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Outcome Evaluation: United Nations Development Programme Support to "Strengthening and Further Expansion of the Mine Action Capacity in Azerbaijan" Project

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OUTCOME EVALUATION
UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME
SUPPORT TO
“STRENGTHENING AND FURTHER EXPANSION OF THE
MINE ACTION CAPACITY IN AZERBAIJAN” PROJECT

By

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1 December 2008

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Azerbaijan National Agency for Mine Action (ANAMA) is a success story and is one of only five such agencies with comparable success. If the main stakeholders maintain their current support and approach to it, that success should continue.

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) approach to the project with ANAMA has proven to be a large part of this success and although its impact is now less – given the increasing strength of ANAMA – its role is still very important.

All the Outcomes and Outputs assessed by this evaluation have been met.

ANAMA wishes to expand its reach beyond Azerbaijan, initially – possibly - to Afghanistan, Georgia and Tajikistan. With the possible exception of Afghanistan, this appears entirely possible.

Its wish to create a centre of excellent has already been achieved but its apparent wish to become a regional centre needs further thought. The concept has merit but the form it would take and the geographical spread are unclear.

A very large part of ANAMA's success has been due to the constructive support of the Government of Azerbaijan and the international donors. UNDP and ANAMA will need to work together to ensure the continuation of the support both in form and substance.

MAIN REPORT

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

The Azerbaijan National Agency for Mine Action (ANAMA) was formed by the Presidential Decree of 18 July 1998. It is the national agency responsible for all aspects of mine action activities within Azerbaijan including management and co-ordination related issues. It is responsible for national planning, prioritisation, training, standards and quality management, resource mobilisation and co-ordination of all mine action activities within Azerbaijan. It is implementing its activities through two national non-government organisations (NNGO) alone. In the early years international mine action organisations were also contracted.

On 2 April 1999 the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) and the State Commission for Rehabilitation and Reconstruction signed a joint Project Document to cover the first two years of the development of mine action capacity in Azerbaijan. The project was aimed at developing a national capacity to deal with the landmines and unexploded ordnance (UXO) threat which would enable a mine free environment in war-affected territories of Azerbaijan. *The Mine Action Programme in Azerbaijan* was a joint project between UNDP and the Government of Azerbaijan with UNDP helping with capacity building, providing technical expertise, and attracting international funding.

The government later requested that the project be extended for a further two years¹. The UNDP Azerbaijan evaluation plan required an outcome evaluation to be conducted and this was undertaken in April 2004².

The present joint project covered the period 1 October 2005 – 1 October 2008³ with the stated purpose:

“... to amend and reconsider the project activities and budget for the duration of 3 years. Revised project is oriented on strengthening and further expansion of the mine action capacity in Azerbaijan in order to remove the threat of landmines and explosive devices in accessible war-affected areas and rapidly react when occupied areas will be restored.”

1.2 Outcomes and Outputs

The United Nations Development Assistance Framework⁴ (UNDAF) states the National Priority 1 as: *“The system of governance ensures an enabling environment for development, poverty reduction, and respect for human rights and freedoms”*.

The Country Programme Output 2.15 states: *“The Government implements effective mine action”* with a corresponding Output of: *“Support provided for landmine/UXO clearance, mine risk education, and mine victim assistance”*.

The UNDP Country Programme document⁵ repeats the Outcome (Multi-Year Funding Framework (MYFF) Goal 4.4) and the Output (2.14.1) and gives the indicators as square

¹ State Commission for Rehabilitation and Reconstruction, letter dated 19 December 2001

² Baric (Consultants) Ltd. *Evaluation of the UNDP Mine Action Programme in Azerbaijan*. 29 April 2004.

³ *Strengthening and Further Expansion of the Mine Action Capacity in Azerbaijan*.

⁴ *United Nations Development Assistance Framework 2005-2009*.

⁵ UNDP Country Programme for the Republic of Azerbaijan (2005-2009).

metres cleared and number of casualties per year but without stating what those numbers should be.

The Project Document⁶ specifies three Output Targets:

1. Integrated mine action programme in Azerbaijan.
2. UXO clearance in Saloglu village of Agstafa district.
3. Strengthening the capacity of ANAMA.

An Outcome Evaluation of this latest project period has been undertaken and the findings are set out below.

1.3 **Purpose of the evaluation**

The current UNDP project with ANAMA ends in October 2008 and this evaluation is tasked to provide lessons learned, findings and recommendations covering the following areas:

- Adequacy of the project design to achieve the country programme output.
- The progress made towards achieving the outcome, the reasons for any shortfall and whether there have unintended effects.
- The relevance and effectiveness of the strategies to achieving the outcome.
- Factors beyond UNDP's control that affect the outcome.
- Any part played by UNDP's outputs and other interventions (including soft assistance) in achieving the output.
- Effectiveness of UNDP's partnership strategy and whether it assisted in achieving the outcome.
- The feasibility of ANAMA with its current capacities becoming an international training centre and a centre of excellence.

The unusual aspect of this evaluation is contained in the last bullet point above and it is discussed in some detail later in this report. UNDP is keen to continue its relationship with ANAMA and decisions on the best way to move forward will, at least to some extent, be based on the recommendations of this report.

1.4 **Methodology used in the evaluation**

The author visited Azerbaijan between 6 and 10 October for discussions with key agencies and people, and he undertook a field visit to the Khanlar Training Centre. Key details are:

- The Terms of Reference (TOR) are set out in Annex A.
- The visit itinerary is shown in Annex B.
- A list of the people met is in Annex C.
- The author also researched relevant documents and some are listed in Annex D.

⁶ *Strengthening and Further Expansion of the Mine Action Capacity in Azerbaijan.*

The author knows ANAMA well, having visited Azerbaijan in 1996 to make initial recommendations for the creation of a national mine action structure in the country and has visited eight times since. He also undertook the Outcome Evaluation in 2004.

The report is structured in line with the sample shown in the annex to '*Guidelines for Outcome Evaluators*' but adjusted to meet the requirements set out in the TOR.

