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Evaluation of the Task Assessment and Planning (TAP) Project in Five Provinces of Cambodia

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Evaluation of the Task Assessment and Planning (TAP)
Project in Five Provinces of Cambodia

Canadian International Development Agency
Mine Action Unit

25 April 2006



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Abbreviations and Glossary

ADMAC	Agricultural Development in Mine Affected Areas of Cambodia, a CIDA project
AusAID	Australian Agency for International Development
AVI	Australian Volunteers International
CMAA	Cambodia Mine Action Authority also known as the Cambodia Mine Action and Victims Assistance Authority, the national coordinating body
CMAC	Cambodia Mine Action Centre, Cambodia's national mine clearance organization
CMVIS	Cambodia Mine Victims Information Systems
DfID	Department for International Development
DWG	District Working Group
GIS	Geographic Information System
GSI	Geospatial International
HALO Trust	One of two prominent foreign mine clearance operators in Cambodia
HIB	Handicap International Belgium
LIS	Landmine Impact Survey, conducted in 2000, also known as the Level One Survey
LUMU	Land Use Management Unit, predecessor to the MAPU in Battambang
LUPU	Land Use Planning Unit, predecessor to the MAPU
MAG	Mines Advisory Group, one of two prominent foreign mine clearance operators in Cambodia
MAPU Process	Three tiers of government bodies made up of DWG, MAPU and PMAC that constitute the provincial mine action planning mechanism
MAPU	Mine Action Planning Unit – Provincial government mine action planning body
MCA	Multi-criteria analysis
NSDP	Cambodia's National Strategic Development Plan 2006-2010
PMAC	Provincial Mine Action Committee, provincial government oversight body for mine action planning
PSC	Provincial Sub-Committee, predecessor to the PMAC
RGC	Royal Government of Cambodia
TAP Project	Task Assessment and Planning Project
UNDP	United Nations Development Agency

1. Executive Summary

1.1. The Task Assessment and Planning (TAP) Project has come at a critical juncture for mine action in Cambodia. It is a time when a few donors, Canada among them, argue strongly that mine action is best served by building capacity among provincial government groups for setting mine action priorities. Few donors would take exception to this in principle, but in practice the more influential ones continue to provide support to clearance operators – HALO Trust and MAG – whose policies are less committed to building government capacity. The TAP project was expected to make the case for the perspective Canada endorses: that with coaching, skills and equipment, provincial mine action planning bodies can make informed decisions in the best interest of all.

1.2. The most important of these provincial mine clearance planning bodies are the Mine Action Planning Units (MAPUs), each one a group of six to eight provincial government employees working under the authority of an oversight provincial body, the Provincial Mine Action Committee (PMAC). The objective of these two bodies is to produce an annual work plan listing the minefields that need to be cleared in an order of importance that everyone can agree on. The Royal Cambodian Government strongly supports these provincial level planning bodies. Cambodia's Council of Ministers formally approved a 'Sub-Decree' a formal government decision to make this mechanism a formal part of provincial governing structure. Previously the MAPUs, the PMACs and the lower level bodies which support them operated under the authority of international NGOs. The first year of the Task Assessment and Planning (TAP) project – 2005 - was the first year that these provincial mine action planning bodies have received full government endorsement.

1.3. The TAP project aimed to provide facilities (maps and GPS instruments), database expertise and training in minefield investigation to members of the MAPUs and some training to the provincial department heads serving on the PMACs. Central to the Task Assessment and Planning approach was the introduction of an analytical procedure for making decisions, a way of arriving at priorities that would rationalize the choices and imbue them with authority. Because this analytical tool involved applying a number of criteria – such as, for example, risk reduction, economic return, unambiguous beneficiaries and others – the tool has been referred to as a multi-criteria analysis (MCA).

1.4. Beginning in August 2004, the TAP project introduced these facilities and techniques to the MAPU members and, to some extent, to the PMAC participants. This set in motion a first year's planning cycle, and a year later in September 2005, the provincial MAPUs in five provinces produced their own list of minefields to clear in order of priority for approval by the PMACs.

1.5. Unexpectedly, another project funded by AusAID was scheduled to build MAPU capacity in the same five provinces over the same period of time. It was an awkward situation. The AusAID project funded Australian Volunteers International (AVI) to place four experienced specialists in Geographic Information Systems among the MAPUs. The presence of these four advisors might have been an asset for the TAP project,

and efforts were made at the beginning to make it so, but their collaboration has not been an easy one. Some project initiatives overlapped, others conflicted and the differences between them produced some difficult moments.

1.6. Among the more contentious issues between the two projects has been the centre-piece of the TAP project, the introduction of the MCA priority setting tool. The AVI advisors felt it was too complex and were concerned that the TAP project was introducing it in an unresponsive and inflexible manner. The TAP project quarreled with the AVI advisors for not giving their unqualified support. As it turned out, the priority setting tool did not receive wide acceptance, two provincial MAPUs declined to use it altogether, and this aspect of the project has fallen short of expectations.

1.7. Clearance operators were specifically mentioned in the Project Performance Planning Framework as stakeholders whom the project would actively engage in supporting the project, specifically in establishing the MCA priority setting tool. One might have expected the TAP project to make a greater effort to forge direct linkages with the clearance operators, with the objective ultimately of gaining broader acceptance from them and their partner NGOs in supporting the MAPU Process.

The MAPU Process

The MAPU Process refers to collaboration among a complex of provincial government bodies which have emerged in recent years to decide on the minefields that merit the most urgent attention. These provincial bodies have evolved with each passing year as refinements are made to what they are expected to do, to their resources and to their ever-increasing capacity. Though the core of this decision-making mechanism in the provinces is now the Mine Action Planning Unit (MAPU), the MAPU is only one of three provincial bodies which interact in supporting mine action planning and which the TAP project, and other projects preceding it, have aimed to strengthen. The other two are the Provincial Mine Action Committee (PMAC) and the District Working Group (DWG). The mechanism was officially recognized in the October 2004 Sub-Decree on Socio-Economic Management of Mine Clearance Operations approved by the Council of Ministers which describes the responsibilities and interactions among these provincial government bodies. The background of the MAPU Process and its relevance to the TAP project is described in Annex II.

1.8. The TAP project has delivered many of the inputs it promised, not all. But the way the project has been implemented has raised concerns. There are indications that the TAP project has not constructively engaged with key project stakeholders including not only the AVI partners, but also the CMAA national mine action coordinating body.

1.9. Section Five outlines how the various project inputs and issues have been assessed, what indicators were used and how. Section Six reviews the results of measuring project performance according to eight key indicators. On some of these indicators, the project performs well, on others less well and on some, poorly. The project was ranked with respect to each of these performance indicators by assigning a numbered ranking from 1 (lowest ranking) to 3 (highest ranking) and summing them. The project received a total of 15 points out of what would have been a perfect score of 24. This is 62 per cent of what

would have been an ideal score, less than what one might have expected. Three matters are principally responsible.

1.9.1. The use of a directive, rather than a consultative approach for introducing the MCA priority setting tool resulted in a number of intended users rejecting or losing interest in making it a part of their standard procedures.

1.9.2. The omission of any formal initiative to build bridges between the MAPU groups and the clearance operators as well as other NGOs meant that opportunities were missed for giving the MAPUs a greater role in managing and maintaining information and consequently for affording them greater authority in coordinating minefield clearance.

1.9.3. A collaborative relationship never emerged between the TAP project and the AVI project though they were implemented concurrently. The TAP project would have benefited by doing more to find ways for the two projects to make the most of their comparative advantages.

1.10. The TAP project has had some successes. Its training programs have been appreciated. MAPU members cite particularly the training by the TAP project field manager, who has extensive minefield experience, on how to survey a minefield and how, in particular to take safety precautions. This has made the MAPU members more inclined to conduct minefield investigations in person and to visit villages for confirming the claims made by the village chiefs in the initial investigations held at district offices. MAPU members are now visiting villages and minefields more than before. Inquiry protocols, information technology and GPS devices have been provided, giving their observations greater precision. Particularly commendable have been efforts of the TAP project to bring PMAC members on board by providing training to them, whether it be in minefield investigation or the use of the MCA priority setting tool.

1.11. But the shortcomings, especially regarding the way the project has been designed and implemented, are as prominent as the successes. An assessment of the TAP project offers a valuable opportunity for drawing lessons from this project's experience for improving performance in subsequent endeavors. Lessons learned are reviewed in Section 7.

2. Context of the TAP Project in Cambodia

2.1. A prepossessing concern of the mine action debate in Cambodia is whether to build capacity among government groups to make mine action decisions, or whether to get right to the task of clearing as many mines as possible without worrying about whether government bodies can do it or not. The country manager of HALO Trust, an influential operator, makes his case for clearing as many mines as possible rather bluntly: “We do mine action, not good governance,”¹ and he has a number of supporters among the more powerful donors including the US, Japan, Finland and the Netherlands. Others, Canada included, take the different view that building government capacity at the provincial level is a better investment, particularly building the capacity of the Mine Action Planning Units (MAPUs) and the higher level Provincial Mine Action Committees (PMACs).

2.2. There is another, related dimension to the debate. There are those who prefer to clear where there are the most mines and it matters little where they are located, again the position of HALO Trust and its supporters. They are skeptical of making clearance serve development ends since this puts off solving the real problem; it commits the error of “applying a long term solution to a short term problem”.² Others, like Canada’s development officers, argue alternatively that it is better to clear areas which would otherwise be productive, such as agricultural land or roads or water sources and that contamination, while important, is a secondary consideration. The primary consideration is solving poverty where people live and work and it makes little sense to go after the mines in heavily contaminated areas where the population is sparse or the economic return would be modest.

2.3. In the last few years, as the capacity of Cambodia’s provincial government bodies to solve the landmine problem has become stronger, they have made their views known on the question of whether to get rid of landmines and reduce accidents or to reduce poverty by clearing productive land. There is little doubt about the priority they place on making mine action serve economic development by clearing productive land. In all five of heavily contaminated provinces where the MAPUs function, they carefully weighed the value of choosing areas where risk to people was reduced or where land would be freed for economic potential, and in most cases gave priority to areas where there was economic or development potential. Their annual plans have not taken the matter lightly. Whether formally or informally, the criterion “agricultural potential” is weighted more than risk reduction.

2.4. Integrating mine clearance with good governance programs goes hand in hand with integrating mine action within a development perspective. Local planning bodies, when given the tools to work on their own and when obliged to make the choice, prefer

¹ Interview with Richard Boulter, Country Manager for HALO Trust in Cambodia, 14 February 2006

² An important assumption in HALO Trust’s claim is that the majority of land which is only lightly contaminated will be cleared by farmers on their own, though it is difficult for HALO to show just how much and where they are likely to do so. Their claim that the mine problem can be solved in a few years is disingenuous but it has been claimed so frequently and so vociferously, that it now has the ring of truth.

agricultural productivity over accident reduction. While acknowledging in principle the preference of government bodies to clear areas with economic potential, the foreign clearance operators tend to be guided in practice by other criteria and commitments.

