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Global Assessment of EC Mine Policy and Actions 2002-2004

March 2005

Global Assessment of EC Mine Policy and Actions 2002-2004

Framework Contract : EUROPEAID/116548/C/SV

LOT Number 4 Mission number 2004/89069 - Version 2

Main contractor ATOS ORIGIN



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This report was prepared at the request and with financial support of the Commission of the European Communities. The opinions expressed are those of the consultants and are not necessarily those of the Commission

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ABBREVIATIONS

APL	Anti-personnel Landmine
APLR	The Anti-personnel Landmine Regulation
Commission	European Commission
EC	European Community
ECHO	European Commission's Humanitarian Aid Office
EDF	European Development Fund
EOD	Explosive Ordnance Disposal
ERW	Explosive Remnants of War
EU	European Union
EuropeAid	EuropeAid Cooperation Office
GICHD	Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining
IMAS	International Mine Action Standards
ITF	International Trust Fund for Demining and Mine Victim Assistance
HIDC	Highly Indebted Developing Country
JRC	The Joint Research Centre, located at Ispra, Italy.
KAP	Knowledge, Attitude and Practices
LIS	Landmine Impact Survey
MAP	Multi-Annual Programme
MAS	Multi-Annual Strategy
MBT	Mine Ban Treaty (Convention on the Prohibition of the use, stockpiling, production and transfer of antipersonnel landmines and their destruction)
MCA	Multi-Criteria Analysis
MIP	Multi-annual Indicative Programming
MRE	Mine Risk Education
MS	Member State (of the European Union)
NFR	New Financial Regulation (of the EC)
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
PCM	Project Cycle Management
PRA	Participatory Rural Appraisal
The Regulation	The Anti-personnel Landmine Regulation
RELEX	External Relations Directorate General
RIM	Resilience-Impact Matrix
SAC	Survey Action Center
SALW	Small Arms and Light Weapons
SWG	Survey Working Group
TOR	Terms of Reference
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNMAS	United Nations Mine Action Service
UNOPS	United Nations Office for Project Services
UXO	Unexploded Ordnance

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Anti-personnel Landmine Regulation¹ mandates an “overall assessment” of all EC mine action every three years. This report contains the first such assessment which is for the period 2002-2004.

The total funding by all EC budget lines for 2002-2004 for mine action was about 116M€, of which the horizontal mine action budget line was nearly 40% at 45M€. The total for the same period for all EU mine action, including contributions by Member States, was about 410M€, of which the dedicated budget line is just 11%.

Approach used

The broad mandate of *overall assessment* was approached by focusing on the methods and processes used by the European Commission for implementing mine action. Four areas were considered: (i) how the APL Regulation was used to generate the mine action strategy (ii) how the strategy was used to implement the multi-annual programme (iii) how projects were selected and contracted in order to achieve the programme objectives and (iv) the evaluation and assessment processes used.

A range of methods was used for data gathering: document, database and internet searches and analysis, interviews with staff in Brussels, telephone interviews with key organization staff, questionnaires to delegations and project implementers, and three field missions (to Somalia, Azerbaijan and Bosnia & Herzegovina) to meet delegation staff and visit projects.

Key findings and recommendations

The evaluation team recognises that EC staff have consistently sought to achieve high standards – this report should be read in the context that the key criticisms are not of the outcomes (nor of the individuals concerned in mine action) but of some of the methods, processes and systems used. Improvements to these could reduce the difficulty and stress related to implementing mine action, as well as potentially improving the outcome and, in particular, the value for money. It should be noted that, while there is room for improvement, in the opinion of the evaluation team the EC manages its mine action programme at least as well as other similar international donors. The criticisms in this report should be seen in the light of the overall success so far, which has been achieved in political support as well as direct mine action.

1. Whilst the evaluation team is in general agreement with the selection of countries and projects funded in the programme, the *process* by which they had been selected was not readily apparent. This exposes the Commission to the risk of criticism and exposes the staff making the decisions to a lot of pressure. The evaluation team strongly recommends implementing a transparent, objective process, such as multi-criteria analysis, to make strategic decisions and to include key actors in setting the criteria and weightings. Other management tools are also of value in this process, including Project Cycle Management which is already widely used by EuropeAid.
2. Priority should be given by Brussels staff to *strategic* activities. Deconcentration is a timely opportunity which should be used to maximum effect to lift some of the load imposed by detailed day to day project management and free up staff time. There is an urgent need for

¹ Regulation (EC) No 1724/2001 of the European Parliament and of the Council, concerning action against anti-personnel landmines in developing countries, and Regulation (EC) No 1725/2001 of the European Parliament and of the Council, concerning action against anti-personnel landmines in third countries. Together these are known as “the Anti-personnel Landmine Regulation”.

improved coordination of project implementation and tracking between different budget lines, and improved data management to support this. There is a need to clarify “who does what” in mine action in the EC for the benefit of administrative staff and project implementers, as well as the public.

3. Insufficient good project proposals are available. Both broadening the proposal base, and reducing the percentage of bids rejected on technicalities are necessary as a matter of urgency. This should promote increased competition, which can be expected to give better value. Further use of commercial operators (in accordance with the Regulation) should be included. However, support to *natural monopolies* such as National Mine Action Authorities should be continued. Improving understanding by project proposers of the Commission documentation is a first step to very significantly reducing the large percentage of proposals rejected on technicalities.
4. Proposal and project assessment has not included a rigorous technical component, and this has led to some inefficiency. Assessment must be done on both programme criteria and also on rigorous technical criteria. Mechanisms are available to undertake this and should be more fully used. The relatively small extra cost will be more than compensated by potential gains in efficiency and the reduced risk of poor quality projects which fail to deliver good results. Since the Regulation was drafted there have been significant advances in the International Mine Action Standards, they are now the *de facto* international standard and provide a useful basis for independent and authoritative project assessment.
5. Greater contractual rigour is needed to make sure that responsibility and authority are commensurate, are clearly stated in the project documents, and are enforced in practice. Put bluntly, the Commission must learn to insist on better value for money. Contracting is a powerful tool that could be better used. Better use could be made of the services of *agents* as intermediaries to create synergies and share implementation costs where appropriate.
6. Greater support should be given to implementing both existing and new technologies in the field – significant savings in the longer term will require some increased expenditure now. Programme and contract requirements should be changed to permit implementers to recover the initial costs and benefit from investments in technology, over five year, or longer, periods. Current practice effectively prohibits the use of more efficient methods by usually issuing short, non-renewable contracts.
7. Any intervention must have a clear exit strategy, not only for sound development practice but to reduce the risk of the EC being held hostage to bad publicity and ill feeling.
8. The political achievements of the EC in mine action have been notable. The European Institutions have been at the forefront of the success of the Ottawa process and subsequent successes in campaigning for support and ratification of the Mine Ban Treaty. A considerable part of this success is due the efforts and personal dedication of the small team responsible. The European Institutions derive real value from visibility of these policies.

A continuous thread running through the assessment is the impact of the Deconcentration process which was undertaken during the period covered by this Report. This will, it is hoped, have a positive impact on mine action, though there are negative effects too, in particular due to the fragmentation of project management and the consequent increased difficulty in technical assessment.

The report includes suggestions for some changes to update the Regulation in view of the advances in mine action in recent years. The evaluation team notes that the original drafting is very clear and well-focussed and the changes suggested are minor.

SUGGESTIONS FOR AMENDMENTS TO THE REGULATION.

Introduction

Both the original mandate and also the Terms of Reference of this assessment include providing suggestions for improvements to the Regulation. The evaluation team found the Regulation to be well written, clear and well focussed. All the suggestions made below are minor changes: two are needed to clarify a detail points where the team consider the wording ambiguous, the rest are due to the need to update the Regulation.

Analysis

When the regulation was drafted, mine action in general, and the Ottawa process² in particular, were considerably less advanced than today. As a result, the regulation has a very strong focus on *Anti-personnel Landmines* to the exclusion of other types of mine and the near exclusion of unexploded ordnance (UXO).³ This was appropriate at the time but amendments should now be considered in order to make the Regulation consistent with the International Mine Action Standards (IMAS) definition of humanitarian demining which includes the clearance of *all* explosive remnants of war (ERW) to a verifiable standard and a known depth. (It is, of course, not possible in practice to clear only APLs and leave other types of contamination). There is also an increasing recognition that the target of mine action should focus more on impact reduction than the elimination of all mines and UXO: given the level of residual contamination in northern Europe from the two World Wars⁴ this latter goal is clearly not necessary for impact to be reduced and economic recovery to take place.

In some countries abandoned ammunition dumps are a direct explosion threat due to poor storage conditions (and the consequences of an explosion can scatter munitions over a wide area), and are also a potential source of munitions for looters who may be seeking to reignite conflicts or simply to dismantle ordnance in order to sell the scrap metal – this latter is an extraordinarily risky activity. However, abandoned but unused munitions are often neither mines nor UXO⁵ so they are not currently covered by the Regulation.

The close linkage between mine action and Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) limitation is increasingly recognised in international fora. The evaluation team recommend that this linkage should be recognised formally in the text of the Regulation.

Recommendations for amendments:

1. Article 5.2 states that “Community financing under this regulation shall take the form of grants”. This is taken as the general use of the word “grants” to distinguish it from such mechanisms as loans or guarantees, and not the NFR specific use of grants to mean a payment to a non-profit entity. This should be clarified. (See also chapter three).
2. The difference between project evaluation (as covered by Articles 2.1(a), 11 and 13 of the Regulation) and strategic evaluation of the EC mine action mechanisms (as covered by Article 14 of the Regulation) could perhaps be made clearer. (See chapter four for details).

² The “Ottawa process” is the political process which led to the Mine Ban Treaty, which is now ratified.

³ It is increasingly recognised that UXO cause more deaths and injuries world-wide than mines. For example, see the recent British Medical Journal article by Bilukha and Brennan at <http://bmj.bmjournals.com/cgi/content/full/330/7483/127>

⁴ Estimates suggest that Belgium still has over 100 million UXO from the first World War.

⁵ UXO is ordnance which has been armed but has failed to detonate. **Unused** munitions are not UXO.

3. The Regulation should be revised to reflect both current IMAS and the *de facto* situation whereby "humanitarian demining" is defined as verifiable clearance of all ERW to a certain depth. This should, *inter alia*, include clearance of abandoned munitions dumps, which may well contain neither mines nor UXO.
4. Acknowledgement of the close links between mine action and Small Arms and Light Weapons limitation would probably strengthen the regulation.

INTRODUCTION

This report was commissioned in compliance with Article 14 of Regulation (EC) 1724/2001 and Article 13 of Regulation (EC) 1725/2001. The two regulations are collectively known as the Anti-personnel Landmine Regulation⁶ (APLR). These two articles mandate an overall assessment of all Community mine actions every three years, and call for suggestions for the future of the Regulation and proposals for amendments.

Full background information about EC mine action is available in the documents “EC Mine Action 2002-2004”⁷ and “The European Roadmap towards a Zero Victim Target”⁸ both of which can be downloaded from the EuropeAid website, <http://europa.eu.int/comm/europeaid>. The background information will not be repeated in this report.

This global assessment covers a great deal of ground from the political and strategic basis for action through to the actual implementation of projects in some of the poorest countries on earth. The body of the work is contained in four chapters based on (i) strategy, (ii) programming, (iii) project selection and contracting, and (iv) evaluation. Recommendations are made at the end of each chapter. A comprehensive set of annexes provides the interested reader with a substantial body of additional information and the reasoning behind the report. The separation into chapters is somewhat artificial: it is well known that project management is a cycle and there are some strong interdependencies between these topics. However, this layout, based on the Terms of Reference, allows for organisational clarity, and keeps the task manageable. The evaluation team also presents in this report some new concepts which may assist in programming mine action projects, notably the Resilience-Impact Matrix diagram.

Since the approval of the Regulation in 2001 a great deal of progress has been made in humanitarian demining. Political progress has led to the ratification of the Mine Ban Treaty with the vast majority of countries confirming their rejection of anti-personnel landmines. Contaminated land has been cleared so that people can grow food, refugees can return to their homes and children can play in safety. Progress has also been made in establishing humanitarian demining as a recognised and regulated discipline; the development of International Mine Action Standards covering many aspects of mine action is a notable achievement. This report covers mine action from 2002 to 2004 and is, therefore, unable to take into full account the very recent developments of the reorganisation of EuropeAid nor all the changes taking place as Deconcentration moves new responsibilities to the EC Delegations world-wide.

The European Community has been at the forefront of mine action from the beginning. Over the years the commitment has not weakened or diminished and the EC with the EU Member States are, together, the largest donor to mine action. Such a commitment brings with it the responsibility to ensure that the funding is used to the best advantage, and as efficiently as possible. This report seeks to contribute to those aims.

Much more still remains to be done however, and with this in mind the evaluation team offer their recommendations.

The evaluation team would like to express their appreciation of the Terms of Reference: these were sufficiently broad that nothing important was excluded but also sufficiently focussed that results could be achieved in the time available. The work would not have been possible without substantial help and cooperation from EC staff in Brussels and in the Delegations which were visited, and the staff of the other organisations and agencies who so freely gave their time. Throughout the evaluation difficult questions were answered without hesitation and access was never refused to information and documents.

⁶ Regulation 1724/2001 concerns mine action in developing countries and 1725/2001 mine action in third countries. They are almost identical, so for ease of reference, this report will use the Article numbering of “Regulation (EC) No 1724/2001 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 July 2001, concerning action against anti-personnel landmines in developing countries”.

⁷ http://europa.eu.int/comm/europeaid/mine/intro/02_04en.pdf

⁸ http://europa.eu.int/comm/europeaid/projects/mines/strategy_mip_2005_2007_en.pdf

Chapter 1: STRATEGY

Objective

The objective of this section of the report is to assess how well the program strategy documents map out a means to implement the global strategy for mine action set out in the APL Regulation⁹.

Approach

Assessment was done by document analysis, comparing the Multi-Annual Strategy document with the APL Regulation and analysing its functionality as a coordination instrument.

Careful reading of the text of the APL Regulation allows the extraction of a series of criteria and tasks that are required (by Article 12 of the Regulation) to be covered by an APL Strategy Paper (in this case the document "EC Mine Action 2002-2004 Strategy and Multiannual Indicative Programming"). This strategy paper is referred to as the Multiannual Strategy (MAS) throughout this Report.

These criteria and tasks are set out in Table 1, below. The tasks are highlighted in **bold text**.

Findings

The 2002-2004 MAS was published in four sections: the main text, plus three annexes, which cover:

- Annex 1. Applications of thematic priorities to geographic priorities
- Annex 2. Use of budget lines to support mine action
- Annex 3. Indicative focus countries for EC instruments in support of mine action, 2002-2004

There are several positive aspects to the 2002-2004 MAS. Its Annex 1 provides clear and transparent summaries of how funds have been allocated to national mine action programs; its Annex 2 provides a clear summary of the budget lines available to support mine action. Indeed, in general, the text of the MAS and its annexes reflect the criteria set out in the text of the Regulation. However, there also appear to be several weaknesses in the MAS in terms of its ability to map out a strategy for achieving the goals set out in the Regulation. These are set out below.

The first criticism that may be levelled at the strategy is that it provides little guidance for strategic prioritisation (as called for in Article 2.3 of the Regulation). This is particularly significant given the wide number of eligible projects (such as those covered in Article 2.1) and the global reach of the Regulation. The resultant risk is that EC resources will be spread thinly, over many short-term projects that attempt to provide "a little to all" without a coherent set of goals. Project Cycle Management (PCM) is a technique already widely used by EuropeAid, and the evaluation team consider that use of the PCM Log Frame type of tool could provide a useful method at strategic level, as well as at a project level, to ensure that important considerations do not "fall through the gaps". An example layout is attached at Annex A.

Given the nature of mine action projects, short term funding is unlikely to be the most efficient approach – many mine action projects are capital intensive and it is generally most efficient to fund projects over the useful life of one set of equipment – approximately five years. It is possible to establish contracts that require annual validation (with the option to cancel funding in the event of

⁹ Regulation 1724/2001 concerns mine action in developing countries and 1725/2001 mine action in third countries. Together they are known as the Antipersonnel Landmine regulation. They are almost identical, so, for ease of reference, this report will use the Article numbering of "Regulation (EC) No 1724/2001 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 July 2001, concerning action against anti-personnel landmines in developing countries".

serious non compliance) and this is to be encouraged. However, in order to be compliant with Article 10.1 of the APLR in terms of cost-effectiveness it may mean that fewer, larger projects are supported. This would require Committee opinion in accordance with Article 9.2 for any project receiving over 3M€. This referral should be made whenever the nature of the project requires it.¹⁰

Table 1-1 - Tasks set out in APL Regulation		
Ser (a)	Requirement (b)	Regulation Ref. (c)
1	Aid should be linked to MBT compliance	Para 7
2	Aid should be integrated with development	Para 8
3	Research can be funded	Para 9,11
4	Stockpiles should be included	Para 10
5	Must be sure that actions have been effective	Para 12
6	Aid must be consistent with EC foreign policy	Para 15
7	Aid must be efficient, flexible and rapid	Para 17
8	Maximum transparency	Para 19,20
9	Supporting elaboration, monitoring and implementation	Article 2.1.(a)
10	Creating and sustaining international structures	Article 2.1.(c)
11	Aiming for maximum effectiveness	Article 2.1.(c)
12	Preventing casualties	Article 2.1.(d)
13	Assisting victim rehabilitation	Article 2.1.(d)
14	Supporting in country trials of appropriate equipment	Article 2.1.(e)
15	Supporting in country trials of appropriate techniques	Article 2.1.(e)
16	Coordinating equipment design with user requirements	Article 2.1.(f)
17	Encouraging clearance that is compatible with the environment	Article 2.1.(g)
18	Encouraging clearance that is compatible with sustainable development	Article 2.1.(g)
19	Supporting coordination	Article 2.1.(h)
20	Priority to be given to most seriously affected countries	Article 2.3
21	Mine action to be financed from relevant development budgets where possible	Article 2.4
22	Partners (to have appropriate expertise and experience) include regional and international organizations, national provincial and local governments, institutes, public and private operators	Article 4.1
23	Participation to be equal between legal persons of member states and beneficiary countries	Article 4.2
24	All tendering organizations to have adequate SOP and adequate insurance	Article 4.3
25	Where agreements exist, EC is not to cover taxes or duties	Article 5.3
26	Co-financing is possible	Article 8.2
27	Coordination and cooperation with international actors, UN, NGO and GICHD is promoted	Article 8.3
28	Projects to form part of wider development or reconstruction framework	Article 10.1
29	Projects to be prioritized and appraised in terms of positive impact and cost effectiveness	Article 10.1
30	Commission may carry out on the spot checks	Article 11
31	Commission to prepare strategy paper including: horizontal guidelines Priorities Benchmarks	Article 12
32	The Commission to regularly assess operations funded by community	Article 13
33	The commission to report annually to European Parliament	Article 14
34	The commission to carry out overall assessment every 3 years and report to Parliament	Article 15

Table 1-1 Analysis of 2002-2004 MAS

¹⁰ The Team were informed that the main reason for choosing projects below 3M€ was the amount available per country given the yearly overall budget for the line, and not the need for referral. The need for this arbitrary restraint would disappear if a structured resource allocation mechanism (such as Multi-criteria Analysis as described in this Report) was adopted.

One useful technique that may be adopted for use in resource allocation is Multi-criteria Analysis (MCA). The use of an MCA in this regard is discussed in detail in Annex B, which includes an example of how to undertake the task.

Whilst the text of the 2002-2004 MAS repeats many of the criteria set out in the Regulation, it does not provide guidance as to **how** these are to be implemented or measured. As a result, it has not fully complied with Article 12 (shown at line 31 in Table 1-1 above) in that there are no *visible* mechanisms for setting priorities or benchmarks for measurement of success. For example:

- Article 10.1 requires projects to be appraised in terms of positive impact and cost-effectiveness; the MAS does not provide any guidance as to how this is to be done
- Whereas MAS Annex 1 provides clear information on how much is to be allocated to various countries, and Annex 3 provides details of how these funds are to be allocated to projects, there is no visible 'decision science' on how these decisions were made.
- Furthermore, the text provides no strategic benchmarks that allow measurement of performance; both prioritisation and benchmarking are a clear requirement of Article 12 of the Regulation and it would appear that the MAS is therefore not fully compliant with this requirement.

This is not to say that these mechanisms do not exist: Part 1.2.1 of the main text of the MAS certainly suggests that they do: the problem is it is not possible to trace how these decisions were made.

Finally, the MAS appears to confuse the different types of monitoring required by the Regulation. Paragraph 1.4 of the MAS describes the requirement of Article 13 to carry out a three-year review consisting of an overall assessment of all community mine actions, whereas Article 13 of the Regulation actually appears to require an assessment of the operations themselves, presumably through field monitoring and evaluation (which is also supported by several other sections of the Regulation, including Paragraphs 12, 19 and 20 of the Preamble and Article 2.1(a)). The subject of monitoring and evaluation is covered in more detail in Chapter four.

In short, without clearer strategic guidance, prioritisation and benchmarking activities at a strategic level there is considerable risk that subsidiary activities, including programming, commitments and field implementation will be harder to achieve. A series of recommendations is set out below.

Recommendations

There are four major recommendations for future MAS documents.

The Commission is recommended to develop the following tools as a matter of some urgency:

- A strategic log frame for EC mine action. An example is included at Annex A.
- A check list of eligibility for implementing organisations and potential projects
- A rigorous Multi-Criteria Analysis (MCA) mechanism to score proposals in line with the criteria set out in the Regulation.

A process to make requests for strategic plans from EC delegations, with an emphasis on multi-year funding, coordinated cost-sharing with other donors in a sector-wide approach. This will be covered again in the section on Programming in the next chapter.

Chapter 2: PREPARING THE PROGRAMME

Objective

This chapter assesses the process used to generate a programme for implementing the multi-annual mine action strategy; derivation of the strategy was discussed in the previous chapter. The programme should, essentially, define what is to be done where, and this information can then be used to request proposals for projects or make calls for tenders to implement it. The focus of the analysis is on the *process* used to develop the programme.

Approach

Assessment was made by document analysis, use of the EuropeAid project database, internet web searches, interviews with Commission staff, principally EuropeAid and Delegation personnel, and interviews with project implementers during field visits.

Findings

The use of Multi-Annual Programmes (MAPs) is welcomed by the evaluation team. In preparing the MAP, European Commission staff are faced with a number of difficulties, two of which stand out: coordination and programming the allocation of resources.

Coordination of the Programme

The number and diversity of actors within the Commission and EU who are involved in mine action makes it difficult to move from a strategy to a coherent plan which everyone can agree, and which makes best use of available resources. A range of different budget lines, types of project, delegations and Directorates General of the Commission are involved, in addition to donor and recipient countries. This diversity also makes maintaining a record of *all* EC mine action extremely difficult (see *Ex post coordination and Record Keeping* below).

A distinction should be made between the *ex ante* coordination needed to develop the programme and the *ex post* coordination and record keeping which enables tracking and evaluation of projects; both are important elements of the project cycle; feedback from projects is an essential input in planning.