2. **ANAMA**

2.1 **Introduction**

It is popular with some international mine action organisations to claim that there is no effective national mine action co-ordination organisation anywhere in the world. They are wrong; there are many failures but there are some significant successes. There are probably five very effective organisations of which ANAMA is one⁷. None of these countries has been subject to large-scale international interventions and they have realised that the initiative lies with them; if they do nothing, nor will anyone else. By and large they have found their own solutions to their problems and, in some cases, are ahead of other countries in their conceptual thinking and operational implementation.

Azerbaijan does not enjoy a good reputation for its transparency and corruption is a problem. Yet ANAMA shows what can be achieved with the right mix of benign government support, effective leadership, high quality staff and sensible international support. The Director⁸ is a very effective manager and greatly respected by his staff. He was on holiday during the evaluation which was a pity as his views and plans for the future would have been most welcome. However, his staff were very open and honest; they had been instructed to declare the problems as well as the successes.

2.2 **Structure**

The structure of ANAMA is shown in the diagram below⁹ and is quite conventional in its design. All the departments report to the Director which avoids any possibility for confusion and the agency is not so big that this imposes an unreasonable burden on him.

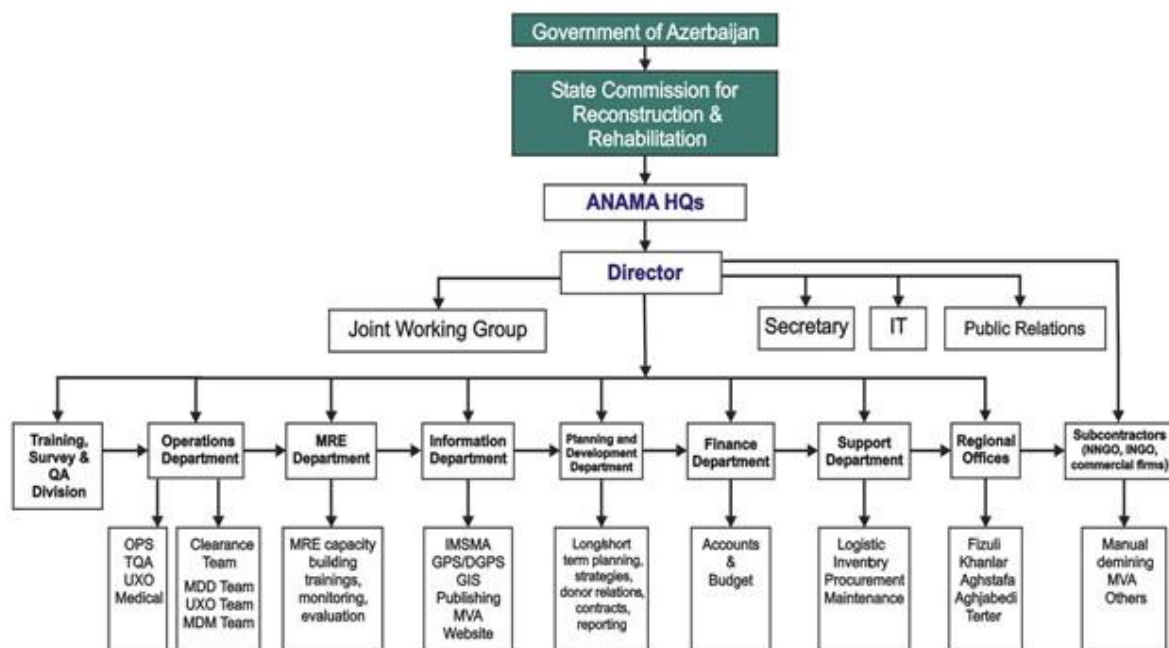
The relationship of effective management supported by a high level of technical competence is critical to ANAMA's continued success; neither will survive without the other. The Director is already aware of many of the technical issues and he attends the annual Meeting of States Parties (MSP) as an Observer to the Ottawa Convention¹⁰ as a representative of Azerbaijan. It was not clear the extent to which others in ANAMA are exposed to international contact and, although some were, the Director might wish to consider extending such opportunities. If ANAMA wishes to extend its reach beyond Azerbaijan (see Section 3 below), the more international experience its staff has, the more credibility ANAMA will have as an international centre.

⁷ Albania, Azerbaijan, Croatia, Jordan and – possibly – Yemen.

⁸ Mr Nazim Ismaylov.

⁹ Taken from the ANAMA website: <http://www.anama.baku.az>.

¹⁰ Also known as the Mine Ban Treaty (MBT).



The departments function well together and there is an obvious feeling of camaraderie between the senior people involved. All the departments are important but the two key functions are Operations and Quality. There should be close synergy between these and within ANAMA that is the case.

2.3 Operational activities

ANAMA undertakes the full range of operational mine action activities¹¹ but as Azerbaijan is not a States Party to the Ottawa Convention it is not involved in advocacy. Its activities are covered in detail in the Annual Reports and they are not repeated here. Should more detail be required than is presented in this evaluation, ANAMA should be asked for a copy of the Annual Reports.

Two key projects are worth mentioning here: one completed in 2007; the other ongoing.

- The government required about 19 km² of land to be cleared at Zobjug so internally displaced person (IDP) families could be resettled in newly built houses and ANAMA was given about a year and a half in which to complete the project (a very short period of time). Through innovative use of procedures and technology, the task was completed on time and to the required quality. Some of these new procedures were developed by ANAMA alone and are well ahead of those in many other countries.
- A very large former Soviet ammunition depot exploded some years ago scattering munitions over a very large area (in excess of 40 km²). In co-operation with the NATO Maintenance and Supply Agency (NAMSA) ANAMA is clearing both the depot and the surrounding area, and will be doing so for some years yet. It is a very large-scale project and some very innovative techniques are being used. Another former Soviet munitions depot has been discovered about 70 km outside Baku which will require clearance at some time.

¹¹ These are sometimes referred to as the 'Five Pillars' of mine action and include: demining (including survey, marking and clearance), advocacy, mine risk education, victim assistance and stockpile destruction.

The innovation mentioned merits some explanation. There are a number of issues over which there is much philosophical debate – and very little outcome – taking place internationally. This is discussed again later in the next paragraph. The more straightforward innovation is that being used at Saloglu where the ANAMA specialists have developed some uniquely simple means of burning ammunition and small items of explosive ordnance.



The interest of the left hand picture is the ANAMA-designed and locally made burning container and the simple use of fuel to ignite the burn. It is cheap, effective and safe.