2.5. For the moment, the larger donors support the decisions of foreign operators more than those of local planning bodies. Together, the activities of the two largest clearance operators – HALO Trust and MAG – consume between 50 and 60 per cent of all mine clearance resources available for Cambodia. Not more than 20 per cent of the clearance tasks that HALO Trust chooses in a year are likely to appear on the Mine Action Planning Unit annual plans. The same is true for MAG though for somewhat different reasons.³ Cambodia's national clearance operator, the Cambodia Mine Action Centre (CMAC), works differently since it explicitly supports MAPU decisions by clearing where MAPUs have given priority. Overall however, as long as donors support the separate agendas of the foreign clearance operators, the national clearance priorities and the MAPUs that set them will not have the prominence they deserve.

2.6. A recent proposal by the UNDP to establish and manage a trust fund⁴ for supporting national level and provincial mine action planning bodies might have led foreign operators to give greater support to national clearance priorities had it received more support. The idea of UNDP's new trust fund is that operators – HALO, MAG, CMAC and others who are accredited – are to be encouraged to bid on clearance projects financed out of this fund of donor contributions. Opening mine clearance to competitive bidding reduces the cost of landmine clearance by motivating operators to increase their efficiency, but it also aims to support national clearance priorities by largely restricting clearance tasks to those on the priority list of the provincial MAPUs. Canada is considering committing \$US 7.1 million over five years, Australia has committed a slightly larger amount, Norwegian People's Aid and the NGO Adopt-a-Minefield have also expressed interest. But this is not enough to bring the foreign operators HALO Trust and MAG around. Both have opposed the trust fund idea and have given notice that they will not participate in competitive bidding. The larger donors such as Japan, the US, DfID and the European Union have, up to now, declined to contribute to the trust fund.

2.7. The foreign operators, meanwhile, continue to be openly critical of the MAPU priorities. They readily cite cases where a Mine Action Planning Unit (MAPU) task has taken them into an area where there were no mines. Or they claim that many of the tasks

³ MAG espouses integration of mine action with development in theory but in practice it does not often follow the annual plan that the Mine Action Planning Units put forward. This is because MAG follows the directions that donors such as World Vision and others give them. These donors use MAG to make areas safe for their development inputs such as water projects or community development projects and in many cases, MAG clears areas principally in order to provide security for development workers, not because the areas are of strategic value. The effect is to work at cross purposes from the provincial planning bodies: in any given provinces, no more than 20 to 30 per cent of their mine clearance tasks would be the ones that the MAPU groups have put on their plan.

⁴ This is the new "Clearance for Results" multi-donor funding facility recently put forward by UNDP, described extensively in UNDP and Government of Cambodia, UNDP, Clearing for Results: A Partnership for Landmine Action in Cambodia, October 2005; see also Clearing for Results: A Partnership for Mine Action in Cambodia, Cambodia Mine Action Authority, December 2005

on the MAPU list are areas that have been poorly investigated or areas where they may clear a hectare of a minefield and find only one or two landmines that would not have gone off anyway. They complain that MAPU investigations are not adequate to the task and are likely to lead them to clear in areas that, when completed, will do little to impress their donors.

2.8. Canada collaborates with the Royal Government of Cambodia in supporting the building of national capacity at the federal and provincial levels. Implicit in this support is that preference should be given for clearing in areas where removing landmines enhances the economic potential of an area, in other words, for integrating mine action with development. As a general rule, mine action should not be an end in itself but a means to an explicit developmental end. It is within this perspective that Canada has supported the Task Assessment and Planning (TAP) project, which has sought to provide the MAPU groups with tools and skills that will enhance the credibility of their choices and promote the provincial MAPUs as the central coordinating and tasking mine clearance authority in the provinces.

2.9. The TAP project has served a core function in Canada's evolving strategy for Canadian development cooperation with Cambodia. It is one of the last projects to be funded through the Canadian Landmine Fund that has, over 5 years, funded more than \$8 million in mine action in Cambodia. Canada is concerned to build on these initiatives. This means supporting projects that integrate mine action with development in ways that bilateral programs will continue to fund.

2.10. Canada's Draft Interim Strategy (2005-2007) for Canadian Development Cooperation with Cambodia is explicit on this matter. It regards the RGC's National Strategic Development Plan (NSDP) 2006-2010 as Cambodia's own blueprint and, in its Interim Strategy,⁵ promotes two focus areas designated in the NSDP:

- Strengthening governance
- Private Sector Development- Rural Entrepreneurship

2.11. Mine action has a significant role in both of these. CIDA's Cambodia program in governance includes support for land reform that will facilitate access to land for the poor in rural areas and will support the Ministry of Land Management in re-building the land registry and reducing land disputes. The MAPUs play a crucial part in this process by ensuring fair distribution of areas where landmines are cleared. It will also include continued support for the MAPUs by supporting a program to regulate and direct clearance operators' priorities toward working more closely with the MAPUs and the PMACs.

2.12. Canada's program in private sector development and rural entrepreneurship includes support for providing integrated assistance to small farmers with combinations of village banking, assistance to farmer organizations and mine action. CIDA's

⁵ CIDA-ACDI, Canadian Development Cooperation with Cambodia, Interim Strategy 2005-2007, September 2005

Cambodia bilateral program has recently begun the Agricultural Development in Mine Affected Areas of Cambodia (ADMAC) project with support to mine action worth \$1.1 million over four years.

2.13. Canada's approach to mine action – making it part of larger governance or agricultural bilateral programs – is an important policy initiative. There is as yet little consensus in Cambodia that this kind of an approach is the one that will yield the most long term benefit. In fact, there is a body of opinion claiming that these kinds of projects detract from the most pressing task, which is to clear as many mines as quickly as possible. These are the stakes in making these projects work: not only to prove the point in which Canada has invested, but also to show the considerable value of integrating mine action into other projects that have as their ultimate objective to produce more food, reduce rural household poverty where it is the most severe and strengthen government planning capacity in affected provinces.

2.14. There is some indication that Canada's approach is gaining more international support than it previously had. Some major donors may be prepared to invest in programs that accord greater authority to local government planning bodies whose inclination has been to view mine action in a larger planning perspective, as serving larger economic development ends. The TAP project is by no means the only project that showcases this somewhat innovative approach, but it is an important one and its performance is a matter of some concern.

3. The Task Assessment and Planning Project

3.1. The Task Assessment and Planning project commenced on 4 August 2004 with an estimated completion date of June 2006. This evaluation has been carried out during the 18th month of a 22 month project. Very few project activities are envisioned for the remaining months apart from regular visits from the project field manager. Total CIDA funds budgeted for the TAP project amounts to \$720,483 and as of 28 February 2006, \$648,594 had been disbursed. Ninety percent of the budget has been spent and 82 per cent of the project's expected duration has passed.

3.2. The project has taken place in five sites. In three of them a related project will continue to provide support for the central beneficiary organizations, the Mine Action Planning Units (MAPUs). This is the Agricultural Development in Mine-Affected Areas of Cambodia (ADMAC) project which is underway. This will allow the support provided by the TAP project to segue into another support mechanism although of a different and diminished nature.⁶ In the other two sites, there are no further formal TAP project activities. Here, the Mine Action Planning Units (MAPUs) and the planning mechanisms which support them continue nevertheless since funding comes from other sources. Principal among these sources is the AusAID supported AVI project.⁷

3.3. No exit strategy has been devised by the TAP project, perhaps because support continues in three provinces through a related Canadian support mechanism (the ADMAC project) and, in the other two provinces, because support continues from other sources. It is nevertheless essential that the project stipulate procedures and policies to accompany the termination of the TAP project (see Section 8 Recommendations).

3.4. Geospatial International (GSI), a Canadian firm, has implemented the TAP project. Its experience in Cambodia has included, among other things, carrying out the Landmine Information Survey (LIS), a nationwide level one survey, five years ago. Geospatial International continues its presence in Cambodia in the context of a contribution agreement to manage the Agricultural Development in Mine Affected Areas of Cambodia (ADMAC).

3.5. The TAP project had a focused objective, and this was to introduce a conceptual tool for making credible decisions about which minefields required prior attention in any given planning period. This was important because the stakes in these decisions are high and they must be seen to be made in an objective and credible manner. The decisions must be credible to the villagers who are impatient to have their fields cleared, and they also must be credible to the foreign clearance operators who are inclined to make their own decisions with little regard to the MAPU Process. The TAP project's principal input was therefore a tool for doing this, an analytical tool that took the MAPU members

⁶ Support for the Mine Action Planning Units (MAPUs) in the context of the ADMAC project is still open to discussion though it has been part of the project design.

⁷ In addition, funding is expected from the national mine action coordination body (CMAA), from the donor supported Seila project or its successor and from NGOs.

through establishing criteria, applying the criteria to each of the suspected mined areas, ensuring that the proper information was available for applying this tool, weighting the criteria in ways the members saw fit and then using the process to decide which of the minefields required prior attention. It would ensure that no minefield made the final list without ample justification. The TAP project used the phrase, multi-criteria analysis (MCA) to refer to this priority setting tool.

3.6. Training was carried out on applying this tool at various stages. Project managers trained TAP project staff members, chairmen of MAPUs and the PMAC, and the MAPU staff were expected then to train the District Working Group (DWG) members. The TAP project employed one person in each province – in two instances, someone from the MAPU itself – to work for the TAP project as trainers and team leaders.⁸ Throughout the year, from September 2004 to September 2005, as the annual planning cycle progressed, MAPU members were to prepare a work plan for the PMAC to approve using the MCA priority setting tool for justifying choices. Other project inputs served the application of the MCA priority setting tool, including the following.

3.6.1. Forms and techniques for data collection from communes and village chiefs at the district level were introduced.

3.6.2. Village specific, up-to-date maps, generated from satellite imagery for aiding the village chiefs in identifying minefields were to be provided by the project to aid in confirming information. As it happened, the TAP project decided not to purchase satellite imagery and instead attempted to make older aerial photographs usable by increasing their resolution. The process took time and these enhanced photos were provided only toward the end of the project.

3.6.3. A database scheme was to be designed that would keep the records of MAPU investigations, allowing them to track information and decisions made on a province-wide inventory of suspected mined areas; the original idea was to incorporate a number of other data sets, such as poverty data, mine victim and demographic data in the same system. As it happened, the TAP project did assemble a database package, but the AVI database expert felt it was overly difficult to use and developed his own. The Geospatial supported TAP database scheme was never adopted as part of the project.

3.6.4. Training was provided for all those involved in using the maps and forms and analytical tools.

3.6.5. Capacity building among the institutions was expected to make the decision-making tool and associated practices a part of their standard procedures.

