

Angola LIS: Guidelines for Using LIS Results in Mine Action Annual Planning

The Survey Action Center and Comissão Nacional Intersectorial de Desminagem e Assistência Humanitária carried out the Angola Landmine Impact Survey. In July 2006, SAC sent the author on the first of three planned missions to Angola as Technical Advisor for the completion of the LIS. This article explains the Provisional Provincial Reports, which contain a section of guidelines on the use of LIS results for operational planning. The National Mine Action Strategy for Angola was developed based on interim LIS results, and the detailed data supporting those results are made freely available to all interested parties.

by Charles Downs [Survey Action Center]

Starting in early 2003, the Survey Action Center, CNIDAH and six implementing partners carried out the Angola Landmine Impact Survey¹ fieldwork in 10 of the country’s 18 provinces. It was nearly complete when the project faced a funding crisis in mid-2005. SAC had to close its office due to lack of funding, CNIDAH assumed responsibility for coordination, the six partner nongovernmental organizations sought funding on their own to continue fieldwork in their agreed provinces, and the United Nations Development Programme established a project to provide key technical support for the database with funding from the European Union. Following an interruption of a few months, an additional five provinces were surveyed by August 2006. Two of the three remaining provinces were completed in February while the last is expected to be completed by May 2007.

Interim results of the ALIS suggest that there will be a total of about 2,000 mine-affected communities covering less than 1 percent of the national territory. This figure is far lower than previous estimates; it is in line with results of the Landmine Impact Surveys performed in many other countries and is accepted by experienced actors in the country and government. The ALIS has identified about 2 percent of affected communities as suffering high socioeconomic impact, about 23 percent as medium-impact, and about 75 percent as low-impact. These results have generated discussion about the scoring system and how impact is measured, including the role the number of recent victims has in accounting for high impact. SAC has welcomed this discussion on alternative scoring systems and has kept attention on the high- and medium-impact communities. CNIDAH used the interim results from the first 14 provinces as the basis for the Angolan National Mine Action Strategy 2006–2011, adopted by the Council of Ministers in September 2006.

Provisional Provincial Reports

With the invitation from CNIDAH to continue joint responsibility for the ALIS, SAC received funding from Germany and sent the author as Technical Advisor on the first of three planned missions in July 2006. In order to increase the usefulness of the LIS results, SAC and CNIDAH agreed to publish a set of Provisional Provincial Reports based on the data from 15 completed provinces, with a general

summary, maps, tables, a short analysis of the results of each province and a CD-ROM with the full survey detail. CNIDAH completed this report and provided it to the Provincial Vice-Governors (responsible for mine action) at a national plenary meeting in October 2006. The report is freely available to the mine action operators and other interested parties. The National Mine Action Strategy and these interim ALIS results were key elements in the development of the 2007 provincial operational plans.

Guidelines for the Use of LIS for Operational Planning

The PPRs contain a section of guidelines on the use of LIS results for operational planning, developed by the author and reproduced in the following paragraphs. The guidelines are meant to provide practical guidance to make greater use of the LIS information. Comments and suggestions to improve these guidelines and make them more useful are welcome, as are examples of similar guidelines that may have been developed in other countries.

Using LIS data to develop annual provincial plans. The annual provincial plans implement the national strategy and consider the best available local information. These notes provide suggestions of targets and a wide range of factors that may be relevant; the list below (see Table 1) is not fully comprehensive, nor is it a step-by-step guide. It should assist provincial planning teams in the analysis of the data and development of plans, starting from the specific landmine problems and humanitarian and development priorities of each province, within the framework of the National Mine Action Strategic Plan adopted by the Council of Ministers 6 September 2006.

LIS field visits and community interviews. The LIS assessed and mapped the impact of landmines on communities through field visits and community interviews in all communities suspected to be affected by landmines. The interviews collected included detailed information on the suspected hazardous areas around the community, mine victims and the blockage of a wide range of normal community activities, including agricultural production, travel, and access to water, schools, markets, etc. Blockage of any of these activities implies increased risk and/or higher cost (time or resources) to conduct those activities. By combining the presence of mines, the number of blockages and the number of victims, the LIS results in an impact score for

each community, grouped into high, medium and low impact. All levels of impact are of concern, but high and medium warrant greater immediate attention.

National Mine Action Strategic Plan

The driving concept of the National Mine Action Strategy is to solve the landmine problem by focusing on resources to eliminate the blockage of community and development activities, mark other areas that do not impact community or development activities and eventually remove all explosive hazards. The identification of communities impacted by landmines comes primarily from the LIS, while the identification of development projects generally comes from the respective ministries, provincial authorities and local communities. These factors should be reviewed in open discussions of the landmine problem and its solution at the provincial, local and national level to arrive at the mine-action plan. The key points of the National Mine Action Strategy include:

- Identify all LIS high-impact communities in the province and include them in the annual and medium-term plans in order to eliminate all impact and minimize further risk in all high-impact communities within two to three years. (The list of all high-impact communities is provided in the PPR.)
- Identify all LIS medium-impact communities in the province and include them in the annual and medium-term plans so as to eliminate all impact and minimize further risk in at least 50 percent of medium-impact communities within three to five years. (The list of medium-impact communities is provided in the PPR.)
- Identify all high- and medium-impact communities in the province and re-focus annual and medium-term plans to address risk according to impact, particularly by reducing risky behavior of population and reconfirming blockages. This task should include prompt response to all new incidents with victims.
- Report all progress, changes in the situation and actions taken to CNIDAH for incorporation into the National Mine Action Database (the Information Management System for Mine Action).

