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Mauritania

National Mine Action Plan for Completion – Fulfilling Obligations under Article 5 of the Antipersonnel Mine Ban Treaty 2008-2011

Mauritania will be free from all anti-personnel landmines and unexploded ordnance within all known Suspected Hazard Areas (SHAs) within its territory by January 2011; enabling freedom of movement and national economic development activities to occur in a safe environment; landmine survivors will be rehabilitated and re-integrated into society; a national capacity will be developed to address any residual mine problem that may occur beyond treaty deadlines and any ERW threat, as well as MRE/ERW education.

The total cost over a 3 year period will be approximately \$18,856,400 USD from which 407,000 USD have already been pledged, leaving a shortfall of 18,449,400 USD. The Government of Mauritania has strongly indicated they shall contribute 20% (3,700,000 USD) leaving a shortfall of 14,800,000 USD (planning and coordination = 470,000 USD, mine risk education = 235,000 USD, survivor assistance = 438,000 USD and clearance activities = 13,606,400 USD). In addition, the government of Mauritania will contribute approximately 9,000,000 USD in kind over the 3 year period, covering deminers salaries, casualty evacuation services and medical insurance costs.

December 2007

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Foreword

Landmines and explosive remnants of war (ERW) have existed in Mauritania since the Western Sahara conflict, affecting 310,000 square kilometres and 294,000 inhabitants. Since 1978, mines have killed 349 people, injured 247 more, destroyed 36 vehicles and resulted in the death of several hundred camels. Mauritania completed a Landmine Impact Survey in September 2006 to determine the magnitude and socio-economic impact of landmines and unexploded ordnance (UXO) on nomadic and urban communities in the regions of Daklet Nouadhibou, Tiriz Zemour, and, to a lesser extent, Adrar. The UN certified LIS results for Mauritania indicate suspected hazardous areas totaling 76 sq km. A total of 117 communities were visited from which 60 were confirmed as mine affected. The Mauritania LIS, based on application of the Survey Working Group (SWG) Protocols, indicates 3 High, 23 Medium and 34 Low impact communities. Ninety-three percent of the mine affected communities are a single suspected hazardous area. Fourteen recent victims were noted during the survey, 86% being male. The predominant activity at the time of the accident was herding animals.

Mauritania's commitment to the Mine Ban Treaty contributes to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. In the 60 mine affected communities, social and economic development opportunities will be increased. The UN Country Office is committed to work in partnership with Mauritania and its mine affected communities, non-governmental organisations, bi-lateral partners and donors to address the threat posed by landmines and other explosive remnants of war, to build national capacities to manage the current and residual problems and to support efforts by national authorities to assist survivors. Amongst these mine affected communities, the female population is the primary beneficiary due to their nomadic lifestyle and most of the victims being predominantly male.

The Government established the National Commission on the Ottawa Convention on Anti-Personnel Mines and the National Humanitarian Demining Office (BNDH) under the Armed Forces Engineer Corps, with minimal international assistance. On 5 December 2004, Mauritania destroyed its remaining stockpiles of mines. It has firmly stated it expects to meet its treaty obligations by 2011. During 2006, the Government took steps to transfer the national demining office to a civilian ministry. On 20 November 2006, a decree was signed outlining the new institutional arrangements for the National Humanitarian Demining Programme for Development (PNDHD renamed from the former BNDH) placing it under the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Development (MAED). A subsequent decree signed on 21 August 2007, places PNDHD under the Ministry of Decentralisation and Territorial Management. The UNDP Country Office has supported the Mauritania national programme with a Chief Technical Advisor since November 2005.

MAURITANIA NATIONAL MINE ACTION PLAN

Completion Milestones

- **Legislation, Institutional Arrangements and Coordination:**

3 December 1997	Mauritania signs Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Treaty
1 July 2000	Treaty ratified
July 2000	National Commission created
July 2001	BNDH Created (Military coordinating structure for mine action)
2004	Draft legislation submitted
November 2005	UNDP in-country support with CTA
26 May 2006	BNDH/UNDP/UNICEF meeting with MINURSO
9 April 2007	PNDHD created
August 2007	Revised legislation submitted
21 August 2007	PNDHD transferred to Ministry of Decentralization and Territorial Management

- **Survey and Clearance:**

December 1999	All components of National Clearance Capacity (NCC) selected, trained and equipped by USA
June 2000	NCC legally established
March 2003	HAMAP funded mission in Nouadhibou
2004	4 HAMAP funded missions in Nouadhibou
5 December 2004	Stockpile destruction completed
February-June 2006	4 HAMAP funded missions in Nouadhibou
August-September 2006	Landmine Impact Survey (LIS) conducted
July-December 2006	4 German funded missions in Tmeimichatt
December-January 2007	2 Technical Surveys conducted in HIGH priority areas
25 July 2007	LIS certified by UN Certification Committee

- **Mine Risk Education:**

September 2006	Canadian Funded Activities
2006/2007	CAP Study
	5,000,000 sqm marked (PK 56 and PK 106), 150 mine markers installed, 170 mine markers maintained, 6 billboards erected, Nomad campaign reaching 30560 nomads, 20 tourist guides trained, 45 local MRE networks established in Boulenouar, Inal, Tmiemichatt, 34 School Directors/Assistants trained in 17 private schools