3.7. Official documentation for the TAP project reflects its focus on introducing this analytical tool. Three out of the four proposed outputs and outcomes dealt with the

⁸ This became a contentious issue between the two projects, TAP and AVI, since AVI disagreed with TAP's taking skillful Mine Action Planning Unit members out of the group when their principal concern was to build the MAPU's capacity.

introduction and adoption of the MCA priority setting tool. The Project Performance Planning Framework was designed accordingly. It is reproduced in Table 3.1. Five out of the seven outcome and output indicators track the adoption of the MCA priority setting tool.

3.1. TAP Project Performance Planning Framework

Performance Indicators	
Outcome Indicators	
1	MAPU staff can manage priority setting process
2	Stakeholders actively participate in establishing decision support tool criteria
Output Indicators	
3	MAPU stakeholders are able to participate in MCA in a transparent manner
4	MAPU staff can assemble required data for multi-criteria analysis decision support system
5	Stakeholders agree the new photo maps are useful for priority setting
6	CMAA database unit is able to provide up to date information to local staff
7	MAPU, District and Commune Staff are able to operate and manage MCA without external technical advisors

Source: (1) Geospatial International, "Proposed Logical Framework Analysis and Performance Monitoring Plan," Task Assessment and Planning Project – The Introduction of MCA Decision Support at LUPUs in Cambodia, Project Design Document, September 2003; (2) Geospatial International, "Project Performance Planning Framework," Contribution Agreement, July 2004

3.8. The TAP project undertook a self-assessment exercise in August 2005 involving the Project Director, Project Field Manager and Project Field Coordinator over a two week period. This three-person team visited each of the five sites and asked stakeholders to rank the level of satisfaction project participants felt with reference to a number of topics. The topics were more diverse than the topics proposed in Performance Planning Framework ranging from "the appropriateness of uniforms" to "minefield investigations" to "use of the database" to "confidence in ability to communicate successfully with the PMAC." The respondents were asked to rank the level of confidence from one to ten on each of these issues, first for the period before the project and then for the present. The rankings were averaged and pre-project scores were compared to present scores. When asked about their satisfaction with their uniforms before the project, their average score was a 2 (out of 10) and after the project, their score was 9.4, a change of 7.4. When asked about their satisfaction (and confidence) in using the priority setting tool before the project, the average score was 4.1 and afterwards the average score increased to 7.3, a change 3.8. A summary of the results is in Annex III.

3.9. Satisfaction is greatest for the uniforms. Satisfaction with training on how to conduct minefield investigations is ranked 4th out of 15. Satisfaction or confidence in using the priority setting tool is ranked 11th out of 15. Capacity to prioritize minefield tasks is ranked 13th and confidence in ability to function without outside support is ranked 15th. Table 3.2. shows the ranking among the 15 assessed topics for the seven performance indicators given in the project's original performance indicators. Among the fifteen topics examined in this self-assessment, these are ranked in the bottom third.

3.10. Table 3.2. shows how the original performance concerns fared among the 15 topics assessed in the TAP Project Self-Assessment Exercise.

Table 3.2. Ranking of the Original Performance Indicators among the 15 Topics Reviewed in the TAP Project Self-Assessment Exercise

	Performance Indicator	Ranking out of 15 assessed topics
1	MAPU staff can manage priority setting process	11th
2	Stakeholders actively participate in establishing decision support tool criteria	Not assessed
3	MAPU stakeholders are able to participate in MCA in a transparent manner	13th
4	MAPU staff can assemble required data for multi-criteria analysis decision support system ¹	9th
5	Stakeholders agree the new photo maps are useful for priority setting	14th
6	CMAA database unit is able to provide up to date information to local staff	Not assessed
7	MAPU, District and Commune Staff are able to operate and manage MCA without external technical advisors	15th

¹This is given as “knowledge of interview techniques” in the list of assessment topics.

4. Methods and Measures

4.1. Three key issues structure this assessment of the TAP project's performance in five Cambodian provinces: (1) results achievement, (2) sustainability and capacity building, and (3) collaboration and coordination.

4.2. The assessment has sought to capture project performance in meeting the goals and objectives it set for itself in the most efficient manner possible. Its indicators may therefore be expressed somewhat differently from the performance measures given in the project's own Logical Framework Analysis and Project Performance Planning Framework. They cover the same issues, only more succinctly. In order to demonstrate the pertinence of this evaluation's indicators, Annex IV traces the linkages between this evaluation's indicators and the TAP project's planned outcomes and outputs.

4.3. Attribution is an important consideration. The TAP project was one of a number of factors that influenced the principal target of the project, i.e. the three-tiered provincial mine action planning mechanism. This mechanism has been in existence for some eight years (see Annex II). The MAPU Process) and the recipient of support from a diversity of sources and organizations. The TAP project inputs are the most recent of these and a piece of the larger puzzle of inputs that have come to make the MAPUs work better. There are other pieces of equal or greater significance. The AusAID funded, Australian Volunteers International Capacity Building for Mine Action project functioned simultaneously and kept four technical experts in place in each of the five provinces where the TAP project worked on a permanent basis. They advised and coached the MAPU members daily, while the TAP project had only an intermittent presence in the five project sites. Although indicators are chosen which aim to isolate the performance of the TAP project from that of the AusAID project, the effects are difficult to separate.

Results Achievement

4.4.1. *Adoption and Use of the MCA decision making tool.* The adoption and use of the MCA decision making tool for setting priorities captures the TAP project-specific input, in particular, how effectively it was conceived and introduced.

Performance indicator I: Adoption of the MCA decision making tool as part of the MAPU regular operating procedures assessed on a scale of 1 to 4: 1 = no system of priority setting used; 2 = a rudimentary priority setting system used without reference to MCA; 3 = a priority setting system used based on MCA but poorly understood; 4 = a priority setting system, based on MCA, used and understood.

Performance Indicator II: Percentage of the total clearance tasks assigned high priority. The MCA tool is used most efficiently when it successfully discriminates between high, medium and low priority tasks, specifically when it is able to reserve high priority rankings for a select few, or small percentage of total tasks; it is less useful when it fails to discriminate and assigns high priority to a large percentage of tasks.

4.4.2. *Acceptance of MAPU decisions by clearance operators.* The objective of support to the provincial mine action planning bodies is for their decisions to guide those of clearance operators about where to clear. Only then are the provincial mine action planning bodies in a position to coordinate mine clearance tasks and to ensure that the tasks selected correspond to provincial and local concerns, not the special agendas of donors or of the operators themselves.

Performance indicator III: MAPU sanctioned clearance tasks expressed as a percentage of all annual clearance tasks for each of the operators.

4.4.3. *MAPU coverage of affected communes and districts.* An important measure of MAPU's reliability is the number of affected villages and communes where inquiries have taken place and the coverage that MAPUs have been able to achieve in a province.

Performance indicator IV: Number of districts and communes where MAPU members have conducted investigations expressed as a percentage of total affected districts and communes in a province.

Sustainability

4.5.1. *Technical capacity and skills acquisition.* An overall estimation of skill levels was elicited by asking the MAPUs in each of the five provinces to assess themselves by answering the question: how many years were needed before the MAPU themselves felt fully competent to perform all functions without outside technical assistance?

Performance indicator V: Number of years required before MAPU members are able to perform all functions without external assistance – view of MAPU members.

4.5.2. *Quality of Governance.* MAPUs are governed internally by chairmen, or chiefs, appointed by the provincial governor. The quality of this leadership is an indication of the commitment of the provincial government to provide quality leaders as well as a significant factor in the strength of the MAPU as an institution. The TAP project conducted training programs for these leaders and was in a position to enhance their grasp of, and commitment to the MAPU Process.

Performance indicator VI: Quality of leadership based on observations and polling of stakeholders judged by whether the leader has a clear grasp of the MAPU Process assessed on a scale of 1 to 4: 1= no grasp of the MAPU Process in general, the sequence of operations, the database and the ranking system; 2= little grasp of the MAPU Process, the sequence of operations, the database and the ranking system; 3= moderate grasp of the MAPU Process with evidence of contributing creatively to the sequence of operations, the database and the ranking system; 4 = full grasp of the MAPU Process with evidence of contributing creatively to the sequence of operations, the database and the ranking system

Performance indicator VII: Quality of leadership based on observation, polling of stakeholders judged by the respect he holds among the MAPU members assessed on a scale of 1 to 4: 1 = no capacity to instill coherence and motivation to the group; 2 = moderate capacity to instill coherence and motivation; 3 =demonstrated capacity to instill coherence and motivation; 4 = innovative in instilling coherence and motivation.

Collaboration and Coordination

4.6. With a number of other contributors supporting the MAPU Process or involved in its evolution, it was essential for the TAP project to work in concert with other stakeholders to avoid duplication, to ensure the lessons of the TAP project benefited other programs and to marshal the support of a range of actors for the inputs specific to the TAP project.

Performance indicator VIII: Record of collaboration with three bodies or institutions:

- Australian Volunteers International
- Cambodian Mine Action Authority (the national coordinating body),
- Provincial Mine Action Committees

5. Results, Sustainability and Coordination

Results Achievement

5.1. By the end of the year 2005, all five Mine Action Planning Units (MAPUs) had concluded a first year's planning cycle culminating in a provincial workshop that approved their province's mine clearance plan for 2006. TAP project inputs aimed to expedite the planning cycle, improve the quality and give it a greater measure of authority. Three indicators serve to render account of what the project has achieved.

Adoption of the MCA priority setting tool

5.1.2. Users of the MCA priority setting tool were expected to identify different criteria, or reasons, for why a minefield should be cleared, including typically: (1) reduction of risk, (2) whether the cleared land would have an immediate development spin-off such as growing crops or clearing school grounds, (3) numbers of beneficiaries, (4) whether a clearance operator (HALO Trust, MAG or CMAC) seemed interested in tackling the project and (5) whether clear ownership of the cleared land could be demonstrated.⁹ Then they ranked the importance of clearing a minefield for each criterion with 1 being the least and 3 being the most important: a minefield might receive a ranking of 1 from the perspective of 'reduction of risk' and a ranking of 3 from the point of view of having a 'development spin-off.' The rankings for all the criteria used were summed to get an overall score for each minefield that could be compared to other minefields under consideration.

5.1.3. The original idea was to introduce this scheme at district level meetings when all the demining tasks for a district and its constituent communes were reviewed by the District Working Group. The majority of the District Working Groups failed to understand the activity.¹⁰

5.1.4. Ideally, the MCA priority setting tool was to be used at the provincial level when the MAPU presented results of their investigations for consideration by the PMAC who met to approve the work plan for the year. Each of the 100 or 200 minefields were to be ranked according to agreed-upon criteria and when the scheme included 5 or more criteria, it was very time consuming. All of the PMACs tried the scheme initially. Two of the provinces, Preah Vihear and Otdor Meancheay subsequently declined to use the scheme for various reasons. The Battambang MAPU made an effort to use the scheme

⁹ Each of the three provinces that chose to use the TAP project MCA scheme adopted different numbers of criteria – 3 in Pailin, 5 in Battambang and 7 in Banteay Meancheay.