The philosophical debate affects two issues but it is, essentially, the issue of risk management. For some in the international community it is a subject which raises unacceptable implications; that the mine clearance industry is prepared to put lives at risk. That position is nonsense as almost everything humankind does carry some risk and in most cases that risk is known and accepted. Clearing land is a risk reduction process (mostly to a very high extent) and not one of risk elimination. The innovation here is whilst others have debated – and done nothing – ANAMA has debated and then developed very effective procedures to undertake what is now being called 'land release'. It is a subject in which the author is deeply involved and he often raises ANAMA's innovative approach to the subject demonstrated by the release of land at Zobjug. The international community has things to learn from ANAMA.

2.4 **Implementing partners**

The majority of the work is undertaken by two national NGOs: Relief Azerbaijan and the International Eurasia Press Fund. Although technically independent of ANAMA it is doubtful that there is much real competition between them. In a truly competitive environment that would be a cause for concern but in many ways it is little different from the relationship between donors and international NGOs and the grant arrangements. It appears that the NNGOs are subject to detailed external quality assurance and control and so long as that is honestly and fairly applied the risks of poor workmanship are much reduced.

External companies have been used from time-to-time when there is a requirement for specialised input. This is the case for Saloglu (see below).

3. **THE EXPANSION OF ANAMA'S ROLE**

3.1 **Introduction**

ANAMA recognises that it has things to offer others outside its own borders and is considering setting up an international training centre at one of its two regional training centres (the Khanlar Training Centre). The scale of the international reach it foresees is not clear but appears to be largely regional.

- The Georgian Government has formally requested ANAMA assistance in setting up a Georgian mine action centre to oversee the clearance of former Russian contamination (not only that left from the recent conflict).
- Tajikistan has also requested assistance to bolster the capability of its mine action centre.
- The Government of Azerbaijan undertook a formal visit to Afghanistan and an ANAMA representative participated. The Afghan Department of Mine Clearance (DMC) requested ANAMA assistance in developing its capabilities.

There is an ambition to create an international 'Centre of Excellence' and this is discussed below.

3.2 **Georgia and Tajikistan**

These requests are straightforward and well within the capability of ANAMA. The Khanlar Training Centre in Goygol is well suited to run training courses of the type likely to be required and the instructors are experienced and competent. So long as there is a clear understanding of what each side expects, and there is funding in place, meeting these two requests should not present any serious problems.

3.3 **Afghanistan**

The request from the DMC requires some care. The author was in Afghanistan 31 October – 8 November and, with the agreement of ANAMA, discussed the matter with the UN Mine Action Centre for Afghanistan (UNMACA) and, in particular, with its Director (Dr Haider Reza, the former Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs). Unfortunately it was not possible to meet the Director of DMC. Dr Reza was a little surprised at the request from DMC as it is co-located with UNMACA and they are working together with UNMACA providing peer training. Next year the DMC will be moved to new premises on the edge of Kabul and UNMACA will again co-locate with it. Dr Reza is very clear that UNMACA will hand over responsibility increasingly to DMC but the complete process will not be quick (not likely before 2013 at the earliest). It is understood that DMC took an active role in the development of the latest Integrated Operational Plan for 1388 (1 April 2009 – 31 March 2010).

That said, and as Dr Reza himself agrees, DMC is still very weak and will require significant support if it is to develop. There may be a role in this for ANAMA and as the request came from an inter-government mission it should not be ignored but caution is required and some preparatory work is essential. It is suggested that ANAMA should undertake a feasibility study to understand precisely:

- What the DMC expects.
- What is required to make the DMC functional.

- Whether either is realistic and sustainable.
- The view of the government.
- The view of UNMACC.
- Who will provide funding?
- The security implications

3.4 **Centre of excellence**

ANAMA already is a centre of excellence and this has been highlighted above. As such it could provide a good base for an international centre of excellence but the question is, who would it serve and in what region? The author is no expert on regional politics but there are three obvious options.

3.4.1 **The Caucasus**¹²

- North Caucasus includes: Chechnya, Ingushetia, Dagestan and North Ossetia (this is not a complete list).
- South Caucasus includes: Georgia (including disputed Abkhazia, South Ossetia), Armenia, Azerbaijan (including disputed Nagorno-Karabakh) and Turkey.

It seems unlikely that Russia will defer to a non-Russian centre of excellence which thus rules out North Caucasus. In South Caucasus, for much the same reason, Abkhazia¹³ and South Ossetia are unlikely clients. Given present relations with Armenia and Nagorno Karabakh, only Georgia and Turkey are left. The view of Turkey on the matter is not known.

3.4.2 **Central Asia**¹⁴

In the modern context Central Asia goes east from the Caspian Sea and includes Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan. Afghanistan and Mongolia may also be included in Central Asia, as well as north-eastern Iran and the western Chinese provinces of Inner Mongolia, Xinjiang, Qinghai and Tibet.

It seems unlikely that China would acknowledge ANAMA as a centre of excellence and the view of Iran and Mongolia is not known. The most likely client group is the remainder.

3.4.3 **South East Europe**

This comprises Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Macedonia, Montenegro, Romania and Serbia¹⁵. Azerbaijan is already a member of the South East Europe Mine Action Co-ordination Council (SEEMACC)¹⁶ which is not, nor does it pretend to be, a centre of excellence. It is a forum for sharing experience¹⁷. Albania and Croatia have very effective mine action centres of similar capability to ANAMA and they might claim they have little to learn from ANAMA.

¹² Adapted from Wikipedia.

¹³ The HALO Trust has been active in Abkhazia for many years and has already created an Abkhaz Mine Action Centre. So long as the HALO Trust remains, an international centre managed by ANAMA is unlikely to be of interest.

¹⁴ Adapted from Wikipedia.

¹⁵ Adapted from www.southeasteurope.org.

¹⁶ www.see-demining.org/main.htm.

¹⁷ Members are the mine action centres of Albania, Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH), Croatia and the International Trust Fund. Observers are: Montenegro, the mine action centre in Serbia, the mine dog centre in BiH, Kosova and Macedonia.