The majority of mine action funding does not pass through the mine action horizontal budget line, which for the period 2002-2004 totalled about 45 M€. This was less than 40% of the total identified EC funding of 116 M€ in this period. When contributions from all EU sources and Member States are also included the grand total rises to 410 M€, of which the horizontal mine action budget is just 11%. Nonetheless, it is the small mine action team in Directorate General External Relations (RELEX) and the staff responsible for the mine action horizontal budget line who have the primary responsibility for coordination of all the different budget lines.

The RELEX team have clearly put a great deal of effort into the *ex ante* programme coordination. Bringing together all the different interests and achieving synergy between the disparate programmes is a major exercise which imposes a heavy load on the staff involved and the RELEX team does not appear to have been allocated sufficient resources for this. Achieving good coordination with administrators of many other programmes, some of whom have mine action as only a small part of their total budget, is acknowledged to be a major challenge. Deconcentration will have an impact on this; RELEX staff noted that there is considerable room for improvement in the information flow with delegations (see also footnote 12). In addition, the

RELEX team has also to coordinate mine action at apolitical level with the European Parliament and other international bodies such as the Meetings of States Parties to the Ottawa Convention and has further responsibilities (e.g. Explosive Remnants of War, and Small Arms and Light Weapons policy).

Under such circumstances it is inevitable that some aspects of the work will suffer. One example is the lack of introduction of programming tools and methodologies – such as a formalized and independent coordination and resource allocation *mechanism* – which could in future materially assist in reducing this extreme workload as well as offering other important benefits. RELEX emphasized, in their comments to the evaluation team, that they are well aware of the need for such a planning mechanism, but that they currently lack the resources to devote to this task. Overall, the mine action staff appear to be too busy doing urgent work to do the important work which is necessary to achieve some longer term benefits. The evaluation team consider that this problem can only be resolved by allocating more resources, at least in the short term, to make the breakthrough in establishing efficient and transparent strategic resource allocation mechanisms such as the Multi-Criteria Analysis referred to later in this chapter (below and in Annex B)."

Programming – Resource Allocation

There are far more needs in mine action than can be met with the funding available. Spreading the resources too thinly can have the effect of reducing efficiency and increasing workload. Moreover, funding a large number of small actions also effectively eliminates the possibility of supporting the uptake of new technologies which may hold the key to significant improvements to clearance methods (APLR Article 2.1 e & f). This is discussed further, below.

What funding to allocate where for what purpose is a difficult problem and requires that hard decisions are made. There is a clear need for measurable criteria and a transparent¹¹ process (APLR introduction para 19 & 20, also *principles of PCM*, see chapter three). Even though it yielded good results, the process used for 2002-2004 did not make clear what decisions were taken for which reasons – the programming must be *seen* to be objective and fair and not just have good outcomes. Commission staff made informed judgements on the basis of multiple inputs including the Country Strategy Paper, information from Delegations, bilateral contacts with donors and recipients, political information and their own personal specialist knowledge.¹² Information overload, and choices which were based on non-comparable information and are hence open to challenge, are real risks of this way of working, especially given the need to always reject a large number of options due to funding limits. This approach also imposes a great deal of pressure on staff. The good results achieved with the 2002-4 programme reflect the hard work and personal commitment of the people involved, not a satisfactory process.

Multi Criteria Analysis (MCA) is a potential solution which the evaluation team strongly recommends, see also chapter one and annex B. The criteria and weightings for a mine action MCA should be decided at an inter-institutional level, with the participation all key constituents, to ensure cross-programme validity and broad acceptance. The steps taken in this direction in the 2005-7 strategy paper are welcomed, but should be taken further to develop a full MCA.

Further analytical tools, such as the Resilience-Impact Matrix (RIM) (see Annex B) should also

¹¹ "Transparent" here takes its original meaning of visibility. There is no suggestion whatsoever of improper action, merely that the actions taken to reach a certain outcome were not fully visible.

¹² The evaluation team heard statements that delegations did not feel adequately consulted in deciding the programme. Equally, staff in Brussels expressed the view that they would welcome more input from delegations who did not always fully contribute to the process. It was noted that these difficulties also extend to other programmes.

be used as appropriate to assist in the task of generating the multi-annual programme. Greater use of this type of aids will assist the Commission in reducing dependence on difficult personal judgements in prioritization and allow greater synergy in programming mine action in countries with similar problems. A full introduction to the RIM diagram and its application is given in annex B. Briefly, it permits the grouping of countries as measured by two key criteria: (i) the Impact of mines/UXO and (ii) the country's ability to cope, or "Resilience". Each cluster of countries (which may be geographically distant) is associated with a range of suitable types of intervention. Similarly, different areas of responsibility by different agencies within the EC can be allocated to different areas on the diagram, as can suitable "exit strategies" for longer term sustainability. The most appropriate interventions for a particular RI ratio should be decided during programme development.

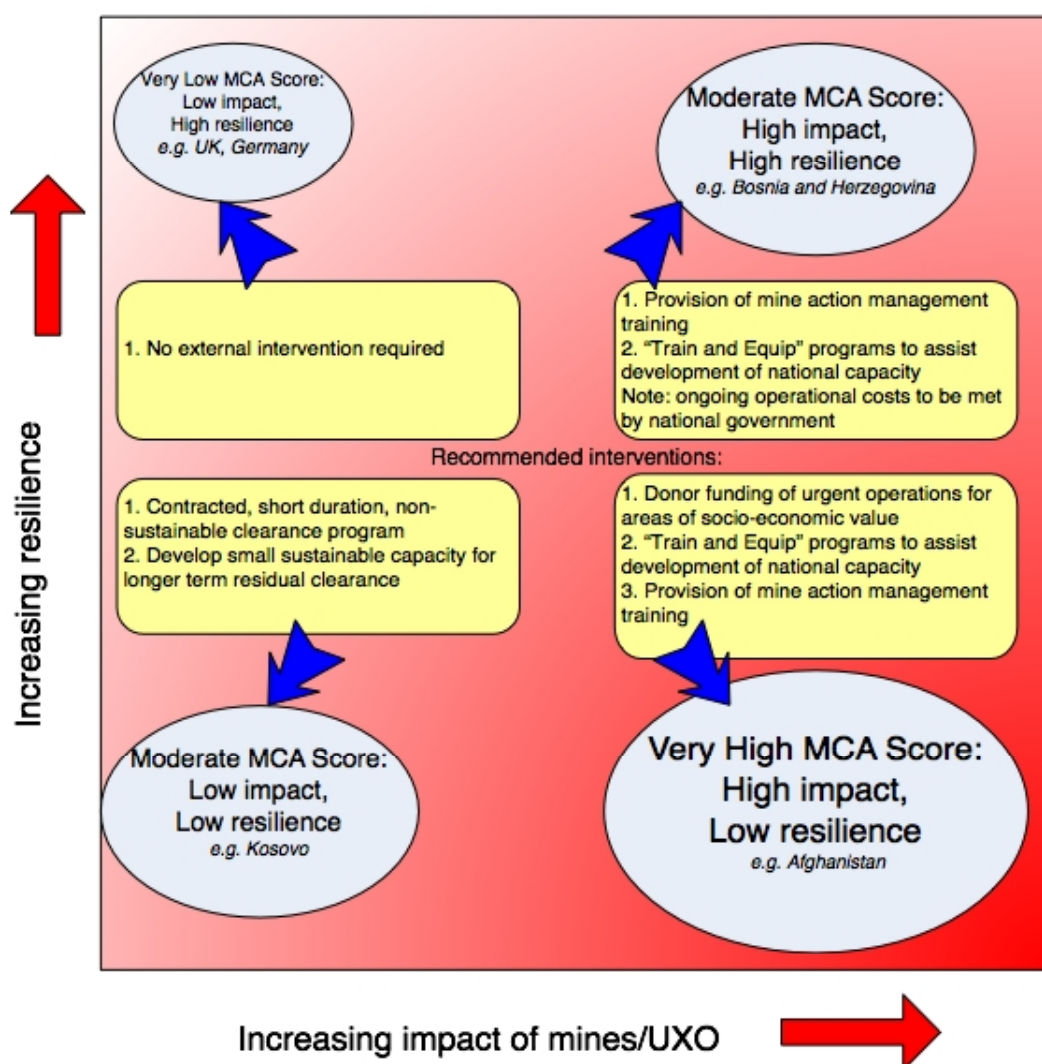


Figure 2-1 Resilience-Impact Matrix (RIM) diagram. See Annex B for full details.

Ex post coordination and Record Keeping

In terms of *ex post* coordination, compiling a list of all mine action projects which have been undertaken from 2002 to 2004 throughout different parts of the EC (let alone Member State bilateral actions) has proved to be a difficult exercise and the need for improved data management is clear. EuropeAid's database is complete for their own projects, the indicative programme list held by RELEX includes most other EC mine action, but, for example, projects

mentioned in ECHO's annual report had not been reported for inclusion in the listing of all projects¹³.

Mine action also forms a small part of a number of different development projects in several countries. Details of the financing allocated specifically for mine action within larger projects may only be available from extensive searching of project files which are being moved to delegations as part of Deconcentration. Tracking all these projects, which do not generally appear in database searches for "Mine Action," will take a change to record keeping.

The data that are available in Brussels are spread across a number of databases which are not linked. Even EuropeAid and ECHO (both members of the "RELEX Family") are not able to share this data easily. Major funding sources include the European Development Fund, the Rapid Reaction Mechanism and several geographic budget lines. Creating a method to exchange information is not straightforward and should be addressed in the first instance by examining the current systems and what can be achieved without major expense. Coordinating information from the most important mine action budget lines should be accorded priority, perhaps starting with the members of the RELEX "family". This problem has clearly been recognised for some time as a pilot project was started by the JRC in 2002 to improve this record keeping¹⁴, but appears to have been abandoned as unsuccessful with no further data entered.

Improvements in record keeping are necessary to benefit the programme planning process at a strategic level as well as to provide "who does what" information for internal Commission use and for the public. Ultimately, the solution is not to spend considerable effort in preparing a comprehensive list of projects, but to invest the effort in better coordination which makes it easier to prepare the list.

Creating greater coherence and cross-referencing between the various EC mine action websites should also be undertaken straight away (a search on Google locates a dozen, with a variety of information and some have very few, if any, links to the other mine action web sites. The quality of the web pages is also very variable).

Other Issues

- *Survey* The large investment in Landmine Impact Surveys (LIS) by the Commission is welcomed by the evaluation team – early support of LIS by the EC was found to have brought "on board" further donors and multiplied the benefits. Accurate and detailed knowledge of the problem is the necessary first step in mine action, and in many cases the LIS significantly reduces the initial estimate of time and funding needed for clearance. A major independent report on LIS is in publication (see Annex J) and the draft has been released to the team who support its findings.

¹³ The evaluation team undertook extensive searching of the EuropeAid database, and document searching for mine action projects funded from other budget lines. The team also included with the questionnaire (see chapter 4 and annex E) a request to delegations to provide a list of all mine action projects in the period 2002-2004. Eight replies were received which fully demonstrated the difficulty of this type of record keeping. One delegation reported no projects even though the Brussels records indicated otherwise. The other six countries reported projects funded from five different EC budget lines with about ten cost-sharing partners putting further funding into the projects. There was some confusion about the reporting period: some projects of the 2000 or 2001 budget allocations did not start until 2002, some 2004 projects did not start until 2005. Analysing the responses from just eight delegations revealed that the RELEX indicative data had included all the major expenditure, but also emphasised that such a task would not be feasible worldwide within the Terms of Reference of the evaluation. Not all the delegations with mine action projects had even responded to the questionnaire.

¹⁴ <http://eu-mine-actions.jrc.cec.eu.int/actions/contracts/index.htm>

Of particular note in the LIS report is the strong criticism of donors who do not act on the priorities arising from the LIS and continue to fund mine action projects which are designated as low priority by the survey. The authors go further in their remarks and state that donors often do not even read the LIS.

As a major contributor to the substantial costs of LIS it is especially important that the EC takes the time to study survey results and furthermore, ensures that its programming, and hence the projects which receive funding, reflect the priorities suggested by the LIS. If the costly LIS does not materially affect funding priorities there would seem to be little justification for it. This is further discussed in the context of contracts in chapter three.

- *Exit Strategy* Many project descriptions include local capacity building, whether on a “train and equip” basis, in victim assistance, or by teaching skills from basic mine risk education to programme management. The Regulation specifically mandates sustainability. The overall programme, as well as individual projects, should have a viable exit strategy which ensures that, when project funding terminates, what is left is truly sustainable with local funds or with other identified and earmarked funds. Mine clearance tasks should not be left part-completed and large numbers of people should not be employed as deminers for one year only to be left unemployed again.

Lack of a good exit strategy risks making the Commission hostage to bad publicity and ill feeling in addition to the potential negative impact on development and sustainability. This implies that a greater emphasis should be placed on continuity of action than during the 2002 – 2004 Multiannual Strategy. Longer duration projects, even if the cost per year has to be significantly reduced, should be seriously considered. Instead of employing, for example, 100 deminers to clear land in one year then face unemployment, it may be better to support 35 deminers for three years by which time the local economy will have started to develop. The exit strategy should also be reflected in the project design; this is discussed in chapter three.

The RIM Diagram can be used to provide some guidance as to how the exit strategy will vary with the nature of the program. For example, in a “high impact, high resilience” country the exit strategy will of necessity tie in with the type of support being given by training. In comparison “high impact, low resilience” situations require the most careful planning of exit strategy. It is unlikely that the donor community will pay for the entire clearance of the whole country, victim assistance, etc, so it is important to determine which areas of highest priority will be funded first by external donors.

Furthermore, where national funding is to pay ongoing costs the EC should in future ascertain that the project cost is feasible and that the political will exists in the country to support the work. This was not always the case in projects examined by the team.

- *International Standards* When the APLR was written mine action was a comparatively new concept. There is now an established body of good practice and successful projects which planners can draw on. The UN supported International Mine Action Standards (IMAS) now cover many aspects of planning and implementing mine action and are the *de facto* standards. The team found that the EC has good understanding of the use of standards and need for compliance with IMAS.
- *Introducing new methods and technologies* Annex C provides an overview of mine action technology research and development which has been funded or co-funded by the EC. The APLR mandates support for the introduction of new technologies and for improving efficiency but the team noted that little was achieved in this area in 2002-2004. There is a clear cost to introducing technology and new techniques in the field, as the APLR

recognizes, but the potential mid and long term benefits are considerable and could far outweigh the costs. Mine action organizations active in the field have no incentive to improve efficiency unless donors not only request but *insist on, changes*¹⁵, *and are prepared to fund the initial additional costs* (which may include the through life costs of operating the equipment). Demining is, for a number of reasons, a generally conservative activity where any change must be justified and there is always pressure *not* to change proven but inefficient methods which are now outdated.

What is urgently needed is not just new equipment but also greater support for getting more equipment with an already proven utility (e.g. brush cutters) into the field. The greatest impact will be achieved by changes to contract methodologies which permit organizations to fully benefit from the expenditure on capital investment in technology, irrespective of whether they are a commercial company seeking to amortize an investment or an NGO seeking to make best long-term use of donor funds (see also chapter three). Piecemeal support to technology developers and testers is not likely to have any greater impact in the future than in the past, and to date has not proved effective. The development of standards is, in itself, important but cannot influence technology take-up in the way that changes to programming and contracts can. A pro-active attitude could transform the EC into a world-leader in this area and potentially lead to substantial cost savings in the future.

- *Victim Assistance* Medical support to mine victims is a particularly difficult issue. In mine affected countries which substantially lack health care facilities, the evaluation team consider that it is clearly beyond the scope of mine action programmes to put in place an entire public health care system. Medical ethics suggest that emergency facilities cannot be exclusively reserved for mine victims and closed to others needing similar trauma care. Thus the overwhelming majority of those assisted may well not be mine victims: road traffic accident victims typically outnumber mine victims by far more than ten to one¹⁶. Criteria of sustainability, the need for a viable exit strategy and “added value” criteria should be carefully applied to such medical support. The risk of not being able to withdraw from medical support projects without adverse publicity should also be carefully addressed at programme level. Medical assistance to mine victims is possibly best addressed by supporting the mainstreaming of mine action.
- *Support for the MBT and campaigns* The European Institutions have been at the forefront of the success of the Ottawa process and subsequent successes in campaigning for support and ratification of the Mine Ban Treaty (MBT). A considerable part of this success is due the efforts and personal dedication of the small team responsible. The European Institutions derive real value from visibility of these policies. The evaluation team considers that national support for the MBT is a relevant criterion in the MCA for programme generation. However, given the considerable success of the MBT and associated campaigns so far it may be time to review the funding allocated to support of such campaigns to see if it can now be reduced.

Recommendations

Multi Criteria Analysis should be introduced as soon as possible to ensure a transparent and objective process in programming and reduce workload. Other tools, such as the RIM diagram,

¹⁵ As has been noted in the working group on Mine Action Technologies at the Intersessional meetings of the Ottawa process, donors have a clear responsibility in improving efficiency by insisting on such improvement and by supporting the initial costs of implementation of improved technologies. See <http://maic.jmu.edu/journal/7.3/focus/acheroy/acheroy.htm>

¹⁶ Accident data from Mozambique for 1980 to 1993 show that, in a country at the time heavily contaminated by mines and with little traffic, 35% of accidental deaths were due to road accidents, but only 3% to mines.

may also be helpful and are strongly recommended. The evaluation team recommends that sufficient resources should be made available to RELEX and/or EuropeAid for speedy implementation of such programming mechanisms in order to realize significant immediate and longer term benefits.

Greater priority should be given to the coordination of information on the wide range of mine action activities within the EC. This may require reallocation of some financial and human resources away from project implementation. Improved data management, to allow better global reporting and hence complementarity, should be included in this coordination. The deconcentration process should, as far as possible, be used to reduce Brussels project management activities in order to release staff time for this.

The programme should continue to reflect Landmine Impact Survey (LIS) priorities and support further LIS where appropriate. Programming should strenuously avoid making funds available for purposes deemed to be low priority by a LIS.

Land clearance and, in particular, some types of medical victim assistance are very costly and present large demands on limited resources. Better value will probably be obtained by supporting "high added value" activities from the relatively small horizontal budget line, such as coordinating different donors and budgets to effectively jointly fund high-cost interventions.

Support for new techniques and technologies should be reviewed and substantially improved. This will be primarily by changes to the programming and contracts by supporting fewer, larger, and especially longer, projects (not necessarily from the horizontal budget line). The EC must be prepared to invest in the (sometimes substantial) increased initial cost of more efficient techniques in order to reap the mid- and long-term benefits and to give a global lead.

The "exit strategy" needs to be considered at programme level as well as project level so that sustainability criteria are fully met, best use is made of resources, and the visibility of the EC is improved. This is particularly important in medical support to mine victims.

The EC is recommended to continue and extend its use of, and support for, International Mine Action Standards.

Chapter 3: PROJECT SELECTION AND CONTRACTING

Objective

Once the strategy and the programme have been decided, suitable projects must be identified and funded, and their outcomes evaluated. This chapter examines the contractual and project management processes and their performance in practice.

Approach

Assessment was made by document analysis, internet web searches, interviews with Commission staff, principally EuropeAid and Delegation personnel, and interviews with project implementers during field visits.

Findings

Principles

Project Cycle Management. EuropeAid has considerable experience of the use of Project Cycle Management (PCM) tools to ensure efficient and successful management. The role of PCM is clearly outlined on the EuropeAid website¹⁷:

"For all Commission operations the [Project Management] cycle highlights three common principles:

- i- Decision making criteria and procedures are defined at each phase (including key information requirements and quality assessment criteria);
- ii- The phases in a cycle are progressive – each phase should be completed for the next to be tackled with success; and
- iii- New programming and project identification draws on the results of monitoring and evaluation as part of a structured process of feedback and institutional learning."

The chapters on strategy and programming have already discussed the need for objective criteria to be used in a transparent process (principle -i- in the PCM list above) and the need for improved data management to support feedback and institutional learning (principle -iii-). The final chapter will discuss evaluation in greater detail (principle -iii-).

Basing the selection of projects on the output of a completed Multicriteria Analysis (MCA) – or a similar objective and transparent process– and avoiding *ad hoc* proposals is clearly required by the second principle of PCM listed above.

Outcome and output focus, not activity focus.

Mine action projects have at times been too *activity focussed* instead of *output focussed*; measures of activity, such as an increase in the number of mine clearance teams or MRE staff have been used in proposals instead of measures of output. Measures of output could be the amount of land cleared or number of MRE sessions undertaken. Better yet, as is clear when using PCM techniques, is to measure *outcome*. For example, the stated aim of a project might be to clear a certain amount of land or conduct MRE for a certain number of people. These are measures of output and not outcomes. The overall goal of the first intervention might be to resettle refugees and an outcome criterion would typically be the successful resettlement.

¹⁷ See http://europa.eu.int/comm/europeaid/qsm/project_en.htm

Similarly, the end goal of MRE is to change high-risk behaviour and not simply to make contact with large numbers of people, so behaviour change is the outcome. The evaluation team recommend that this is given greater emphasis during proposal selection and contracting. PCM methodology has been required of the implementing agencies for the management of the mine action projects (for example through the Logical Framework in which both outcome and output are specified in terms of concrete results and activities). However the team consider that its systematic application at a strategic level could yield further benefits, in particular at the start and finish of the cycle – i.e. identification of needs by stakeholders and project evaluation. The survey process and IMAS evaluation standards (see chapter 4) can contribute to this.¹⁸

Broadening the participation base

Need for increased response In the period 2002-2004 there were only two calls for proposals using the APL budget line and the rest of the funds were dispersed as direct grants without a call.

Furthermore, EuropeAid staff commented on the difficulty in getting an adequate response to some calls for proposals, and how there tends to be only a limited sub-set of organizations prepared to submit proposals.

Mine action has relatively few actors globally so it is essential to be as inclusive as possible in getting responses in order to reduce the number of contracts issued to a single proposer without competition. The evaluation team consider that reduced competition has at times led to increased pricing, especially for clearance work which is a high cost item¹⁹. There is no suggestion of malpractice here, just a lack of incentive to be efficient and innovative when there is no competition. The team is therefore firmly of the view that increased competition resulting from more proposals could bring about significant reductions in cost for the EC without any loss of quality²⁰.

There are, however, also some “natural monopolies” in mine action which should be respected and not subjected to competition. National Mine Action Authorities are a clear example – support for NMAAs should include criteria that encourage efficiency, but setting up a second NMAA “in competition” would not be the way to do this.

Tenders and commercial companies Both the New Financial Regulation (NFR) and the standard contracts used by EuropeAid favour contracting with NGOs, and other non-profit organizations, over tendering by commercial operators. However, the APLR states in article 4: “1. Partners eligible for financial support under this regulation may include [...] private operators with appropriate specialised expertise and experience.” (Article 5.2 states that “Community financing under this regulation shall take the form of grants”. This is taken as the general use of the word “grants” to distinguish it from such mechanisms as loans or guarantees, and not the NFR specific use of grants to mean a payment to a non-profit entity. A change to the APLR would be helpful in clarifying this point).