¹⁰ The AVI advisors have recommended against the use of the MCA priority setting tool at the District Working Group level: "The matrix scoring approach dominates, distracts and confuses the workshop attendees, and the results from this year's experience are not actually utilized for the final district workplan decisions. AusAID – Australian Volunteers International, "Review and Recommendations from MAPU Planning Process 2005," February 2006

though the leader of the group had a poor grasp of what was involved. In the remaining two provinces, only one weighted the criteria. Table 5.1. reviews the levels of adoption.

Table 5.1. Adoption Levels for the MCA Priority Setting Tool in the First Planning Cycle

Province	Was it adopted?	Level of adoption ¹	Remarks
Battambang	Yes, but application not fully understood	3	Each demining task was scored from 1 to 3 on seven criteria and the scores summed to distinguish between high, medium and low. None of the MAPU members were able to explain how scores were assigned.
Pailin	Yes	4	Each demining task was scored from 1 to 3 on five criteria and the scores summed to distinguish between high, medium and low priority.
Banteay Maenchey	Yes	4	For each demining task, potential uses and number of beneficiaries were given. In addition, scores were assigned for each of nine criteria. The criteria were arranged in two groups: risk reduction and economic benefit and, each were weighted. Subtotals were summed for the two categories and used with overall totals for distinguishing between high, medium and low priorities. A written explanation of the scoring system was prepared.
Otdor Meanchey	No	2	Demining task priorities were assigned by proposing a year – 2006, 2007 or 2008 – for clearance. These years had been assigned by village chiefs when initially questioned. The training of the PMAC members came too late in the planning cycle for them to apply the prioritizing scheme. Enthusiasm for the scheme was low.
Preah Vihear	No	1	The area and the number of beneficiaries were given for each demining task. The MAPU members had decided not to apply the TAP project's MCA priority setting tool.
Total score for level of adoption		14	
% of maximum score		56%	

¹ 1 = no system of priority setting used; 2 = a rudimentary priority setting system used without reference to MCA; 3 a priority setting system used based on MCA but poorly understood; 4 = a priority setting system, based on MCA, used and understood

5.1.5. After encountering some resistance, various efforts were made to render the scheme more user-friendly. Since the TAP project did not have an on-going presence in

the provinces, it relied on the other (AVI) project’s advisors to keep an interest in the MCA priority setting tool alive. The AVI advisors, however, had reservations about the priority setting tool and expressed frustration at having to support a scheme which they found difficult to convey and which they felt was not entirely appropriate to the circumstances.

5.1.6. The MCA priority setting tool has been applied with comprehension in two of the five MAPUs. It was applied in a third without full comprehension, in a rudimentary way in a fourth, and not all in a fifth. This evaluation’s assessment of adoption levels of the priority setting tool gives 56 per cent of the maximum score (Table 5.1.). In contrast, the TAP project’s progress report for the quarter ending December 30th 2005 claimed that “97% of MAPU staff and PMAC are able to apply the MCA weighting and scoring system.”¹¹

5.1.7. The success of the scheme for setting priorities depends not only on its adoption but also on how it is used to make difficult discriminations among mine clearance tasks. The scheme is of limited utility when a high percentage of tasks is ranked in the high priority category. Table 5.2. gives a breakdown of how many tasks fell into each category (high, medium, low priority) expressed as a percentage for each of the provinces.

Table 5.2. Number and Per Cent of Mine Clearance Tasks Given High, Medium and Low Priority

Province	# High priority SMAs		Medium Priority SMAs		Low priority SMAs		Total Tasks
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	
Battambang	67	62%	31	29%	10	9%	108
Pailin	40	57%	10	14%	20	29%	70
Banteay Maenchey	93	72%	26	22%	7	6%	126
Otdor Meanchey ¹	47	21%	42	20%	131	59%	220
Preah Vihear ²	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

¹In Otdor Meanchey, MAPU applied a very different ranking scheme, based on whether village leaders requested clearance in 2006, 2007 or 2008. 2006, 2007 and 2008 are taken here to mean high, medium and low respectively.

²In Preah Vihear, the group decided not to apply the MCA priority setting tool and not to use rankings.

5.1.8. In the three provinces where the scheme was adopted (Battambang, Pailin and Banteay Meahchey) high priorities were assigned to the majority of the tasks. This reflects the temptation for villages to give information that stresses the urgency of implementation and for provincial officials to convey this urgency to donors. The MCA priority setting tool might have been more credible had it avoided this temptation. In a fourth province, Otdor Meanchey, MAPU members ranked mine clearance tasks by

¹¹ GeoSpatial International Inc, “Task Assessment and Planning Project in Cambodia” Progress Report for the Quarter Ended 30 December 2005

whether the task should be undertaken in 2006, 2007 or 2008. The proportion of urgent tasks in this province – i.e. scheduled for 2006 - is less than in the others.

5.1.9. Many of the MAPUs fill out the matrix in deference to the TAP project, but the application has been a struggle and it will probably not become a regular MAPU practice in the long term if used in its present form. It is too complex an instrument to be used at the District Working Group level; in its original form it is too time consuming for provincial level decision makers to adopt; and many MAPU members find it cumbersome to apply. A simpler approach has been proposed in a recent review of the MAPU planning process by the AVI advisors.¹²

Acceptance of MAPU Decisions by Clearance Operators

5.2.1. Three operators have a presence in the five northwest provinces: the Cambodian Mine Action Centre (CMAC), HALO Trust and MAG. CMAC is a para-statal organization that follows MAPU priorities with some exceptions. HALO Trust clears mainly where the contamination is worse, where they find the largest number of landmines and where accidents are more likely to happen. For the most part, this excludes clearing for economic benefit and puts HALO Trust at odds with the MAPU Process. MAG clears in response to the wishes of its donors, be it Care or DFID or World Vision, who task MAG to clear at project sites to reassure them of their staff's safety. Since MAG must respond to its funding partners, it may agree with MAPU priorities in principle but it does not follow them in practice (see footnote 3).

5.2.2. The question is whether the support MAPU members have received through the TAP project has made any difference in their credibility with operators, whether the operators are more inclined now than before to include MAPU priorities in their work plan. Some operators do not work in some of the provinces, and in some of the provinces it was not possible to meet with the operators.¹³ Table 5.3. assembles the data and gives the percentage of MAPU priorities among the operator tasks in four provinces for each of the three operators.

5.2.3. The CMAC operators support MAPU priorities with the occasional exception of tasks that come to them as emergencies or as requests to clear areas where development related construction is pending. Clearance for school construction is such a case. HALO Trust takes on a few MAPU tasks when these fit their own criteria, and the district of Kamrieng in Table 5.3. is a good example. The HALO Trust office in Otdor Meanchey is exceptional in the northwest in working more closely with the MAPU office. MAG clears first where their donors wish them to clear and the data from the two MAG offices given in Table 5.3. is illustrative. For the six cases reported in the table the percentage of MAPU priorities among the total number of tasks accepted by operators is less than 50 per cent.

¹² AusAID – Australian Volunteers International, “Review and Recommendations from MAPU Planning Process 2005,” February 2006

¹³ No operators were interviewed in Pailin.

Table 5.3. Acceptance of MAPU Priorities by Clearance Operators - 2006

Province	Total operator tasks for area in question	Number of MAPU tasks included	MAPU tasks as per cent of operator totals
Cambodia Mine Action Centre (CMAC) Tasking			
Banteay Meanchey	51	45	88%
Preah Vihear	65	61	94%
HALO Trust Tasking			
Battambang (Kamrieng)	50	9	18%
Otdor Meanchey	16	14	88%
MAG Tasking			
Battambang	124	24	19%
Preah Vihear	50	15	30%
Total	356	168	47%

5.2.4. This is low. Efforts to strengthen the MAPU Process have not achieved their objective of making the MAPU credible coordinators of mine clearance planning. Some changes are taking place nevertheless: MAPU members are now welcome in the offices of MAG and HALO Trust and there is closer contact between MAPU members and operators in all provinces. Almost all the operators regard the MAPU office as the clearing house for clearance operations, and they are generally conscientious about notifying MAPU of their intentions to clear even if the task does not figure on MAPU's priority list.

MAPU Coverage of Affected Communes and Districts

5.3. MAPU members collected minefield data initially from village chiefs brought together at commune offices to provide information on their home villages, and subsequently, by visiting select villages/minefields to confirm information on reported minefields. All MAPUs made an effort to have some contact with a large percentage of the affected communes. Table 6.4. reviews the number of districts and communes visited by the MAPU members and shows this as a percentage of the affected areas.

5.3.1. A number of factors influence coverage. More efficient investigative techniques provided by the TAP project have made some difference. The number of members in the MAPU group and how well they function is another. Support from the provincial government is a particularly important factor since the PMAC chairman can facilitate matters, secure funding for travel or sign travel requests without delay; he can also obstruct MAPU activities by not tending to these matters. Size is also a factor. Battambang and Preah Vihear are the larger provinces and here coverage is less than elsewhere. Note that Table 5.4. shows only the coverage for the first planning cycle without any comparison to a baseline or previous year.

Table 5.4. Coverage of Affected Districts and Communes

Province	# Affected Districts	# Districts Covered	% Coverage	# Affected Communes	# Communes Covered	% Coverage
Battambang	13	9 ¹	69%	49	16	33%
Pailin	2	2	100%	8	8	100%
Banteay Meanchey	5	5	100%	32	32	100%
Otdor Meanchey	5	4	80%	24	8	33%
Preah Vihear	4	4	100%	29 ²	38	76%

¹This number varied considerably in the discussion, from 3 to 9. The higher number is used here.

²Actually the MAPU members covered only 10 of these, but the CMAP-C, a GSI employee working separately from the MAPU provided coverage for some more. There was little coordination between the CMAP-C and the MAPUs and there was some overlap.

5.3.2. There have undoubtedly been increases in coverage from the previous year, even if they are not shown in Table 6.4. and the TAP project can take some of the credit. At the same time, the table does show provinces where the percentage of affected areas covered remains modest and, not surprisingly, these are the areas where provincial support is less and where more effort is required to ensure greater budgetary and political support from provincial leaders for MAPU transport and travel allowances. These are areas where a more effective capacity building approach, implemented with a greater concern for donor, NGO and government coordination would have placed a greater obligation on provincial officials to support the MAPU Process.

Sustainability and Capacity Building

5.4. Government bodies like the MAPUs are more likely to endure when they serve their purposes expertly and when they are governed well. The TAP project contributed to both technical capacity with training and equipment and to good governance through efforts to improve the quality of leadership.