3.4.4 The rest of the world

If ANAMA wants to be truly international, it should assess what it can offer potential clients outside the regions discussed above. That may seem to be a step too far but it should not be discounted immediately. It is probably unrealistic in the short to medium term for ANAMA to do this alone but it might achieve it in co-operation or partnership with others.

Some examples are:

- The International Mine Action Training Centre (IMATC) based in Nairobi¹⁸ may be a suitable partner. The author has visited it many times but not in the past two years.
- The International Trust Fund (ITF) has been a source of funding for ANAMA and it is looking to expand its role overseas beyond its current limits. It is about to finalise a new strategy for 2009-2013 which allows it to seek a much wider role than hitherto¹⁹. One of those new roles might be institutional capacity development and ANAMA would be well suited to help it.
- The US government has previously referred to ANAMA as the 'jewel in its crown' and it may be willing to use it as a strategic training partner in nearby countries instead of sending in American organisations. The ITF and the US State Department already have a partnership arrangement.

There is merit in taking a progressive approach to expansion. Trying to do so too rapidly, and alone, could be harmful to ANAMA's reputation. There is no obvious case to support global expansion but that might become clearer once a more limited expansion gains momentum.

3.4.5 Possible way forward

There is merit in ANAMA exporting its expertise but it will be difficult to set up an international centre without the agreement of potential clients within nearby regions or elsewhere in the world. There may be three key factors which impact on ANAMA's aspirations:

- It will need to articulate what it believes to be its 'unique selling point'. In other words what can ANAMA offer that is needed by others which it can provide better than anyone else?
- Worldwide aspirations will be limited by the ability of more distant potential clients to go to Azerbaijan. The main issue for most will be that of cost.
- Azerbaijan not being a States Party to the Ottawa Convention will deter some potential clients. Even a country like the USA – also not a States Party – sometimes has problems with its international status despite being comfortably the biggest donor to mine action.

There may be three ways forward:

¹⁸ This is a UK funded facility which is managed by the British and Kenyan armies.
¹⁹ The author is a member of the team which undertook the strategic review.

- As ANAMA has been asked for assistance by three countries, it could simply let it be known more widely that it is willing to act as a training facility for others, irrespective of the region of the world in question.
- The SEEMACC model could be extended more widely to include the Caucasus and Central Asia. This will still allow ANAMA to offer training and allow it to develop relationships with additional willing partners. However it is understood that SEEMACC has become too inflexible and is not now a suitable model in its present form.
- There may be merit in ANAMA considering strategic partnerships as discussed in Section 3.4.4 above.

3.5 **Funding**

Although the European Commission (EC) is presently providing no funding to ANAMA (because the new EC Instrument is limited to a Good Partnership policy), in principle, it would be interested in funding cross-border (Good Partnership) activities. It has a significant fund for Georgia managed by EuropeAid in Brussels. There are other regional funds that could be used for work in the other countries. It is suggested that the Director should have discussions with the Delegate (when he is in post) to explore the possible availability of Good Partnership funding for his projects.

The United Kingdom (UK) operates what are called 'Conflict Prevention Pools' which are funds used to assist with conflict prevention, peace support and other related endeavours. The Department for International Development (DFID) – already a donor to ANAMA through UNDP – is one of the contributors to the Pool budgets. It is suggested that the Director also has discussions with the British Embassy to explore this possible source of funding to support his international projects.

3.6 **Recovery of the occupied territories**

Understandably Azerbaijan wishes to recover the territory presently annexed by Armenia and, if that happens, the expectation is that a considerable amount of clearance will be required. The two countries are technically still at war and deaths occasionally do occur on both sides. It is not clear to the author whether a rapprochement is likely anytime soon but the advice provided during the visit suggests not. ANAMA recognises that if it does happen there will need to be an increased land clearance capacity to assist the many IDPs who will want to return to their former homes.

To capitalise on the likely rush of donor support, and the urgency of the task (IDPs are unlikely to wait for clearance before going back to their land), ANAMA should have a well thought out concept of operations. Given the uncertainties, there will be changes to the concept but it will be too late if it is left until agreements are concluded. The Director may wish to consider the following issues:

- The scale of the potential problem should be estimated. Although Azerbaijan has no control over the area in question, it seems improbable that it has no information.
- How the initial physical survey would be undertaken to assess or confirm, in much more detail than is possible now, the true scale of the problem.
- Some rough estimates should be made on which techniques are most likely to be needed. What proportion of the land will possibly need full mine clearance and what

proportion might possibly need battle area clearance. In addition, what proportion of land might possibly be released through technical survey, non-technical survey and straightforward cancellation? In there is no other means of estimating this, then the experience within the current borders of Azerbaijan could be used.

- Mine risk education programmes will be important and the most appropriate means of achieving them should be considered. As part of this, some physical marking (signs and possibly fencing) will be needed to warn people of suspect danger areas.
- The key issues are those of resources required (whether funding or technical capacity) and the number of years over which the work will be undertaken. This is a classic project management task and at this stage a critical path analysis might be helpful. Once more details are known, this can be converted to a Gantt chart.
- Developing a plan for resource mobilisation. Who will be approached to provide funding? Who will be approached to provide the technical resources?

It is important to stress that this is all a process of estimation based on the best information available. However, it will probably be too late to start this process after the territories are recovered when many people may move spontaneously, thus putting themselves at risk in uncleared areas.

The United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS) developed an excellent rapid response operational plan for Lebanon which was implemented once Israeli forces withdrew in August 2006. Although there were some significant changes once the fighting stopped, most of the resources were agreed on the basis on the draft plan which was circulated before the withdrawal. No doubt UNMAS would provide a copy of this document if requested.

4. **FINDINGS**

4.1 **Status of the outcomes**

4.1.1 **Country Programme Output 2.15**

(“The Government implements effective mine action” with a corresponding Output of: “Support provided for landmine/UXO clearance, mine risk education, and mine victim assistance”).

This output has been met and comprehensively so. The government continues to support ANAMA and its activities in two important ways:

- It provides funding and over the period April 1999 to September 2008 it has been the second largest donor after the USA²⁰ (see the table below). This is an important contribution because it demonstrates a clear commitment to mine action. The government has many other priorities which require funding and it is encouraging that the importance of mine action is recognised. Oil revenues make the country potentially very wealthy and as the end of the first ten years of the Ottawa Convention approaches, international donors may become more selective about where they allocate their money. Most donors prefer a shared relationship and may increasingly look for a strong government financial commitment. Compared to many other countries, Azerbaijan has demonstrated its commitment but it may have to do more.