- **Survivor Assistance:**

March 2007	Victim Needs Assessment conducted
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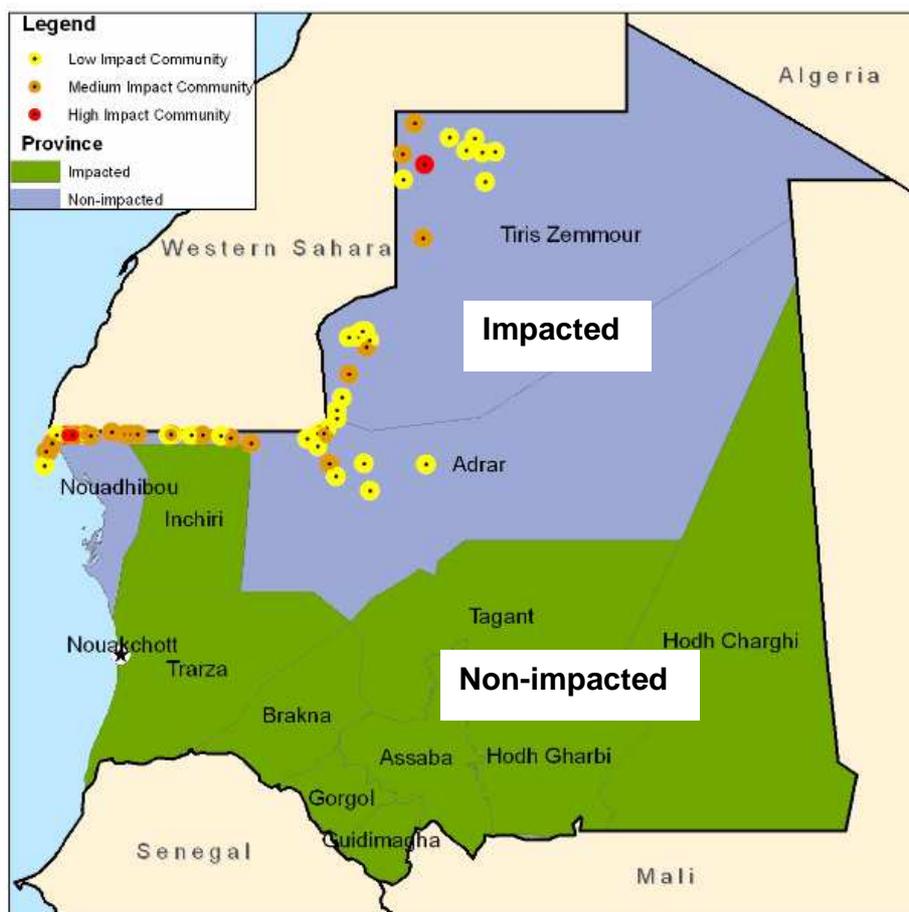
Situation Analysis

1.1 Background

The landmine/ERW (Explosive Remnants of War) problem stems from the 1975-78 conflict. The three mine-affected regions—Nouadhibou, Tiris Zemmour and Adrar are inhabited by 294,000 nomadic people. The Government of Sweden funded a Landmine Impact Survey, with technical support from the Survey Action Centre and quality assurance provided by UN Mine Action Service (UNMAS). The Mauritania LIS was initiated and planned by the national authority BNDH (Bureau National de Déminage Humanitaire) and implemented by BNDH in collaboration with a network of local gender balanced NGOs. The final survey results are used in the development of this national mine action strategy (Completion Initiative in UNDP language).

1.2 Extent of Contamination

The landmine/ERW problem dates back to the Western Sahara conflict in 1976-1978, during which all involved parties made use of landmines around main towns and villages, military settlements / installations and economic centres. The three mine affected provinces (Nouadhibou, Tiris Zemmour and Adrar) lie in the North of the country, encompass a conflict area of 310,000 km² with 12% of the population (294,000). Confrontation areas are further affected by the presence of ERW.



The Mauritania LIS results indicate suspected hazardous areas totaling 76 sq km. The UN certified LIS, based on application of the SWG Protocols, indicate 3 High, 23 Medium and 34 Low impact communities. Ninety-three percent of the mine affected communities are a single

suspected hazardous area. Fourteen recent victims were noted during the survey, 86% being male. The predominant activity at the time of the accident was herding animals.

LIS Results by Community Impact and Number of Recent Victims

Total number of communities:	158
Total mine affected communities:	60
- High Impact:	3
- Medium Impact:	23
- Low Impact:	34
Number of recent victims:	14
Suspected communities not visited:	1

1.3 Humanitarian & Development Impact

1.3.1 - Humanitarian threat

Since 1978, mines have killed 349 people, injured 247 more, destroyed 36 vehicles and resulted in the death of several hundreds of camels. Fourteen recent victims were recorded during the LIS of which 9 were male, primarily engaged in herding livestock. Although landmine survivors have access to public health facilities, the distances involved present enormous challenges to obtain medical treatment in a timely manner. The mine and UXO problem has a significant affect on the nomadic movement of the Sahawri population moving across borders in the region.

In 2007, three accidents were recorded. Firstly, a vehicle accident involving two French tourists resulting in one casualty; secondly an accident involving a nomadic shepherd and thirdly, an accident one teenager playing with an UXO in the proximity of their tent.

1.3.2 - Development and poverty reduction

The three mine affected regions in the north of Mauritania contain landmines and ERW from the Sahara conflict. The nomadic population in this region has been suffering since the end of the hostilities in 1978. Mines were placed without any consideration for subsequent livelihood of the local population; they were placed near water points, denying access to water and impeding movement of the nomads.

During this 30 year period, the impact of mines has continued to place a significant burden on all economic and development activities within in region, particularly relating to grazing and animal husbandry. This deeply hinders the ability of nomads to migrate freely throughout the area and negatively affects trade amongst these tribes (Morocco, Western Sahara and Mauritania).

Twelve percent of the population lives in the mine affected area, predominantly desert, with difficult access to remote nomadic camps. During the wet season, when plants are suitable for grazing, this desert is known for its richness in providing nutrients for the animals, specifically camels. In the mine-affected region of Tris Zemmuor, camels will earn twice their price than elsewhere in Mauritania.

These northern zones are also very rich in mineral wealth; principally iron ore, gold, suspected inland oil reserves and uranium deposits. A significant portion of revenue to Mauritania is derived from the export of iron ore by the state enterprise SNIM (National Industrial Society of Minerals), resulting in the annual export of approximately 7,000,000 tons with a recent discovery predicted to increase export to 11,000,000 tons annually, a 40% increase. This newly-found mineral wealth has attracted various international prospecting companies, driving a far greater interest in potential economic activities in the region.

Additionally, a number of other factors are influencing the need for mine action in this region. They include:

- Tourism activities throughout the area;
- A recently opened Nouakchott-Nouadhibou paved road in 2005 that has increased economic trade and tourism from Morocco;
- A proposed Algeria-Mauritania road to increase economic trade; and
- Continued efforts to find a resolution to Western Sahara, such as a peace plan proposed in May 2003 for Western Sahara

All these development activities will have a positive impact on Mauritania's economy, therefore, this region will be considered as a priority by the government. The full clearance from mine and UXO is therefore an important contribution as well as an essential pre-condition enabling these developmental activities.

1.4 National and international response

Since the end of the Sahara conflict, the Mauritania Army established in 1980, a military programme to demine urgent requirements. This included primary road access between Zourate, Bir Mougrein to Nouadhibou and to support infrastructure developments at the Zourate iron ore extraction facility operated by SNIM. In addition, clearance activities enabled a water pipeline between Boulenoir and Nouadhibou, providing the town of 55,000 inhabitants with reliable potable water.