Technical capacity and skills acquisition

5.4.1. The MAPUs and their oversight body, the PMACs received a succession of inputs in 2005: a scheme for collecting data, training in data collection, minefield safety, database management for the information collected, a matrix for setting priorities and coaching for putting it in practice, the use of maps and other mine action related skills. The acquisition of these resources and skills should have built group confidence and increased the groups' independence from external expertise. The extent to which this occurred is reflected in MAPU members' response when asked how many years would it take before they could work entirely on their own.

5.4.1. In most cases, MAPU members felt they had mastered the field work part of the job. They had learned to walk in and work in minefields, they had learned the forms and they had mastered the entry of data. But there were some areas where they admitted more skill was needed. The first was the management of data since many of them were familiar

with the MS Access database and GIS but felt uncomfortable with exporting data and manipulating it. They were concerned about presenting the data in spreadsheets for consideration by the PMACs or the clearance operators. Some mentioned they had not fully understood the MCA priority setting tool. And they were particularly concerned about their capacity to negotiate their needs and concerns with provincial government overseers, the PMACs and the national coordination body, the CMAA. Table 5.5. gives specific answers to the question, *how long before you are able to perform these activities on your own?* Confidence is high, especially in two locations, Pailin and Preah Vihear where, notably, the MAPU chairmen have been effective and supportive. It is worth noting that the number of years needed before MAPU members felt ready to work on their own increases where governance has been less effective.

Table 5.5. Number of Years before MAPUs Feel They Can Work on their Own

	Battambang	Pailin	Banteay Meanchey	Otdor Meanchey	Preah Vihear
Years	2	1	2	1.5	1

Governance

5.4.2. MAPUs are governed internally by chairmen appointed by the provincial governor. The quality of their governance is an indication of the commitment of the provincial government to appoint capable individuals; it is also an indication of the personal commitment that the MAPU chairman brings to the job.¹⁴ The TAP project conducted training programs for these leaders and was in a position to enhance their grasp of, and commitment to, the MAPU Process.

5.4.3. Formal and informal discussions with MAPU members, advisors and government officials have contributed to assessing leadership according to two indicators: (1) the MAPU chairman's grasp of the MAPU Process and (2) the respect the chairman receives from the MAPU members. Results are given in Table 6.6.

5.4.4. In Preah Vihear, a diligent MAPU chairman has held the post from the beginning of the project, he is senior and commands respect. In Pailin, an excellent leader has just resigned but her legacy remains strong and her successor is strong and well-informed. In Battambang, there is a MAPU chairman who does not fully understand the process or the data and, while appreciated, does not command respect within his group. In Banteay Meanchey, the MAPU chairman neglects his duties and leaves responsibility to a deputy. In Otdor Meanchey, the present MAPU chairman has assumed the responsibilities of a capable predecessor who was hired out of the MAPU group by the TAP project as its local coordinator and who never returned. Circumstances vary, but overall conditions for ensuring greater competence and continuity in MAPU leadership need to be improved.

¹⁴ The remuneration that MAPU members and their chairmen receive is too little to command a full time commitment from most officers who typically hold other jobs while keeping their government post. It requires a person with genuine commitment to commit full time.

Table 5.6. Quality of Leadership

Province	Grasp of the Process ¹	Respect of the Group ²	Total score
Battambang	1	2	3
Pailin	3	2	5
Banteay Maencheay ³	3	1	5
Otdor Meancheay	2	2	4
Preah Vihear	3	3	6
Total	12	10	23
% of maximum score	80%	67%	76%

¹1= Little grasp of the MAPU Process in general, the sequence of operations, the database and the ranking system; 2= moderate grasp of the MAPU Process, the sequence of operations, the database and the ranking system; 3= full grasp of the MAPU Process with evidence of contributing creatively to the sequence of operations, the database and the ranking system.

²1 = moderate capacity to instill coherence and motivation to the group; 2 = demonstrated capacity to instill coherence and motivation; 3. innovative in instilling coherence and motivation

³In Banteay Meancheay, the MAPU Chief rarely participated and in his place, a Deputy Chief had become the *de facto* leader. The low score in the second column accounts for the resentment felt among the group of having to make up for an absentee leader and does not reflect on the leadership capacity of the Deputy Chief.

Coordination and collaboration

5.5. Although coordination and collaboration do not figure in the project's objectives or anticipated results, they have been essential preconditions for achieving them. The mine action sector in Cambodia involves a number of actors and cross cutting networks for linking them. Collaboration with them individually, and through the cross-cutting networks, is essential for any initiative and especially for the TAP project in this first planning cycle year when the AusAID Australian Volunteers International supported a similar project with similar objectives in the same locations.

5.5.1. Initially, the two projects – TAP and AVI – resolved to collaborate and together they established a Joint Steering Committee to guide their collaboration. The principal cross-cutting network, Cambodian National Mine Action NGO Forum (an informal but influential working group of mine action actors), expressed its concern early on about the two overlapping projects and struck its own internal committee, headed by the country director for HALO Trust, to oversee the two projects' collaboration. As it turned out neither the Mine Action Forum coordinating committee nor the Joint Steering Committee¹⁵ took any significant initiative to promote a collaborative working relationship between them or to resolve differences as they arose.

5.5.2. The two projects were left to forge their own relationship. Their collaboration is the first and most important of three collaborations discussed below. The second is the TAP project's interaction with the Cambodian Mine Action Authority (CMAA), the national

¹⁵ The Joint Steering Committee for the AVI and TAP projects has met three times over 18 months.

coordination body which has maintained a close interest and not always an easy relationship with the TAP project. The third is the TAP project's on-going involvement with the PMACs, the provincial bodies that oversee the activities of the MAPUs.

The TAP project and Australian Volunteers International (AVI)

5.5.3. AVI had previous experience with mine action planning at the provincial level since technical advisors from AVI had been working with the provincial government in Battambang since 1999. When the two projects came simultaneously on stream in August/September 2004, four new AVI technical advisors arrived to work closely with the five target provinces. They were experienced professionals with GIS, engineering and land use planning skills and their functions had been agreed following extended consultation. By contrast, the TAP project appeared to “drop from the clouds” with less consultation.¹⁶

5.5.3.1. While there were attempts on the part of the TAP project and the AVI advisors to work together, differences arose. The AVI advisors objected to the TAP project engaging MAPU staff for TAP project activities in two provinces, essentially removing experienced personnel from the MAPU team that the AVI advisors had come to strengthen.

5.5.3.2. When the TAP project introduced its MCA priority setting tool, the AVI technical advisors suggested the tool, as it was being presented, might be too complex for the MAPU members to use effectively. The TAP project reacted strongly to the AVI advisors' expression of concern. It is possible that the AVI advisors expressed their concern in ill-chosen circumstances, in the context of a public forum. The TAP Project reacted strongly. Its director notes in the Progress Report for March 31st 2005 that “collaboration with Australian Volunteers International became very difficult in January with representatives of AVI raising differences of approach between AVI and GSI (TAP project) in two separate public forums, without prior contact with GSI management.” The report notes further that the second meeting, “attended by the Ambassador of Canada, was marred by the airing of issues by AVI that had not been previously discussed with the TAP project.”¹⁷ The differences were raised in a meeting between the Australian and Canadian Ambassadors. These differences were subsequently reconciled to some extent, but the AVI advisors regretted the matter had escalated to such a level and were subsequently judicious in choosing matters for discussion with the TAP Project Director. Future collaboration on the MCA priority setting tool was limited. The AVI advisors continued to have reservations about the complexity of the MCA priority setting tool discreetly urging that the tool be significantly simplified.¹⁸ And the TAP Project Director

¹⁶ Interview with Scott Rankin, Senior Manager, Australian Volunteers International. This view was shared by a number of informants familiar with the TAP project.

¹⁷ GeoSpatial International Inc, “Task Assessment and Planning in Cambodia,” Progress Report for the Quarter Ended March 31st 2005

¹⁸ AusAID – Australian Volunteers International, “Review and Recommendations from MAPU Planning Process 2005 in the Capacity Building for Mine Action Project” February 2006

continued to suspect members of the AVI team of providing “conflicting advice” that limited the tool’s acceptance in certain provinces.¹⁹

5.5.3.3. Differences arose on two further issues. The first was over what software was more appropriate for the long term maintenance of minefield records. The TAP project specialist, engaged by the TAP project for a period of nine months, preferred a more elaborate software while the AVI advisors advocated something simpler. The TAP project database was completed but never used.

5.5.3.4. The second issue emerged following the preparation, by the TAP project, of a Technical Operation Guidebook²⁰ summarizing the project’s view of the seven basic operations the MAPU Process ought to undertake in a typical planning cycle with particular reference to the use of the MCA priority setting tool. The Technical Operation Guidebook had been reviewed by each of the provinces. But the AVI advisors were concerned that the Guidebook should be incorporated into the CMAA national guidelines and approved by the CMAA before being made part of the standard procedures for the provinces. The TAP project rejected this suggestion claiming the Guidebook is “MAPU/PMAC property for their local operational guidance.”²¹

The TAP project and the Cambodian Mine Action Authority (CMAA)

5.5.4. The Cambodia Mine Action Authority (CMAA) is the national coordinating body. It maintains a national database, provides a national forum where issues of national importance are discussed and, in principle, oversees the MAPU Process. It might have been logical for the TAP project to forge closer links with the CMAA, but it did not. Even though the TAP project signed its Memorandum of Understanding²² with the CMAA, the CMAA was rarely consulted on project matters.

5.5.4.1. The TAP project may have had its reasons for keeping CMAA at arms length and for avoiding any relationship that would have involved financial transactions. But promises were made and never fulfilled and the consequence has been that the CMAA has remained resentful of the TAP project. The CMAA Director has accused the TAP project of betraying him and of betraying the government institution which supports and coordinates mine action.²³

5.5.4.2. It might have mattered little had the TAP project been engaged in an endeavor that relied less on government support. However, the TAP project was building a

¹⁹ GeoSpatial International Inc, “Task Assessment and Planning in Cambodia,” Progress Report for the Quarter ended December 30th, 2005

²⁰ Mine Action Planning Units and the TAP project, Technical Operation Guidebook, draft, December 2005

²¹ GeoSpatial International Inc, “Task Assessment and Planning in Cambodia,” Progress Report for the Quarter ended December 30th, 2005

²² The Memorandum of Understanding was signed in mid-2004 between GeoSpatial International Inc., in partnership with Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) Government of Canada and Cambodia Mine Action and Victim Assistance Authority (CMAA) Royal Government of Cambodia.

²³ Interview with HE Sam Sotha, Advisor to the Prime Minister and Secretary General of Cambodian Mine Action and Victim Assistance Authority, 20 February 2006

government institution with modest resources and relied on the support of government institutions. Support was needed in particular to ensure that the political and financial resources of the provincial government would be made available when needed. In the instances where the provincial governor or deputy governor has declined to provide support to the MAPUs or has been slow in doing so, the only recourse is to appeal to a higher government authority. CMAA is this authority.