²⁰ Table provided by UNDP on 3 December 2008.

Funding April 1999 – September 2008	
Donor	Sum (USD)
Government of Azerbaijan	10,629,461
Government of Japan	635,531
Government of Canada	65,000
Government of the USA ²¹	12,537,731
Government of Norway	112,140
Government of the UK	925,000
Government of Italy	640,000
Government of Sweden	95,240
Government of Saudi Arabia	50,000
European Commission	3,730,000
NATO PfP Trust Fund	1,056,730
UNDP	2,080,436
UNICEF	213,310
ITF	644,135
Charitable clubs and Foundations	258,285
Total	33,672,999

- Equally as important as the funding – and arguably even more so – is the government’s willingness to provide support without obvious interference. By doing so it has allowed the development of a very effective and internationally respected mine action agency. As indicated earlier ANAMA is one of very few truly effective national mine action agencies and the government should be proud of that fact. Of course, the government will direct ANAMA on certain issues – such as the clearance of the land for resettlement at Zobjug – but ANAMA’s hard won success could be very quickly lost if the government were to interfere in internal management issues, such as, the appointment of staff. A very large part of ANAMA’s success is the quality and commitment of its staff.

Government and international support allows “... *landmine/UXO clearance, mine risk education, and mine victim assistance*” to be undertaken. That said, it is hardly a challenging target, although probably a sensible one.

There can be a fixation on arithmetic outputs such as how many square metres have been cleared, how many landmines or UXO have been destroyed and so on. These are not irrelevant figures but they can be a small part of what should be achieved. Unfortunately, the real value that mine action can bring may be hard to measure and may not be fully realised until long after the clearance task has been completed. The table below²² provides the numbers of metres cleared using the techniques indicated against certain key targets. When this report is read, these figures will be out of date as work will be ongoing but it highlights two weaknesses:

- The targets set were in anticipation of donors providing the funding required to meet them. In some cases there was a funding shortfall but simply looking at numbers, such as those shown below, the reader might assume a failure in productivity. That might be a flawed judgement.
- The question donors are increasingly asking when looking at numbers of square metres cleared is “so what?”. Unless donors are willing to fund a country’s Article 5 compliance – not relevant in the case of Azerbaijan – then they are more likely to be

²¹ Including USD 234,000 from USEUCOM.

²² From a table provided by ANAMA during the visit.

interested in the societal value of the clearance. The Zobjug project is a very good example of what donors like to see; land cleared for the resettlement of IDPs. Land cleared to reduce or prevent casualties, to help reduce poverty, to improve infrastructure and so on are all equally good. The problem is, that they are often very hard to quantify and may not be fully achieved for some time – even years – after clearance is completed.

Operation	Total m ² for 2008 (at September 2008)	Target (m ²)
Clearance	562,525 manual	1,500,000 manual
	1,729,945 battle area clearance	No target set
Technical survey	8,040,020	10,000,000
Minefield clearance with MDD support	228,375	500,000-600,000
Area processed using mechanical means	3,000,000	1,177,945

4.1.2 Project Document Output Targets

- *Integrated mine action programme in Azerbaijan.*
- *Unexploded ordnance (UXO) clearance in Saloglu village of Agstafa district.*
- *Strengthening the capacity of ANAMA.*

The mine action programme is highly integrated with all aspects being co-ordinated by ANAMA. The 'hard issues' of mine clearance and unexploded ordnance disposal (EOD) are well managed and targeted. The 'soft' issues of mine risk education (MRE) and victim assistance are also well managed. MRE is highly co-ordinated from government level down to community level and the active involvement of schools. Victim assistance is well covered although it appears rather less well funded. Many mine action centres tend to focus on the hard issues and virtually ignore the soft issues. It is very much to ANAMA's credit that all aspects of mine action are integrated so fully into an overall strategy.

Operation	Progress at September 2008	Target
Mine risk education	48 MRE committees in 4 districts	Community based MRE groups in 10 districts
	250 school identified and teachers selected for MRE training	500 teachers from 250 schools trained
	28,130 MRE materials (books, manuals etc) produced	MRE text books (18,000) and manual (1,000) produced
Saloglu project	253,479m ² cleared	800,000m ² to be cleared

Although it was not visited, the UXO clearance at Saloglu appears to be very well done and, again, ANAMA has developed some innovative procedures which are being used there. The work has been undertaken in conjunction with NAMSA and discussion is ongoing to agree a third phase of support. NAMSA has approved Phase 3 but the finance has not yet been agreed. When it is – hopefully next month - it will come from the Partnership for Peace fund, supported by a number of NATO countries with Turkey being the lead nation. ArmorGroup has been hired to develop the operational concept for Phase 3 and Turkey will provide an explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) specialist to advise.

Strengthening the capacity of ANAMA has been an on-going commitment and a constant theme throughout this report is the success of that commitment. This output is not simply a matter of maintaining the *status quo* but seeking to improve capacities and capabilities still further. Given ANAMA's already high standard, the rate of improvement will undoubtedly slow down but it should continue to implement a process of continual professional development both as an agency and for its staff.

4.2 **Factors affecting the outcome**

4.2.1 **Introduction**

There are four clear factors which have affected the outcome and all have been positive. Whilst each factor is important in its own right – and some more than others – it is the combination of them that has created the success in Azerbaijan.

4.2.2 **The government**

The Government of Azerbaijan's benign support has already been discussed above and is not repeated here. There is merit in the government giving some indication when it thinks it will be in a position to entirely fund ANAMA given its present responsibilities and tasks. That would help donors understand that their support is not taken for granted.

Its unwillingness to accede to the Ottawa Convention is not helpful and will be a discouragement to some donors (see below). The government uses the fact that it has no control over the land occupied by Armenia as a justification but the Treaty states²³:

“Each State Party undertakes to destroy or ensure the destruction of all anti-personnel mines in mined areas under its jurisdiction or control, as soon as possible but not later than ten years after the entry into force of this Convention for that State Party.”