Some use has been made of commercial companies as subcontractors – there is apparently no objection to a non-profit organisation such as the UNDP presenting a project proposal where a large part of the work is sub-contracted to commercial partners. This flexibility is very much

¹⁸ PCM and Log Frames are actually separate techniques, EuropeAid has been a pioneer of their merged use, see http://europa.eu.int/comm/europeaid/qsm/documents/pcm_manual_2004_en.pdf

¹⁹ The issue of competition was discussed in depth in the evaluation of the mine action sector in Cambodia coordinated by UNDP in November-December 2004, whose findings strongly support this view. The evaluation team regard these findings as generally applicable in principle throughout mine action

²⁰ The GICHD study on Manual Demining (due for publication later in 2005) also strongly supports this view that price sensitivity is the key to getting value for clearance operations.

welcomed by the evaluation team.

It is strongly recommended that ways are sought to immediately increase participation by both NGOs (see “Documentation” below), and also private operators, where their specialist skills are required, and in particular where there are few or no NGOs operating in country, – the NFR includes the use of tendering with private companies. The tendering process can involve both more time and more effort than grants, but should be used where real added value can be obtained from working with commercial organisations as well as non-profit ones, even if grants are considered the norm.

The NFR use of *calls for proposals* for non-profit entities and *tenders* for all types of organisations, including commercial companies, obscures a possibly useful difference between these instruments. A call for proposals generally sets objectives and leaves to the proposer the description of how the objectives are to be achieved and at what cost. A tender typically describes the work which is to be done and requests a price from bidders. Tenders may offer greater control of the process and this may be important for two reasons:

- They may permit greater insistence that work is prioritised in accordance with the findings of an LIS where one has been done. There is a recognised problem that some international organisations develop significant expertise in one approach to mine action and are then reluctant to tackle objectives in any other way, even when LIS recommendations call for it (see also Annex J).
- They can be used to assist in the specification of outcome defined contracts instead of activity defined contracts (see above)

In the period of this assessment there was only one such open tender. Greater use of the tendering process with bids requested from all qualified actors should be seriously considered as it can be used to resolve these three issues: to ensure compliance with LIS priorities, to promote contracts based on defined outcomes and to include the greatest number of potential proposers as eligible.

The geographic restrictions which limit participation to NGOs from either the affected country or EU member states can have unexpected and negative consequences in mine action. The security situation in mine/UXO affected countries can be fragile and organisations in the field may choose to locate their offices and support infrastructure in adjacent countries, for example some agencies operating in southern Sudan are based in Kenya and thus ineligible for grant support from the Commission. Attention should be given to examining this restriction and potential derogation mechanisms.

Documentation The evaluation team found that project proposers and contract tenderers generally do not fully understand the rationale behind Commission’s project documentation and this contributes to the lack of interest by some of them; filling in the forms without knowing why certain data are required can be difficult and frustrating. Some effort is already made by delegations to inform proposers and a number of guides and explanatory documents are available on Commission websites. Despite this, *Brussels staff reported that up to 80% of proposals are rejected on technicalities* such as failure to sign the correct form. This is a “lose-lose” situation which should be addressed immediately. The Commission is apparently not getting enough good quality bids for mine action projects and yet has to reject potentially useful proposals, meanwhile the implementers become resentful that the substantial effort needed to write a proposal is wasted for seemingly trivial reasons²¹.

²¹ If a good proposal fails on a technicality a poorer but adequate proposal may, of course, be awarded the contract. This unduly favours organizations with strong proposal presentation skills over those with project implementation skills who are not so adept at the paperwork.

Clearly, this is not just a mine action problem, but the lack of good proposals in some countries makes it acutely felt in mine action. A step by step guide (e.g. a *vade mecum*) and considerably more effort in working with proposers appear to be needed. A first step might be to seek to make the various guides already available better known and easier to find by collecting them in one place and publicising them, but re-writing in a more approachable format may also be necessary.

Proposal Assessment

Once valid proposals have been received they need be assessed on the basis of a dual knowledge set (a “binome”) which looks at the proposed actions from two distinct and complementary points of view. Evaluation or assessment should consider the following:

- Projects should be assessed in the light of strategy, programming, established practice of the relevant Commission services, political considerations, financial and contractual norms and development practice. EuropeAid and the Delegations have considerable expertise and experience in most of these issues – this is where the European Commission has considerable strength. The introduction of the NFR and Deconcentration clearly present some challenges, but also some opportunities.
- In parallel, an assessment needs to be made from an authoritative technical point of view by evaluators whose level of technical expertise is respected by the national and international organisations presenting the proposals or bids. This “expert peer evaluation” is established practice, for example, in the research Directorates General of the Commission.

In development sectors with large budgets and many projects, such as agricultural or infrastructure development, a delegation might be expected to have suitable technical expertise available from staff members. However, mine action is such a small sector that this expertise is, almost without exception, not available. The response appears to have been to trust that proposers are indeed fully knowledgeable and are offering maximum value and efficiency without further technical checking. This is a very high risk strategy which cannot be recommended.

A further point regarding assessment is the inclusion of further criteria from the APLR: given the APLR’s mandate, a strong case can also be made for the evaluation criteria for all project proposals to also include efficiency (e.g. rigorous cost-benefit analysis) and also other aspects such as support for technology. In both cases the assessors should, clearly, have the necessary qualifications and experience to complement the strategic and development orientation of EuropeAid staff.

In all of the countries where field visits were made the potential consequences of a lack of rigorous and authoritative technical appraisal could be noted, and the consequent risks to the Commission. At times it was only thanks to the diligence of EuropeAid and project staff that good results had been achieved. For example, in Azerbaijan the national mine action authority, a partner in the LIS, was able to identify savings of 0,3 M€ in an already awarded contract of 1,6 M€ and was subsequently able to renegotiate part of the contract. There is no suggestion of any financial wrongdoing in this, however the lack of technical appraisal by suitably qualified staff led to initial acceptance of a contract where significant gains in efficiency could have been made. The mechanisms for this technical evaluation already exist in the NFR²² and in the Framework Contracts to support delegations. Increased use of technical evaluation is

²² Article 178 Evaluation of applications.

“1. The authorising officer responsible shall appoint a committee to evaluate the proposals, [...] [...]Outside experts may assist the committee by decision of the authorising officer responsible.”

necessary to reduce the risk presented to the Commission by both poor quality and also deliberately misleading proposals.

One of the key challenges of Deconcentration is this fragmentation of key technical skills and the perception of the reduced authority of local – as compared with Brussels-based – staff when proposals from respected organizations need to be challenged on detailed technical grounds.

Transfer of sufficient resources by Brussels from other budget items to administrative costs to fully support delegations and EuropeAid staff in this technical assessment task, even if done at the expense of some project implementation, is very strongly recommended. The evaluation team are convinced that the potential benefits far outweigh the costs and that an increase in project quality and efficiency can fully justify the relatively small extra expenditure.

The evaluation team notes that the poor security situation in some mine-affected countries imposes constraints by requiring significant contingency provision that could appear to be excessive to anyone unfamiliar with the local circumstances (see the country report on Somalia introduced in Chapter 4 for an example). This could tend to penalise good proposals which allow sufficient money for likely emergencies and accidents, and thus appear to be overpriced. The Commission should insist that proposers adequately focus on risk analysis and management for projects in countries where the security situation and infrastructure are poor. The evaluation team noted that a number of projects had failed to finish in Somalia due to lack of contingency planning, and that in one case the resulting partly trained EOD staff may not be a useful asset. The general ending of a contingency provision in the budget may exacerbate this, however there is continued permission for international organisations to allow contingency funds and this should be encouraged as appropriate.

The contractual chain - Clarity and accountability of contractual obligations

A further area where improvements could be made is in more closely defining the precise contractual chain of responsibility: this was found to be unclear in many of the projects visited (this was raised as a specific issue during the visit to Azerbaijan, which is discussed in more detail in Chapter 4). Some project implementers (including UNDP in one country²³) complained of having “all the responsibility but no authority” when it came to subcontracted work. An example is one of the LIS contracts where there appeared to be little clarity as to who was ultimately responsible to whom in the extended chain of command.²⁴ The Commission did not appear to be in receipt of the Quality Assurance reports provided as part of one LIS, indeed it appears that the LIS chain of command effectively did not include the donor. This is far from satisfactory. Clear contractual obligations must be consistently enforced to create a culture of best practice.

In general, implementers felt that the Commission was not always getting good value on contract implementation largely due to not *insisting* on getting good value and “flexing its muscles” to ensure that the contractual obligations were adequately fulfilled. One important aspect is that the Commission appears to undervalue the role of its implementing agents who are paid up to 7% of contract value²⁵ but not then fully used.

²³ The UNDP is a large organisation which varies from country to country. Other organisations raised points regarding the real value that UNDP adds to contracts in some countries. Use of the UNDP as an example does *NOT* mean that other international organisations might not be suitable. The EC must ensure when contracting an agent that obtains the best possible value.

²⁴ The contractual chain for the LIS in Azerbaijan involved seven layers:

European Commission, UNOPS, UNMAS, Survey Action Center, Survey Working Group, National Mine Action Agency, local NGO.

²⁵ If each organisation in a long contractual chain takes a percentage for administration then the total amount can be far in excess of the nominal 7% limit.

The contractual situation is at times made worse by unclear and ambiguous statements in the "Description of the Project" (Annex 2 of the contract)²⁶. The Commission clearly needs to further empower itself to act to raise standards and to take a more strategic approach to getting the contract right and thus saving time and effort later in project management.

Using international organisations (e.g. UNDP) which are already active in country, in the role of *agents* potentially offers a number of advantages, particularly when they are able to act for several funders and several projects. This can reduce *transaction costs* and create synergies, as well as provide local knowledge. This is of particular value in countries with no delegation. However the EC must ensure, when contracting and using an agent, that it obtains the best value possible. Articles 8.2, 8.3 and 10.2 of the APLR encourage this integrated approach. Figure 3-1 shows one possible structure.

The slow speed of receipt of payments is a separate issue which was raised, however the evaluation team note that the NFR mandates payment in 45 calendar days.

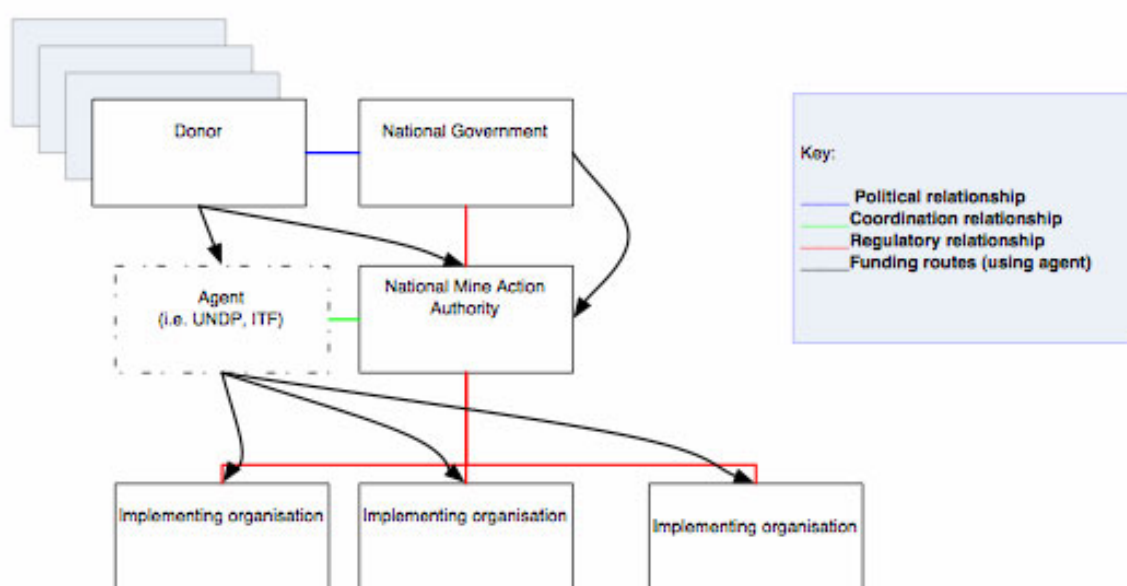


Figure 3-1: The role of an "Agent" organisation

Local sustainability and continuity

Projects which will lead to locally sustainable activities must be of a size which is commensurate with local resources; similarly, cost-shared projects must remain at a feasible size for all funding partners. There can be a temptation to add more parts to a proposal as there is always more useful work that can be done. The team noted in two of the countries visited that the net result was projects which had ended up being beyond what realistic estimates of local resources could sustain and cutbacks were necessary. Care is needed to achieve the balance between ambition and realism, and greater rigour and realism is probably needed in assessing potential

²⁶ A typical example is the following: An annex 2 stated that an organisation has the responsibility that it "will assist with provision of advisors". Is this a responsibility to assist the project by providing advisors, or will someone else provide the advisors but this organisation will assist with their recruitment, or perhaps assume part or all of the cost of the advisors. At least three different interpretations are open to this phrase, and the context does not suggest which is correct.

local capacities. Clearly, where local skills and funding are available they should be fully used. Deconcentration should assist in providing expert local knowledge in this area.

Some specialist skills like EOD are not always best approached as a one-off training exercise. Refresher courses and internationally recognized accreditation may require very much longer involvement with, for example, annual short courses and skills evaluations for several years. There appears to be little recognition of this in mine action projects. The potential consequences of an error can be very serious and a general move to longer (but not necessarily larger) projects should be seriously considered in designing contractual frameworks.

Finally, discussions with RELEX and EuropeAid staff make it clear that after Deconcentration many decisions will still be taken at Brussels. The New Financial Regulation, NFR, also defines who can be authorised to make certain decisions. Even given these limitations, Deconcentration still allows Delegations to undertake some more of the day-to-day project management tasks, as well as to have a greater role in the initiation and contracting of some projects, and evaluation and assessment. The evaluation team consider that this increased role offers an opportunity for the staff in Brussels to focus more than at present on the strategic and programming issues which this report has highlighted as some of the areas of concern. Given the very small Commission team in charge of mine action in Brussels, and their substantial workload, every opportunity offered by Deconcentration and the NFR to involve the delegations more fully at the project level would appear to be potentially useful for reallocating tasks.

Recommendations

Project Cycle Management, a technique already widely used by EuropeAid, should be applied to all mine action, as far as the diversity of budget lines permits. EuropeAid staff should take the lead in this and ensure the full cycle of PCM as well as Log Frame methods are used.

Broadening the proposal base and reducing the percentage of bids rejected on technicalities are both necessary as a matter of urgency. This should promote increased competition which can be expected to give better value, especially in clearance activities, which are very costly. Further use of commercial operators (in accordance with the APLR) should be included. However, support to “natural monopolies” such as NMAAs should be continued. Improving the understanding by proposers of the Commission documentation is a first step to very significantly reducing the number of rejected proposals. A *vade mecum* or similar guide (on paper or website) should be considered.

Technical project assessment should be considerably strengthened to reduce the risk taken by the Commission and to improve quality and strategic value. A dual knowledge base (binome) approach to project assessment should become the standard, using mechanisms which are already available. This is especially important in view of the fragmentation effect of Deconcentration. Funding for this should be made available as a priority, even at the expense of some project implementation.

Project proposers and assessors should be encouraged to use criteria which focus on the true outcomes or outputs of a project and not on its activity. The use of tendering (as opposed to proposals) by non-profit entities may be useful in this regard. Efficiency should become a standard criterion in proposals in order to comply with the Regulation, a suitable approach would be a cost-benefit analysis.

Greater contractual rigour is needed to make sure that responsibility and authority are commensurate, are clearly stated in the project documents, and are enforced in practice. Put bluntly, the Commission must learn to insist on better value for money and make better use of the services of *agents* where these are used as intermediaries.

Projects with long-term local participation must be of a size and type that is feasible for local governments and organizations to continue. The need for longer term refresher training and repeat accreditation should be considered in allocating funding.

Project management and the contracting process should, as far as possible, be devolved to the Delegations in line with the principle of Deconcentration wherever the requirements of the NFR allow it.

Chapter 4: EVALUATION OF IMPLEMENTATION

Objective

The objective of this element of the report is to assess how well the current structures have allowed the evaluation of EC funded projects, in line with Article 2.1(a), Article 11 and Article 13 of the Regulation.

Approaches

In tackling this question, the evaluation team considered how the structures have worked, how evaluation of mine action has developed in the years since the publication of the Regulation, recommendations for possible improvements and, where resources allowed, assessment of a sample of projects in different geographical areas funded by different EC budget lines.

The Team have taken a number of approaches in assessing this issue. These include:

- Literature review of International Mine Action Standards (IMAS) which is included in full at Annex D with its findings summarised below
- Literature review of the EC Joint Research Centre (JRC) Study report “*Producing Better Evaluation of EC Funded Mine Action Projects,*” 2002,²⁷ the findings are summarised below
- Development of a proposed generic Terms of Reference (TOR) for future EC project evaluations which is included in Annex D. This is designed to facilitate the conduct of future project evaluations on behalf of the EC in light of current shortfalls in established mine action evaluation methodology as described here
- Circulation of a questionnaire to all 21 EC Delegations known to have an EC-funded mine action project in their coverage area (as identified by a document search in EC offices by the evaluation team in December 2004). This is considered a representative sample. The questionnaire solicited opinions on the advantages and disadvantages of EC mechanisms; the results are compiled at Annex E, and are summarised below. The responses were kept confidential as agreed in the initial mission briefing as set out in the Inception Report.
- Circulation of a questionnaire for project implementing organisations. This questionnaire repeated the process set out above but was optimised for responses from implementing organisations or relevant international organisations such as the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) or the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). The results are compiled at Annex F with the findings summarised below.
- Field missions were also carried out in order to test the proposed Evaluation TOR and to gain first-hand feedback from actual projects in accordance with Article 13 of the Regulation. These missions were carried out to: (i) Somalia, (ii) Azerbaijan, and (iii) Bosnia & Herzegovina and reports are included at Annexes G, H, & I respectively.

Findings

General

²⁷ Available from <http://eu-mine-actions.jrc.cec.eu.int/performance/final/studyfinal.pdf>

Evaluation is the main way in which feedback is obtained on the way an activity has been conducted and is therefore a key part of any strategy. It is explicitly required for PCM. However, in the past, mine action has not been particularly good at including evaluation as a core activity in its processes. This is particularly the case for mine clearance which has often been seen as being linear, ending when mines are removed and land handed over (much the same as when a construction project comes to an end), rather than as part of an iterative process within the standard 'project cycle' commonly used in development work. That there are always more mines to be cleared suggests that clearance should be considered as part of a development process – answering questions like “where should we clear next year?” – and is therefore suitable for consideration using the full project cycle, including evaluation.

In many respects the EC, particularly with respect to Article 14 of the Regulation, was an early adopter of the need for strategic evaluation of mine action with the commissioning of the JRC Study in 2001. This three-year global assessment report is a further part of the evaluation process. However, events have moved on and there has been an increasing interest in evaluation by donors. International standards have also been developed and IMAS now include monitoring and evaluation of projects and programs, with clear requirements for donors.

International Mine Action Standards (IMAS)

The evaluation team have reviewed IMAS at length, especially those IMAS that are specifically concerned with project evaluation. The team consider that, in general, IMAS have developed sufficiently over the period covered by this Report to now form the basis for evaluation of mine action programs and projects. A detailed assessment of the relevant IMAS is included at Annex D to this Report.

“Study Report Producing Better Evaluation of EC Funded Mine Action Projects,” JRC 2002²⁸

Since its publication in 2002, some of the concepts of the JRC report have subsequently been set out in more detail in other fora, such as the newer IMAS on contracts being prepared by GICHD (e.g. IMAS 07.20). There is also, as mentioned above, a new IMAS on project evaluation. The JRC Study Report should therefore be regarded as having been overtaken by events and the evaluation team recommend that it should not be further used or developed.

The JRC report contains many accurate observations but does not fully address the essential task of providing *guidelines* and a *methodology* for project evaluation. Most of the main text and the first two annexes are focussed on how to design a mine action project and a contract, instead of how to evaluate a project. The report explains at considerable length the problem with the scope of the original terms of reference though little seems to have been done to limit the scope to fit the resources and meet the aim of the title (i.e. “*producing better evaluation*”). The report’s Annexes C and D are intended to provide guidance on quantitative data for the measurement of output and of performance indicators, though in practice much of the content of these Annexes is rather superficial. The Report also makes assumptions about the role of the Joint Research Centre which do not appear to be borne out by other documentation²⁹.

Questionnaires

The Team is grateful to all of the Delegations and implementing organisations that took the time to complete and return the questionnaires. The key findings of the questionnaires are set out below:

²⁸ Available from <http://eu-mine-actions.jrc.cec.eu.int/performance/final/studyfinal.pdf>

²⁹ In particular, the Study Report includes diagrams that seem to show JRC with an operational role in making decisions about mine action projects and proposes the “JRC as the nominated focal point, not only for EU mine action data, but also regionally and internationally.”

- Delegation questionnaires. Eight Delegations returned completed questionnaires (which were collected with a guarantee of anonymity). Full details are included at Annex E. The key findings are:
 - Not all Delegations appear to be aware that RELEX has sent them copies of the EC Regulation or Multi-Annual Strategy. Those that have these documents are of mixed opinions about their usefulness – ranging from “very useful” to “no apparent use”.
 - A number of project successes were reported, which suggests that, in general, EC contributions are being used well and that the various problems described in this Report can be overcome.
 - There are a number of problems with projects, mainly concerning risk issues that were not taken into account of during the project design. The issue of risk management is described elsewhere in this Report but, in short, it appears that more careful risk analysis could be of significant help at the project design stage.
 - One delegation reports that the situation is exacerbated by a lack of communication, and confusion, about the relative roles of Brussels and Delegations. This is supported by the findings of the Team during the visits reported below.
- Implementer questionnaires. Ten implementing agencies returned completed questionnaires. The replies (which were collected under a guarantee of anonymity) are from a mix of organisations (including mine action authorities, international organisations and mine action NGOs). Whilst there may be some subjectivity in the responses there is nevertheless also interesting consistency to some of the answers. Full details are included at Annex F. The key findings are:
 - All respondents complain about the delays involved in the project process; one makes the point that delays in the process are exacerbated by the retention of large parts of the payment until the end of the project. It is hoped that Deconcentration will go some way to removing some of these problems.
 - There is some divergence in the attitude to the processes involved; it seems that the complexity of the Commission’s paperwork favours the established implementers who are familiar with the forms – the situation is exacerbated for those organisations who do not have access to good or native English speakers.
 - There is some level of complaint about the assessment and selection processes. The evaluation team consider that this could be largely solved by more objective and transparent resource allocation and selection processes described in other parts of this report.
 - Finally, there is a sense from *all* of the responses that the EC processes are somehow ‘out of touch’ with the real situation. Again, allowing for any subjectivity, Deconcentration should also go some way to removing any validity to such claims in the future.