During a military to military exchange programme from 1999-2003, the US military provided full equipment and humanitarian demining training to a Mauritanian Engineer Company, approximately 100 personnel.

In June 2001, the Government established a National Commission on the Ottawa Convention on Anti-Personnel Mines under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the National Humanitarian Demining Office under the Armed Forces Engineer Corps, with minimal international assistance. This permitted Mauritania to develop institutional arrangements to meet its international obligations under the anti-personnel mine ban treaty.

In March 2003, the UN Resident Coordinator convened representatives from UNDP, UNICEF, the UN High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR), and the embassies of Spain and the United States to consider a funding request by the NHDO. Since the meeting, the BNDH has become the main intermediary between the Government and development partners.

On 5 December 2004, the Government destroyed its stock of 5000 remaining landmines, leaving 728 for training purposes (permitted under the anti-personnel mine ban treaty).

In November 2005, UNDP recruited a Chief Technical Advisor to assist with capacity development, facilitate donor confidence and provide technical advice. MATRIX achievements resulting in no Chief Technical Advisor beyond December 2007, indicating strong national programme ownership.

During 2006, the Government has taken steps to transfer the demining office to the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Development by signing a decree on 20 November 2006 outlining the new institutional arrangements for the National Humanitarian Demining Programme for Development (PNDHD). On 21 August 2007, PNDHD was formally transferred to the Ministry of Decentralisation and Territorial Management.

In December 2007, the government of Mauritania integrated mine action into the national action plan within the Ministry of Decentralisation and Territorial Management, to include five activities aimed at improving development. This national plan has been submitted for resource mobilization during the Contact Group Meeting in Paris (5-6 December 2007).

In addition, the mayors of the mine affected communities have taken into consideration mine action in the development of their community needs. For example in November and December 2007, the mayors of Inal, Tmiemichatt and Boulenoir have submitted development project plans with a mine action component.

Furthermore, the SNIM Foundation (Foundation de la Société nationale industrielle et minière) is implementing a wider development programme in mine affected zones by constructing schools, medical posts, commercial and economic support, and is engaged to fund clearance activities with PNDHD.

The government of Mauritania is capable of providing 80 deminers to assist with landmine removal efforts, representing an annual contribution in-kind of approximately 700,000 USD. This figure includes salaries for approximately 80 deminers, PNDH staff salaries (15 personnel), insurance, operations and maintenance, infrastructure and casevac services. It is important to note however, that interrupted international donor support has resulted in a fragmented approach in conducting operations and full mobilization of trained deminers has yet to be achieved.

The UNDP Completion Initiative

The *Completion Initiative* is a response supported by UNDP that seeks to accelerate mine action activities in countries where a concerted effort and relatively modest investment of approximately \$10 million would aim to solve the landmine problem in a short timeframe (3-5 years).

Although concentrating on the antipersonnel landmine problem in attempts to meet treaty obligations, the *Completion Initiative* would strive to ensure the development and ownership of national clearance and survey capacities to undertake ERW work in general and address any residual mine-problem that may surface well beyond treaty deadlines.

First, it would provide significant humanitarian and development benefit to countries such as Mauritania and, secondly, the international community would subsequently be in a position to focus efforts on a smaller number of countries where mine action is unlikely to be required over the longer term.

This approach may secure additional resources for mine action, thereby improving efficiency by creating economies of scale. In addition, it will draw attention to and maintain the international momentum that has been generated to rid the world of mines. Furthermore, this approach will serve the Mine Ban Treaty (MBT) by enabling more countries to develop a plan that aims at reaching completion of Article 5. The present Mauritania Plan has been developed in the context of the Completion Initiative with UNDP support.

1.4.1 – Legal and institutional

Mauritania has developed a number of institutional arrangements to enable it to meet its international obligations through the Anti Personnel Mine Ban Treaty (also known as the Ottawa Treaty) and other instruments that regulate the use of mines and other ERW. The government of Mauritania (GoM) ratified the MBT in June 2000 and subsequently established the National Commission on the Ottawa Treaty on Anti Personnel Mines (NC) and the BNDH in the Armed Forces Engineer Corps in July 2001. Moreover the GoM successfully destroyed its remaining stockpiles of antipersonnel mines on 5 December 2004. Furthermore, the GoM has firmly stated it expects to meet its Treaty obligations by early 2011.

During 2006, BNDH was transferred from the Ministry of Defense to the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Development (MAED), recognizing it as the National Programme for Humanitarian Demining for Development (PNDHD). These institutional arrangements were changed by a decree signed in August 2007, placing PNDHD under the Ministry of Decentralisation and Territorial Management.

It is anticipated the transfer of PNDHD to a civilian ministry will augment donor interest in Mauritania, particularly when coupled to an accredited and government accepted LIS.

A draft Mine Action Legislation was prepared by the Ministry of Justice and Ministry of Defence in 2004 and submitted for acceptance. The legislation was later revised and re-submitted to the government and Parliament in December 2007. This national legislation outlines penal sanctions, including one to three years imprisonment and carrying fines up to 4000 USD (representing 20 times the average national salary).

1.4.2 - Clearance operations

The Corps of Military Engineers, cleared approximately 4km² during the period 1999-2002, to meet Ottawa Treaty obligations. They also received, through a military to military exchange program from the United States of America, significant assistance including training of humanitarian deminers (120 personnel), material (detectors, personnel protective equipment, vehicles) and infrastructure (construction of national BNDH offices in Nouakchott and Nouadhibou).

From 2002 to 2007, demining operations were conducted by BNDH including financial support from the Mauritania Government, Halte aux Mines Anti-personnelle (HAMAP - a french NGO), and the Governments of Germany, Sweden and France. Additionally, in 2006, the Government of Germany purchased 100 sets of protective equipment (vests and visors). The clearance figures from 2002 to 2006 are shown below:

Mine and ERW Clearance in 2002-2006

Year	Original estimated suspected in sq km (for mine clearance / BAC)	Mine clearance (in square kilometers)	Battle area clearance (in square kilometers)	Area reduced or cancelled (in square kilometers)
2006	182000 / 5sqm	0.045650	1.150	2.160
2005	0 / 4 sq km	0	0.250	0.96
2004	130000 / 8 sq km	0.026	0.460	0.056
2003	183500 / 3sq km	0.045	0.650	0.780
2002	197000 / 0	0.035	0	00
Total	692,500 sqm / 20 sq km	0,15165	2,510	3,956

Since 2002, the Government of Mauritania has provided military engineers to its mine action and explosive ordnance disposal field activities. The Government of Mauritania's contribution has supported surface clearance and humanitarian demining, general surveys, stockpile destruction, the development of BNDH and clearance of ERW from highly impacted areas. The Armed Forces also contributes to the Mauritanian Mine Action Programme, CASEVAC support and explosive materials to destroy mines and UXO.