The occupied territories are not under the “... *jurisdiction or control* ...” of Azerbaijan and are thus not included in the Treaty obligation at this stage. If the land is returned to Azerbaijan the land will then be subject to the Treaty but it is probable that the government will be given a ten year period from that time to comply.

4.2.3 **Donors**

Continuing donor involvement has been important (see the table in page 11). Given its oil revenues, the government could possibly fully fund ANAMA and perhaps, one day, it will. However, given the many calls upon the State Budget at present that is unlikely. Without international funding, the likely outcome will be a cessation of the development of ANAMA and a reduction in its operational capacity. There are two dangers:

- International donors, recognising ANAMA's capability, may decide to divert their funding to countries where the national agency is less successful and support appears to be needed more.
- As the end of the first ten years of the Ottawa Convention approaches, and the consequent high political focus on it, some donors may decide Azerbaijan's refusal to accede to the Treaty should not be rewarded. There is now no humanitarian

²³

Article 5.1.

emergency in Azerbaijan and development funding is sometimes managed differently, sometimes by different people in different departments or, occasionally, by a different government ministry.

It would be a shame if donors walked away and ANAMA and UNDP should endeavour to encourage donors to continue their funding.

4.2.4 UNDP

UNDP's support for national mine action capacity building at the National Execution (NEX) phase has not always been successful and there are many examples around the world to support this statement. UNDP recognises this²⁴:

"The implementation of national execution as the main modality for UNDP-assisted programmes, has been difficult due to its rapid and evolutionary nature."

Why it has been successful in Azerbaijan and, most probably, is due to the combination of the factors being discussed in this section.

"With the advent of NEX, UNDP now plays a host of roles, including that of partner of government, donor, facilitator of management, assistant project administrator, and performance monitor." ... "Governments readily accept the ideology that under NEX they have the final executive responsibility for their programmes, only to find that UNDP continues to set the terms, control the funds, and monitor their performance."²⁵

Importantly UNDP has deployed in Azerbaijan what has been called elsewhere a 'light footprint'. It plays the 'host of roles' mentioned above without alienating the government.

The need to keep donors involved with ANAMA is mentioned above and this may be a greater challenge in the future than hitherto. In addition to existing donors, UNDP should assist ANAMA in finding new sources of funding and two options (EC and the UK) were mentioned earlier.

If the occupied territories are returned, UNDP's assistance will be especially important, not just for mine action of course, but the needs of ANAMA should be recognised quickly as IDP return will not be safe without a rapid response by ANAMA; initially with MRE but then will rapid response clearance.

UNDP also provides a protective environment within which ANAMA can function without undue pressure from inside or outside the country.

As ANAMA moves forward with its international ambitions, UNDP's help will be important, especially as it can call on assistance from its offices in the countries in question.

4.2.5 Clear vision and realistic work plan

Perhaps because it is not a signatory to the Ottawa Convention, ANAMA's vision does not suffer the hyperbole of 'mine-free'; it sensibly uses the word 'safe'.

²⁴ *National Execution: Promises and Challenges*, Chapter 6, see:

www.undp.org/eo/documents/nec6.htm

²⁵ Ibid.

“Vision: The territory of Azerbaijan safe for the people to live free from the threat of landmines and explosive devices, in an environment conducive to development, where mine victims are fully integrated into society.”²⁶

ANAMA has long recognised, much as we might wish it otherwise, that mine clearance, EOD etc, are risk-reduction processes, not risk-elimination. This allows it to focus on the real technical issues rather than politically-driven objectives. Its annual work plans are thus well formulated and realistic.

4.2.6 **Quality and commitment of the staff**

Even if all the above factors were in place, ANAMA would most probably fail if it were not for the quality and commitment of its staff. This has been discussed elsewhere in this report and is discussed no further here.

4.3 **UNDP’s contributions to the outcome through outputs**

This section should be read as an adjunct to that above where UNDP as a factor is discussed.

During the visit, ANAMA staff were pressed to explain their view of UNDP’s role. Without exception they were supportive and wanted the relationship to continue. The key issues for them were:

- UNDP was a necessary channel to attract funding from international donors.
- It provided visibility for ANAMA and allowed it to get international exposure that otherwise would be more difficult to gain.
- The Mine Action Exchange (MAX) programme by which selected people were funded to travel to another mine-affected country to get experience was especially welcomed.
- UNDP had, in the past, provided some high calibre Chief Technical Advisors (CTA) whose role was to assist and advise ANAMA. The last two, in particular, were key to the recent development of ANAMA.

The MAX programme merits a brief explanation and a caution. The fundamental objective of the programme is sound; much experience and confidence can be gained by visiting other programmes. However, funds for the MAX are very scarce and it is important that the right person is allocated to each exchange visit. They are not holidays, they are opportunities to gain experience but also, and importantly, to share experiences with the host. Although UNDP has been the source of funding so far, there is no reason why ANAMA could not allocate some of its own money if the MAX continues to be a valuable tool.

4.4 **UNDP partnership strategy**

It appears that UNDP is well regarded in Azerbaijan, at least so far as its relationship with ANAMA is concerned (the author looked no further than this). As explained above, its role is very much appreciated by ANAMA staff and – from previous discussions with him – by the Director. Although no discussions were held with the government this time, it is clear from previous meetings with the Deputy Prime Minister that government support was in place. A

²⁶

<http://www.anama.baku.az/pages/workplan.htm#strategies>.

number of donors do, or have, passed their funds through the UNDP Trust Fund. Indeed, since 1999 it appears, from the figures seen, about 85% of the funds have passed through UNDP, including government money.

It would appear from this that the partnership strategy is successful.

5. **CONCLUSIONS**

The UNDP/ANAMA project is a considerable success and if the main stakeholders maintain their current support and approach to it, that success should continue.

All the Outcomes and Outputs assessed by this evaluation have been met.

The project faces two challenges: the wish to expand the reach of ANAMA beyond Azerbaijan; and the need to keep the donors involved for some years yet to come. Both of these are discussed above and both are achievable given careful planning.

6. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

These are offered in order they were raised in the main text, not necessarily in order of priority.