Field Missions

The visits provided the Team with an opportunity to validate the findings from the literature review and the questionnaires, and proved to be very useful in this regard. In all cases, the visits would not have been possible without the aid of the EC Delegations/Representative Offices involved and the cooperation of the local mine action community and UNDP mine action teams. The key findings were:

- Delegations did not appear to fully understand how resources were allocated between different countries and projects by Brussels. However, it was unanimously felt that Deconcentration is an important tool in allowing improvement of project selection and monitoring. There is further work to be done in making the full use of the Deconcentration process, which has the potential allow the relevant officials in Brussels to concentrate on the continued development of strategic and higher-level programming issues, as set out in the rest of this report, without being overloaded with detail project work. This is of course subject to any constraints imposed by the NFR.
- Delegations have more responsibility as a result of Deconcentration – however UNDP and other relevant organisations, such as the International Trust Fund have the ability to act as Agents on behalf of donors; a synergistic relationship with other donors and a coordination Agent should allow the most cost-effective management of donor–implementer relationships.
- A significant proportion of EC funds for mine action have been spent on the conduct of Landmine Impact Surveys. Whilst these surveys are vital information gathering tools there is scope for improving the management of the survey process. A more detailed review of surveys is set out at Annex J.
- It is not cost effective for Delegations to engage their own permanent mine action specialists; however there is a key role for such specialists in project appraisal and project evaluation. Delegations are able to make use of the Framework Contract process to obtain access to specialist advice and should be encouraged to do so in order to ensure that, in particular, “the job is being done right”.

Recommendations

The recommendations of the Team with respect to implementation and evaluation are set out below.

Although Delegations are consulted on the identification of needs and priority actions, they should – in the context of Deconcentration - be given as much responsibility to design, contract, and monitor projects as possible, supported by appropriate technical assistance where necessary. Brussels should concentrate on strategic issues and not become involved in project management unless strictly necessary.

All projects funded by the EC should be evaluated at least once in the three-year cycle referred to by Article 14 of the Regulation.

Wherever possible and practicable, projects should be monitored by independent quality assurance teams in accordance with IMAS.³⁰ All evaluations should take account of the latest relevant IMAS standards for evaluation: there is no need to continue work on the approach contained within the JRC Study Report on evaluation as it has largely been superseded by IMAS.

Evaluations should look at two components: the technical conduct of the project (i.e. “is the organisation doing the job right?”) and the selection, outcomes and impact of the project (i.e. “is the organisation doing the right job?”)

³⁰ The evaluation team wishes to note that it considers one part of the current IMAS to be flawed, IMAS 09.20, “Post-clearance inspections and sampling”. In its current version IMAS 09.20 places too heavy a burden in terms of transaction costs and the Team have serious doubts about the statistical basis for the processes entailed within this IMAS. However, the team note that this IMAS is already under review by GICHD

The evaluation need not be carried out solely by the EC; if the project is also funded by other donors then the EC or the relevant Delegation can make use of synergy to either co-fund the evaluation or else make use of a credible and relevant evaluation carried out using appropriate methodology within the same time frame

Whilst the evaluation may be organised and coordinated by a suitable agency recruited by the EC, the actual evaluators should be as independent as possible from any implementing organisation (or any coordination agency) at the time of the evaluation

The amount of administrative credits for the thematic budget line should be significantly increased so that delegations are able to use them (and in particular the Commission Framework Contract) to fully support project assessment and evaluation.

The difference between project evaluation (as covered by Articles 2.1(a), 11 and 13 of the Regulation) and strategic evaluation of the EC mine action mechanisms (as covered by Article 14 of the Regulation) could perhaps be made more clear in the Regulation.

The enclosed proposed Terms of Reference for Evaluation Missions (Annex D, Appendix 1) are recommended to the EC as a basis for future project evaluations.

SUMMARY OF ALL RECOMMENDATIONS

This section collects together the recommendations made at the end of each chapter – it does not include any further recommendations.

Chapter 1

There are four major recommendations for future MAS documents.

The Commission is recommended to develop the following tools as a matter of some urgency:

- A strategic logframe for EC mine action. An example is included at Annex A.
- A check list of eligibility for implementing organisations and potential projects
- A rigorous Multi-Criteria Analysis (MCA) mechanism to score proposals in line with the criteria set out in the Regulation.

A process to make requests for strategic plans from EC delegations, with an emphasis on multi-year funding, coordinated cost-sharing with other donors in a sector-wide approach.

Chapter 2

Multi Criteria Analysis should be introduced as soon as possible to ensure a transparent and objective process in programming and reduce workload. Other tools, such as the RIM diagram, may also be helpful and are strongly recommended. The evaluation team recommends that sufficient resources should be made available to RELEX and/or EuropeAid for speedy implementation of such programming mechanisms in order to realize significant immediate and longer term benefits.

Greater priority should be given to the coordination of information on the wide range of mine action activities within the EC. This may require reallocation of some financial and human resources away from project implementation. Improved data management, to allow better global reporting and hence complementarity, should be included in this coordination. The deconcentration process should, as far as possible, be used to reduce Brussels project management activities in order to release staff time for this.

The programme should continue to reflect Landmine Impact Survey (LIS) priorities and support further LIS where appropriate. Programming should strenuously avoid making funds available for purposes deemed to be low priority by a LIS.

Land clearance and, in particular, some types of medical victim assistance are very costly and present large demands on limited resources. Better value will probably be obtained by supporting “high added value” activities from the relatively small horizontal budget line, such as coordinating different donors and budgets to effectively jointly fund high-cost interventions.

Support for new techniques and technologies should be reviewed and substantially improved. This will be primarily by changes to the programming and contracts by supporting fewer, larger, and especially longer, projects (not necessarily from the horizontal budget line). The EC must be prepared to invest in the (sometimes substantial) increased initial cost of more efficient techniques in order to reap the mid- and long-term benefits and to give a global lead.

The “exit strategy” needs to be considered at programme level as well as project level so that sustainability criteria are fully met, best use is made of resources, and the visibility of the EC is improved. This is particularly important in medical support to mine victims.

The EC is recommended to continue and extend its use of, and support for, International Mine Action Standards.

Chapter 3

Project Cycle Management, a technique already widely used by EuropeAid, should be applied to all mine action, as far as the diversity of budget lines permits. EuropeAid staff should take the lead in this and ensure the full cycle of PCM as well as Log Frame methods are used.

Broadening the proposal base and reducing the percentage of bids rejected on technicalities are both necessary as a matter of urgency. This should promote increased competition which can be expected to give better value, especially in clearance activities, which are very costly. Further use of commercial operators (in accordance with the APLR) should be included. However, support to “natural monopolies” such as NMAAs should be continued. Improving the understanding by proposers of the Commission documentation is a first step to very significantly reducing the number of rejected proposals. A *vade mecum* or similar guide (on paper or website) should be considered.

Technical project assessment should be considerably strengthened to reduce the risk taken by the Commission and to improve quality and strategic value. A dual knowledge base (binome) approach to project assessment should become the standard, using mechanisms which are already available. This is especially important in view of the fragmentation effect of Deconcentration. Funding for this should be made available as a priority, even at the expense of some project implementation.

Project proposers and assessors should be encouraged to use criteria which focus on the true outcomes or outputs of a project and not on its activity. The use of tendering (as opposed to proposals) by non-profit entities may be useful in this regard. Efficiency should become a standard criterion in proposals in order to comply with the Regulation, a suitable approach would be a cost-benefit analysis.

Greater contractual rigour is needed to make sure that responsibility and authority are commensurate, are clearly stated in the project documents, and are enforced in practice. Put bluntly, the Commission must learn to insist on better value for money and make better use of the services of *agents* where these are used as intermediaries.

Projects with long-term local participation must be of a size and type that is feasible for local governments and organizations to continue. The need for longer term refresher training and repeat accreditation should be considered in allocating funding.

Project management and the contracting process should, as far as possible, be devolved to the Delegations in line with the principle of Deconcentration wherever the requirements of the NFR allow it.

Chapter 4

Although Delegations are consulted on the identification of needs and priority actions, they should – in the context of Deconcentration - be given as much responsibility to design, contract, and monitor projects as possible, supported by appropriate technical assistance where necessary. Brussels should concentrate on strategic issues and not become involved in project management unless strictly necessary.

All projects funded by the EC should be evaluated at least once in the three-year cycle referred to by Article 14 of the Regulation.

Wherever possible and practicable, projects should be monitored by independent quality assurance teams in accordance with IMAS.³¹ All evaluations should take account of the latest relevant IMAS standards for evaluation: there is no need to continue work on the approach contained within the JRC Study Report on evaluation as it has largely been superseded by IMAS.

Evaluations should look at two components: the technical conduct of the project (i.e. “is the organisation doing the job right?”) and the selection, outcomes and impact of the project (i.e. “is the organisation doing the right job?”)

The evaluation need not be carried out solely by the EC; if the project is also funded by other donors then the EC or the relevant Delegation can make use of synergy to either co-fund the evaluation or else make use of a credible and relevant evaluation carried out using appropriate methodology within the same time frame

Whilst the evaluation may be organised and coordinated by a suitable agency recruited by the EC, the actual evaluators should be as independent as possible from any implementing organisation (or any coordination agency) at the time of the evaluation

The amount of administrative credits for the thematic budget line should be significantly increased so that delegations are able to use them (and in particular the Commission Framework Contract) to fully support project assessment and evaluation.

The difference between project evaluation (as covered by Articles 2.1(a), 11 and 13 of the Regulation) and strategic evaluation of the EC mine action mechanisms (as covered by Article 14 of the Regulation) could perhaps be made more clear in the Regulation.

The enclosed proposed Terms of Reference for Evaluation Missions (Annex D, Appendix 1) are recommended to the EC as a basis for future project evaluations.

Annex C: Mine Action Technology Research

Funding for mine action technology should be increasingly focused on making the best possible use of existing technologies (both field proven and awaiting development past the initial prototype). There appears to have been recognition of this need by the EC for several years but not the commensurate actions. Test and Evaluation and Standards should be focused on supporting technologies which end-users want and need.

The move towards integrating mine action technology research with risk management and other humanitarian technologies should be continued.

Projects should be specifically required to show how their product could improve value for money from investment in mine clearance, before receiving funding.

Evaluators able to consider project finance and economic aspects should be identified and included in project selection teams, in addition to technical specialists.

³¹ The evaluation team wishes to note that it considers one part of the current IMAS to be flawed, IMAS 09.20, “Post-clearance inspections and sampling”. In its current version IMAS 09.20 places too heavy a burden in terms of transaction costs and the Team have serious doubts about the statistical basis for the processes entailed within this IMAS. However, the team note that this IMAS is already under review by GICHD

Annex J: Notes On Landmine Impact Survey Evaluation

Surveys have usually been planned on the assumption that there will be no 'false negatives' and this has resulted in the need to extend (and hence re-finance) surveys after the 'false negative' approach was found to be unjustified. Surveys using false negative sampling should be planned to show a 'maximum' and 'minimum' timescale.

The use of IMSMA remained problematic over the period covered by this report and needs major review: the software should be freely available so that all mine action implementing agencies can make use of it to make reports, and more thought should be given to comments from the field on its structure (though the evaluation team notes that GICHD are undertaking a review of IMSMA at the time of this evaluation).

As noted in the Scanteam report, the SWG/SAC processes are not fully transparent. There is a potential conflict of interest in that many members of the SWG are also survey implementers: surveys should be let by competitive tender using international competitive bidding processes and open to all qualified organisations – including commercial demining agencies or survey companies. It is the opinion of the Team that SAC should be encouraged to consider itself as the custodian of standards rather than as an implementer.

The Team have heard some evidence that at least one survey was over-priced. The European Commission is strongly recommended to negotiate the most advantageous terms possible for supporting future surveys.

Annex A: Table A-1: EC Mine Action Strategy 2002-2004 – possible strategic logframe					
	Intervention logic	Objectively verifiable indicators	Sources of verification	Assumptions	Remarks
Overall objectives	To contribute towards the goal of total elimination of APL ¹ (and other UXO ² world wide in the coming years in areas where civil communities are trying to recover from armed conflict ³)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Implementation contracts completed ▪ Fund disbursement ▪ Reduction in casualty numbers ▪ Reduction in suspected contaminated area ▪ Successful completion of development projects in previously (suspected) contaminated areas ▪ Numbers of landmines and UXO removed ▪ Numbers of recipients of MRE training ▪ Increase in capacity of health and disability services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Implementing agencies reports ▪ National mine action centre reports ▪ Reports by EC Delegations ▪ Casualty and landmine impact survey data ▪ UN mine action agency reports ▪ Reports available through Inter-donor cost sharing mechanisms ▪ EC delegation reports ▪ EC-funded External monitoring and evaluation ▪ Financial records for EC budget lines ▪ Tri-annual assessment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Funds available in accordance with APL Regulation Article 6 ▪ Security state remains stable in beneficiary countries ▪ Implementing agencies remain active throughout life of projects ▪ Contracts to be let and projects managed by Delegations through full use of Deconcentration process 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. APL = Anti-personnel landmine 2. UXO = unexploded ordnance 3. From Articles 1 and 3 of APL Regulation
Specific objective	To manage the provision of EC funds to support mine action programs in a transparent, effective and efficient manner				
Expected Results	Full disbursement of EC funds in a timely manner to successful, effective and efficient mine action projects that are compliant with international mine action standards and the priorities suggested by data from landmine impact survey.				
Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Establishment and operation of project prioritisation and selection process with emphasis on effectiveness and efficiency ▪ Development and maintenance of checklist for use by potential implementing partners ▪ Solicit strategic plans from EC delegations ▪ Coordination with other donors and other EC budget lines ▪ Development of Multiannual strategy ▪ Resource allocation between selected countries as part of annual work plan ▪ Manage periodic project monitoring and evaluation ▪ Generate annual reports ▪ Carry out tri-annual assessment 				

Annex B: THE USE OF MULTI-CRITERIA ANALYSIS FOR RESOURCE ALLOCATION³²

Definition

Multi-criteria Analysis (MCA) can be defined as:

“a way of looking at complex problems that are characterised by any mixture of monetary and non-monetary objectives, of breaking the problem into more manageable pieces to allow data and judgements to be brought to bear on the pieces, and then of reassembling the pieces to present a coherent overall picture to decision makers. The purpose is to serve as an aid to thinking and decision making, but not to take the decision³³.”

SMART³⁴ goal setting

Project Management theory includes the use of SMART criteria as a means by which projects can be designed. Application of SMART criteria in the case of resource allocation for mine action could be as follows:

S	= Specific
M	= Measurable
A	= Attainable
R	= Relevant
T	= Timely or time bound

Figure 1. SMART goal-setting criteria.

- *Specific*: Resources are allocated to a particular outcome or capacity.
- *Measurable*: Outputs and outcomes must be measurable by use of objectively verifiable indicators.
- *Attainable*: The disbursement plan must be commensurate with the resources available. This suggests that the minimum unit of funding should be sufficient to run one mine action team (of whatever type) for one year, including an allowance for capital expenditure.
- *Relevant*: Emphasis is to be placed on outcomes rather than output or activity
- *Timely*: The timescale for the project shall be optimised for efficient resource usage, and funds disbursed as soon as possible. This may mean a commitment to a particular team over the working life of the equipment, and may mean therefore a greater funding in Year One of the commitment in order to allow equipment to be purchased³⁵.

The use of SMART goal setting criteria also helps to maximise transparency, often a key requirement of donor organisations³⁶. As shown below, MCA can provide a SMART means of resource allocation.

Scope: strategic, operational, and tactical perspectives

³² Extracted from a paper by Robert Keeley, Imperial College London, 2005

³³ Source: “*Multi Criteria Analysis: A Manual*” published by the UK Department of Transport, Local Government and the Regions, February 2001. Following the reorganisation of government departments this manual can now be found at

http://www.odpm.gov.uk/stellent/groups/odpm_about/documents/page/odpm_about_608524.hcsp

³⁴ Explanations of the SMART criteria technique may be found at

http://web.mit.edu/hr/oed/learn/teams/art_newteam.html and at

<http://www.goal-setting-guide.com/smart-goals.html>

³⁵ The time span of programming decisions is covered in more depth in Chapter two of this Report.

³⁶ See for example Paragraph 19 of the Preamble of Regulation (EC) No 1724/2001 of the European Parliament and of the Council.

It is common practice to borrow some terminology from military theory in order to define the scope of different perspectives: from a 'strategic' view of the overall picture to more immediate, 'tactical' decision making. This provides a means to define the scope of the three major questions faced by the donor:

- Strategic: how to decide between countries?
- Operational: how to select the type of projects and the projects themselves?
- Tactical: how to select implementing organisations?

This Annex refers to the possible use of MCA in the strategic role, i.e. in allocating resources between 'focus' countries. The operational and tactical decisions are referred to in more detail in Chapters two and three of this report.

Multi-criteria analysis as a strategic decision support tool

MCA has the potential to assist donors in meeting their requirements for a decision support tool in resource allocation. It is a transparent and objective method, which also allows stakeholders to give greater weight to issues that they feel to be of critical importance. *Filters* can be used to focus only on the most important candidate countries.

Possible Filters

Given that there are more than 83 countries with a landmine contamination problem³⁷ it is unlikely that any one donor can make a significant difference by spreading resources amongst all of these countries (even if countries capable of funding their own clearance efforts are excluded). It may therefore be appropriate for a donor to use *filters* to identify a shortlist of the most suitable potential recipients of funding. In order to maximise transparency, a number of possible filters that would achieve this in an objective manner should be identified. Two key examples are set out below.

1. *States Party to the 1997 Ottawa Treaty*. Some donors have a policy to prioritise support to States Party to the Ottawa Convention³⁸. However, this is problematic as it may discriminate against populations of countries that suffer from a contamination problem even where their governments have not yet adopted the Convention. It may not therefore be possible to use accession to the Ottawa Convention as a filter – it may nevertheless be possible to use Ottawa accession – or progress towards it - as a means of 'weighting' the resource allocation process. Weighting is dealt with in more detail below.
2. *Countries that have completed a Landmine Impact Survey (LIS)*. A second possible filter is to exclude all countries that have not undertaken a credible national survey of their landmine problem (though of course such countries might be considered as candidates to receive funding to undertake a LIS). In the last few years, the survey process has become codified and subject to international norms and quality assurance methodologies and is now known as a "Landmine Impact Survey" (LIS). LIS assist donor officials in dealing with the problem of 'asymmetric information' (i.e. where the "seller" knows much more about the subject than

³⁷ Source: "Landmine Monitor" Report 2004. See <http://www.icbl.org/lm/2004/intro/hma#Heading646>

³⁸ See for example Article 3 of the EC Anti-personnel Landmine Regulation. (Regulation (EC) No 1724/2001 of the European Parliament and of the Council, concerning action against anti-personnel landmines in developing countries, and Regulation (EC) No 1725/2001 of the European Parliament and of the Council, concerning action against anti-personnel landmines in third countries are together known as "the Anti-personnel Landmine Regulation". Article numbering from 1724/2001 is used in this report.)

the “buyer”) and the LIS can thus be considered as a risk management tool for donors. Specifically, it is easier to be sure of the impact and the extent of the problem in a country that has had an LIS than one that has not. Therefore, a donor is more likely to make an equitable division of resources amongst countries that have undertaken a LIS than amongst countries that have not yet done so.

Possible Criteria

The identification and selection of criteria for consideration in an MCA is greatly simplified if the availability of a LIS is used as a filter as described above. A LIS is structured to provide information on the following issues:

- Numbers of Casualties
- Extent of Contamination
- Socio-economic impact of *blockages* (a *blockage* is where contamination prevents a community gaining access to otherwise productive land or other necessary resources.)

Information on all of these criteria can be extracted – to a certain extent – from the LIS data. This is therefore a very cost-effective way of obtaining strategic information as it does not require further surveys³⁹.

There is one additional criterion that can be added at this stage: the total population of the affected country. The reason for including population is to prevent inappropriate ‘dominance’ of one criterion by a large country; i.e. without the population criterion a moderate problem in a large country would dominate over a problem which was smaller in absolute terms but had a far more severe per capita impact in a much smaller country.

Structure of the MCA table

The possible structure of an MCA table used in resource allocation is explained in depth in the paper “Use of Multi-criteria Analysis in EOD resource allocation.”⁴⁰ An example is included at Appendix 1 to this Annex.

Weighting, filtering and adjusting

Stakeholders may feel that some criteria are more important than others⁴¹. For example, stakeholders might feel that the casualty issue is so important that the number of casualties should be weighted by a large factor. A second imperative might be to weight criteria to favour the least-developed countries – this could be done by identifying, for example, those countries that are recognised as being “heavily indebted developing countries” (HIDC), or by weighting in favour of “fragile states⁴²”. The use of HIDC or Fragile States criteria would depend on the aims of the donor, as use of HIDC would be compatible with a strategy of rewarding good governance whereas use of Fragile States would be compatible with a strategy of preventing

³⁹ As is discussed in Chapter four of this Report, the LIS are limited to some extent in their treatment of some factors. However this is probably a case where the increasing marginal costs of additional information become prohibitive; the results are probably ‘good enough’ for strategic decisions on resource allocation (and certainly better than anything that is currently being used, in terms of objectivity).

⁴⁰ Published in the Journal of Mine Action by James Madison University, 2003. See <http://maic.jmu.edu/journal/7.1/focus/keeley/keeley.htm>

⁴¹ For example, Paragraph 15 of the Preamble of the APL Regulation sets out the requirement for EC support for mine action to be compatible with other EC foreign policies.

⁴² See for example the DFID definition of Fragile States in <http://www.dfid.gov.uk/pubs/files/fragilestates-paper.pdf>

state failure – a different political aim. A final example, mentioned above, is that the country's accession to the Ottawa Convention could be rewarded by weighting in favour of States Party to the Convention with perhaps a lower weighting given to States working towards ratification of the Convention.

Adjusting for Resilience

Another important factor that can be taken into account is the *resilience* of the country. In disaster management terms *resilience* is the ability of the country to withstand the impact of a disaster. In the case of landmine and UXO contamination a country with a high population and a large economy will be more able to withstand the impact of even a high amount of contamination than a country with a smaller population and a less developed economy. It may therefore also be appropriate to adjust the raw results to reflect resilience, by adjusting for the relative populations and wealth of the countries concerned.

A possible MCA table is set out at Appendix 1 to this Annex. This table uses the same principle of identifying the distribution of the problem on a percentage basis, in order to prevent large country dominance, as described above. The table includes examples of filtering, weighting and adjusting as discussed above, and has deliberately been left blank as it is important, in order to ensure transparency and objectivity, to decide on weighting and filtering mechanisms *before* populating the table with data. It is recommended that a suitable focus group be established to do this (see below).

Objectivity and Transparency

In all cases, the selection of criteria and the application of filters, weights and adjustments should be decided in advance by the stakeholders, not least to ensure that the weighting factors reflect appropriate foreign policy (see reference to HIPC and Fragile States above)⁴³ Ideally, the criteria, filters and weights should be approved by an appropriate focus group (perhaps an Interservice coordination group in the case of the EC) in order to maximise transparency. This should be done *before* inserting the data from the candidate countries, in order to prevent any possible accusations of bias in designing the various weighting mechanisms.

Resource allocation on the basis of the MCA results

Even once the MCA table has been designed, there is still a need to establish a rule set for utilising the results in order to make the output workable. These are discussed in more detail in the paper at reference⁴⁴ but, in summary, the principle is to divide the available resources amongst the candidate countries in the ratio determined by the MCA process.

⁴³ This would also be appropriate in terms of Paragraph 15 of the Preamble of the APL Regulation.

⁴⁴ Paper by Robert Keeley, Imperial College London, 2005 "Multi-criteria Analysis as a possible resource allocation mechanism for small and large donors to mine action."