5.5.4.3. As it happened, support within provincial governments for the MAPUs has not always been forthcoming. The PMACs are expected to approve work plans and provide support for the MAPUs, to review the prioritized lists and approve annual plans as well as sanction their travel and activities. This kind of provincial support has ranged from little to none at all in four out of the five provinces, Pailin being the exception. Rarely do the members of the PMAC come to meetings in Battambang; in Preah Vihear, the head of the PMAC is rarely available, in Banteay Meanchey, he can be dismissive of MAPU activities and in Otdor Meanchey, the chairman deliberately interferes, using his influence to access the MAPU resources for his own use.

5.5.4.4. The TAP project's attempts to secure greater provincial government support might have been easier had it more judiciously nurtured its relationship with the CMAA and been able to solicit CMAA's intervention at critical junctures.

The TAP project and the Provincial Mine Action Committees (PMAC)

5.5.5. The PMAC approves the annual plans submitted to them by MAPUs which serve as their investigative unit. Composition of the PMAC includes provincial department heads, provincial military commanders and district chiefs and it is usually chaired by the governor or deputy governor. For the most part, it is a large and unwieldy body, usually too large and with too many separate interests to closely review the extensive technical submission provided by the MAPUs in the workshop for preparing the annual plan.²⁴ The TAP project has recognized the critical, though often reluctant involvement of the PMACs and has taken pains to maintain collaborative and supportive relations with them.

5.5.5.1. The budget of the MAPU is a perpetual dilemma. Little can be done about salaries since salary levels are set by the regulations which govern the decentralization process, but there is also the matter of equipment, transportation and travel (to minefields) and office resources. The authority of the PMAC is essential for supporting MAPU's basic requirements.

5.5.5.2. The TAP project has been mindful of the commitments required from PMAC members who may, at the same time, have little or no motivation to meet these them. From the beginning the TAP project has included PMAC members, and especially the PMAC chairmen, in its training exercises. It has provided resources to PMAC members and has conducted training on the MCA priority setting tool as well as on mapping and

²⁴ It is strongly recommended here, and elsewhere, that the MAPU annual plan be reviewed by a small working sub-committee of the PMAC before it is submitted to a plenary meeting for official approval (see para 8.2.)

data management, recognizing, throughout the project, the crucial role that senior provincial officers play in maintaining MAPU support.

6. Summary Assessment

6.1. Table 6.1. summarizes observations of the previous chapter. The project’s performance for each of the indicators proposed in Section 4, Methods and Measures, is ranked in a rudimentary fashion, assigning a number between 1 (lowest) and 3 (highest) for the project’s performance on each of the indicators.²⁵ This table shows where the project has done well, less well and poorly.

Table 6.1. Summary Assessment by this Evaluation’s Performance Indicators

Performance Indicators	Ranking 1-3 1 = performed poorly 2 = performed less well 3 = performed well
Results Achievement	
1. Adoption and use of the MCA decision making tool	1.5
2. Acceptance of MAPU decisions by clearance operators	2
3. MAPU coverage of affected communes and districts	2.5
Sustainability and Capacity Building	
4. Technical capacity and skills acquisition	3
5. Support for Good Governance	2
Collaboration and Coordination	
6. With AusAID-supported AVI	1
7. With Cambodian Mine Action Authority	1
8. With Provincial Mine Action Committees	3
Sum of Rankings	15 (Out of a possible 24)
Percent of maximum score	62.5%

6.2. The sum of all rankings for the eight indicators is 62.5 per cent of a perfect score, less than what one might have hoped. Three areas of performance, in particular, are responsible.

6.2.1. The use of a directive, rather than a consultative approach for introducing the MCA priority setting tool resulted in a number of intended users rejecting or losing interest in making it a part of their standard procedures.

6.2.1.1. Finding a useful and user-friendly way to put this kind of analytical tool into practice relies on dialogue and experimentation, and while there were discussions and training and a testing period,²⁶ the TAP project did not succeed in achieving the broad

²⁵ There are other indicators that might have been used. The TAP project’s own assessment included, among its chosen indicators, whether the MAPU members’ confidence was enhanced by the uniforms provided. Readers may consult this scheme for comparison in Annex IV.

²⁶ A formal review of the adaptation of the MCA priority setting tool was held in August 2005, deficiencies were identified and revisions were made. This was described in: GeoSpatial International Inc., “Task Assessment and Planning in Cambodia,” Progress Report for the quarter ended 30 September 2005

acceptance one might have wished. Greater consultation with the DWGs, the MAPUs, the PMACs and the AVI would have been desirable.

6.2.2. The omission of any formal initiative to build bridges between the MAPU groups and the clearance operators as well as other NGOs meant that opportunities were missed for giving the MAPUs a greater role in managing and maintaining information and consequently greater authority in coordinating minefield clearance.

6.2.2.1. The creation of formal linkages, collaborative training and collaborative data gathering programs with operators and prominent NGOs would have placed collaboration with them on more solid ground. Even if this was not part of the original project design, it should have been and at a minimum should have emerged as an obvious necessity in the course of the project. One of the most valuable functions that the project might have served is to have established which organization would collect what type of information and how the MAPUs could serve to integrate them. At present the operators collect their own data using their own diverse sources, the International Labour Organization collects information through its Integrated Rural Assessment Planning (IRAP) and the Cambodian Red Cross along with Handicap International Belgium maintain the Cambodia Mine Victim Information System (CMVIS). At some point, these sources of integration will have to be amalgamated and unless the MAPUs assume responsibility, the present fragmentation in functions will allow the clearance operators to continue working on their own with little regard for the MAPU priorities.

6.2.3. A collaborative relationship never emerged between the TAP project and the AVI project though they were implemented concurrently. The TAP project would have benefited by doing more to find ways for the two projects to make the most of their comparative advantages.

6.2.3.1. The obligation to maintain a collaborative relationship with the AVI advisors rested largely with the TAP project. This was due to the circumstances: the AVI project design emerged out of extensive consultation and considerable experience in the area. There was also the reality that four AVI advisors worked on a daily basis with the MAPU groups while the TAP project had only an intermittent presence. This gave the AVI advisors a familiarity with the MAPUs that the TAP project never had and left the TAP project really no choice but to work closely with the AVI advisors.

6.3. The TAP project has had some successes. Its training programs have been appreciated. MAPU members cite particularly the training by the TAP project field manager, who has extensive minefield experience, on how to survey a minefield and how, in particular to take safety precautions. This has made the MAPU members more inclined to conduct minefield investigations in person and to visit villages for confirming claims made by the village chiefs in the initial investigations held at district offices. MAPU members are now visiting villages and minefields more than before. Inquiry protocols, information technology and GPS devices have been provided, giving their observations greater precision. Particularly commendable have been efforts of the TAP

project to bring PMAC members on board by providing training to them, whether it be in minefield investigation or the use of the MCA priority setting tool.

6.4. But the shortcomings, especially regarding the way the project has been designed and implemented, are at least as prominent as the successes. An assessment of the TAP Project offers a valuable opportunity to draw lessons from this project's experience for improving performance in subsequent endeavors. The most pertinent of these lessons are reviewed in the next section.

7. Lessons Learned

7.1. Project Preparation. Insufficient care was taken in preparing the TAP project. Some sources spoke of the TAP project as “dropping from the clouds.” Its design would have benefited from a broader consultation with stakeholders and, as well, from more on-the-ground examination of the principal objectives and constraints. At the very least, a more careful design would have helped the project avoid overlap with other support programs and attack specific problems – integration of information sources, for example –neglected by the project.

7.2. Partnership with AVI. The daily presence of the AVI project advisors placed considerable importance on building a positive working relationship with them. The TAP project originally seemed willing to regard the AVI project advisors as allies and attempted to cement this alliance by striking a Joint Steering Committee for the two projects. But differences arose. It was in the TAP project’s interest to recognize that whatever the theoretical or practical differences in approach, AVI’s on site presence gave them a unique advantage. The TAP project could have regarded their presence as an asset, but in many instances, it did not. A more consultative approach on the part of the TAP project would have served the overall project objectives far better.

7.3. Introduction of the MCA priority setting tool. Some development practitioners might complain that such phrases as “participatory development” and “responsive programming” have been used too much and without sufficient rigour over the past two decades. But this should not obscure the truth of them: that end users have to make innovations their own before they adopt them fully. The TAP project’s MCA priority setting tool was delivered largely ready made even though it was patently too complex for many of the intended users. Criticisms of the tool were reportedly not easily accepted by the TAP project management. This was a clear example of a technology in search of an appropriate application, and the lesson is, once again, that broad consultation and responsive approaches are not just advisable steps in the process but are essential to ensuring that end users will take an interest in the innovation.

7.4. Connecting outputs and outcomes. Project planning must demonstrate a connection between immediate outputs and the broader outcomes/objectives. The ultimate objective of any support to the MAPU Process, the TAP project notably, is to contribute to making the influence and authority of the MAPUs match that of the clearance operators. This is the only way more donors are likely to come on board and support decentralized government planning units as viable mechanisms for directing mine action efforts. This was implicit in the project design but not sufficiently explicit to make working formally with clearance operators and other influential NGOs a prominent feature of the project. Programming should have included a strategy for positioning the MAPUs as an information hub, among other things, connecting in this way the project’s outputs with what are Canada’s real objectives in Cambodia’s mine action sector.

7.5. Constructive engagement with stakeholders. Constructive engagement with diverse stakeholders is a key component of building institutional capacity in groups such as those that figure in the MAPU Process. Engaging with government bodies (PMACs and CMAA), with other projects that have similar objectives, with other donors, NGOs and key actors in the mine action sector is essential. This is particularly important where opinions on approach diverge as they do in Cambodia. It would have been to the TAP project's advantage to devote more attention to building bridges and deliberate linkages among the key stakeholders associated with the MAPU process.

8. Recommendations

8.1. **Exit Strategy.** The termination of the TAP project will have different impacts in different provinces depending on the level of support each of the five MAPUs can be expected to receive in the near future. It is recommended that exit strategies be prepared for each of the five different provinces that takes realistically into account an appraisal of what sources of support may be forthcoming and what tasks MAPUs can be expected to perform. The role of the Agricultural Development in Mine Affected Areas of Cambodia (ADMAC) project will figure significantly in these exit strategies.

8.2. **Amalgamation of Information.** One of the prerequisites for the MAPUs to effectively influence provincial level decisions on mine action is to be able to access all information available on victims, victim assistance, suspected areas, changes in land use and relevant community initiatives. MAPUs should ideally serve as repositories of this information. It is recommended that the TAP project, in collaboration with Australian Volunteers International (AVI), develop a step-wise plan for bringing together in a single database or in linked databases within the MAPU offices all relevant and available information pertinent to mine action in the five provinces. This would include information maintained by the three operators. It would also include information collected under ILO's Integrated Rural Assessment Planning (IRAP) as well as the information maintained as part of the Cambodia Mine Victim Information System. Information collected under the Community Based Mine Risk Reduction (CBMRR) program supported through CMAC by UNICEF and Handicap International Belgium should have a place in the MAPU offices. The plan should specify the technical resources required initially as well as the personnel and technical resources needed to maintain this coordinated data management over an extended period.

