USAID's Perspective: The Importance of Social and Economic Development Strategies for Humanitarian Mine Action

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With the advent of the ALIS, UNMACA has worked with the government and other mine action stakeholders to sharpen mine action prioritization to tackle the dead-

liest minefields (high SHAs) in Afghanistan by 2007, medium SHAs by 2009, all remaining minefield SHAs by 2013 and UXO SHAs by 2015. The ALIS data will also assist in further refining the MAPs casualty reduction strategy. Additionally, the ALIS results allowed mine risk education programs to develop new strategies for risk reduction that will better use limited resources and encourage safe behavior among various community members, targeting communities based on the level of impact from landmines according to the ALIS.

The ALIS can also impact planning for development. Based on information from governmental, international and non-governmental organizations, as well as the results from the ALIS, cost estimates can be calculated for mine action that affects road construction, power lines and irrigation. However, such estimates require delineated ranked priorities and time frames for development projects.

In order to make more effective use of the LIS, Afghanistan is one of the first mine action programs to create monitoring teams to ensure the database stays current. Landminder Impact Assessment Teams were assembled at UNMACA soon after the ALIS was completed. They conducted community views countrywide in both colulates and update the ALIS findings. The LIAT-based monitoring systems ensure the database is consistently maintained, which, in turn, will allow UNMACA to undertake regular analysis and monitoring to ensure planning is effective. Priorities can be updated on an ongoing basis to ensure high-impact communities are kept at the top of the agenda, including communities newly categorized as impacted because of recent victims or new blockages. By periodically updating the critical two-year window of information driving community impact scoring, UNMACA will base MAPA planning on the best available information.

Conclusion

The LIS has advanced the planning for mine action in Afghanistan. The survey has provided MAPA with an updated and verified database in which baseline data can be used in planning and measuring achievement and success. Significantly, the LIS identified areas seriously affected by landmines as well as areas not af-
fected. The survey ensures the idea that landmines are everywhere in Afghanistan.

The government of Afghanistan, the ultimate user of the survey, expressed its satisfaction with the LIS findings. The government was on advocating the implementation and ratifi-
cation of the Convention, as well as increased levels of donor funding for such mine action activities as the cessation of stockpile production, removal of already planted mines and rehabilitative responses for people in-
jured by those hidden killers.

A World Bank economist in attendance expressed his hope that a 2007 mine action retrospective conference would convene an entirely different set of participants and he hoped that a 2007 mine action retrospective conference would convene an entirely different set of participants. Indeed, the 1997 Ottawa landmine conference was on advocating the implementation and ratification of the Convention, as well as increased levels of donor funding for such mine action activities as the cessation of stockpile production, removal of already planted mines and rehabilitative responses for people injured by those hidden killers.

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This economist reflected the current thinking of many people working in the field of humanitarian mine action who now view their work in a broader context.

To achieve this goal, they are advocating a more holistic approach, one that realizes the importance of closely integrating mine action and reconstruction efforts.

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This approach begins with initial planning and runs through the execution of mine action activities to the long-term reconciliation, establishment and development of physical and social infrastructure.

Evidence shows that this approach works. For example, in Angola, for instance, it has been possible to reestablish a water pumping station in Monroe province that brings, formerly, waterable to more than 120,000 residents. More recently, in Angola, the deactivisation of a surgery room in Huila province's Mavinga Hospital. These infrastructural changes will improve the health and productivity of Angola's people, which in turn will contribute to long-term economic gains and increased chances of political stability. The potential gains are great for Angolans, for the country, and for the region.

Whether or not mine clearance will have achieved its goals by 2007, it is increasingly important for those concerned about the lasting impacts of landmines and other remnants of war to view their mine action activities within the framework of social and economic reconciliation and development strategies.

History of Foreign Assistance

Since 1961, when U.S. President John F. Kennedy signed the Foreign Assistance Act into law and created USAID, the U.S. government has been responsible for promoting social change and economic development in the developing world—especially in post-conflict reconstruction. USAID's mission was to end extreme poverty and to help people help themselves. To this end, the Agency has developed a three-pronged strategy focusing on these areas:

1. Improving and analysis in fragile states
2. Development programs appropriate to fragile states
3. Streamline operational procedures for a rapid and effective response

Development Approach to Mine Action

Most people who have lost a limb can cope with the physical challenges placed before them. But they face more crippling obstacles: the loss of means to earn a livelihood or the loss of hope for a better life. Landmine victims are frequently unemployed, and those who are employed are frequently discriminated against. In many countries, the lack of employment continues to be a significant obstacle for those who have lost a limb. It is increasingly important for those concerned about the lasting impacts of landmines and other remnants of war to view their mine action activities within the framework of social and economic reconciliation and development strategies.

Foreign assistance and foreign policy are engaged in serious reconsiderations of their priorities and strategies.

With these considerations, and of pertinent interest to those engaged in humanitarian mine action, USAID has identified as a priority the need to recognize the potential disruption that fragile states (states that are considered to be failing, failed or are recovering from conflict) can cause to these efforts.

Establishment of a political infrastructure where the rights of people with disabilities and of all marginalized populations are protected by the establishment and enforcement of the rule of law.

USAID finds the most effective approach to addressing the needs of landmine sur- vivors is including them within the larger population of people living with disabilities, providing for their ongoing needs through national re- construction efforts and giving them access to the opportunities national reconstruction provides. These opportunities relate directly to the objectives mentioned above, insofar as all members of mine-affected communities and other marginalized populations need to regain the self-reliance and self-respect they have lost as a result of conflict. USAID's mission is to take advantage of social and economic services that will help them be productive members of society. This includes access to mine risk education, skills training, appropriate health care and medical services, and opportunities that allow them to earn a livelihood.