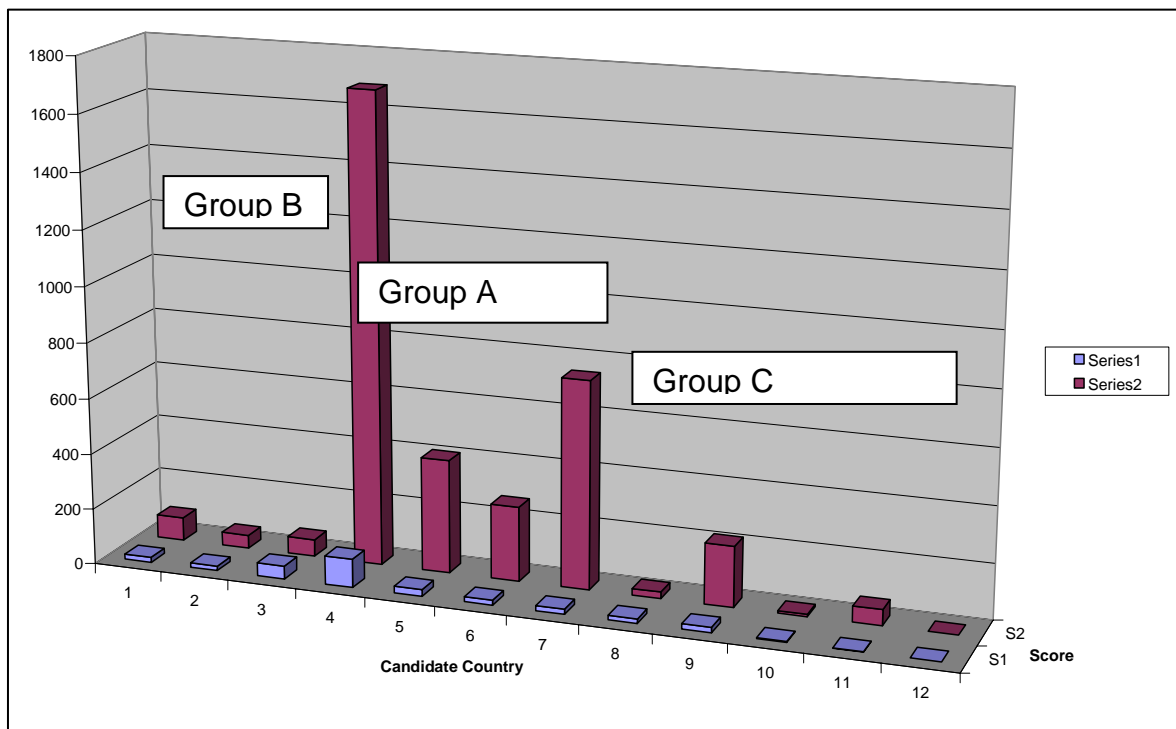


Figure 2. Graph showing MCA scores based on analysis of Landmine Impact Surveys. Series 1 shows the unadjusted scores; Series 2 shows the scores after adjustment for economic resilience (Keeley 2005). Note how data can be grouped into three groups depending on impact and resilience.

The Next Step - RIM Analysis

Analysis of potential candidate countries produces the results like those shown in the histogram at Figure 2, which shows the distribution of scores between the candidate countries. The countries in the middle, with the highest scores (Group A), have both high impact and low resilience. There is, however, an important difference between two other groups of countries – represented by the use of two ‘tails’ to the distribution in the histogram. Essentially, these are groups of countries with “high impact and high resilience” (Group B) or “low impact with low resilience” (Group C). By implication, this suggests there is in fact a fourth group: “low impact with high resilience” and indeed there is: many of the EC member countries could themselves be included in this category. The city of Berlin is estimated, for example, to have some 6000 unexploded aircraft bombs buried within it left over from the Second World War, but Germany has the resources to deal with this problem itself⁴⁵. Such countries are referred to here as “Group D” countries.

⁴⁵ From interview by Robert Keeley, Imperial College London, with Berlin Police EOD team leader, December 2003.

The distribution of countries into groups characterised by these 'meta criteria' can be represented by the diagram shown in Figure 3. This is a matrix of resilience and impact, hence "RIM analysis".

This argument is developed further in Chapter 2, which sets out that it is possible to use this diagram to identify appropriate types of program to be supported in each of these categories. Such a process would solve many of the problems with resource allocation methodology observed in the 2002-2004 MAS.

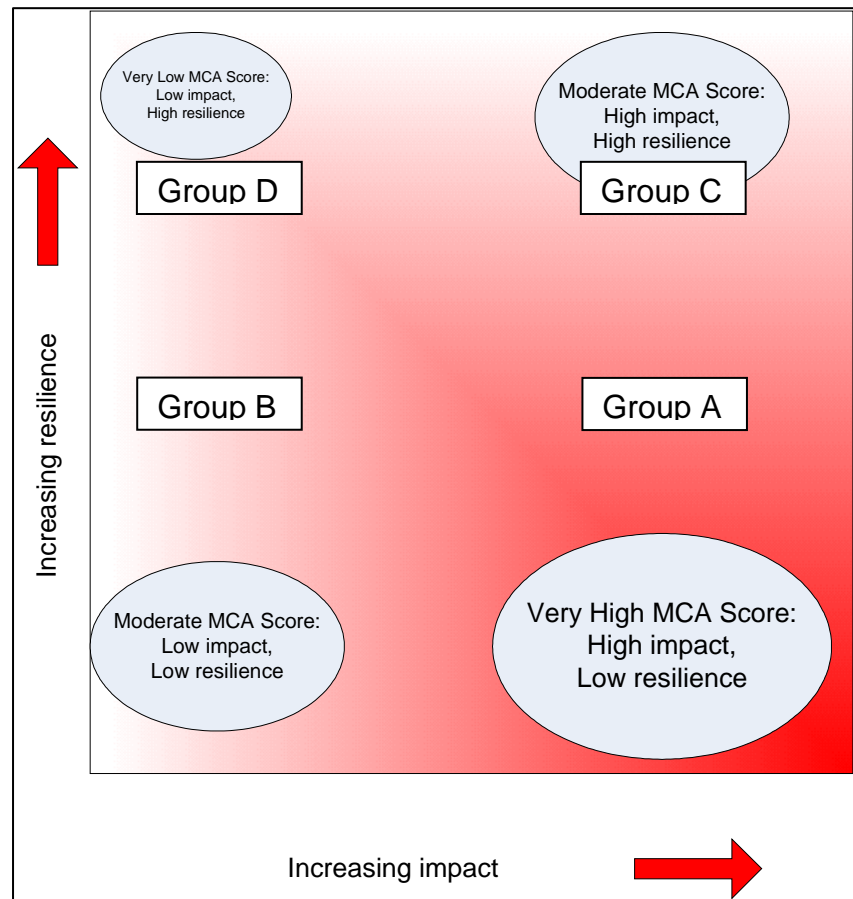


Figure 3. RIM Diagram showing relation to MCA results (Keeley and Gasser 2005). This diagram shows how the scores of different programs subjected to multi-criteria analysis (MCA) can be represented graphically. Programs tend to group depending on the impact of contamination and the resilience of the country (i.e. its ability to withstand the impact)

Appendix 1 to Annex B: MCA Resource Allocation Table							
Step One: Identify candidate countries							
Ser	Criteria	Weights	Candidate Country			Total	Remarks
			A	B	C		
(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)	(f)	(o)	(p)
Step Two: data collection (absolute numbers)							
1	Number of casualties		0	0	0	-	See Note 1
2	Contaminated area (km2)		0	0	0	-	
3	Blockages		0	0	0	-	
4	Population (absolute number)		-	-	-	-	
5	HIDC member		0	0	0	-	
6	GDP (PPP)		-	-	-	-	
Step Three: filter for survey							
7	Filter: Does LIS Exist?		0	0	0		See Note 2
8	Number of casualties		0	0	0	-	
9	Contaminated area (km2)		0	0	0	-	
10	Blockages		0	0	0	-	
11	Population (absolute number)		-	-	-	-	
12	HIDC member		0	0	0	-	
13	GDP (PPP)		0	0	0	-	
Step Four: Unweighted scores							
14	Casualty score		0	0	0	0	See Note 3
15	Contamination score		0	0	0	0	
16	Blockage score		0	0	0	0	
17	Population score		0	0	0	0	
18	Total score (unweighted)		0	0	0	0	
Step Five: Assign weights							
19	Casualties	0	0	0	0		See Note 4
20	Contamination	0	0	0	0		
21	Blockage	0	0	0	0		
22	Population	0	0	0	0		
23	HIDC/HIPC member	0	1	1	1		
24	GDP adjustment factor	-	0.00	0.00	0.00		
Step Six: Calculate weighted scores							
25	Casualty score		0	0	0		0
26	Contamination score		0	0	0		
27	Blockage score		0	0	0		
28	Population score		0	0	0		
29	Total score (weighted)		0	0	0		
Step Seven: Adjusted for Resilience							
30	Adjusted score (HIDC)		0	0	0		
31	Adjusted score (HIDC and GDP)		0	0	0		

Sources:

- 1 Survey Action Centre, 2005 www.sac-na.org
- 2 CIA Factbook <http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/index.html>
- 3 World Bank HIPC List Feb 2005 <http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/TOPICS/EXTDEBTDEPT/0..contentMDK:20260049-menuPK:528655-pagePK:64166689-piPK:64166646-theSitePK:469043.00.html>

Notes

- 1 Contamination is based on approximate estimate of suspected hazard area.
- 2 score 1= 'yes' 0 = 'not yet'. Filtered score is total unweighted score x LIS filter
- 3 score = - x where 'x' is percentage share of global population (i.e. total populations of all countries in analysis)
- 4 Shows the factor by which the current GDP per capita would have to be multiplied to be the same as the reference GDP (i.e. highest GDP in MCA population)

Annex C: MINE ACTION TECHNOLOGY RESEARCH FUNDED BY THE EC⁴⁶

Two fundamental questions should be asked in assessing the EC funded humanitarian demining technology research: has it delivered useful results? - and has it offered value for money? As with any research programme, positive outcomes cannot be guaranteed, and there is a need for both ambitious goals as well as realistic projects. Research which does not achieve the expected outcome can still offer value for money, and conversely, getting to an end result is not necessarily a measure of how cost effective was the route taken.

Summary of expenditure and projects

Up to 2003 the EC had spent about 65 M€ in support of research and development of technologies for mine action⁴⁷. This was principally through the Joint Research Centre at Ispra (JRC) and the *Information Society Technologies* (IST) programme which forms part of the *larger Framework Programmes for Research*. The IST programme was administered by Directorate General Information Society (DG INFSO), though some projects were initially administered by other Directorates General (DG). Other DGs, including DG Research and DG Development also supported some further aspects of Mine Action Research. Further information can be found in the reference in footnote 2.

A list of EC funded mine action technology projects can be found on the Eudem website www.eudem.info (the Eudem2 project was financed through Framework Programme 5), INFSO expenditure on this research was about 15 M€ in FP4 (1994-1998) and 17 M€ in FP5 (1998-2002). In FP6 (2002-2006) humanitarian demining research and development was integrated into the wider topic of "Improving Risk Management"; one further project which focuses on demining was selected for funding of about 2 M€.

The principal JRC expenditure was as follows:

- In the 1999-2002 work programme: "SAI-2 Civilian de-mining" was allocated 15.3 M€, and "ISIS-18 Information systems in civilian demining" was allocated 5.4 M€.
- In the 2003-2006 work programme, TETHUD (test and evaluation for humanitarian demining) is funded as one of four measures which collectively are allocated 27 M€.
- Other funding was also used for developing the JRC test facilities (about 2 M€).
- The JRC projects ARIS, MINETEST, SEARCH2, MINESIGN, SIGEX were all 100% funded from FP4, a total of 1.95 M€.
- Other smaller amounts of funding from the horizontal mine action budget line and other sources have also been received by the JRC, for example in the Mine Action Strategy 2002-2004 Test and Evaluation, and Standards were allocated 0.6 M€.

Within the European Commission there is agreement that the fundamental Research and Technological Development and Demonstration (RTD) is to be done in the work funded by the IST programme and the JRC will offer support to Test and Evaluation and Standards activities and, in accordance with the JRC's wider mandate, will offer technical support to other Commission services. This separation appears little understood outside the Commission⁴⁸ and

⁴⁶ One of the evaluation team (RG) declares the following interest: from 2001 to 2004 he was Project Officer for the mine action technology RTD projects of Directorate General Information Society. His contract as an employee of the EC ended in October 2004.

⁴⁷ See preface to brochure "Humanitarian Demining – research and technological development funded by the European Commission" EC publications Office 2003, EUR 20830, ISBN 92-894-5942-5. The brochure can be downloaded from http://serac.jrc.it/publications/pdf/demining_no_sig_en.pdf (In accordance with the interest declared in footnote 1, RG declares himself co-author of this brochure).

⁴⁸ For example the authoritative International Mine Action Standard IMAS 03.30 "Guide to the research of mine action technology" First Edition 01 January 2003 states

should be better publicized.

There is also, apparently, little understanding by demining practitioners of the role of and constraints to RTD within the Framework Programmes for Research. The Framework Programmes are designed to bring emerging technologies from basic research through to a laboratory prototype which is capable of demonstrating the principle. This research is undertaken by multi-national consortia, on the basis of a 50% contribution, and must be "pre-competitive research" – support cannot be given to turn a working prototype into a commercial production item.

The EC has recognised that a key problem lies not so much in developing new technologies to the stage of a laboratory prototype (which can be funded within the FP) but in moving from the functional prototype to a fully tested commercial product (which *cannot* be funded through the FP). In 2003, the then European Commissioner responsible for research, M Philippe Busquin, noted⁴⁹ "Even though research and technological development has had a measurable impact on the overall process of mine clearance, it must be recognised that the delivery of new tools and equipment to improve the search for individual mines has not met early expectations. Reasons for this are complex: First, it is necessary to understand the considerable complexity of the mine clearance problem as a process to which risk assessment and management tools need to be applied. Then, [there was] the initial lack of appreciation by some researchers of how to apply advanced technologies in developing regions. Finally, [there are] some significant non-technological problems in finding the resources needed to turn prototype into fully tested commercial products ready to use in the field."

Outcomes

The brochure *Humanitarian demining research and technological development funded by the European Commission*⁵⁰ contains information about the successes achieved by the various programmes; this information will not be duplicated here and interested readers are referred to this publication. In the light of the high initial expectations, it would be easy to suggest that much of the work funded has been a failure – this is too simplistic a view and in practice most research outcomes cannot be divided neatly into either "success" or "failure". There are however a few particularly disappointing outcomes: notably the lack of support possible in the IST programme for realistic and modest proposals which did not make ambitious claims (see below), and in particular the failure of the JRC to deliver some of its own goals such as a statement of operational requirements (SOR)⁵¹ and generic data fusion algorithms for multi-sensor mine detectors.

Analysis

As long ago as 1997 the EC had recognized the need to develop technologies which (i) were needed and wanted by field practitioners (ii) could be brought into use quickly (iii) would be affordable and cost efficient. The EC had also recognized the lack of a large enough market to make commercial investment attractive⁵².

"In the case of the European Union (EU), [...]Research into mine action technology is supported by the European Commission's Joint Research Centre (JRC), Ispra in Italy." There is no reference to the other significant parts of the RTD programme, or the national programmes within the EU which constitute a very significant part of the total research effort.

⁴⁹ Opening address to the 2003 EUDEM-SCOT conference

http://www.eudem.vub.ac.be/eudem2-scot/open_speech/busquin.pdf

⁵⁰ See also footnote 2 to this annex. The brochure can be downloaded from

http://serac.jrc.it/publications/pdf/demining_no_sig_en.pdf

⁵¹ The Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining later addressed this task.

⁵² See for example <http://www.cordis.lu/esprit/src/hphd97co.htm> and similar documents available on the Cordis website.

However, the range of *instruments* available to the EC to finance the necessary research and development were, and still are, very limited. The need to avoid, at least in theory, a programme of purely scientific research with no commercial application, led to location of the research in the more product oriented IST programme and not in a pure research directorate. This IST programme has proved to be largely unsuitable for the small-scale development needed in a field where there is only a very limited market – the Framework Programmes for Research are more suited to trans-European industries like car and aircraft manufacture, and telecommunications. The JRC is a scientific institution with a mandate to support Commission Policy and was accordingly allocated the appropriate scientific supporting role.

The overall result was a focus on high-cost techniques, principally aimed at buried mine detection, often using multisensor detectors with data fusion. The reliance on these very advanced, even speculative, technologies – and the support for this by unsubstantiated over-confident predictions of very short and entirely unrealistic time-scales and costs for implementation in the field – should have been challenged much earlier in the research cycle. In 1998 both research project consortia and also the JRC were confidently predicting highly advanced mine detectors "in the field by 2000⁵³" whereas in fact the first two-sensor detectors, even without data fusion, are still at the trials stage at the time of writing in 2005.

In fairness to the EC, the evaluation team wish to point out that other mine action technology programmes of a similar nature, both national programmes in Europe and the very much larger research programmes in the USA, have not, in general, had significantly more success for exactly the same reasons. Given that it is likely that many high priority areas will be cleared within 10 to 15 years (even if the 2010 Ottawa treaty deadline has to be extended), efforts and funding should now be directed at bringing into production the technologies which are already developed but have been "put on the shelf" for lack of funding to commercialise them.

It is clear that funding for technology research and development, while essential in the long term to increase mine clearance efficiency, cannot be considered as belonging in the same category as funding for any type of direct mine action, whether for mine risk education, clearance or any other part of the wide range of activities. The clear separation by the EC of the two funding streams is welcomed by the evaluation team. However, as has been noted in chapter three, the current contracting process for mine clearance has a very significant negative impact on the take up of new and existing technologies and should be changed as soon as possible in order to support technology take-up, instead of, as at present, effectively prohibiting it.

The current reduction of the INFISO humanitarian demining technology research programme and its incorporation with the wider "Improving Risk Management" strategic objective, in order to generate important synergies with other types of risk and the humanitarian response to crises, also appears to be well founded. Moving the focus away from buried mine detection (despite the ongoing popularity of this theme in the media and in some political circles) and into areas where technology has already made a far more decisive impact on the overall mine clearance process (Area reduction⁵⁴ and Information Management⁵⁵) is to be strongly welcomed (see also footnote 1).

While the importance of test and evaluation and development of standards is recognized, these activities also need to be carefully focused and not approached with a "broad brush". There is

⁵³ Dr A Sieber of JRC quoted in "Innovation & Technology Transfer" Newsletter of the Innovation Programme, November 1998. www.cordis.lu/itt/itt-en/98-6/prog1.htm

⁵⁴ However, at the time of writing this Report, the evaluation team notes that there is no single widely accepted definition of 'area reduction' in the mine action community.

⁵⁵ Nevertheless, the mixed reception of some information technology implementations (as reported elsewhere in this Report) suggests that this must be approached in a focussed and market-sensitive manner.

little point in spending considerable amounts of money on testing equipment for which there is no demand and which field operators do not consider useful.

Value for money

It is difficult to agree, from the perspective of the end user, that either the INFISO programme or the JRC support to Mine Action Technology has offered good value for money. Both have made real contributions (see brochure, footnote 2) but the overall cost of perhaps 65 M€ by 2004, has not been reflected by commensurate technical advances, nor by equipment in the field, nor by crucial scientific contributions from the JRC.

In the case of the JRC, the lack of published project results, scientific papers and financial reporting makes it difficult to even assess what a significant proportion of the money was spent on, and makes it impossible to draw the conclusion that value for money was achieved at all. Significantly better reporting should accompany the spending of public money than is available for a large part of the over 20 M€, which the JRC allocated to humanitarian demining in the 1999-2002 JRC workprogramme (see funding allocation list, above).

DG INFISO has published full details of its projects, particularly through the www.cordis.lu and www.eudem.info websites (including details of the IST actions undertaken for INFISO by the JRC).

However, "value for money" as such is not even a criterion in the selection and evaluation of technology projects to be funded by the Framework Programme. One of several questions asked is "are the resources appropriate to the task" but more fundamental questions about the affordability of the outcome by the intended end users, or value for money in a broader context are not asked and the independent evaluators do not in general raise the issue. This may be because there has been insufficient effort to recruit evaluators with a project finance or economics background; where this has been done then there is evidence that such questions are asked. Such input is of less value when evaluators assess projects that have already been funded and started to implement their programme of work.

Recommendations

Funding for mine action technology should be increasingly focused on making the best possible use of existing technologies (both field proven and awaiting development past the initial prototype). There appears to have been recognition of this need by the EC for several years but not the commensurate actions. Test and Evaluation and Standards should be focused on supporting technologies which end-users want and need.

The move towards integrating mine action technology research with risk management and other humanitarian technologies should be continued.

Projects should be specifically required to show how their product could improve value for money from investment in mine clearance, before receiving funding.

Evaluators able to consider project finance and economic aspects should be identified and included in project selection teams, in addition to technical specialists.

Annex D: NOTES ON DOCUMENTATION FOR EVALUATION

General

Evaluation can be defined as:

“... a process that tries to determine as systematically and objectively as possible the worth or significance of an intervention or policy. The appraisal of worth or significance is guided by reference to defined (and agreed) criteria such as relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability of activities in light of the specified objectives. An evaluation should provide information that is credible and useful, enabling the incorporation of lessons learned into the decision-making process of project partners and donors”⁵⁶.

The EC Antipersonnel Landmine Regulation sets out, at Article 14 of regulation 1724/2001, the requirement for a triennial evaluation of the global contribution of the EC to mine action. The Regulation also sets out the requirement for individual projects to be subjected to evaluation.

Detailed notes on existing IMAS and GICHD guidelines are included at Appendix 1 to this Annex; proposed Generic Terms of Reference (TOR) for the evaluation of mine action projects are included at Appendix 2. The recommendations for the conduct of future evaluations are included in the main text of the Report.

Overview of IMAS and GICHD Evaluation Guidelines

GICHD have produced, or are in the process of producing, a series of documents that are of particular relevance to evaluation. The International Mine Action Standards (IMAS) provide guidelines for almost the entire sphere of mine action, and more IMAS are currently in production. These IMAS have no legal status directly⁵⁷, though they become legal documents when specifically referred to in contracts or when adopted as national standards. In an evaluation context, IMAS provide a framework against which processes in particular can be assessed, especially where mine action contracts require compliance with IMAS. Indeed, some IMAS deal specifically with issues of monitoring and evaluation. For example, IMAS 14.20 deals with “Evaluation of Mine Risk Assessment”, and IMAS 07.40 - 07.42 deal with the “Monitoring of Mine Action Organisations.” Some additional IMAS that are also relevant are currently in production, such as IMAS 14.10, which deals with the “Evaluation of Mine Action Programs.” Finally, as pointed out in the JRC Study Report “*Producing Better Evaluation of EC Funded Mine Action Projects*,” 2002,⁵⁸ it is impossible to completely separate evaluation from the project appraisal and contract process, and relevant IMAS include IMAS 07.30-31 “Accreditation of Mine Action Programs” and IMAS 07.20 “Guide to Contracts” (currently in Draft stage).