8.3. **Review of Photo Map Usage.** The original expectation was that Quickbird satellite imagery would be provided for investigators to use in their interactions with district and village leaders for specifying mine field locations. When digital aerial photographs dating from 2001 became available at less cost, a project decision was made to use these aerial photographs instead; they were not of the highest quality and the TAP project decided to do what was possible to improve them. It is recommended that the TAP project conduct an assessment to determine how useful these aerial photographs have been in investigating mine field locations and what has been the consequence of the project decision to not use up-to-date satellite imagery. This is important not just for this project but also for the MAPU groups to know whether maps of this type are worth the cost, what are the gaps in the coverage and how valuable they are in specifying minefield locations. Ultimately it is important to know the value of these maps in expediting the decision-making process for minefield clearance.

8.4. **Technical Operation Guidebook and National Guidelines.** A draft MAPU Technical Operation Guidebook was prepared in collaboration between the MAPU staff and GeoSpatial International's project personnel and circulated in December 2005. The Guidebook outlines MAPU procedures including the development of mine action plans at village, district and provincial levels, decision-making and monitoring of clearance

activities. It is recommended that further work be done by the TAP project on this valuable initiative. Consultations should be held with the Cambodia Mine Action Authority on the Guidebook with the objective of making the Guidebook consistent in structure and format with national guidelines drafted under the authority of the CMAA.

8.5. Cambodia Mine Action Authority and the TAP project. Repairing the strained relations between the Cambodia Mine Action Authority (CMAA) and the TAP project may have little impact on the project itself, but it will make a difference in future collaborations between Canada and Cambodia on mine action programs. It is recommended that some resolution of the differences between the TAP project and CMAA be achieved. Since direct interaction between GeoSpatial International Inc. and CMAA may not be productive, it is recommended that GeoSpatial approach a third party such as the NGO Mine Action Forum to facilitate the process and assist in the reconciliation.

Annex I: Informants and Interviewees

Royal Government of Cambodia

HE Sam Sotha	Advisor to the Prime Minister and Secretary General of Cambodian Mine Action and Victim Assistance Authority
Noum Chay Roun	Chief, MAPU, Battambang Province
In Vira	Deputy Chief, MAPU, Battambang
Members of PMAC	Battambang Province
Members of MAPU	Battambang Province
Huot Sattha	Chief, MAPU, Pailin Province
Tith Thy	Deputy, MAPU, Pailin Province
Members of PMAC	Pailin Province
Members of MAPU	Pailin Province
Leng Ranin	Deputy Chief, MAPU, Beantey Meancheay Province
Chuon Bunnoun	Chief, MAPU, Preah Vihear Province
Khiew Niep	Deputy Chief, MAPU, Preah Vihear Province
Members of MAPU	Preah Vihear Province
Commune Chief	Chien Mok Commune, Tobai Meancheay District Preah Vihear
Khut Suerk	Chief, MAPU Otdor Meancheay Province
Khim Bo	Deputy Chief, MAPU, Otdor Meancheay Province
Lum Hak	Deputy Chief, PMAC, Otdor Meancheay Province
Caroline Rusten	Program Advisor, SEILA Program, Partnership for Local Government
Ian Thomas	Technical Assistance and Database Manager, Cambodian Mine Action Authority

Mine Clearance Operators

Chea Sarim	Regional Manager, MAG, Battambang Province
Oum Socheath	Deputy Manager, CMAC, Banteay Meancheay Province
Tep Arun	Acting Manager, HALO Trust, Kamrieng, Battambang Province
Gary Fenton	Technical Operations Manager, MAG, Phnom Penh
H.E. Heng Rathna	National Deputy Director, CMAC
Richard Boulter	National Program Manager, HALO Trust, Siem Reap
Pring Panharith	Manager, CMAC, Preah Vihear Province
Norm Sinnath	Manager, MAG, Preah Vihear

NGOs

Bob Eaton	Director, Survey Action Centre
David W. McCracken	National EOD Evaluation Project, Norwegian People's Aid, Phnom Penh
Scott Rankin	National Program Manager, Australian Volunteers International
Peter Britton	Senior Program Manager Australian Volunteers International

Rebecca Day	Australian Volunteers International Technical Advisor Battambang and Pailin Provinces
Andy Kervell	Australian Volunteers International Technical Advisor, MAPU Beanteay Meancheay Province
Stuart Pidgeon	Australian Volunteers International Technical Advisor Preah Vihear Province
Jade Fraser	Australian Volunteers International Technical Advisor Otdor Meancheay Province
Prom Soeun	Australian Volunteers International, Translator and Data Specialist, Preah Vihear
Sharon Wilkinson	Country Director, CARE
Brian Agland	Assistant Country Director for Programs, Care
Marc Bonnet	Regional Resident Representative, Norwegian People's Aid
Prum Suon Praseth	Program Development Officer Humanitarian Mine Action, Norwegian People's Aid

Task Assessment and Planning Project

Mao Vanna	General Manager, GeoSpatial International and Field Manager, TAP Project
Andrew Boan	Database Specialist engaged by GeoSpatial International for TAP Project

Multilateral and Bilateral Donors

Michael Rymek	Head of Aid, CIDA
Julien Chevillard	Mine Action Specialists, UNDP
Ricarda Rieger	Deputy Resident Representative, Operations
Nigel Coulson	Governance Department, DfID
Dr. Jose E. Echevarria	Head of Office, EU Directorate General for Humanitarian Aid (ECHO)
Claes Leijon	Sida Resident Representative, Embassy of Sweden
Nguon Sokunthea	Program Officer, AusAID, Australian Embassy
Stephen Close	Senior Program Officer, AusAID, Australian Embassy
Tim Conway	Poverty Specialist, World Bank

Annex II: The MAPU Process

II.1. A complex of provincial government bodies has emerged in recent years to select the minefields that merit the most urgent attention. These bodies have evolved with each passing year as refinements are made to what they are expected to do, to their resources and to their ever-increasing capacity. Though the core of this decision-making mechanism in the provinces is the Mine Action Planning Unit (MAPU), the MAPU is only one of three provincial bodies which interact in supporting mine action planning and which the TAP project, and other projects preceding it, have aimed to strengthen. The mechanism is widely referred to as the MAPU Process.

II. 2. Local planning bodies were introduced eight years ago once landmine clearance began in earnest to regulate how and by whom the land would be used once it was secure. One of their functions was to check the tendency for operators to work for wealthy landowners who used their influence to claim newly cleared land. With support from Handicap International France, Handicap International Belgium and the NGO, Action Nord-Sud, the provincial governments in Battambang and Banteay Meanchey, two of the most contaminated provinces, came up with a mechanism for investigating and approving mine clearance tasks to ensure the right areas were cleared and the right people got the benefit. At the district level, there were the District Working Groups (DWGs) which would provide information to Land Use Planning Units (LUPUs) at the provincial level which would compile information and submit it for approval to a supervisory, interdepartmental body, the Planning Sub-Committees (PSCs). This three-tiered mechanism was the scaffolding on which a more elaborate structure would subsequently evolve.

II.3. Handicap International Belgium (HIB) worked with the Cambodian Mine Action Centre (CMAC), the national mine clearance agency, to establish this three-tiered system in a number of provinces. Three of them especially received dedicated support: Otdor Meanchey, Banteay Meanchey and Preah Vihear. A fourth in Battambang received support from AusAID. All four of them emerged at more or less the same time, in more or less the same direction and with more or less the same resources. By late 2003 some trends were clear. The interdepartmental oversight committee, the Provincial Sub-Committee (PSC) was not very active and left most of the decisions to the chairman who, in turn, relied on the investigations of the Land Use Planning Units (LUPUs). The District Working Groups (DWGs) did not always make the required information available to the Land Use Planning Unit members (LUPUs). The LUPUs were left to fill a large void; they made decisions for the PSC, they collected information, and because the need was so considerable, they were also making decisions about where to work and why. In addition, they were expected to fulfill their original mandate, to keep disputes from erupting over claims to cleared land.

II.4. The LUPUs had too much work to do, some of it ill-defined, not enough ability to do it and because they were inexperienced and not particularly well-paid, they received little

respect from the clearance operators, especially MAG and HALO Trust.²⁷ This was a significant liability. With a minimum of experience and skill, they actually depended on the clearance operators and the development NGOs for identifying their minefields, and this defeated the purpose. The idea was for the three-tiered system to coordinate the operators, not the reverse, to establish a provincial body with the ability to make independent and authoritative mine clearance decisions based on the interests of the affected villagers, not the interests of the operators and their funders.

II.5. The system had its growing pains. But the idea was a good one and support was available. Care International, World Vision and Australian Volunteers International all provided assistance to the Land Use Planning Unit (LUPU) in Battambang, and UNDP/CAREERE and Norwegian People's Aid supported the Land Use Planning Unit (LUMU) in Banteay Meanchey.

II.6. Meanwhile the mine action sector was changing. Decentralization, supported by a consortium of donors through the *Seila* project, added its weight and financial support to shifting authority over mine action policy from the national to the provincial level, giving support to these decentralized LUPU bodies and reducing their dependence on the national coordinating body. The timing was good since impatience was growing with the national level body, the Cambodian Mine Action Authority (CMAA) in Phnom Penh. At the same time, UNDP was assisting the government to make the three-tiered provincial planning mechanism the subject of an official government document, and by October 2004, a Sub-Decree on Socio-Economic Management of Mine Clearance Operations was approved by the Council of Ministers. Instead of operating under the authority of donors and NGOs, the provincial mine action planning structure now operated under the authority of the Royal Government of Cambodia. The names of the bodies were changed in the sub-decree and their functions adjusted. The Provincial Sub-Committee (PSC) became the Provincial Mine Action Committee (PMAC), chaired by the provincial governor, or his appointee, and the Land Use Planning Unit (LUPU) became the Mine Action Planning Unit (MAPU). The new title reflected the broad spectrum of functions the MAPU had come to assume in the four provinces.