- 6.1 It would be helpful to both ANAMA and the individual if the Head of Operations were able to attend the Intersessional meetings associated with the MSP.
- 6.2 The requests by Georgia and Tajikistan for assistance, although entirely possible, need some further clarity before implementation.
- 6.3 The request by the DMC in Afghanistan for ANAMA should be treated with care and only implemented after a detailed feasibility study.
- 6.4 The ambition to create a region centre of excellence has considerable merit but thought is required on the form it should take.
- 6.5 The Director should explore options for Good Partnership funding with the EC and possible access to Conflict Prevent Pool money with the British Embassy.
- 6.6 If not already in place, a Concept of Operations should be developed to provide a rapid response capability should the occupied territories be returned to Azerbaijan.
- 6.7 If not already in place, ANAMA should develop a policy on continuous professional development for its staff.
- 6.8 It would help ANAMA's aspirations to become an international centre of excellence if Azerbaijan were a States Party to the Ottawa Convention. It is hoped that the Director will continue to try to persuade the government to accede to the Convention.
- 6.9 UNDP and ANAMA should recognise the risk of donor apathy following the end of the first ten years of the Ottawa Convention and work to counter it.
- 6.10 ANAMA still needs UNDP support and a new project should be agreed. It should be expanded to assist ANAMA with its international ambitions using, if necessary, the UNDP offices in the countries in question.

ANNEXES

- A Terms of reference
- B Itinerary
- C People interviewed
- D List of documents reviewed
- E Abbreviations

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Outcome Evaluation Mine Action

1. INTRODUCTION

From 1988 through 1994, the conflict between Armenian forces and Azerbaijan resulted in the occupation of 20% of the Azerbaijani territory and the displacement of 15% of the population of Azerbaijan. A changing front line resulted in mass destruction of housing, infrastructure and productive resources not only in occupied regions, but also in surrounding territories.

A general mine/UXO survey completed in 11 regions of the accessible areas revealed that an estimated 60 million square meter of land is contaminated in 64 villages of these regions. The size and scope of the problem is not known in areas under the occupation of Armenian forces.

The Azerbaijan National Agency for Mine Action (ANAMA) has been formed by the Presidential Decree of July 18, 1998. On 2 April 1999 the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) and the State Commission for Rehabilitation and Reconstruction signed a joint Project document to ensure the development of mine action capacity in Azerbaijan. The Azerbaijan Mine Action Programme is aimed at developing a national capacity to deal with landmines/UXO threat, which would enable the mine free environment in war-affected territories of Azerbaijan. UNDP is assisting with the capacity building, technical expertise and resource mobilization in accordance with international standards

Azerbaijan National Agency for Mine Action (ANAMA) manages and coordinates comprehensive mine action. ANAMA's de-mining activities have improved access to houses, infrastructure, and surrounding areas. More than 17 million square kilometers were cleared in 2007, and 81 houses and five schools were certified as safe. Since the UNDAF cycle began in 2005, ANAMA has certified more than 44 square kilometers to be mine-free. In addition, sustainable, community-based mine risk education initiatives and medical, psychological, and employment services for mine victims have helped to reduce the impact of mines/UXOs. This creates a safe living environment, an enabling environment for development, and income generation opportunities for the populations of seven mine-affected regions.

ANAMA covers the full spectrum of de-mining activities in compliance with international standards. A process of building national capacity rather than relying on international subcontractors has enabled ANAMA to achieve cost-effectiveness. ANAMA's unit cost mine clearance is about US\$ 1 per square kilometer, compared to US\$ 2-3 in most other programs worldwide. As a result, ANAMA has achieved impressive results with its limited budget (US\$ 13.6 million since its creation in 1999). It is estimated that in most other countries the same results would have required between US\$ 20 to 40 million.

Sharing the good practices of ANAMA has the potential to benefit mine-affected people in other countries. A feasibility study on the promotion of ANAMA as a international mine action center is anticipated.

The project contributes to the achievement of the UNDP **Country Programme Outcome: The Government implements effective mine action** through the output "Strengthened and expanded Mine Action Capacity in Azerbaijan." This output is achieved through the following deliverables:

- Provision of the training to the staff
- Improving external relations of ANAMA
- Improving access for individual houses and surrounding areas
- Reducing impact of mines/UXOs on local population

The project fact sheet is available at www.un-az.org/undp

2. OBJECTIVES OF THE EVALUATION

The outcome evaluation shall assess the short medium and long term results of Azerbaijan Mine Action Programme. It includes an assessment of the effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability of the programme against their objectives, contribution and external factors. The outcome evaluation should also examine non-intended effects of the programme.

The evaluation at the outcome level is to assess progress of UNDP's project interventions towards achievement of the Country Programme Outcome - *The Government implements effective mine action*, including contributing factors and constraints. The evaluation should also generate lessons and experiences that could provide inputs or feed into the review of the current Country Programme and/or design and implementation of the next Country Programme.

Evaluation is undertaken in the last year of the project's implementation. This timing was decided to enable the evaluator to not only assess the performance of the project itself but to assess the sustainability of the project's results upon its completion and provide recommendations to UNDP and key project beneficiaries on further actions to sustain and expand the results achieved and additional strategies/interventions to fully achieve the CP outcome.

The findings of evaluation will serve as an input to the formulation of the next phase of the Mine Action Programme in Azerbaijan.

3. SCOPE OF THE EVALUATION

The outcome evaluation will be looking at the relevance and contribution of UNDP project activities with regard to the CP Outcome and evaluate the efficacy of strategies employed in contributing to the achievement of outputs. The scope of evaluation is expected to include lessons learnt, findings and recommendations in the following areas:

- Assess adequacy of the project design for the achievement of the CP outcome and project outputs;
- Assess what and how much progress has been made towards achievement of the outcome, in part or full, the reasons for any shortfall in its achievement and whether any unexpected effects have occurred;
- Assess relevance and effectiveness of the applied strategies to the achievement of the outcome;
- Analyse the underlying factors beyond UNDP's control that influence the outcome (including the opportunities and threats affecting the achievement of the outcome);
- Assess whether UNDP's outputs and other interventions (soft assistance) can be credibly linked to the achievement of the outcome;

- Assess whether UNDP's partnership strategy has been appropriate and effective, including the range and quality of partnerships and whether this has contributed to the achievement of the outcome.
- Assess the existing capacities of mine action agency in provision of training and guiding supports relevant to all aspects of mine action activity and make recommendation as to feasibility and perspective for creation of the training resource institute of international standard

Geographically the evaluation will cover Baku and a selected mine affected region of Azerbaijan targeted by the project.