For example, USAID's support in Cambodia began by meeting the physical rehabilitation needs of survivors as a first step towards self-reliance. USAID is now engaging with the traditional and modern communities in order to provide better quality and quantity of medical rehabilitation services coupled with training and access to meaningful employment opportunities. The Fund has also been able to increase the numbers of children returning to mainstream education.

The Agency has learned important lessons from its experience that could serve to guide other donors and implementers who might be interested in pursuing activities in this area. Perhaps the five most important lessons we have learned are as follows:

1. Think long-term and with equity. As much as (if not more than) other social services, pro- thetic and orthopedic services need to be available on a sustained basis and must meet minimally ac- ceptable levels of quality. Quick fixes such as one-time distributions and service delivery by in- auguration are not enough. USAID does not add to the long- term needs of survivors and, in some instances, may do physical harm.

USAID is addressing this issue through a three-year program, with the International Society for Prosthetics and Orthotics (ISPO) is providing hundreds of scholarships to local rehabilitation technicians that enable them to attend interna- tional and regional schools and facilities. When these technicians return to their home countries, they then return to their home countries.

The funding is also being used to provide additional small-grant opportunities to local organizations.

2. Broader the impacts of rehabilitation efforts. Investments in building service-delivery faciliti- es are necessary but not sufficient. Such investments are also required to help both human and financial resources and to ensure that they are of high quality. USAID is currently working on an investment portfolio to ensure that rehabilitation service-delivery systems are properly funded and managed.

In addition, where and when possible, fee-for-service policies should be introduced. Fee-for-service programs give clients the right to choose their services and care and also relieve some of the financial burdens on cash-strapped countries. Investment opportunities are available in USAID-supported programs in Laos, Cambodia and Nicaragua.

3. Ensure commitment at all levels. International humanitarian organizations must begin and maintain a commitment to establish and build the capacity of local service delivery enti- ties, be they governmental or non-governmental, in order to provide sustained support.

In addition, donors should ensure that government assumes a role that maximizes the effectiveness of its long-term reconstruction and development environment. It is critical that governments, in concert with donors, provide the necessary support to local NGOs and other non-governmental organizations to effectively pursue changes in policy, laws, the physical environment and local atti- tudes with respect to people with disabilities.

Global has long been an issue for people with disabilities and other marginalized populations need to be engaged in the broader community and included in the community, and will decide that their future livelihood and using their new prosthetic limbs. We learned that mere physical rehabilitation efforts did not address social and economic needs. As a result, orthopedic programs were quickly linked and networked with vocational rehabilitation programs to integrate physical rehabilitation efforts into the school system. Cambodians with disabilities are now increasingly seen in the workplace, participating in social and political life, and returning to the classrooms.

To these ends, meaningful humanitarian mine action programs should acknowledge that survivors of landmines and other explosive remnants of war need to become engaged in the broader community and included in the economic and social opportunities, and especially an important part, in many cases, for people with disabilities. The Agency is also making efforts to provide additional small-grant opportunities to local organizations.

Resources are now being put in place to promote and assist grantee programs in responding to these strategies. USAID is also making efforts to provide additional small-grant opportunities to local organizations.

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Endnotes and References

Mine Free: Not Anytime Soon, Kidd [from page 4]

Endnotes

An Operator’s Perspective on Ottawa’s Article 5, Nergard [from page 35]

Endnotes
3. IDA 9900 is a set of standards for quality management systems that is accepted around the world. For more information about the various quality certifications, visit International Organization for Standardization at http://www.iso.org or Simply Quality’s Frequently Asked Questions About ISO 9000 at http://www.iso.org/isoq.htm.

Demining in Iran, Banks [from page 8]

Endnotes
1. UN World Services is the service arm of E�I International. MAI is the E�I mine action company presently operating with several other E�I companies in the Islamic Republic of Iran.
2. More work to be done is a national disarm. International donors demand IDA standards and international quality assurance/quality control companies to inspect work.
4. Embankments are to contain flood water. Bombs are generally used to describe defensive positions, banks of earth and embankments.
5. Banerjee et al. stand on the banks to watch for signs of hazardous material that may be dug up.

Assisting Landmine Accident Survivors in the Thai-Burma Border Region, Matthea [from page 11]

Endnotes
2. While only governments can sign the convention, non-state actors can sign the Deed of Commitment for Adherence to a Total Ban on Anti-Personnel Mines and for Cooperation in Mine Action through an organization called Geneva Call. Geneva Call engages NGOs to respect and adhere to humanitarian norms, starting with the anti-personal mine ban.
4. Simple planks made to be used as a plant bed, which is a reference line guided by a string or cord weighted at the end with a large weight known as a plant bob. It is used to create a reference line for creating vertical rites.

A Regional Approach: Mine and UXO Risk Reduction in Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia, Wells-Dang [from page 14]

Further Reading
3. The War Goes On, Vosburgh [from page 37]

Endnotes
1. The Millennium Development Goals are eight goals adopted by the government to eradicate poverty and hunger, achieve universal primary education, promote gender equality, reduce child mortality, improve maternal health, combat HIV/AIDS, malaria, and other diseases, ensure environmental stability and develop a global partnership for development, all by 2015. http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/

How Can Economists Contribute to Mine Action, Marsh [from page 51]

References