II.7. A high profile evaluation of mine action in Cambodia, commissioned jointly by the Donor Working Group on Mine Action²⁸, appeared shortly after the approval of the Sub-Decree, and pushed even further the lessons arising out of the LUPU experiments in the provinces and the themes implicit in the Sub-Decree. It came to some landmark conclusions. It claimed that the scope of the demining task in Cambodia had been overestimated, that the landmine problem was solvable within 10-15 years. What was needed was a more efficient and cost conscious approach to managing mine clearance activities. Operators had to be more cost effective and, to this end, mine clearance tasks should be assigned to operators through a competitive bidding process. At the same time, the tasks should be chosen more carefully to ensure that the most essential areas for the

²⁷: Michael Bolton, Praivan Limpanboon, Chhim Vanak, LUPU Project Evaluation: Report of an External Evaluation of the Handicap International Belgium Project: Support for the Planning of Demining and the Utilization of Demined Land in Cambodia, Handicap International Belgium, October 2003

²⁸ Australia, New Zealand, Sweden, UNICEF and UNDP

national economy and for poverty reduction be cleared first. This would be the job of the provincial planning bodies, the MAPU Process.²⁹

II.8. Expectations of the MAPU Process were rising. At this critical juncture, just as the Sub-Decree was approved and the conclusions of the joint evaluation were under discussion, two new projects appeared to support the MAPU Process. One of these, the AVI project was a continuation of four years of experience in Battambang Province. This was the AVI Capacity Building for Mine Action project that would provide technical advisors for all five³⁰ of the new Mine Action Planning Units (MAPUs). The other, the Canada-funded TAP project appeared on the scene with the intention of providing some technical training, putting a database in place, providing maps for the MAPU investigators to use in investigations with villagers and, more specifically, of introducing a model for MAPU members to use in deciding on appropriate clearance priorities.

II.9. Both project's interventions would have to be mindful of participating in an evolving mechanism, one with an eight year history of attempts to invest mine action decisions in a provincial government authority. There were lessons to be learned from the past. The projects would have to build on the initial efforts by the LUPUs to regulate the distribution of cleared land, on the attempts to monitor the clearance activities of the operators, and on the more recent efforts to make the newly sanctioned MAPUs credible coordinators of mine clearance operations.

²⁹ Robert Griffin and Robert Keeley, Joint Evaluation of Mine Action in Cambodia, Donor Working Group on Mine Action, December 2004.

³⁰ A fifth province – Pailin - had been added to the original four where Land Use Planning Units (LUPUs) had originally been tried.

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Annex IV: Relevance of Evaluation Indicators to Anticipated Project Outputs and Outcome

Evaluation's Performance Indicators	Project's Performance Indicators
Results Achievement	
1. Adoption and use of the MCA decision making tool	MAPU staff and manage priority setting process
	MAPU stakeholders are able to participate in MCA in a transparent manner
	MAPU, District and Commune Staff are able to operate and manage MCA without external technical advisors
2. Acceptance of MAPU decisions by clearance operators	MAPU stakeholders are able to participate in MCA in a transparent manner
3. MAPU coverage of affected communes and districts	Stakeholders actively participate in establishing decision support tool criteria
	MAPU, District and Commune Staff are able to operate and manage MCA without external technical advisors
Sustainability and Capacity Building	
4. Technical capacity and skills acquisition	MAPU, District and Commune Staff are able to operate and manage MCA without external technical advisors
5. Support for good governance	MAPU stakeholders are able to participate in MCA in a transparent manner
Collaboration and Coordination	
6. With Aus-AID-Supported AVI	Stakeholders actively participate in establishing decision support tool criteria
7. With Cambodian Mine Action Authority	CMAA database is able to provide up to date information to local staff
	Stakeholders actively participate in establishing decision support tool criteria
8. With Provincial Mine Action Committees	Stakeholders actively participate in establishing decision support tool criteria

Source: (1) Geospatial International, "Proposed Logical Framework Analysis and Performance Monitoring Plan," Task Assessment and Planning Project – The Introduction of MCA Decision Support at LUPUs in Cambodia, Project Design Document, September 2003; (2) Geospatial International, "Project Performance Planning Framework," Contribution Agreement, July 2004

Annex V: Terms of Reference

Institutional Capacity Assessment of Mine Action Programming in Cambodia

Background:

Cambodia is one of the countries most affected by mines and explosive remnants of war (ERW), due to almost three decades of conflict. Some 900 new landmine and UXO (unexploded ordinance) casualties were reported in 2004, with an additional 594 casualties being reported to the end of June 2005. These represent significant increases with respect to 2003, and point to an increase in casualties from UXO. The Landmine Impact Survey (LIS) issued in May 2002 identified 4,466 square kilometres suspected to be affected by mines and other ERW. It is estimated that 5.18 million people in 6,422 villages were at risk, and that about 1,640 villages (12% of all villages in Cambodia) had a high contamination of landmines and UXO.

Most mine/ERW incidents are associated with livelihood activities being undertaken in forests and fields, and therefore have a negative socio-economic impact in affected communities. A cost-benefit analysis of Cambodian mine clearance programs, conducted in 2004-05 for the CMAA (Cambodia Mine Action Victim Assistance Authority) and UNDP, indicated that benefits for 2004 were about US\$37 million, distributed 80 percent on clearance for development and 20% on reduced human losses. In general, net benefits are estimated to be 38% higher than costs, suggesting a significant return on investment in mine action.

The Kingdom of Cambodia signed the Mine Ban Treaty on 3 December 1997, and the Treaty entered into force on 1 January 2000.

Canada's support for Mine Action in Cambodia in 2004 amounted to over C\$1.1M. This was broken down as follows:

- \$374,437 to Geospatial International for capacity building at the community level.
- \$359,134 to World Vision Canada for integrated mine action (victim assistance).
- \$249,372 to Oxfam Québec for landmine survivor vocational training.
- \$110,000 to Mines Action Group for two EOD teams.
- \$15,086 for survivor handicraft enterprises (funded by Foreign Affairs)

The Cambodia bilateral program has also commenced an agricultural development project which has a significant mine action (\$1.1M over four years) component. The project is being implemented by Geospatial International, and began operations in September 2005.

Issue:

The CMAA took over the coordination and regulation of mine action at the national level in September 2002. Its responsibilities include integration of mine action into government development plans (including the National Poverty Reduction Strategy and Millennium Development Goals). In order to prioritize mine action at the local level, and integrating it with development objectives, Mine Action Planning Units (MAPUs) were established (generally broadening the mandate of existing Land Use Planning Units/LUPUs) under the auspices of the CMAA, and working in conjunction with Provincial Mine Action Centres (PMACs). MAPUs are thus expected to be the focal points for coordination between affected communities and demining and development agencies.

However, an evaluation carried out in 2004 for the Cambodia Donor Working Group on Mine Action found that donors as well as operators lacked confidence in CMAA, due to its weakness and ineffectiveness. It recommended that the CMAA should focus its efforts on policy development, preparation of annual reports and resource mobilization. As an alternative approach towards coordinating mine action operations, the UNDP has established a trust fund through which donors may channel support for mine action in Cambodia, yet still maintaining linkages with the CMAA for coordination with the host government.

Capacity-building for mine action planning in Cambodia is largely provided by two organizations: Australian Volunteers International (AVI), funded by AusAid and GeoSpatial International (GSI), funded by CIDA. More specifically, GSI is engaged in the identification of processes to improve data collection by MAPU staff, while both AVI and GSI have been involved in developing PMAC capacity in information management and data collection.

Objectives:

1. To monitor and review the progress on the GeoSpatial Incorporated (GSI) Task Assessment Project (TAP).
 - i. Monitoring progress against expected results, as presented in the project LFA and PMF.
 - ii. Assessing the successes achieved and challenges remaining through the capacity-building efforts of the TAP.
 - iii. Assessing the effectiveness of integration efforts between the TAP and other relevant mine action programming in similar areas.
 - iv. Provide recommendations for an appropriate exit strategy and transfer of operations upon closure of the project in June 2006.

2. To undertake a due diligence assessment of the UNDP Cambodia office. Assess:

- a. The consistency between CIDA's policy and programming priorities and the organization's capacity for implementation;
- b. The degree of leverage obtained with CIDA's investment;
- c. The comparative advantage of using the organization to meet CIDA's program and/or sectoral interests;
- d. The degree of effectiveness and transparency of the organization's governance system;
- e. The organization's capacity to demonstrate sound management practices;
- f. The results of previous evaluations;
- g. The determination that a results-based accountability framework is in place for CIDA to determine the effectiveness of its grant payment, including performance indicators, expected results and outcomes, methods for reporting on performance and evaluation criteria.

A full description of the requirements for a due diligence assessment of a proposed grant recipient is attached as an annex.

Deliverables:

1. Structured workplan and schedule, with list of key contacts and activities.
2. A monitoring report on the progress of the GeoSpatial TAP project.
3. A due diligence report on the UNDP Cambodia office.

Both reports shall be submitted in electronic format using word processing software acceptable to CIDA (i.e., Microsoft Word, Lotus WordPro or Corel WordPerfect).

Reporting:

The consultant will report to the Program Officer responsible for Asia within the Mine Action Unit of CIDA.

While in the field, the consultant will report to the Head of Aid, Phnom Penh.

Estimated Level of Effort:

Preparatory review of documents & preparation of workplan:	3 days
Mission in Cambodia:	up to 14 days (including debrief to Head of Aid, Phnom Penh)
Transit time for travel:	4 days (2 days each way)
Preparation of draft report:	4 days
Finalization of report:	1 days
Travel to Ottawa for debriefing:	2.5 days
Total Level of Effort:	28.5 days

Annex VI: Results of TAP Project Self Assessment Showing Overall Present Confidence (Column 1) and Change in Confidence Over Previous Year (Column 2) by Topic Scored on a Scale of 1-10 (1=lowest)

Topic	1 Overall Confidence, Score Now (Average for Group)			2 Change in Confidence over the Last Year (Average for Group)		
	Chief	Members	CMAP-C	Chief	Members	CMAP-C
Appropriateness of Uniforms	9.2	9.4	9.8	8.0	7.0	5.8
Usefulness of Equipment	8.6	8.1	8.6	5.2	5.2	4.8
Safe Conduct in Suspected Mined Areas	8.8	7.3	7.8	5.6	3.9	5.4
Minefield Investigation	8.4	7.6	7.8	4.8	3.7	4.2
Confidence in conducting Commune meetings	8.2	7.2	8.2	3.0	2.3	4.8
Confidence in conducting District meetings	7.8	6.5	8.2	2.0	2.2	3.8
Confidence in reviewing reports from mine action operators	8.2	7.3	7.7	3.6	3.4	3.7
Confidence in ability to communicate successfully with PMAC	7.0	8.1	7.8	2.0	2.7	3.0
Knowledge of interview techniques	7.8	6.3	7.8	4.2	3.0	4.2
Use of the Database	6.8	6.8	8.2	3.8	3.8	5.6
Knowledge and use of MCA	7.4	7.3	7.2	3.6	3.8	5.0
Capability to transfer knowledge to colleagues	6.8	6.7	7.8	2.8	2.4	3.6
Capability to prioritise tasks	7.2	6.8	7.2	3.0	3.0	3.0
Use of field support tools (air photo, maps, compass, GPS, data forms)	7.4	6.0	7.2	4.8	3.7	4.4
Confidence in ability to work without support from GSI/AVI	6.4	6.1	6.8	4.2	2.7	3.6