The evaluation will cover the project throughout its duration from 2004 to the end of 2008.

4. PRODUCTS EXPECTED FROM THE EVALUATION

The evaluation is expected to produce a detailed report with findings, recommendations and lessons learnt covering the scope of the evaluation at the outcome level. The structure and content of the report should meet the requirements of the UNDP Monitoring and Evaluation Policy.

5. EVALUATION APPROACH

Desk-top review of documentation including:

- UNDAF and UNDP Country Programme 2005-2009
- UNDP Evaluation Policy
- National Mine Action Strategy
- Reports on Mine Action activities
- Project Document
- Annual Project Progress Reports
- Information and education materials (printed and video) produced by the project
- Any other information available

Interviews with:

- ANAMA
- non-governmental organizations working with ANAMA
- local authorities of mine affected regions
- State Committee for Reconstruction and Rehabilitation
- Partners and Donors to the project
- Meeting with direct beneficiaries

Field visits to a selected mine affected region of Azerbaijan

6. EVALUATION TEAM

The evaluation team should include one international independent evaluator who at no point was directly associated with the design and implementation of the project activities.

Duties and responsibility of the evaluator:

- Design detailed evaluation scope and methodology
- Conduct participatory evaluation of the project;

- Conduct interviews/meetings with relevant medical professionals, stakeholders, Government, donors, beneficiaries;
- Draft evaluation report;
- Present draft evaluation report to key stakeholders in a debriefing meeting;
- Ensure that the report is finalized within maximum 3 weeks after the mission completion.

Area of expertise and qualifications:

- Minimum 5 years of experience in mine action
- Experience in conducting evaluations and assessments;
- Knowledge of mine action international policies and programmes;
- Proven expertise in project/programme management;
- Good professional knowledge of the CIS region;
- Strong analytical and report writing skills;
- Computer literacy;
- Knowledge of English is mandatory.

Equal opportunity will be provided to individuals and companies with evaluation expertise.

7. MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS

The evaluation is being initiated by UNDP Azerbaijan Country Office. As such, UNDP CO will prepare the schedule of evaluation mission, provide copies of the project documentation for review and arrange meetings. The Office will also arrange for transportation and if and whenever necessary for interpretation during the mission. UNDP shall provide an overall briefing to the evaluator upon arrival. The evaluator will be working closely with the ANAMA.

UNDP will provide the evaluator with logistical support such as issue of visa, hotel reservation, working space in the UN House premises with access to internet.

The evaluator is requested to travel with his/her own laptop.

The following timeframe for the evaluation mission is proposed:

- Desktop review - 2 days (could be partly or fully done from distance)
- Briefings of evaluator, meeting with ANAMA – 1 day
- Visit to the field, meetings/interviews – 2 days
- Finalization of the reports – 2 days
- Debriefing 1 day

The evaluation mission should take place in the 3rd quarter of 2008.

ITINERARY

Date	Activity	Comments
Sunday 5 October	Alistair Craib departs UK	1450 UK time
Monday 6 October	Alistair Craib arrives Baku Airport Initial meeting at UNDP Introductory meetings at ANAMA	0045 local time
Tuesday 7 and Wednesday 8 October	Field visit to Goygol District to Include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visit Regional Centre • See Training Centre facilities • Briefings 	
Thursday 9 October	Detailed meetings at ANAMA	
Friday 10 October	Meeting at British Embassy Meeting at EC Delegation Meeting at US Embassy Final meeting at UNDP	
Saturday 11 October	Alistair Craib departs Baku Airport Alistair Craib arrives UK	0810 local time 1015 UK time

PEOPLE INTERVIEWED

Agency	Name	Appointment
UNDP	Shamil Rzayev	Senior Programme Advisor & Team Leader for Crisis Prevention and Recovery
	Jamila Ibrahimova	Assistance to the Resident Representative
ANAMA	Samir Poladov	Operations Manager
	Adil Aslanov	Senior Supervisor
	Elnur Qasimov	Team Leader TSQA Division
	Musa Jalalov	Head of MRE
	Fikret Aliyev	Senior TQA Officer
	Nigar Vagabova	Plans Officer
EC Delegation	Rza Zulfugrzade	Programme and Project Manager
US Embassy	Peter Andreoli	Political Officer
British Embassy	Declan Byrne	Second Secretary Political Affairs & HM Consul
Landmine Monitor	Emil Hasanov	Mine Action Researcher (CIS & Middle East) and Editor

DOCUMENTS REVIEWED

Author	Title	Date
Cranfield University	Strategic Planning Options	September 2003
UNDP	Project Fact Sheet	
UN Country Team	United Nations Development Assistance Framework 2005-2009	
UNDP	UNDP Country Programme for the Republic of Azerbaijan (2005-2009)	October 2004
UNDP	Guidelines for Outcome Evaluators	2002
Government of Azerbaijan / UNDP	Strengthening and Further Expansion of the Mine Action Capacity in Azerbaijan	August 2005
ANAMA	Annual Report 2004 and Work Plan 2005 Annual Report 2005 and Work Plan 2006 Annual Report 2006 and Work Plan 2007 Annual Report 2007 and Work Plan 2008 Website: www.anama.baku.az	

ABBREVIATIONS

ANAMA	Azerbaijan National Agency for Mine Action
DFID	Department for International Development
DMC	Department of Mine Clearance
EC	European Commission
EOD	Explosive Ordnance Disposal
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
IMATC	International Mine Action Training Centre
ITF	International Trust Fund
LIS	Landmine Impact Survey
MAX	Mine Action Exchange
MBT	Mine Ban Treaty
MRE	Mine Risk Education
MSP	Meeting of States Parties
MYFF	Multi-Year Funding Framework
NAMSA	NATO Maintenance and Supply Agency
NNGO	National Non-Governmental Organisation
SAC	Survey Action Centre
SEEMACC	South East European Mine Action Co-ordination Council
TOR	Terms of Reference
UN	United Nations
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNMACA	United Nations Mine Action Centre for Afghanistan
UNMAS	United Nations Mine Action Service
UXO	Unexploded Ordnance