As of December 2006, 151,650 m² have been cleared and about 4 km² (see above table) remain to be released pending a new release policy to be developed by the PNDHD. In the 2006 clearance season, the national capacity of PNDHD consisted of a pool of 80 deminers, of which 45 deminers were tasked with supporting humanitarian demining activities, five impact survey teams and two technical survey teams. This data serves to provide baseline parameters, as it establishes some preliminary ratios of cleared and released land in relation to the threat area:

Ratios of Suspected Areas to Cleared Areas and Released Areas from 2002 to 2006

Original Suspected mine zone (sq km)	Original Suspected BAC zone (sq km)	Cleared mined area (sq km)	Cleared BAC Area sq km	Released (sq km)
0.692	20	0.15165	2.51	3.96
		Ratio is 0.15165/0.692 = 22%	Ratio is 2.51/20 = 12.55%	Ratio = 3.96 / 20.692 = 19.1%

The projected manual clearance production during the remaining 2007 clearance season (15 days) will be 0.028 km². The anticipated introduction of mechanical assistance augmented with raking techniques will increase this productivity in 2008. Furthermore, the commitment by the state is expected to increase fivefold in 2008 to reach 650 deminers. Additional deminers are available at the national level for further training to increase this national capacity.

Ordnance Type by Suspected Hazardous Areas and Estimated Area

Ordnance Type	SHAs		Estimated Area	
	Number	% of Total	sq km	% of Total
AT only	4	6.2%	1.2	1.5%
AP only	3	4.6%	0.8	1.1%
UXO only	22	34%	7	9%
AT & AP	13	20%	28	37%
AT & UXO	9	14%	32	42%
AP & UXO	1	1.5%	0.1	0.1%
AT, AT, & UXO	13	20%	7	9%
TOTAL	65	100%	76	100%

Based on the above results, the following proposed activities are suggested:

Ordnance Type and Proposed Activities

Ordnance Type	Proposed Activity/Activities
AT only	Marking
AP only	Clearance (mechanical, manual)

	or raking)
UXO only	Battle Area Clearance, possibly mechanical
AT & AP	Clearance (manual)
AT & UXO	Clearance (manual)
AP & UXO	Clearance (mechanical, manual)
AT, AT, & UXO	Clearance (manual)

Activities by Percentage

Activity	Percentage
Marking	1.5 %
Battle Area Clearance	9%
Mechanical	1%
Manual Clearance	88.5%
TOTAL	100%

1.4.3 - Mine risk education

Since 1999, mine risk education was a critical component in the Mauritanian mine action programme to sensitize the nomadic population in the three mine affected provinces. In early 2000, UNICEF funded the first workshop/seminar on MRE in Zourate, enabling the first network MRE NGOs to be established. In 2005, the Canadian Government supported MRE activities to train 160 local NGOs on delivering messages to the nomadic population, printing school notebooks (7000) and 7000 leaflets and implementing four marking campaigns (covering 2,500,000 sqm). The goal of mine risk education remains to discourage life-threatening behavior and activities among at risk vulnerable groups.

UNICEF leads MRE activities in Mauritania by providing support and monitoring field activities in partnership with PNDHD. This collaborative effort strengthens the commitment by the state, partners and local NGOs to reduce landmine casualties and to raise the profile of MRE at the regional level.

During the period 2005-2007, the national programme strengthened two national NGO networks by increasing their capacity to conduct MRE and strengthening their management skills. These networks are NEJDA in Zourate (consisting of 40 NGOs) and NDB Network in Nouadhibou (consisting of 55 NGOs). The school curriculum in Zourate and Nouadhibou include lessons on MRE since 2006. The efforts were further enhanced by training the local school teachers and directors on MRE tools.

In 2007 and beyond, these networks will continue to conduct MRE in the mine-affected communities, will focus on schools and nomadic communities. Information will be disseminated through community-based relays, established in early 2007. In addition, the Scout network will be used as a means to convey additional MRE messages through plays.

In summary, the following MRE activities have been accomplished in Mauritania:

- In 2006/2007:
 - Marked 5,000,000 sqm
 - Conducted a comprehensive mine victim study to determine best strategies to assist landmine survivors
 - Produced of a 7 minute documentary to raise mine awareness

- Conducted a nomad MRE campaign providing awareness to 30560 nomads and distributing 12000 pamphlets
 - Trained 45 local networks and 20 tourist guides to promote MRE and act as relays to pass victim information to national authorities
 - Trained 34 school directors/assistants throughout 17 private schools, reaching 6500 students
- In 2005:
 - Marked 2,500,000 sqm
 - Introduced MRE into national school curriculum
 - Trained 160 MRE trainers
 - Printed and distributed 14,000 MRE posters, 7000 brochures and 7000 pamphlets for children
 - Conducted an open-house ceremony in Nouadhibou for public and civilian authorities

The overall mine risk education strategy over the remaining three years is focuses on building national capacities already developed within key mine affected communities. This consolidation of effort will gradually reduce over the next three years, as shown in the proposed Mine Risk Education budget at Annex B. Any residual threat that may occur may be addressed by the existing MRE capacity established at the community level.

1.4.4 - Victim assistance

Mauritania typically has five to seven casualties annually, as indicated in the analysis of the LIS results. Landmine survivors are treated within the existing national structure without any discrimination, however, the ability of each victim to reach the required services is difficult – largely due to the remoteness of the accident and the weak infrastructure services within the mine affected regions.

At the national level, a single orthopedic and rehabilitation centre, located in Nouakchott, provides centralized services to landmine survivors. This centre has a limited capacity to respond to victim’s requirements and as such needs to be strengthened. In addition, it would be advantageous to reinforce the regional hospitals with an orthopedic component to respond to the primary needs of the landmine victims.