Additionally, GICHD are in the process of producing a handbook on the evaluation of mine action projects, with the title “*Evaluating Mine Action as Development: A Handbook of Methodology*”. GICHD have been kind enough to share a copy of the draft of this handbook with the EC evaluation team. Though the handbook does not deal with the technical aspects of mine action (which are already largely covered in IMAS) it is, in effect, a very useful primer on the required aspects of social science aimed at people who are not social-scientists. This handbook

⁵⁶ From The UNICEF Programme Policy and Procedures Manual (2001), as quoted in IMAS 07.11. See http://www.mineactionstandards.org/IMAS_archive/MRE/0711.pdf

⁵⁷ However, IMAS do reflect “international best practice” and as such could provide a legal argument in the assessment of “duty of care” in which a court might ask why such a comprehensive framework of standards had not been used or had not been adhered to.

⁵⁸ Available from <http://eu-mine-actions.jrc.cec.eu.int/performance/final/studyfinal.pdf>

also has the potential to be the source of an even-more simple *aide memoire* that could contain the absolute minimum of essential information in terms of 'how to do' an evaluation.

The relevant IMAS are summarised below:

Ser	IMAS	Title	Status	Remarks
(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)
1	07.10-11	Management of demining and MRE	Approved	
2	07.20	Guide to contracts	Draft	
3	07.30-31	Accreditation of mine action organisations	Approved	
4	07.40-42	Monitoring of mine action organisations	Approved	
5	09.20	Post-clearance inspections and sampling	Approved	Under review
6	10.60	Accident investigations	Approved	
7	14.10	Evaluation of mine action programs	Draft	
8	14.20	Evaluation of MRE	Approved	

Conclusions

The first conclusion that can be drawn from this global assessment is that, if it is to be effective, evaluation of mine action is a multi-skilled process. Whilst not forgetting the need to include essential mine action skills in the evaluation team, there is also a need for the evaluation team to have development and economic skills, plus access to specialist technological skills where necessary.

Unfortunately, there remain at present no international standards for mine action technical advisors. The issue of training standards for deminers has been addressed by a series of CEN workshops in 2004-2005, which have also highlighted the need to develop minimum standards for technical advisors. It may be possible to do this via a new IMAS standard in the future.

The second conclusion is that IMAS – whilst not yet complete – do provide the best framework for conducting evaluation of mine action programs at present. The proposed generic terms of reference at Appendix 2 provide a means for formulating the evaluation of EC mine action projects based on the use of IMAS. Indeed, in order for projects to be fully IMAS compliant they must be evaluated.

Appendices:

1. Assessment of the possible contribution to evaluation by International Mine Action Standards (IMAS)
2. Proposed generic terms of reference for future EC project evaluations.

Appendix 1 TO Annex D: ASSESSMENT OF THE POSSIBLE CONTRIBUTION TO EVALUATION BY INTERNATIONAL MINE ACTION STANDARDS (IMAS)

Detailed comments on the relevant IMAS are set out below⁵⁹.

IMAS 07.10: Management of Demining

IMAS 07.10 provides a good general overview to the structure and processes of a mine action programme (the diagram at Annex C is particularly useful) and hence provides a useful series of evaluation questions, such as:

- Is the program compliant with IMAS 07.10?
- If not, why not?
- If not, what are the resource requirements required to obtain compliance?

IMAS 07.10 also includes an interesting paragraph (Para 6.3) on the role of donors, which is set out in full below:

“Donor agencies are part of the management process, and as such have a responsibility to ensure that the projects they are funding are managed effectively, and in accordance with international standards. This involves strict attention to the writing of contract documents, and ensuring that demining organisations chosen to carry out such contracts meet the accreditation and licensing criteria. Donors, or their agents, are also partly responsible for ensuring that the standards and guidelines for quality management are applied. This responsibility and accountability is even greater when the national mine action authority is in the process of formation, and has not had the opportunity to gain experience”.

This reinforces the role of the donors in quality management.

IMAS 07.11: Management of Mine Risk Education

IMAS 07.11 provides a useful overview of the structure and processes of a mine risk education component of a mine action programme. In many sections it duplicates much of the content of IMAS 07.10 but this is a result of using the ISO 9000 format for IMAS, which was essential in establishing a framework for IMAS. The diagram at Figure 2 (page 6) of IMAS 07.11 is particularly useful in showing how evaluation fits in to the MRE process. IMAS 07.11 refers to the need to collect data for the planning and evaluation of MRE, a point that is perhaps underemphasised in the GICHD handbook discussed above and almost ignored in the JRC study report. IMAS 07.11 includes the caveat that

“In practice, the evaluation of MRE is usually difficult to achieve as it may not be possible to identify the connections between the cause (i.e. the MRE intervention), and the effect (i.e. behavioural change)⁶⁰”

This issue of *effectiveness* will be addressed in more detail as part of the review of IMAS 14.20 below, though this team suggest that of the five criteria quoted above (and in IMAS 07.20 itself), i.e. *relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability* then at least three of the five could be comparatively easily assessed, whilst effectiveness and impact could be assessed

⁵⁹ Note: in all cases these reviews are of the latest available version of the IMAS. See

<http://www.mineactionstandards.org/imas.htm#extant>

⁶⁰ IMAS 07.11 Edition One (2003) Page 8 Para 6.5

using a Knowledge, Attitude and Practices (KAP) survey (though with the associated cost of doing so). It is perhaps surprising that even though the IMAS puts such an emphasis on data feedback (in Figure 2) it then appears to shy away from statements as to how this might be done, though it does say that these areas are addressed in other IMAS (see below).

IMAS 07.20: Guide to contracts (draft)

Not available at the IMAS website⁶¹ as at the time of writing.

IMAS 07.30: Accreditation of mine action organisations

IMAS 07.30 sets out some clear guidelines for the accreditation of either national or international demining organisations. This includes a review of the organisations on standing operation procedures (SOP), which provides a focus for evaluation, in that the organisation can be reviewed against its compliance with IMAS and any national standards, and its conformance with its own SOP. However, IMAS 07.30 also sets out the responsibilities of donors in Para 7.4, which is repeated in full below:

“When the contract or other formal agreement has been framed by the donor organisation, it shall be responsible for including details of the national accreditation requirements, or in the absence of a national mine action authority requirements established by the UN or other appropriate international body”.

In other words, in order to be IMAS compliant the donor has a duty to ensure that the organisation is accredited, and, by implication, the donor should also ensure that the organisation is of a standard to be accredited before the contract is let.

IMAS 07.40: Monitoring of mine action organisations

IMAS 07.40 provides very clear guidelines on the conduct of monitoring procedures, and in Para 5.2.1 makes this the role of the national mine action authority:

“The national mine action authority shall monitor the demining organisation and its sub-units to confirm that the management systems and operational procedures are consistent with the terms of the accreditation and licenses”.

However, IMAS 07.40 is vague on the frequency of the monitoring process, as stated in Para 5.2.1:

“The frequency of monitoring should be dependent on the task and the previous performance of the demining organisation; it should be agreed between the national mine action authority and the demining organisation”.

Furthermore, IMAS 07.40 is completely silent on monitoring the impact or effectiveness of the mine action activity; however these are referred to in the new GICHD handbook and should presumably also be covered by the new IMAS 14.10 (currently in draft). IMAS does provide some comment on the responsibilities of donors, in Para 7.4:

“When the contract or other formal agreement has been framed by the donor organisation, it shall be responsible for including details of the monitoring requirements,

⁶¹ www.mineactionstandards.org

or in the absence of a national mine action authority, requirements established by the UN or other appropriate international body”.

Therefore, in order to be fully IMAS compliant, donors must include a monitoring component within their contracts. Monitoring is clearly a transaction cost, and, according to IMAS, one that should be borne by the national mine action authority. Presumably, therefore, IMAS 07.40 expects the donors to assist national mine action authorities in meeting this responsibility; this can be by providing resources for the mine action authority to carry out the monitoring directly or, as allowed by Para 6.1, provide for this service to be provided under contract⁶².

IMAS 07.41: Monitoring of MRE organisations

IMAS 07.41 follows a similar structure to IMAS 07.40, though it does link the monitoring process more clearly to the project cycle and evaluation. IMAS 07.41 also provides some guidance on how monitoring should be conducted (see the note in Para 9.2(f)) though this could perhaps be expanded.

Significantly, in the context of this Report, it also sets out some responsibilities for donors in Para 9.4:

“When funding MRE projects, donors:

- a) should ensure that project proposals include sound and detailed monitoring plans;*
- b) should provide the necessary resources to enable the implementing organisation to conduct comprehensive and effective monitoring*
- c) should recognise that monitoring may recommend changes to their funded activities, and should enable such changes to be readily made*
- d) may monitor projects and programmes funded directly by them”*

Whilst most of these obligations reflect requirements set out in other IMAS as described above, Para 9.4 c) has a unique requirement of the donors, which could mean a *change of funding requirements at mid-project depending on the finding of the monitors*. This may suggest a greater need of technical scrutiny of projects at the project appraisal stage in order to minimise this risk.

IMAS 10.40: Accident investigations

The relevant paragraph of IMAS 10.40 in this context is Para 4.3 which states:

“The following information should be widely distributed:

- a) the circumstances contributing to and harm resulting from the incident*
- b) an analysis of the information collected during the investigation; and*
- c) the findings of the investigation (i.e. the conclusions and recommendations drawn from the investigation process)*

The national mine action authority, or an organisation acting on its behalf, shall disseminate information on demining incidents. In the absence of a national mine action authority, demining organisations should make this information available to other demining organisations through UNMAS”.

The dissemination of such information is vital in ensuring that the risk of accidents being repeated is minimised. However, it is known to this Team that some organisations do not comply with these requirements. It is therefore strongly recommended that the EC specifically

⁶² This principle is also set out in Para 5.1 of IMAS 07.41 (Monitoring of MRE organisations).

compels funded organisations to comply with this requirement and make the retrieval of such documentation a core part of the monitoring and evaluation process.

IMAS 14.10: Evaluation of mine action programmes

Currently in draft by GICHD

IMAS 14.20: Evaluation of MRE

IMAS 14.20 provides clear strategic guidance for the evaluation of MRE, and specifically points to the use of KAP surveys in Para 4 (see above for previous discussion of KAP surveys). Indeed, in the absence of IMAS 14.10 much can be drawn from the general principles set out in IMAS 14.20. IMAS 14.20 also provides guidance for donors in Para 7.4, which states:

“Donor organisations:

- a) should ensure that projects have an evaluation component and the necessary resources to undertake them; and*
- b) should evaluate the projects they have funded and should take into account evaluation findings and recommendations for future funding of mine action programmes”.*

This reinforces the need for donors to include evaluation in projects in order for them to be fully IMAS-compliant.

Additional GICHD Documentation

As mentioned in Annex D, GICHD are in the process of producing a handbook on the evaluation of mine action projects, entitled “Evaluating Mine Action as Development: A Handbook of Methodology”. One element that is not currently included⁶³ but might be worthwhile, given the general approach of the handbook, is consideration of the transaction costs of evaluation and the diminishing marginal returns of information. Any evaluation that requires surveying of beneficiaries in the field, be it by formal or PRA methods, will cost a lot more than an evaluation carried out by literature review or by stakeholder analysis in the capital city, though it might well produce more credible data. This is all implied in the text but it would be worth a paragraph or two pointing out the logistic requirements of a field approach, lest enthusiastic donors start insisting that a standard three-week evaluation mission should also produce quantitative data on impact, based on a Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) of one or two provinces. Furthermore, the handbook does not explain the use of knowledge, attitudes and practices (KAP) surveys as a means of gathering information about behaviour change, which is particularly relevant in the case of mine risk education (MRE) projects.

⁶³ These comments have also been fed back to GICHD and it is conceivable that the final version of the handbook may have taken these comments into account.

Appendix 2 TO Annex D: PROPOSED GENERIC TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR FUTURE EC PROJECT EVALUATIONS⁶⁴

Background

Insert background information on organisation⁶⁵, program and project here.

Aim

The aim of this document is to set out the Terms of Reference (TOR) for an evaluation of the (insert organisation name) in (insert programme name) over the period (insert period here) in accordance with the evaluation requirements set out in Articles 13 and 15 of “Regulation (EC) No 1724/2001 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 July 2001, concerning action against anti-personnel landmines in developing countries”⁶⁶.

Goals of the evaluation

The goals of the evaluation include:

- improvement of the program or project being evaluated
- generating knowledge and learning for wider application (lessons learned and missed opportunities)
- making project results transparent and accountable

Normative References

Normative references include:

- The regulation
- International Mine Action Standards (IMAS)
- National mine action standards (as available)
- Terms and conditions of contract (insert contract details here) including scope of works and works plan
- Contracting organisation’s standing operation procedures

Specific Issues to be addressed

In general, evaluation can be conducted by considering the following attributes⁶⁷:

- Is the project **relevant** – i.e. the extent to which the project/program is suited to the particular needs, expectations and priorities of the target group, national mine action authority (NMAA) (if existing), implementing organisation and the EC (as expressed in the terms of the original contract).

⁶⁴ Produced by Robert Keeley, 2005, and provided for incorporation into this Report.

⁶⁵ Name of the organisation being evaluated. Subsequently referred to as “The Organisation”.

⁶⁶ Subsequently referred to as “The Regulation”.

⁶⁷ Based on concept set out in IMAS 14.10 (Amendment 1) Para 4

- Is the project **effective** – i.e. the extent to which the project achieves its objectives and goals as set out in its contract. This should be apparent from study of the project logical framework and comparison of the actual achievements with the stated outputs.
- Is the project **efficient** – i.e. the extent to which the project outputs (qualitative and quantitative) are achieved in relation to the inputs, i.e. resources and cost.
- What is the **impact or outcome** – i.e. the benefits and costs of the project/program, whether directly or indirectly, intended or unintended. Political, socio-economic, environmental and cultural issues should be addressed. In the logical framework the intended impact is encapsulated by the ‘outcomes’ box⁶⁸.
- Is the activity **sustainable** - the probability that the benefits achieved by the project will continue after donor funding and/or specialist assistance (such as international technical advisors) has been withdrawn. This is to be included if the terms of the original contract stipulated that the projects/ programmes should be financially and technically sustainable.

To this end, the evaluation team should investigate the following issues:

- The methodology used by the Organisation to prioritise work and allocate resources between projects at a programme level, including any linkages with broader humanitarian or development contexts
- The technical standards and work practices followed by the Organisation, including
 - The methodology used by the Organisation to select a particular technique or tool for employment
 - Review of reports of casualties amongst Organisation staff, amongst civilians (or reports of ‘missed mines’) on land processed by the Organisation (where any such incidents have occurred within the scope of this evaluation)
- Management of funds provided to the programmes

In considering these issues, the evaluation team should take into account the following criteria

- Organisational competence
- Individual competence of individual managers and staff
- Means used by the Organisation to maximise cost effectiveness⁶⁹
- Means used by the Organisation to maximise cost-efficiency
- Quality of output
- Workplace safety
- Ability to innovate
- Transparency of activities, including cooperation with any national reporting requirements
- Ability to cooperate with other organisations

- Support for capacity building at all levels
- Establishment of exit strategies

Methodology

⁶⁸ For the purposes of this document the ‘impact’ is the degree to which the project/program contributes to the ‘overall objectives’ as written in EC logical frameworks, which may involve factors outside the direct control of the project/program, whilst ‘outcome’ is the degree to which the project/program has an effect on the lives of the beneficiaries.

⁶⁹ For the purposes of this evaluation, the term ‘cost-effectiveness’ is used to describe the means by which a given outcome or benefit is achieved at the lowest cost. An example may be the use of vegetation cutting machines to facilitate the access of manual deminers. ‘Cost Efficiency’ is used to describe the ratio of outputs to inputs, measured in terms of cost. It may be considered the extent to which the potential cost effectiveness of a particular approach is actually achieved.

When evaluating the conduct of the program/project (delete as applicable) the evaluation team should take care to compare performance with the following benchmarks:

- Compliance with any contractual obligations, including works plans
- Conformance with:
 - International best practice as encapsulated within relevant International Mine Action Standards (IMAS)
 - Any applicable national mine action standards
 - The organisation's own global and national SOP
- Comparison with performance by other mine action organisations in the same context, where appropriate.

The evaluation is to involve a mix of document review, interviews, survey by questionnaire and field visits. Useful descriptions of the use of such tools are included in the (draft) handbook on evaluation published by GICHD⁷⁰.

The evaluation team should take account of the recommendations for the conduct of evaluation of mine action programs as set out in IMAS 14.10 (Evaluation of Mine Action Programmes).

Stakeholders

The evaluation team should canvass objective comments from stakeholders, including:

- Donors
- International mine action coordination bodies operating in the countries that include projects by the target organisation
- National mine action authorities in the countries that include projects by the Organisation
- Any development organisations operating in partnership with the Organisation on specific projects

These comments should be sought by use of questionnaire or interview.

Organisation Input

Apart from the clear and substantial input that the Organisation and its field offices will be able to make in terms of describing their current activities, ethos and working practices, the Organisation should also be given the opportunity to comment on any problems with existing contractual arrangements, including any directions to work in particular regions, follow particular priorities or other contractual requirements that the Organisation feels result in sub-optimal performance. The Organisation may also wish to highlight any particular successes with certain arrangements.

Evaluation Project Management

The Evaluation Team should report to (insert here) who will act as Project Coordinator on behalf of the donors. Any changes to the scope or extent of the evaluation or its TOR should be negotiated with the Project Coordinator.

⁷⁰ "Evaluating Mine Action as Development: A Handbook of Methodology"

Scope of the evaluation

Whilst the evaluation team are expected to become familiar with the history of the Organisation from its beginnings, the evaluation itself should focus on activities between (insert dates and any geographical restrictions here).

Evaluation team

The evaluation team should consist of a development specialist able to assess the Organisation's contribution and effectiveness in addressing development problems, supported by a mine action specialist able to assist with an evaluation of technical procedures and standards followed by the Organisation. Whilst this mine action specialist may be a former employee of the Organisation, between them the team must have experience of the wider mine action sector in order to make objective comparisons with other organisations' approaches where these differ from those followed by the Organisation.

Time frame

The time frame of the evaluation is (insert depending on complexity of the evaluation), including 3-5 days visiting the Organisation's headquarters (depending on travel requirements) and 12 days for each field visit, including travelling time to and from the relevant country. This includes time required for document review and preparation of reports. Where possible, the exact timing and duration of field visits to be agreed with the relevant Organisation country offices in order to facilitate the development of timetables, to minimise the administrative impact of the visits and work around any limitations to local travel. Where delays are unavoidable, the evaluation may include a no-cost extension of up to 30 days in order to incorporate these delays. Any potential delay of the project should be reported to the Project Coordinator as soon as a need becomes apparent and any further extension of the project beyond the 30 day no-cost extension already mentioned must be approved in advance by the Project Coordinator.

Expected results

The evaluation team is expected to reach conclusions and make recommendations for improvements, either by the Organisation or the contracting and coordination mechanisms to which they are responsible. The outputs of the evaluation team are to be encapsulated in reports as set out below:

- An inception report, setting out the details of the methodology to be followed by the team, including confirmation of countries for field visits, reference to any changes in the methodology as set out in this TOR and an outline works plan including agreed dates for visits to the headquarters of the Organisation, field visits and presentation of the draft report and final report. This inception report to be part of the tendering process if the evaluation is carried out on a corporate basis, or on establishment of team if individual consultants are recruited, in which case it should be completed within the first week of the project).
- Interim reports, to be submitted to the Project Coordinator within 72 hours after the visit to the Organisation's headquarters and after each field visit. The main aim of the interim reports is to chart the progress of the evaluation and all findings should be set out in detail in the main reports to be completed at the end of the evaluation, as set out below. These are to be brief reports – ideally on one A4 (or similar size) sheet - and should set out in note or tabular form the extent of success of the visit in meeting its objectives and summarise any particular successes or problems encountered, either in terms of the conduct of the visit or

in activities being carried out by the Organisation. The format of the interim reports should be confirmed as part of the inception report.

- A summary of current programmes and projects by the Organisation (based on data provided by the Organisation and triangulated by the evaluation team) including information on
 - Country
 - Type of programme/project
 - Area of operations
 - Start date and expected finish date
 - Donor(s)
 - Any development partners or coordination organisations
 - Value of programme/project
 - Any extant evaluation or audit reports
 - Program results and achievements
- An *aide memoire* of the evaluation team's initial findings to the Organisation, providing them time to comment before the completion of final reports.
- A Draft final report, taking account of any responses by the Organisation to the *aide memoire*. The evaluation team should prepare a verbal and/or "Powerpoint" summary of the draft report for presentation to donors.
- A final report, taking account of donor feedback from the Draft Report. The format of the final report may follow the format laid out in the (draft) handbook on evaluation referred to above, such as the generic layout which is included at Annex A to this TOR.

All reports are the property of the donors. All interim, draft and final reports are to be considered confidential and are not to be released without the express permission of the donors via the Project Coordinator. The Organisation may release the *aide memoire* at their discretion, providing it is released in its entirety.

Administrative support

The team should be prepared to arrange all necessary administrative and logistic support, including visas, flights, insurance and vaccinations, including travel to the Organisation's headquarters and a presentation of the Draft Report in Brussels if required. Funding for such activities should be included in the contract along with an allowance for local expenses including local travel, local accommodation and interpreters.

Assumptions

It is assumed that:

- The Organisation will facilitate access to all relevant documentation, including access to all relevant evaluation and audit reports covering the period covered by the scope of this evaluation.

- Relevant EC Delegations, assisted by the Organisation's country offices will be prepared to assist in arranging visas, visit timetables, local accommodation, local travel and advice on local security precautions.
- Other stakeholder organisations will respond as set out above
- Full access will be possible for travel to field projects.

Any problems with any of these issues should be reported immediately to the Project Coordinator.

—“—

Possible Report Format⁷¹

A possible report format is set out below.

Cover

- Title Page, including name of agency or individuals conducting the evaluation
- Table of Contents, including list of Annexes and Enclosures
- List of Tables and Figures

Executive Summary

- Including key findings and lessons learned

Introduction

- Brief commentary on the project's context, its scope and design, the evaluation team, the methodology, the report presentation and other introductory remarks
- Reference can be made to the evaluation work plan with details appearing as an Annex.

Context

- An analytical commentary on the conditions that have an impact on the project/program being evaluated, including institutional, managerial, socio-economic, safety and other conditions, as well as ongoing related projects, partnership arrangements, etc.
- This can include limitations on the conduct of the project/program.

Relevance

- Describe the extent to which the project/program is suited to the particular needs, expectations and priorities of the target group, national mine action authority (NMAA) (if existing), implementing organisation and the EC (as expressed in the terms of the original contract)
- Topics related to relevance include considerations such as the quality of needs assessment, identification of the appropriate scope and design elements, the project's integration into a national plan, the value of the project to the community, etc.

Effectiveness

⁷¹ Based on format included in the GICHD publication: "Evaluating Mine Action as Development: A Handbook of Methodology" but developed to include the main findings of this Report.

- Describe the extent to which the project achieves its objectives and goals as set out in its contract. This should be apparent from study of the project logical framework and comparison of the actual achievements with the stated outputs

Outcomes and Impacts

- Describe the outcomes and impacts of the project/program, with reference to the logical framework and any indicators used by the Organisation

Efficiency

- Set out the extent to which the project outputs (qualitative and quantitative) are achieved in relation to the inputs, i.e. resources and cost
- Include consideration of management issues such as the quality and motivation of staff, use of equipment, quality of supervision, work planning, coordination, communication, donor visibility, security, medical care, accounting and bookkeeping etc.