Operational Considerations

The tasks listed in Table 1 are recommended as ways to identify and meet local priorities and national strategic goals.

Survey	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Deploy xxx specialized survey teams to determine more precise boundaries and dimensions of suspected hazardous areas, with priority to xxx high- and medium-impact communities.• Confirm blockage of community or development activity caused by xxx SHAs and identify for clearance the portion of each SHA causing the blockage.• Identify xxx blocked roads, bridges and access routes and plan to open xx percent within two years, with priority to those routes without viable alternatives.• Identify all blocked community facilities (schools, health posts, markets) and clear xx percent of those blockages within one year.• Identify blockages interfering with national development projects (e.g., road network, irrigation, power distribution) and clear blockages as part of respective project.
MRE	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Deploy xxx MRE teams to all high- and medium-impact communities with an appropriate frequency to reduce risky behavior and reconfirm blockages.
Clearance (see guidance under ‘Survey’)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Clear xxx portions of SHAs blocking community or development activities.
Marking	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mark xxx portions of SHAs not blocking community or development activities (except clear small remaining areas and areas within 10 meters (11 yards) of settlement).
Priority Setting	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Give greater priority to clearing blockages affecting more than one community.• Give greater priority to clearing blockages without reasonable alternatives.• Give greater priority to clearing blockages when the resources necessary to fully utilize the previously blocked activity are readily available (and lower priority to clearing those blockages where significant additional resources must be obtained to reactivate the activity).
Budgeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Consider logistical costs and address other blockages clustered in same area.• Reconcile the available mine-action resources (clearance, marking, MRE) with the requirements identified, and consider the development of additional or different resources as may be appropriate.
Reporting	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ensure CNIDAH has accurate information reflecting changes in circumstances and mine-action work completed since conduct of LIS.• Investigate and provide LIS-update reports to CNIDAH on all new mine incidents, newly identified mine-affected communities or SHAs, and changes to previous information.• Submit quarterly progress reports and task completion reports to CNIDAH.

Operational Considerations to Meet Provincial Priorities and Strategic Goals.

To ensure realism and a greater chance of success, each task should include a quantifiable indicator (e.g., number or percentage of coverage per year; examples are indicated below by “xxx,” with the number or percentage to be determined at the provincial level during the annual planning process). Planned activities should be consistent with available assets. Implications for an increased number of teams and budgets should also be assessed and translated into realistic resource mobilization and growth plans, as appropriate, since the current assets are likely to be insufficient to respond to all these factors as promptly as would be preferred.

Conclusion

CNIDAH, SAC and the several ALIS implementing partners are striving to ensure the LIS results are as useful as possible. Change in the LIS scores provides a measure of the impact of mine action; it is a measure of “outcome” and not merely of “output” like measures of area cleared or anti-personnel mines removed. The National Mine Action Strategy for Angola has been developed based on interim LIS results, and CNIDAH have made the detailed data supporting those results freely available in CD-ROM format to all interested parties. The preceding “guidelines”



LIS community interview by HALO Trust in Benguela province
PHOTO COURTESY OF MIKE KENDELLEN

have also been widely circulated in an effort to assist with the practical use of the results at the provincial and local level to further both humanitarian and developmental goals. While operators should continue to be concerned with efficiency in clearance of areas and disposal of anti-personnel mines, periodic monitoring of the change in the number of communities that move from high to medium or low impact will

be a clear indicator of the outcome of mine-action activities. The acceptance of the LIS as the basis for the National Mine Action Strategy is a major step forward in enhanced accountability and effectiveness of the mine-action program. Comments are welcome to improve the guidelines, and CNIDAH will monitor the results to refine this process. ♦

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Charles Downs has worked in mine action since 1999 when he became the Chief of the Mine Action Unit of the United Nations Office for Project Services Mine Action Unit. Current assignments include: SAC Technical Advisor for the Angola LIS, professor of international project management at New York University's Wagner School, assessment of the impact of management training for national mine-action managers and development of practice based guidelines to increase the effectiveness of UNDP capacity development efforts under projects funded by the Global Fund for AIDS/HIV, TB and Malaria.

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News Brief

Canadian Mine Survivor Gets Custom Motorcycle

When Canadian Master Corporal Jody Mitic lost both his feet after stepping on a landmine in Afghanistan, Mitic never thought he would be able to ride a motorcycle again. After months in recovery at Toronto's St. John's Rehabilitation Hospital, Mitic had two new prosthetic feet and was walking with just a cane but still had little hope of ever riding a motorcycle. Having contacted the Barrie Harley dealership before his accident about purchasing a bike, Mitic had to write back and say, "Things have changed."

In April, owners of the Harley Davidson in Barrie, Ontario, Canada, presented Mitic with a custom-made chopper.

Community organizers heard of Mitic's situation and raised more than CN\$50,000 for the custom bike, which includes a hand-operated shifter and a hand brake that works both front and rear brake. To supplement the funding shortfall, bike builders from the Barrie Harley dealership donated 260 hours in labor to build Mitic's perfect custom Harley.