The PNDHD, in collaboration with UNICEF have completed a Landmine Survivor Study in 2007 to provide the framework to develop a national strategy for landmine victims, covering their rehabilitation and socio-economic integration. To provide a comprehensive landmine survivor strategy at the national level strategy, the recommendations outlined in this study will be discussed and developed with partners in a workshop in 2007.

The results below are derived from the LIS survey:

Mine Incidents by Year

Year	Victims
2004	5
2005	7 (2 records missing in IMSMA database, but reflected in LIS)
2006	7
2007	3
TOTAL	22

As shown in Table below, the Landmine Impact Survey identified 14 casualties in the two years prior to the survey (2005-2006). Six of the casualties have survived while eight died from their injuries. Out of 14 recent victims only one was a known female. Another one was unknown and 12 were identified as male.

Mine Incidents and Fatalities, by Gender

Incident	Male	Female	Unknown	Total	Percentage
Killed	7	0	1	8	57%
Injured	5	1	0	6	43%
TOTAL	12	1	1	14	100%
Percentage	86%	7%	7%	100%	

The following Table shows that all of the casualties from recent mine incidents were over 14 years of age. The one known female casualty was between 30-44 years of age. Data on age and gender is available for 13 of the 14 recent victims.

Recent Victims, by Age and Gender

Age	Male	Female	Total	Percentage
0-4 years	0	0	0	0%
5-14 years	0	0	0	0%
15-29 years	3	0	3	23%
30-44 years	8	1	9	69%
45-59 years	0	0	0	0%
60 and over	1	0	1	8%
Total	12	1	13	100%

The data below shows that herding was the most common activity at the time of the mine accident.

Activity at the Time of the Incident

Activity at the Time of the Incident	Recent Victim Totals	Percentage
Herding	8	57%
Farming	1	7%
Housework	1	7%
Travelling	2	14%
Other	2	14%
TOTAL	14	100%

The following two Tables below show that all six of the landmine survivors are in Nouadhibou province and they suffer from a loss of a limb. The only type of injury reported during the community interview was amputation. Five of the six survivors were herders including one woman casualty.

Type of Wound from Mine Incident, by Gender

Wound	Female	Male	Total
Amputation	1	5	6
Loss of Sight	0	0	0
Other wound	0	0	0
Unknown wound	0	0	0
Total	1	5	6

Survivors, by Gender and Occupation

Province	District	Community	Gender	Occupation
Nouadhibou	Nouadhibou	Carriere	Male	Herder
Nouadhibou	Nouadhibou	Carriere	Male	Herder
Nouadhibou	Nouadhibou	Carriere	Male	Herder
Nouadhibou	Nouadhibou	Agudet ol Bedbed	Male	Farmer
Nouadhibou	Nouadhibou	Dhi Billal	Male	Artisan
Nouadhibou	Nouadhibou	Swicita 2	Female	Herder

A Victim Needs Assessment, completed in 2007, recommended the following:

- Establish a specific project for landmine survivors and their integration in society
- Support the national orthopaedic centre (CNORF) to be able to provide adequate services to the survivors
- Establish a database to track landmine survivor activities
- Provide to survivors, professional training targeted to meet their needs to be integrated into society
- Provide micro-credits to enable victims to generate income
- Establish and support landmine survivor networks at the regional and national level
- Encourage young survivors to go to school

2 VISION

Mauritania will be free from all anti-personnel landmines and unexploded ordnance within all known Suspected Hazard Areas (SHAs) within its territory by January 2011, in accordance with the Anti-personnel Mine Ban Treaty;

(a) Enabling freedom of movement and national economic development activities to occur in a safe environment;

(b) Enabling landmine survivors to be rehabilitated and re-integrated into society;

(c) Developing a national capacity to address any residual mine problem that may occur beyond treaty deadlines and any ERW threat, as well as MRE/ERW education

3 STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES 2007-2010

The strategic goal will be achieved through the following strategic objectives:

Strategic Goal 1

Clear all known antipersonnel suspected hazardous areas by January 2011

Strategic Objective One: Conduct technical survey and area reduction by 2010.

Strategic Objective Two: Conduct clearance on all known minefields by January 2011.

Strategic Goal 2

Reduce new landmine casualties to zero

Strategic Objective One: Fence and mark all anti-tank minefields not encompassed by the Ottawa Treaty.

Strategic Objective Two: Enable mine risk education campaigns in mine affected regions by engaging local NGO networks and retaining this capacity to address any residual threat.

Strategic Goal 3

Provide medical care to all landmine survivors and provide them access to assistance leading to their full integration into community life

Strategic Objective One: Provide support to CNORF (Centre national d'orthopedie et de la rehabilitation fonctionnelle), under the Ministry of Health and partner with international organisations in survivor rehabilitation.

Strategic Objective Two: Provide vocational training (at the national level) to survivors to encourage their integration into the community.

Strategic Goal 4

Increase and maintain, at all levels, the national capacity required to support the full implementation of the programme.

Strategic Objective One: Increase the national capacity in planning, training, monitoring/evaluation and demining activities to address known mine threats and any residual threat.

Strategic Objective Two: Mainstream mine action into national plans (poverty reduction, development, etc) and budgets to enable a sustainable implementation.

4 IMPLEMENTATION MECHANISM

4.1 Management, Coordination and Capacity Development

In June 2001, the Government established a National Commission on the Ottawa Convention on Anti-Personnel Mines, responsible for the overall direction of mine action, setting priorities and endorsing the strategic direction of the program, under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The Chair of this body is rotational and is currently chaired by the head of civil society engaged in mine action. Also in 2001, the National Humanitarian Demining Office (BNDH) was created under the Armed Forces Engineer Corps.

At the implementation level, all humanitarian mine action activities are accomplished through the Armed Forces Engineer Corps. Currently, a total of 80 trained deminers can be mobilized, but this must be increased to approximately 650 deminers to attain the strategic goals. The government can train this increase over a 3 month period in the respective regions. Upon completing the national strategy, these trained deminers would revert back to their former

military unit and would serve to offer a residual national capacity to address any unforeseen requirements with respect to ERW (explosive remnants of war).

The National Commission membership consists of representatives from government ministries with responsibilities for mine action, NGOs and donors (as observers). The Executive Secretary of the NC is the Coordinator of the PNDHD. It has been recently proposed by UNDP that membership to the national commission reflect the newly elected government structure and raise the level of participation to the level of Secretary Generals.