Sustainability

- This is to be included if the terms of the original contract stipulated that the projects/programmes should be financially and technically sustainable
- Assess the probability that the benefits achieved by the MRE project will continue after donor funding and/or specialist assistance (such as international technical advisors) has been withdrawn

Conclusions, Recommendations and Lessons Learned

- Assess degree of success or failure the project/program has attained
- Lessons learned should be formulated to a level of abstraction that allows application to other situations of a similar nature
- Lessons can be both positive (to repeat in the future, and negative (to avoid in the future)

Annex E: COMPILED EC DELEGATION RESPONSES

Note: replies from eight Delegations have been compiled anonymously, and shown in *Times New Roman italic text*.

Q1. Have you ever received a copy of EC mine action evaluation guidelines⁷²?

Of the eight respondents, only one claims to have seen the JRC Study Report.

Q2. If the answer to Q1 is 'yes' have you ever made use of it?

One respondent replies "yes", though from their description of the document it suggests that they are in fact referring to other documentation.

Q3. If the answer to Q3 is 'yes' please provide comments on its usefulness or otherwise

See Q2.

Q4. Have any of the mine action projects under your remit been subject to any form of external evaluation within the period 2002-2004, commissioned either by yourselves or another donor? If so please provide details below

Two Delegations report that there have been external evaluations, both EC and multi-donor.

Q5. Have you found (a) the APL Regulation⁷³ (b) the "EC Mine Action 2002-2004 Strategy and Multiannual Indicative Programming Document" to be of assistance in planning, managing or coordinating assistance to mine action projects? (Please mark accordingly)

APL regulation

Very useful	Mildly useful	No noticeable effect	Mildly obstructive	Very obstructive
2	2	4 (see note below)		

Strategy and Multiannual Indicative Programming

Very useful	Mildly useful	No noticeable effect	Mildly obstructive	Very obstructive
2	2	4 (see note below)		

If you have found either of these to be "very" useful or "very" obstructive please provide an explanation in the box below.

Note: 2 delegations report that they have not seen these documents.

⁷² Producing Better Evaluation of EC-Funded Mine Action Projects, prepared 2002 Available from <http://eu-mine-actions.jrc.cec.eu.int/performance/final/studyfinal.pdf>

⁷³ Regulation (EC) No 1724/2001 of the European Parliament and of the Council, concerning action against anti-personnel landmines in developing countries, and Regulation (EC) No 1725/2001 of the European Parliament and of the Council, concerning action against anti-personnel landmines in third countries. Together these are known as "the Anti-personnel Landmine Regulation".

Q6. Please provide a short description of any significant successes in terms of EC contribution to any aspect of mine action in your area of responsibility over the period 2001-2004, highlighting if possible any points where The Regulation or other elements of EC mechanisms were particularly useful in achieving this success.

Five Delegations reported positive outcomes to projects, including Landmine Impact Survey, institutional strengthening and clearance. One other said that it was too early to comment on recent projects that have just commenced.

Q7. Please provide a short description of any significant problems in terms of EC contribution to mine action in your area of responsibility over the period 2001-2004, highlighting if possible any points where The Regulation or other elements of EC mechanisms were particularly relevant in causing these problems.

Three Delegations responded to this difficult question: all referred to political difficulties with national institutions, in some cases leading to cancellation of projects. One also referred to “unrealistic project design,” which is also reflected in the responses to the Implementer questionnaire.

Q8. Where you have identified problems in Q6, please provide a short description of how the problems were overcome, so that lessons may be learned from this in the future.

Two Delegations replied to this question: one stressed the value of Technical Assistance to overcome problems, plus the importance of coordination with other donors (an experience that is shared by the evaluation team); the other said that no solutions were available at the time: better communication is needed in future.

Q9. Please provide any other comments in terms of EC contribution to mine action that you think may provide useful in terms of this evaluation or in improving EC mechanisms for the future.

One Delegation predicted the increased use of commercial demining arrangements, but predicted difficulties making use of such arrangements with current mechanisms (See Chapter 3 for further discussion of this issue).

Another talks about the need for “Improvement of the system related to exchange of the information and coordination between national and horizontal EC programme dealing with mine action” (See Chapter 2 for extensive discussion of this issue)

A third says “Improve communications to gain better conditions of local conditions; change budget format [tendering processes]”

Q10. This questionnaire is primarily about EC mechanisms. However, if there is a particular implementing partner that has carried out exceptional work or, conversely, has proved very difficult to deal with, please note below.

Only one Delegation responded here, saying “The government is very uncooperative due to political concerns on border issues”

Annex F: COMPILED IMPLEMENTING PARTNER COMMENTS

Note: replies are compiled anonymously, and shown in *Times New Roman italic text*.

Q1. Has your project ever been evaluated by an EC evaluation mission⁷⁴?

Only three out of ten respondents reported being evaluated. One of these was a UNDP evaluation mission.

Q2. If the answer to Q1 is 'yes' did you receive a copy of the evaluation report? Yes/No

All three of the respondents report that they saw the evaluation report.

Q3. If the answer to Q2 is 'yes' please provide comments on its usefulness or otherwise. A copy of the report would be very helpful.

Two of the evaluation reports are available to the Team.

Two of the three respondents said the evaluation was useful.

Q4. Have you found the EC planning, project submission and funding process to be of assistance in planning or managing assistance to your mine action project(s)? (Please mark accordingly)

Very easy to deal with	Mildly easy	No noticeable difference to other mechanisms	Mildly frustrating	Very frustrating and difficult
	2	3	3	2

If you have found the EC planning, project submission and funding process to be "very" useful or obstructive please provide an explanation in the relevant box below.

Respondent B listed a series of complaints about lack of consultation by EC and promised funds that have not materialised. However other reports from this country suggest this is probably due to structural problems with the institution in question.

Respondent F complained about the apparent eligibility of a project that was initially rejected

Respondent J said the tendering procedures were not clear and expressed dissatisfaction with the pass/fail process. However, the problem with tendering may be a language issue (the questionnaire was electronically translated which may indicate they do not have access to good English language speakers)

Respondent K described significant problems with delays and continuity of funding. Says problem is exacerbated by processing via UN

Q5. In the case of single sourced projects, are any other donor funding sources available for mine action projects?

Six respondents stated that they had access to other donor funds.

⁷⁴ This includes if you have been evaluated by a multi-donor evaluation mission where the EC was one of the contributing donors.

Q6. Please provide a short description of any significant successes in terms of EC contribution to your project(s) over the period 2002-2004, highlighting if possible any points where EC mechanisms were particularly useful in achieving this success.

Varied responses from seven respondents, summarised as follows:

“EC early commitment to process stimulated other donors”
“Technical assistance with developing national regulations”
“Provision of high calibre training”
“Significant contributions to survey, institutional strengthening and material assistance”
“Channelling of funds bilaterally (i.e. not through UNDP) improves effectiveness”
“Reported successes in clearance and institutional strengthening projects”
“clearance achieved once funds available”

Q7. Did the EC funding processes (and, where applicable, the EC strategy documentation) make it clear which type/scale/location of projects were more (or less) likely to be successful in funding applications? Please provide details below.

Eight generally positive responses, as follows:

Four respondents said documentation was clear or very clear

One said EC documents were good road map, though some problems with coordination and technical assistance mentioned (however this respondent also made other positive reports about technical assistance)

Two said documentation could be clearer.

One replied “not really”

Q8. Please provide a short description of any significant problems or constraints in terms of EC contribution to your mine action project(s) over the period 2002-2004, highlighting if possible any points where the EC funding mechanisms were particularly relevant in causing these problems (such as delays between application, approval and/or disbursement). Other relevant constraints would include demands by the EC in terms of target regions or priorities which you feel were sub-optimal.

All ten reported problems.

Five out of ten reported problems with delays (one mentioned delay of 1-2 years between beginning of process and disbursement)

One commented on high retention rates (reporting rates of some 30% compared with “commercial” rates of 10%) on payments, causing significant cash flow problems

One said that proposals were out of touch, saying “The 2003 and 2004 calls set both geographic and thematic priorities which do not necessarily correspond to our assessment of the needs in a country. Also artificial requests for emphasis on victim assistance not in line with actual situation” Note: This complaint was also reflected in the answers of another respondent and from field visits (reported elsewhere).

One does not like the project appraisal process used in the evaluation of proposals

One said that it is almost impossible to comply if there is any capital equipment procurement...(See discussion of this point in Chapters 2 and 3 of this report)... Exacerbated by different interpretations by different officials.

Q9. Where you have identified problems in Q8, please provide a short description of how the problems were overcome, so that lessons may be learned from this in the future.

Only one respondent could provide an actual answer to this question: "Negotiated changes in framework agreement and provision of no-cost extension"

Three other respondents used this space to repeat general criticism as listed above.

Q10. Please provide any other comments in terms of EC contributions that you think may provide useful in terms of this evaluation or in improving EC mechanisms for the future.

Five respondents answered this question. The answers are summarised as:

EC funded projects overlapped with UNDP. EC should discuss projects in advance to coordinate with mine action here

it would help if project funding cycle were coordinated with local fiscal year

There are not many projects that are submitted; So, the EC should not reject proposals just for administrative reasons

Tender processes take too long

EC processes involve so many transaction costs only worth it if tender is for large amount. Note: The respondent went on to make some unsolicited, negative comments on credibility of other NGO supported by the EC and on use of UN trust funds.

Annex G: VISIT REPORT : SOMALIA 9 - 16 JAN 2005

Introduction

This visit was the first of three carried out as part of the Global Assessment of EC Mine Policy and Actions -2002-2004, as set out in the Terms of Reference (TOR) of Commission Framework Contract EUROPEAID/116548/C/SV.

The visit was carried out in comparative short notice after the New Year break, after having been requested just before the break. The success of the arrangements was entirely due to the effort made by the EC Delegation staff in Nairobi and the UNDP staff in the mine action program office in Garowe in Puntland, Somalia. Particular thanks are due to Juliet Chelimo of the EC Delegation.

Visit structure

The EC Delegation in Nairobi is responsible for EC activities in Somalia, and all international flights from Europe to Somalia pass through Nairobi. This necessitated travel via Kenya. Mission travel to Somalia is by ECHO flight; flights do not arrive in Garowe every day so in order to minimize travel time and cost the field visit was made before visiting the delegation. However the visit was greatly enhanced by the team being accompanied by the responsible officer



Figure 4. Visiting the Police EOD training in Garowe, Puntland

The team was able to visit 3 projects:

- Puntland Mine Action Centre (PMAC)
- Police EOD training
- Phase II Somalia Landmine Impact Survey

Personnel spoken to included:

- Director of Puntland Mine Action Centre (PMAC)
- Technical Advisor Swedish Rescue Services Association (SRSA)
- Survey Team from Survey Action Centre (SAC)
- United Mine Action Service (UNMAS) QA Monitor
- UNDP Mine Action Country Manager
- EC delegation staff (on return from Somalia).

Major Findings

The Team concentrated on the investigation of strategic issues in line with the TOR and in compliance with Article 14 of the Regulation.

The strategic issues included:

- Deconcentration
- How projects are initiated
- Relationship with UNDP and the Mine Action Centre

- Problems with existing structures

Deconcentration

The Team investigated the impact of Deconcentration on mine action projects. In essence, the Team found that Deconcentration should benefit the planning and monitoring of EC contributions to mine action, and, furthermore, that it was seen as a positive step by both the Delegation and the implementing agencies. Deconcentration should optimise the relevance of project selection (see below) and allow the contracting process to take account of local organisational structures.

The Delegation staff made the point that Brussels should of course continue with resource allocation and overall strategy – They also suggested that in this regard Deconcentration should be liberating for Brussels in that it would allow Brussels to escape the drag of minor detail. The downside may mean more work for the Delegations. They will need to keep in line with EC strategic focus on mine action. It would also appear to mean that Delegations will need access to technical expertise in mine issues. This is discussed below. The Delegation personnel however were clear in their overall positive view of Deconcentration.

Project Selection

In the past, project selection has been done centrally in Brussels, in consultation with the Delegation. As a result, there is little or no reference to the mine issue in Somalia equivalent of the 'Country Strategy Program.' Deconcentration should remove this artificial segregation and help the Delegations ensure that projects selected are the most relevant to country needs. The Delegation Staff in Nairobi suggest that they will be able to make use of input from all agencies active in mine action plus – significantly - those agencies whose projects are impacted by mine contamination. The Delegation also thought that more use could be made of tendering processes to ensure that mine action implementers work is relevant to the overall problems of the community, which would assist in ensuring compliance with Paragraph 3 of Article 2 of the Regulation.

Relationships with UNDP and National Mine Action Authority (NMAA)

UNDP have a special role in mine action as a result of the division of labour between UN agencies and a mandated role of the UN in mine action. Furthermore, this role is recognised in Paragraph 3 of Article 8 of the Regulation. The role of the NMAA⁷⁵ is also recognised in Paragraph 2 of Article 10 of the Regulation. Therefore, where UNDP works on capacity building of a National Mine Action Authority (NMAA), this means that it can be inefficient and possibly inappropriate to ask for UNDP or the NMAA (which is a "natural monopoly" in economic terms) to bid on competitively selected projects, as asking other organisations to bid against UNDP or the NMAA in this regard would not be fully compliant with the above mentioned paragraphs of the Regulation, as Paragraph 2 of Article 4 and Paragraph 19 of the Preamble make clear the need for transparency and competitive tendering.

However, discussion with the Respondents has suggested these requirements are not necessarily mutually exclusive, especially where UNDP is acting as an agent of the donors, and where synergy with other donors is allowing UNDP transaction costs to be shared. This could also help solve the problem – from a technical perspective – of how to provide technical expertise in mine action to the Delegations. However, both transparency and efficiency requirements would then make it necessary to ensure that, in general, both UNDP (and the NMAA) are agents and coordinators and NOT implementers of projects. Contracting is considered in more detail in Chapter 3 of this report.

⁷⁵ In this case the NMAA role is currently filled by the "Puntland Mine Action Centre"

Nevertheless, the Delegation representatives did express some reservations (based on their general experience) about getting UNDP to act in this regard. There may be need for the EC to empower itself as the 'customer' in its relationship with the UN in the mine action context. Alternative sources of technical advice may include provision of centralised specialist advice in Brussels (which may be expensive and procedurally difficult) or – as recommended by the Delegation in Nairobi – making more use of the existing Framework contract system to access technical expertise for project appraisal and evaluation.

Problems with existing structures

One problem raised by UNDP was difficulty on dealing with EC documentation. There may be a role for further use of the concept of *Vade Mecum* guidance notes, as used in other EC processes. It was suggested that Deconcentration could also help as the Delegations would be able to provide assistance. A second problem was the delay involved from the process of project selection to the disbursement of funds. Discussions suggest that a *Vade Mecum* should assist in this regard as agencies could be advised of the likely delays. There may also be scope for more clear direction of funding requests to the EC funding streams more suited for the project in question. For example, given that landmine impact surveys are so important for the subsequent planning of mine action there may be a case for using ECHO funds to support them in a timelier manner.

Apparently the problem with delays is also exacerbated by the short-term nature of funding. Both UNDP and the EC Delegation made strong cases for re-organising fund disbursement so that projects had more certainty of funding over several years. In particular, this would allow implementers to invest in technology that could make mine action more cost effective. Thirdly, there appears to be a systemic problem with building in risk management for such projects. Somalia is an example of a project that is at the end of a very logistic chain and in an area of a fragile security – both typical attributes of mine action programs. Both of these issues have caused problems with mine action in Somalia and, frankly, shouldn't have been much of a surprise. It would be helpful to use some type of mechanism to cover such predictable risks; a *Vade Mecum* would be a suitable vector for explaining how this could be done.

Summary

The visit to Somalia provided a useful insight into the practical application of EC contributions to mine action. The good working relationship of EC Delegation staff and UNDP personnel was reflected in the smooth logistic operation of the visit. Furthermore, active and enthusiastic contributions by field personnel provided some useful feedback for the Team.



Figure 5. Unloading medical supplies at the airstrip outside Garowe. Projects at the end of such long logistic chains should build in more contingencies for risk management into their budgets.

Annex H: VISIT REPORT: AZERBAIJAN 23-28 JAN 2005**Introduction**

This visit was the second of three carried out as part of the Global Assessment of EC Mine Policy and Actions -2002-2004, as set out in the Terms of Reference (TOR) of Commission Framework Contract EUROPEAID/116548/C/SV.

The visit was carried out shortly after the New Year break, having been requested just before the break. The success of the arrangements was due to the effort made by the UNDP staff in the UNDP Country Office and the staff of the Azerbaijan National Mine Action Authority (ANAMA). Thanks are also due to the Special Envoy of the European Commission to Azerbaijan, Mr de Vries, for establishing the necessary contacts with UNDP and ANAMA.

Visit structure

The EC does not have a full Delegation in Azerbaijan but is represented by "Europa House" a representative office. Mission travel to Azerbaijan was by commercial flight; however flights do not arrive in Baku every day so in order to minimize travel time and cost the field visit was made before visiting Europa House. The field visit was greatly enhanced by the team being accompanied by the ANAMA

Director of Operations.

The team was able to visit 6 sites including:

- 1 battle area clearance (BAC) site
- 1 minefield clearance site involving mechanical equipment
- 1 minefield clearance site involving mine detecting dogs
- 1 Community-based Mine Risk Education (MRE) project
- 2 operational bases operated by ANAMA

Personnel spoken to included:

- Director and staff of ANAMA
- Task site managers of 2 national NGOs implementing mine action
- Representative of RONCO, an American consulting company providing technical assistance to ANAMA
- UNDP Resident Representative and relevant UNDP staff
- Europa House Coordinator Mr Nicos Antoniou



Figure 6. After clearance, the Battle Area Clearance (BAC) team mark cleared properties.

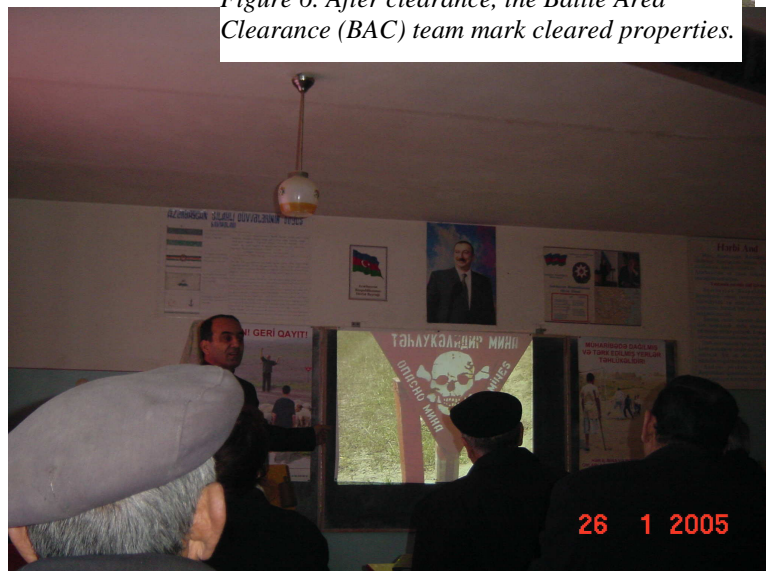


Figure 7. Community-based Mine Risk Education (MRE) in Azerbaijan. The local mine signs are visible on the screen.

- Courtesy call to Azerbaijan Government Official responsible for EC Liaison meeting with Technical Advisor Mr Alfred Supik and Executive Director Asgar Alakbarov

Major Findings

The Team concentrated on the investigation of strategic issues in line with the TOR and in compliance with Article 14 of the Regulation.⁷⁶

The strategic issues included:

- Deconcentration
- How projects are initiated
- Relationship with UNDP and the Mine Action Centre
- Problems with existing structures
- EC contracts and contractual relationships

Deconcentration

The Team investigated the potential impact of Deconcentration on mine action projects. In essence, the Team found that, as in Somalia, Deconcentration should benefit the planning and monitoring of EC contributions to mine action. Deconcentration should improve the local relevance of project selection (see below) and allow the contracting process to take greater account of local organisational structures.

Europa House made the point that as a representative office they do not have the power of a delegation, though they expect to gain the status of a full delegation within the year. The current situation for them therefore reflects the condition of an “undeconcentrated” Delegation in that project decisions are made in Brussels and enacted by local staff. This became particularly significant in the case of the Landmine Impact Survey which was funded by the EC. This is mentioned again below and is discussed in more depth in the main text of the report.

Project Selection

In the past, project selection has been done centrally in Brussels. Deconcentration should help reduce this long-distance approach and help the Delegations ensure that projects selected are the most relevant to country needs. However, there may be need for an initial process in order to train the new Delegation staffs in EC responses to mine action issues, in Baku it appeared that the EC representative office were not knowledgeable about mine action issues as these were issues dealt with centrally and they saw their key role as implementing Brussels decisions.

Relationships with UNDP and local Mine Action Centre (MAC)

UNDP gave the team excellent cooperation during this trip and were very cognisant of their responsibility to the donors. In particular, The UNDP Resident Representative spelt out the need for the UNDP country office to ensure that donor concerns about visibility and financial accountability were met by them. They accepted suggestions that this might need a re-statement of the roles and relationships between the EC and the UNDP country office. They felt that this could be achieved at a country level, given that UNDP have already gone through the equivalent of a Deconcentration process.

The relationship between UNDP and ANAMA seemed sound. UNDP made the point that Azerbaijan does not score well on international measures of corruption (they quoted an independent report by Transparency International) and that UNDP therefore have a role to play

⁷⁶ Regulation (EC) 1724/2001 concerning action against anti-personnel landmines in developing countries

on behalf of donors in this regard. It may therefore seem paradoxical that UNDP have removed their full time technical advisor who was positioned in ANAMA but, as a response, they have also resolved to continue to provide periodic technical advice and assessment on a consultancy basis. This should also be considered realistic in view of the comparative small size of the Azerbaijan mine action program. It also highlights a potential future modality for supporting mine action programs that do not have an existing international coordination presence (such as Vietnam).

ANAMA were also very cooperative in every way and made a copy of a previous international evaluation available to the Team. One small problem was that they continued to expect the Team to evaluate ANAMA and were not initially clear about the ToR of the visit; this may have been exacerbated by the fact that they had never been evaluated by the EC before and were therefore expecting to be assessed by the Team. This was resolved amicably.

Problems with existing structures

UNDP felt very strongly that a re-statement of the relative roles of UNDP and the EC Delegation should be done, as this had proved problematic in the conduct of the Landmine Impact Survey by the Survey Action Centre, which had run into problems in the early stages in terms of disputes over budgets, leading to subsequent delays. Although this will be considered in more depth in the analysis of survey implementation that will be included in the main report, the key point raised by UNDP was that they felt that they had “all of the responsibility for managing the survey on behalf of the donor, and none of the authority”. The UNDP Resident Representative endorsed a suggestion by the Team that, in future, the contractual chain and individual responsibilities for surveys should be clarified and serious consideration given to improving the EC contract documents in order to make them clearer and more specific.

ANAMA also mentioned problems with delays in the EC funding process (as discussed in the Somalia Report). They were also concerned about the cost implications of the number of “middle men” involved in the funding process, although with an undeconcentrated EC office it would be unrealistic to expect projects to be managed by remote control from Brussels without any assistance from the UNDP country office. As in the case of Somalia, there is a need for clarification of the role, and in particular the value added, by the various partners involved at all stages of project implementation.