In November 2005, a Chief Technical Advisor was recruited by UNDP to assist with capacity development, donor confidence and provision of technical advice. After a two year intervention, the Mauritanian mine action programme can execute their responsibilities with full transparency, increased efficiency/effectiveness and technical expertise. However, it is recommended that this programme include periodic external evaluations.

A national capacity matrix is illustrated at Annex

During 2006, the Government transferred BNDH to the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Development by signing a decree on 20 November 2006 outlining the new institutional arrangements for the National Humanitarian Demining Programme for Development (PNDHD). Following Presidential elections in spring 2007, PNDHD was transferred to the Ministry of Decentralization and Territorial Management.

In autumn 2007, the activities of PNDHD were presented to the Steering Committee for the National Programme of Humanitarian Demining for Development. This Steering Committee met on 5 September 2007 to review the activities of 2006, examine the 2007 work plan and approve the operating budget for PNDHD. Key partners and government representatives were in attendance, bringing transparency and visibility to mine action activities.

At the regional level, UNDP has initiated technical exchange meetings with MINURSO in 2006, with participation by BNDH, UNICEF and Mauritania government representatives. It is planned to conduct another technical exchange in 2007/2008.

4.2 Programme Delivery

In addition to monitoring and coordination, PNDHD is responsible for programme delivery. Its activities include:

- Producing and maintaining national mine action procedures based on International Mine Action Standards (IMAS).
- Identifying, surveying, and marking areas contaminated by landmines and UXO through the demining organization.
- Tasking mine action activities according to plans and priorities approved by the NC and central government authorities.
- Collecting, collating, maintaining, and disseminating data on mines and UXO.
- Investigating all mine-related incidents and ensuring that appropriate follow-up activities occur.
- Serving as a liaison with national and international bodies undertaking mine action in Mauritania.
- Monitoring mine action activities and ensuring a high level of quality is maintained.

The current Mauritanian mine action program implementing partners include:

- Clearance: Mauritanian Corps of Engineers and QA by HAMAP and UNDP
- Mine Risk Education: Ministry of Education, Ministry of Defence, Ministry of Health, Federation of Tourist Guides, the local network of NGOs in Zourate and Nouadhibou), the Federation of Nomads, local civil authorities (hakim, wali, mayor and tribe leaders) and UNICEF
- Victim Assistance: Ministry of Health, local network of NGOs, the National Centre for Orthopedic and Rehabilitation (CNORF) and UNICEF

4.3 Monitoring and Quality Assurance

PNDHD is responsible for monitoring mine action operations and ensuring, with UNDP support, that these activities comply with International Mine Action Standards. PNDHD meets these responsibilities through a number of activities, including the following:

- Ensures the work of mine action actors is in compliance with policies and standards (SOPs) set by PNDHD.
- Establish accreditation and validation of mine action organizations.
- Prepares quarterly and annual reports on the progress of mine action efforts for government and other relevant stakeholders.
- Undertakes periodic reviews of the Mauritanian National Mine Action Plan and makes recommendations to NC when changes are deemed necessary for final approval

4.4 Resource Mobilization

Mauritania utilizes five principal mechanisms to mobilize resources for mine action efforts. UNDP in collaboration with PNDHD is principally responsible for these activities:

- Collaborate with major stakeholders in the *Portfolio of Mine Action Projects* compiled and published by UNMAS, UNDP and UNICEF.
- The Mauritania mine action authorities and their partners facilitate site visits (4 April ceremonies, external official visits, quality control during clearance and destruction, MRE seminars, etc) in the affected zones to promote
- Resource mobilization visits to local embassies are undertaken periodically to brief embassy officials on the progress of the Mauritanian mine action program and to request ongoing support.
- A Mauritanian Mine Action Newsletter, to be produced in 2008, providing an overview of the mine-action program and overview of achievements and goals, to be regularly distributed to donors and the broader mine action community.
- GoM delegations regularly participate in international mine action conferences to increase fundraising efforts from international donors.

Donors during 2007 have included the governments of France, Sweden and USA Department of Defence.

Potential donors for 2008 include the International Trust Fund (technical survey), the governments of Qatar (technical survey and capacity development), Canada (technical survey and demining), Japan (EOD) and Spain (instructor training). In addition, SNIM (Société National Industriel et Minière, a joint state and private mineral extraction company) is expected to provide support for technical survey and survivor assistance activities, while the Paris –Dakar Rally organizers will be approached to support survivor assistance projects.

In addition, the government of Mauritania will contribute approximately 9,000,000 USD in kind over the 3 year period, covering deminers salaries, casualty evacuation services, and medical insurance costs.

5 IMPLEMENTATION PLAN: 2007 – 2010

5.1 Coordination and Monitoring

Through the UNDP Capacity Building Project, the structure and working capacity of PNDHD has been developed to a level where it is substantially able to coordinate and monitor all mine action activities in the country in accordance with international standards and is able to fulfill the MBT reporting obligations.

Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) have been developed for humanitarian mine action in Mauritania in 2005. A final revision is still required for the National SOPs. Support from the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD) has been requested to assist in the development of National Technical Standards. The mine action legislation will be submitted to the new elected Parliament and Senate to be approved late in 2007.

At the conclusion of the Mauritania Completion Initiative in 2011, the mine action program will essentially be completed and all mine action institutions supporting mine clearance operations would in principle be closed. However, this capacity will have been well equipped and could be integrated into existing civil protection/defense structures to address any residual mine problem that may surface well beyond treaty deadlines. Indeed, it is expected that the current mine action capacity can be integrated into the existing EOD Response capacity, currently under the Mauritanian Armed Forces in order to further support the programme for destruction of ERW, and cluster munitions.

5.2 Clearance operations

The Completion Plan for Mauritania aims to clear all known SHA to enable the community to live freely in their livelihood and support national development activities. This will be accomplished by January 2011.

5.2.1 – 2007 Clearance season and expected outcomes

As of June 2007, the UN certified LIS results indicate 76 km² of Mauritania territory remain as suspected hazardous areas (SHAs). These 65 SHAs must be technically surveyed prior to clearance. Three technical survey teams and one clearance team are expected to be deployed in 2007. The tasking process will follow the priorities established by the LIS results, for example in 2007, the three technical surveys will specifically address the three HIGH priority mine affected communities, while the clearance team will demine one of these communities. Clearance teams will remain in place until the threat is fully eliminated.

The Corps of Engineers assigned two technical survey teams to two high priority suspected hazardous areas, in Bir Mougrein and PK56. This technical survey identified 5.55 sqm for potential release, pending a new PNDHD policy on this release process. National and international funding will provide additional resources for technical survey, clearance, marking/fencing in 2007. The financial contributions for the 2007 clearance season were secured from France in September (200,000 USD) and augmented with a national contribution (38,800 USD). Further funding is required and shall be secured through the Completion Initiative.

Deminers conduct technical surveys consistent to the priorities identified by the Mauritania LIS results, in order to plan detailed clearance operations. These technical surveys include insertion of probing lanes into the SHAs to find evidence of the threat in conjunction with community input. Potential release of land may also be achieved through these surveys, if the land has been used over a period of time without any incident and verified. The national mine action database, utilizes the Information Management System for Mine Action (IMSMA), to store and disseminate mine related information, including maps, survey and victim data. Clearance records from demining activities are received regularly and the information entered into the database.

The Work Plan to clear the remaining suspected hazard areas of landmines, will be based on the LIS priorities. The resulting clearance activities will respect the LIS priorities until the threat is full eliminated.

5.2.2 – Clearance in the years 2008/2011

Resource mobilization must progressively increase to meet target objectives of the Ottawa Treaty. This must reflect the Government of Mauritania contributions in terms of providing an operational budget to support mine action activities and additionally provision of in-kind services (premises, support services, etc). At the international level, sufficient resources must be secured to compliment the activities envisioned in the Completion Initiative.

By the end of the 2008 clearance season, it is expected that there will be less than 25 km² of mine contaminated area remaining in Mauritania. Tasking of technical survey and clearance assets will adhere to LIS priorities and will address the mine affected communities until the threat is fully eliminated.

In 2008, PNDHD will continue to coordinate mine action in the country, managing and monitoring the planned 30 manual demining teams, 60 technical survey teams, 4 battle area clearance teams and one mechanical team.

PNDHD Quality Assurance teams will oversee all clearance and survey activities. Information will be systematically collected and recorded using Geographical Information Systems (GIS) and the Information Management System for Mine Action (IMSMA) supported by GICHD.

Taking in consideration the importance of having Mauritania free from anti-personnel landmines, the Government is confident that the international community combined with state contributions will continue, allowing Mauritania to meeting the MBT obligations, within the deadlines.

5.2.3 – Land Release

The mine action programme is currently considering a policy on potential land release, where land may be given back to the local community after a formal process involving confirmation through technical survey and local input by community leaders declare these former suspected hazardous areas no longer represent a threat. The details of this land release policy will be the subject of a workshop in the first quarter of 2008, with an invitation extended to GICHD.

5.3 Survivor Assistance

The Ministry of Health, UNICEF, the CNORF and Handicapped Associations are engaged in survivor assistance and disability issues. This may be further enhanced by involving civil society organizations or creating NGOs specifically focused in this domain. The UNICEF study on the needs of landmine and UXO victims in the north of Mauritania was completed in March 2007 highlighted the following:

- As in many mine affected countries, Mauritanian landmine victims tend to most often affect the most vulnerable. The injured have problems being reinserted into the social and economic structures, in addition to problems posed by access to services (geographic accessibility to services, isolated nomadic population of rural communities, financial limitations and a weak economic outlook for the survivors). In many cases, survivors do not have the means to go to cities for medical advice, let alone medicine, braces or prosthetics.
- The only existing physical rehabilitation and orthopedic centre in the country is in Nouakchott, 500 km from the closest mined area.
- Proposed a five year strategy to address the needs of landmine victims in Mauritania – yet to be discussed amongst stakeholders.

5.3.1 - Prosthetic services, training, and capacity building in Ministry of Health

The CNORF is the only existing national facilities providing support to landmine survivors. This center, in Nouakchott, is supported by the Mauritanian government through the Ministry of Health and ICRC, GTZ and the Spanish Cooperation. CNORF can provide braces, artificial limbs, orthopedic shoes, and rehabilitations services. CNORF provides very good quality material and covers a wide range of orthopedic and rehabilitation needs, particularly for women and children.

CNORF also contains specialized equipment for the production of the necessary products through six orthopedic experts, two cobblers and ten physical therapy technicians.

This national institution lacks financial support and logistical support to supervise its regional networks. In addition, formalized training for its technical staff will sustain the functioning of this national institution.

Continued support in the form of training and supplies is needed to make the existing network fully viable.

5.3.2 - Socio-economic reintegration

PHNDH will seek to fund activities that facilitate the socio-economic reintegration of Mauritania's mine survivors through home-based enterprises in trades such as tailors, nursing assistants, active MRE members. Programmes must be developed with the GoM and partners to gain access to micro-finances projects in support of landmine survivors. Two micro-fiance projects are planned in early 2008.

In the long term, survivors recognized as persons with disabilities will continue to receive support through programs provided by the Ministry of Health and by social service organizations in accordance with the National Strategy for Persons with Disabilities. In the coming years, the overall governmental contribution for this component is estimated being approximately 100,000 USD per year.

5.4 Surveillance and Mine Risk education

UNICEF in partnership with PNDHD will continue mine risk education initiatives in the 60 mine-affected villages to discourage life-threatening activities, especially among women and children. Additionally, the United States, partnering with PNDHD and local NGO networks will implement MRE field campaigns aimed to deliver MRE products to the mine affected region in October/November 2007. Communities, schools, and local NGOs will be included in the implementation of mine awareness programs. Interactive activities such as plays, and expositions will inform nomads of the dangers of landmines and UXO, in addition to media exposure by radio/television. PNDHD will monitor, coordinate and prioritize the MRE activities.

Activities planned jointly with PNDHD and UNICEF for 2008 include continued support for mine risk education in the mine affected communities, reinforce mine marking in the region and support the local network of 45 relays. This support will gradually reduce over the period of the strategy, as the mine affected communities become fewer in quantity, however the national capacity will remain to address any residual threat, such as ERW.

5.6 TRAINING PLAN, Capacity Development Plan

UNDP support to the national mine action programme has been implemented through Direct Execution (DEX) through a Chief Technical Advisor providing capacity development support to PNDHD since November 2005. UNDP will scale down its support to focus on National

Execution (NEX) with UNDP support extended from the Country Office and BCPR NY Mine Action Team.

Capacity development has resulted in a training plan for PNDHD staff (IMSMA database, language training, technical skills development, monitoring and evaluation, senior and middle management, etc).