Summary

The visit to Azerbaijan provided a very useful insight into the practical application of EC contributions to mine action, particularly in the case of an undeconcentrated local EC presence. The good working relationship with ANAMA staff and UNDP personnel was reflected in the smooth logistic operation of the visit. Furthermore, active and enthusiastic contributions by ANAMA management and UNDP provided some useful feedback for the Team who considered the visit a success.

Annex I: VISIT REPORT: BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA, 6 - 12 FEB 2005**Introduction**

This visit was the last of three carried out as part of the Global Assessment of EC Mine Policy and Actions -2002-2004, as set out in the Terms of Reference (TOR) of Commission Framework Contract EUROPEAID/116548/C/SV. The visit was carried out at comparatively short notice after the New Year break, having been requested just before the break. The local visits were arranged by the EC Delegation staff in Sarajevo.

Visit structure

The EC Delegation in Sarajevo has been responsible for EC activities in Bosnia since Deconcentration in June 2004. Mission travel to Bosnia is much simpler than in previous years due to a number of commercial airlines now serving Sarajevo Airport on a daily basis. Both Deconcentration and ease of access are in contrast to activities in Somalia and Azerbaijan which were reported in the earlier visit reports.

Due to the limitations of the time available to the Team, only one Consultant conducted this visit, though regular contact by phone was maintained between both members of the team. The consultant was able to visit two projects, both parts of the Bosnian Civil Defence Teams supported by the EC in both entities of Bosnia (the Bosnian Federation and the Republica Srbska). February is mid-winter in Bosnia and this limited the opportunity to visit field activity.

However, with the help of the Delegation the Consultant was able to discuss strategic issues with a number of agencies:

- EC Delegation
- Bosnia and Herzegovina Mine Action Centre (BHMIC)
- UNDP Chief Technical Advisor to BHMIC
- Slovenian International Trust Fund (Bosnia Office)
- Civil Defence Authority (Federation and Republica Srbska)
- Norwegian Peoples Aid
- Armorgroup (an Anglo-American mine action company)

Major Findings

Figure 8. Snow covering the approaches to a minefield being cleared by an EC-funded team. Projects in countries with such climatic conditions must take account of the effect this can have on productivity.



Figure 9. One of the Civil Protection EOD teams funded by the EC.

The Team concentrated on the investigation of strategic issues in line with the TOR and in compliance with Article 14 of the Regulation. However, the relative maturity of the mine action program in Bosnia and Herzegovina (especially compared to the other programs that have been visited as part of this assessment) has meant that the Team has had more access to detailed information than the other reports. This is reflected in the content of this report.

The strategic issues included:

- Deconcentration
- How projects are initiated
- Relationship with UNDP and the Mine Action Centre
- Problems with existing structures

Deconcentration

The Team investigated the impact of Deconcentration on mine action projects. In essence, the Team found that, as in Somalia and Azerbaijan, Deconcentration should benefit the planning and monitoring of EC contributions to mine action. Furthermore, it was seen as a positive step by both the Delegation and the implementing agencies. Deconcentration should optimise the relevance of project selection (see below) and allow the contracting process to take account of local organisational structures.

However, the Delegation reported that in many respects the Deconcentration process was not yet fully implemented. The Delegation reported that, over the period covered by this Report, project selection and contracting processes tended to be retained in Brussels with only 'implementation' left in the hands of the Delegation. This presented problems where contracts included difficulties that were visible locally but less visible at a distance. However, this problem was reported as being general across all sectors and not just in mine action, so it seems that this is likely to be 'teething trouble' with a new process, rather than the fault of a specific office or programme. As in Somalia and Azerbaijan, it became clear that the Delegation needed access to independent technical expertise in mine issues. This is discussed below.

Project Selection

The Delegation reported that there were main three modalities for EC support for mine action in Bosnia. These were:

- Contracted mine action in support of reconstruction projects run by the Delegation.
- Mine action funded through the Horizontal Budget Line. As mentioned above, Brussels continued to select projects funded through this method during the period covered by this Report. Funds were usually channelled through the Slovenian International Trust Fund (ITF). ITF is a low cost program (its management fee is only 3%) and is attractive in terms of 'synergy' as it includes a pledge from the United States to match funds from other donors.
- Institutional strengthening of mine action, through support of the Bosnian Civil Protection Authority (CPA), which has teams operating in both Entities (the Bosnian Federation and the Republica Srpska).

Full implementation of Deconcentration should eventually reduce the problems with project selection and help the Delegation ensure that projects selected are the most relevant to country needs. The other problems with these various modalities are set out below.

Relationships with UNDP and BHMAC

UNDP continues to have a close cooperation with the BHMACH, though the current Chief Technical Advisor is due to retire. UNDP are apparently considering not replacing him – whilst this reflects the genuine capacity development in BHMACH this could have a negative impact on the availability of access to impartial technical advice given the condition of the mine action sector (see below). BHMACH also remain cooperative and open, as does the office of the ITF. There is some debate between BHMACH and ITF about how best to conduct monitoring, which is also discussed below.

Problems with existing structures

There remain persistent - though unconfirmed - rumours of a lack of transparent behaviour in the Bosnian mine action sector, especially concerning the ownership of a number of mine action implementing organisations. Investigating these allegations is outside the terms of reference of this visit and Bosnia is notorious for generating such gossip; nevertheless this is also a strategic issue in that the current structures could make the EC *potentially* liable for *possible* criticism in the future *if* such an allegation were ever to be substantiated. However, the ongoing Deconcentration process should increasingly allow the existing structures to be modified in order to further reduce the risk of such problems, as the Delegation is in a much better position than staff in Brussels to identify and assess the provenance of such rumours. Furthermore, modification of the existing structures could improve transparency and help defend the good reputation of the EC in Bosnia.

There is a general lack of access to independent technical advice, both in the locally-managed projects in support of reconstruction and also projects selected through the ITF. Whilst the Delegation is able to ensure that mine action in support of projects is “doing the right job” in terms of working for the appropriate reconstruction task, Delegation staff clearly do not have the specialised technical skills to determine whether the contractors (be they NGO or commercial organisations) are “doing the job right”. This is the case in many technical areas where funding is not sufficient to allow the Delegation to include a particular specialisation in staff recruitment. The need for improved technical monitoring is strongly supported by reports from the Delegation, BHMACH and ITF offices, that several mines have been missed over the period covered by this Assessment, though none of these missed mines are reported to be on EC projects.

The ITF process is generally sound, and has many attractive attributes as outlined above. However, there are some areas for potential improvement that could further reduce risk for the EC and improve quality of the output. These are:

- The ITF Country Director reported that the EC had directed that only “commercial” demining organisations should be considered for EC funded projects managed by the ITF. However, when this was followed up the ITF representative told us that it had, in fact, been an ITF decision to exclude NGOs. This goes against the principle that all qualified NGOs⁷⁷ should also be allowed to bid alongside qualified commercial organisations in order to ensure true competition amongst the largest possible pool of implementers, and the EC should have been informed of this decision when it was made.
- Typical ITF contracts are around 50,000€. This is not sufficient to encourage new organisations to enter the marketplace (the *minimum* figure likely to encourage a European organisation to start operations in Bosnia is around 300,000€ in order to cover the costs of

⁷⁷ On a separate, but related, point, the EC Delegation reported that the Norwegian mine action NGO Norwegian People’s Aid (NPA) was not eligible for EC funding, as Norway was not in the EC. Given the lack of mine action implementing organisations a more flexible and common-sense approach would seem to be appropriate, in order to include as many technically competent organisations as possible.

starting up, and perhaps as much as 1M€ if organisations using higher efficiency clearance methods which require capital investment are to bid). This creates a significant *incumbent advantage* and thus a strong *disincentive to greater efficiency*. The market would be strengthened simply by ensuring that work funded through the ITF was let in significantly larger lots. The ITF have reported that this would be possible if they were directed to do so. This would also act to reduce transaction costs as it can cost a similar amount to manage (and evaluate) a small project as it does a larger one.

- As mentioned above, the ITF contracting process is generally sound, though the ITF tender evaluation committee does not always include an independent technical specialist. As a result, the committee may not always be able to see the potential technical flaws in proposals. The EC should ensure that sufficient technical support is always made available for this purpose.
- The ITF appear to offer a comprehensive monitoring service (projects are subject to constant monitoring by staff from one of two local companies accredited as monitoring organisations) however this process appears to be flawed for a number of reasons, including:
 - There are only two monitoring companies, both of which have current contracts, which means there is no competition and limited transparency)
 - The 100% monitoring process is expensive, and probably unnecessary, as proper random and unannounced inspections could almost certainly achieve the same result. This would also reduce the risk of a too-comfortable personal relationship developing between the monitors and the monitored and the subsequent loss of objectivity which could ensue.

The institutional strengthening project – the support of the CPA teams – is generally successful. The personnel appear to be knowledgeable and well motivated. They work hard to maintain vehicles donated by the EC many years ago (1996) and have also developed several projects in which the Teams from the two Entities cooperate, such as common equipment maintenance capacity. This cooperation alone is a major success in the Bosnian context. However, the project has some problems in terms of sustainability, which will be presented in more detail in the Final Report. It was also suggested that, by concentrating on that aspect of institutional strengthening (and not therefore providing direct support to the BHMAC) that the EC had lost an important opportunity to have influence in strategic issues – and hence there was significantly diminished visibility for the important EC contributions.

The consultant heard positive reports about the conduct of the Landmine Impact Survey (compared with the other visits) though the UNDP CTA added an opinion that this was due to the fact that BHMAC was comparatively mature when the LIS team arrived and was able to encourage the LIS team to modify their activities to meet local needs. This supports the view that such flexibility is possible when enough encouragement is given. The BHMAC and UNDP CTA seemed less impressed with efforts by UNDP and the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining to insist that they use the “IMSMA” management software. While they remain open, they feel that without improvements IMSMA does not yet offer any added value over their existing software.

The Consultant also investigated opinions on project documentation, which had been reported as problematic in Somalia (and to some extent in Azerbaijan). The CPA staff reported that they did not have any problems with EC tender documentation (in contrast to opinions heard in Somalia) though they did say they had had problems in early days. They suggested that training in the documentation (perhaps through an outreach program) might have helped them at that time.

Summary

The visit to Bosnia provided a useful insight into the practical application of EC contributions to mine action in a mature mine action program, and highlighted some areas for potential improvement. The visit to a delegation which had been Deconcentrated earlier provided a useful counterpoint to the other visits. The cooperation of all respondents was vital to the Consultant's progress in developing these findings. Whilst there appear to be several problems, these should be set in context; much good work is going on in Bosnia and there is a general willingness to address problems and improve. Furthermore, the ability of the Consultant to raise these issues is wholly due to the encouragement given to the Team in the Terms of Reference, to conduct a thorough assessment of all aspects of the programme.

Annex J: NOTES ON LANDMINE IMPACT SURVEY EVALUATION

General

Funding of Landmine Impact Surveys (LIS) has taken up a significant proportion of EC mine action resources over the period 2002 to 2004. Evaluating these LIS would easily absorb all of the resources available to this Assessment. Fortunately, much work has already been done to this end by an Evaluation Mission carried out on behalf of the Survey Action Center (SAC) by Scanteam of Norway and Demex of Denmark, during the period May to October 2003. This Assessment is therefore able to rely on the excellent work done⁷⁸ by Scanteam/Demex⁷⁹ in order to produce a quick overview of the Global Landmine Survey (GLS) being carried out by SAC.

Structure

This Annex is set out in three sections:

- Section One: A summary of the structure and methodology of the Scanteam evaluation
- Section Two: A summary of the major findings of the Scanteam evaluation
- Section Three: further observations made by this Assessment Team on the Scanteam methodology and the survey process

Section One

(Based on text extracted from the Scanteam report)

[Comments by the EC Global Mine Assessment 2002-4 evaluation team are included in square brackets]

When the Global Landmine Survey (GLS) program was launched it was envisaged that it would end once surveys had been carried out in all the major mine-affected countries. The program is now considered to be more than 50% complete, and it was therefore considered timely to undertake a formal and independent evaluation of the LIS process. The evaluation is to form part of a broader strategic review of the GLS program. Based on an open tender process, Scanteam of Norway in collaboration with Demex of Denmark was awarded the contract to carry out the evaluation. The evaluation took place May-September 2003 with field visits to seven GLS countries: Bosnia-Herzegovina, Cambodia, Chad, Ethiopia, Mozambique, Thailand and Yemen. Interviews were carried out in five donor countries (Canada, Denmark, Norway, Switzerland and the US) as well as with UN agencies in New York and Geneva. Telephone interviews and E-mail exchanges were used with a number of key informants.

The objectives of the evaluation were two-fold:

- Examine the current GLS organizational structure and LIS methodologies: procedures, tools and assumptions
- Evaluate the utility, efficacy and use of the survey results

In order to structure the study, the issues contained in the *[Scanteam]* TOR were structured into four sets of key issues, which are then subsequently treated in separate chapters in *[the Scanteam]* report: the planning phase of the LIS; the implementation; the outputs and their impact; and finally overall issues that affect a LIS process and its results.

⁷⁸ Comments are made based on annexes F-.doc

⁷⁹ Subsequently referred to as 'Scanteam' for brevity.

Based on the evaluation of the above two areas, *[Scanteam]* was able to make recommendations for improvements to the overall effectiveness and efficiency of impact surveys *[these are summarised in Section Two below]*.

Section Two

(Based on text extracted from the Scanteam report)

[The Scanteam Report lists major findings, both positive and critical, in the opening pages of the report. The most significant of these are listed here and then discussed below in Section Three.]

Positive comments

- The mine action community has been able to come together to establish the Survey Working Group (SWG) and GLS through a collaborative and deliberative process unheard of in any other sector of development and emergency action.
- The LIS produces reports, databases, and other outputs that provide a qualitatively better and more accurate description and analysis of the mines/UXO problems, and thus provide a better basis for mine action (MA) decisions.
- The LIS has developed a methodology and standards which are recognized and followed by key actors involved in landmine surveying. These are set out in Protocols and Advisory Notes that are easily available and which are subject to a process of continuous discussion and updating.
- ...The LIS strengthens the argument for allocating national resources to MA as the factual basis regarding the mine/UXO problem and what to do about it is both qualitatively and quantitatively better. Finally, the LIS is a major support to national authorities and local mine actors in their own fund raising dialogue with the donor community.
- The GLS is evolving...including the use and updating of the Information Management System for Mine Action (IMSMA) database, follow-up use of the LIS results through...Planning, etc.
- Donors do not use the LIS results directly, but are interested in seeing that partner authorities do – it provides an assurance that MA resources are being planned better.
- National authorities by and large are using the LIS, and in most cases trying to shape national MA plans based on it.

*Critical comments*⁸⁰

- The LIS is a costly undertaking...
- The implementation of the LIS should be...based on international competitive bidding...
- Whether the same entity can both plan and implement a LIS should be considered...
- The LIS is currently structured as a "stand alone" event and is an externally driven and defined process that is poorly integrated into national tools and tasks:
- The overall plan...needs to be sorted out with the national government. If the LIS requires a separate MoU...this should be in place before the project planning begins.

⁸⁰ It is clear from the text of the Report that Scanteam have done their best to be objective and to offer constructive criticism, phrased in terms of how things could be improved.

- The project document should be subjected to the normal scrutiny...before final approval.
- The standard questionnaire should be reviewed for a focus on collecting only "first order" data. Other variables should only be included if it is clear that they will be used by actors for important decisions
- QA resources should be spent more evenly across the three dimensions of data quality: (i) is the survey asking the right questions (relevance)? (ii) does the survey generate answers to the questions being asked (validity, reliability)?, (iii) is data integrity...maintained?
- Local partner institutions for the implementation of the field survey should be identified, to ensure that learning from the LIS survey process is internalized by national institutions and not just simply by the individuals engaged.
- Active involvement of local social science skills should be encouraged...
- Local operators generally do not use the LIS for their planning, in part because funding often determines where they work – donor behavior becomes a blockage to more rational MA resource use through the project approach.
- There is a need for MA actors to come together to see how the LIS can be used for more rational sector resource allocations. National concerns and priorities should be a major benchmark for individual organizations' priorities.
- The LIS database is a key output of the process and its value needs to be ensured through (i) easy and open access to both data and results, (ii) a program of continued and structured updating of key variables, (iii) accessibility in terms of low-cost and easy-to-use software platform (relative to situations in differing countries).
- Having IMSMA as the standard database for mine action makes sense from a pragmatic efficiency point of view. The challenge is to develop it in two areas: (i) making transfer of LIS data to other databases easier... and (ii) make its access to MA operators easier, so that data are more directly user-friendly.
- SAC should avoid direct management of LIS and focus strategic management of the GLS process and its accomplishments. A key role is collecting, analyzing, disseminating and discussing "lessons learned"...
- The SWG Protocols/Advisory Notes provide helpful standards, though there is a need to accept flexible adaptations to country specific situations.
- The SAC management/board selection processes are opaque – formal accountability seems difficult to pin down...

Section Three

In the opinion of this EC evaluation team the TOR given to Scanteam were, fair, broad, and inclusive. They provided Scanteam with the remit to look at all levels of the survey process from the strategic to the technical. There is some question as to whether the resources available to Scanteam were sufficient, given the inclusive nature of the TOR, especially as it appears that the quality assurance monitoring (QAM) process that shadowed the original survey processes appears in some cases to have had a very limited remit, i.e. merely to ensure that the various LIS were carrying out their missions in line with their own project document (as Scanteam puts it "doing the job right"), rather than to consider whether the survey methodology was appropriate ("doing the right job").

This Team finds is able to fully support the findings of Scanteam. If anything, they could have been summarised more succinctly as follows:

- The LIS process is of value to the international community, especially in its role to report on landmine and UXO contamination and as a means of assisting in planning and resource allocation
- The LIS process is evolving, which means it should be able to take account of the various shortcomings found during the Scanteam evaluation process
- LIS are too often stand alone processes that do not make use of existing social science institutes or personnel
- 'The net result has been that the questionnaire is being felt as too large and unwieldy'⁸¹
- LIS are not sufficiently integrated into strategic planning processes, although some progress is being made in this regard
- The use of IMSMA remains problematic and needs major review: the software should be freely available so that mine action implementing agencies can make use of it to make reports, and more thought should be given to comments from the field on its structure [though this team notes that GICHD are undertaking a review of IMSMA at the time of this evaluation].
- The SWG/SAC/GLS processes are not transparent. There is a potential conflict of interest in that many members of the SWG are also survey implementers: surveys should be let by competitive tender using international competitive bidding processes and open to all qualified organisations – including commercial demining agencies or survey companies.

This team also has some other findings that it would add to the findings of the Scanteam report:

- The methodology of the LIS process is slightly skimmed over by the Scanteam report. If anything, the Scanteam report places too much emphasis on explaining its own (i.e. Scanteam) methodology in comparison with the amount of time explaining the SAC/GLS methodology. In particular, there is, in the opinion of this Team, some doubt about one aspect of the SAC 'Protocols'⁸² referred to in the Scanteam report, namely the process of false negative sampling. In short, the false negative technique is a way of reducing the sample size (and hence time and cost) and works thus:
 - Survey teams enter a region of the affected country, and question the regional authorities as to whether they have any mine/UXO contamination present in their region. In the event that the regional authorities say yes, all sub-regions in the region are surveyed. In the event that the authorities say 'no,' a small number of the communities are sampled. If they all say 'no' the region is discounted; if one or more say 'yes', the original response of the regional authorities is regarded as a 'false negative' and the region is treated as if contaminated.

The problem with this approach is that contamination is not a truly random process (there is strong serial correlation between one site of contamination and another, as contamination tends to follow 'confrontation lines') and so there is some doubt to whether such a sampling process can really provide a true picture of the extent of contamination. Furthermore, surveys have tended to be planned on the assumption that there will be no 'false negatives' and this has resulted in the need to extend (and hence re-finance) surveys after the 'false

⁸¹ This is a direct quote from Page 24 of the Scanteam report and this Team believes it deserves greater emphasis.

⁸² The Protocols are not easily available from the SAC website.

negative' approach was found to be erroneous. Indeed, this Team is aware that at least two surveys (Cambodia and Afghanistan) had to greatly extend the scope of the survey in such a fashion. The Cambodia eventually had to sample all villages (i.e. conduct a census rather than a survey) as a result of problems with the false negative methodology. However, in the end this did provide a more comprehensive idea of where – in general terms – the contamination existed.

- The second problem with the LIS methodology is that it has – in the opinion of several deminers who have discussed this with the Team – drifted too far from earlier survey techniques which were themselves (quite rightly) criticised for concentrating too much on logistic and task planning for mine clearance. However, one important element of earlier (often called 'Level One') surveys was that they did tend to place an emphasis on trying to fix the location of mined areas to a greater or lesser extent (though there is a limit to the accuracy achievable through a questionnaire based process. In the opinion of this Team there is scope for taking the middle ground and using the participatory rural appraisal methodology of the LIS process but ensuring that some effort is taken to fix the general extent of the problem as well as its impact (indeed this is a process that some of the LIS management teams have followed at a local level).
- Finally, the Team also heard about some problems with the contracting mechanisms used to select survey implementing partners. *It is very important that the EC use its considerable power as a major donor to seek more open and competitive methods for selecting surveying organisations* – this could mean also that the role of SAC should be more carefully designed as a centre of expertise rather than as an implementer.

Other issues

The Scanteam report does explain many of the problems with IMSMA. However in the opinion of this team, whilst there is a valid reason for using IMSMA as an 'off the shelf' option for new surveys (and indeed new mine action programs) there is nothing to be gained by insisting that established programs (such as Bosnia, Cambodia or Croatia) should convert to IMSMA. There is also some concern about the understanding of the concept of 'standard'. It is one thing to set a standard for the content and quality of survey reports, and another to then insist that reports are completed in a software package that is not generally available. This is particularly aggravating for demining agencies who would be probably be happy to report using IMSMA generated forms if only they could get a copy of the software (at least one database manager has distributed 'bootleg' copies of IMSMA in order to facilitate easier reporting). One condition of further supporting of the IMSMA process should be the use of conditionality: IMSMA should be made downloadable freeware and agencies should cease insisting the conversion of established programs to IMSMA.

Recommendations

Surveys have usually been planned on the assumption that there will be no 'false negatives' and this has resulted in the need to extend (and hence re-finance) surveys after the 'false negative' approach was found to be unjustified. Surveys using false negative sampling should be planned to show a 'maximum' and 'minimum' timescale.

The use of IMSMA remained problematic over the period covered by this report and needs major review: the software should be freely available so that all mine action implementing agencies can make use of it to make reports, and more thought should be given to comments from the field on its structure (though the evaluation team notes that GICHD are undertaking a review of IMSMA at the time of this evaluation).

As noted in the Scanteam report, the SWG/SAC processes are not fully transparent. There is a potential conflict of interest in that many members of the SWG are also survey implementers: surveys should be let by competitive tender using international competitive bidding processes and open to all qualified organisations – including commercial demining agencies or survey companies. It is the opinion of the Team that SAC should be encouraged to consider itself as the custodian of standards rather than as an implementer.

The Team have heard some evidence that at least one survey was over-priced. The European Commission is strongly recommended to negotiate the most advantageous terms possible for supporting future surveys.