Verification

This process aims to build full confidence amongst the mine affected community using the land after clearance. The Mauritanian national demining programme are using sampling methods after clearance as the primary means of verification, prior to formally handing over the land. If mechanical assets are introduced to the programme, they may be used to assist in this process.

6 RISK ASSESSMENT

The NC and PNDHD are implementing a Mine Action Programme and should be able to achieve the Treaty deadline under Article 5 by 2011, if funding at the national and international level is maintained to support activities as indicated. However, it is still appropriate to consider the possible risks that might obstruct the successful completion of activity as described in this plan. The following have therefore been identified as potential risks:

6.1 Insufficient funding

It is estimated that it will take the remaining 3 years to achieve the strategic objectives. This is dependent on the necessary funds being available as planned on an annual basis. A reduction in funding in any year would push the target date beyond January 2011, calling for a request for extension of clearance deadlines as foreseen by Article 5 of the MBT.

6.2 Clearance progress rates are slower than expected

Although mechanical and raking techniques may accelerate demining clearance outputs, a significant threat remains for deeply buried mines covered by sand dunes. These migratory sand dunes shift annually due to strong winds. It is very possible that deeply buried mines may become exposed at a much later date, reinforcing the need for Mauritania to retain a residual capacity to address this type of threat. Deep detection techniques may also be used to reduce this threat level.

Standard output rates, based on 2-man drills yields a output of approx 7000 sq m / team/ 3 weeks or 333 sqm / day / team or 41 sqm/day/lane. SOPs will be amended to convert to one man drills, thereby, increasing productivity. This productivity may be further enhanced by techniques such as raking and using mechanical equipment.

It is also to be taken in consideration that new areas can be reported as being contaminated. One the other hand, two other factors may assist to mitigate this risk:

- A Risk Management approach has been developed during the recent years of field experience in many countries, allowing improvements in the rate of area reduction against area cleared. This is an approach currently being investigated in Mauritania, where continued land use without accidents (such as grazing) over several years of usage may lead to a land release policy, signed by the local authorities in the immediate area.
- Due to low level of risk verified (current zero victims level) following survey operations, some of the BAC tasks could be downgraded for EOD response (spot tasks).

6.3 Institutional Arrangements

Through the UNDP Capacity Building Project, the complete transfer of PNDHD to MDAT, the government acceptance of a UN certified LIS, an increase of national deminers and

engagement of mechanical equipment and raking techniques, PNDHD will acquire an almost complete capacity to manage and coordinate the mine action program; final methodological and technical required refinements have been identified and are planned to be fulfilled as detailed in section 5.2. Nevertheless as mentioned above PNDHD, as a UNDP project under DEX, is not yet a legal entity. The Completion Plan is thus based on the commitment of the Government to take full institutional responsibility of the Programme to implement the present Completion Plan with the support of the international community.

Also there is the need to have donor confidence confirmed and this is to be secured with close collaboration and support from PNDHD and the Government.

ANNEX A: PLAN OF ACTION: MATRIX

<u>Component</u>	<u>Implementing Body</u>	<u>Contracting Body</u>	<u>Funding</u>	<u>Short-term Objectives (2007)</u>	<u>Long-term Objectives (2008-2011)</u>
Planning and Coordination	NC PNDHD UNDP	UNDP Direct Executing PNDHD	International donor countries and Government of Mauritania	Completed capacity building and fulfill transition plan Mainstream mine action into national development plans	Coordinating and monitoring all Mine action Activities in the country
Mine Clearance / Survey and Marking	MEF Fund raising, procurement, financial management, and technical assistance	Corps of Engineers	International donor countries and Government of Mauritania	Clear 28,000 sqm and release 4 sq km based on development of land release policy	Clear remaining SHA
Mine Risk Education	PNDHD UNICEF Fund raising, procurement, financial management, and technical assistance	Corps of Engineers, locals network of NGOs	International donor countries and Government of Mauritania	Campaigns to maintain adequate levels of awareness to ensure "Zero Victims"	Campaigns to maintain adequate levels of awareness to ensure "Zero Victims"
Survivor Assistance	PNDHD UNDP UNICEF Fund raising, procurement, financial management, and technical assistance	CNORF	International donor countries, Government of Mauritania	Support emergency and ongoing medical assistance, physical rehabilitation, and socio-economic reintegration of landmine/ ERW survivors	Mainstream assistance to government and social structures

ANNEX B PLAN OF ACTION: RESOURCE REQUIREMENTS

**Mauritania - Completion
Initiative Budget by Sector**

Components	2007	2008	2009	2010	Total Amount
Planning & Coordination	150,000	150,000	150,000	150,000	600,000
Pledged funds	130,000	0	0	0	130,000
<i>Shortfall</i>	20,000	150,000	150,000	150,000	470,000
Mine Risk Education	150,000	55,000	95,000	35,000	335,000
Pledged funds	70,000	0	30,000	0	100,000
<i>Shortfall</i>	80,000	55,000	65,000	35,000	235,000
Mine Clearance	230,900	4,205,650	8,833,250	4,181,600	17,451,400
Pledged funds	106,000	0	39,000	0	145,000
<i>Shortfall</i>	124,900	4,205,650	8,794,250	4,181,600	17,306,400
Survivor Assistance	100,000	125,000	150,000	95,000	470,000
Pledged funds	12,000	0	20,000	0	32,000
<i>Shortfall</i>	88,000	125,000	130,000	95,000	438,000
TOTAL	630,900	4,535,650	9,228,250	4,461,600	18,856,400
<i>Total Shortfall</i>	312,900	4,535,650	9,139,250	4,461,600	18,449,400

Cost Summary Demining Activities												
Year	# Tms Manual	Cost Manual	Veh	# Tms Mech	Cost Mech	#Tms Tech Svy	Cost Tech Svy	Vehs	#Tms BAC	Cost BAC	Vehs	TOTAL ANNUAL COST
2007	1	95,000	0	0	0	3	135,900	0	0	0	0	230,900
2008	30	2,821,150	690,000	1	1,440,000	57	2,582,100	810,000	5	220,000	270,000	8,833,250
2009	30	1,951,500	0	1	513,000	60	1,620,900	0	5	120,250	0	4,205,650
2010	30	1,951,500	0	1	513,000	60	1,620,900	0	4	96,200	0	4,181,600
Capability COST		6,819,150	690,000		2,466,000		5,959,800	810,000		436,450	270,000	17,451,400

Production Summary												
Year	# Tms Manual	Prod Manual		# Tms Mech	Prod Mech	#Tms Tech Svy	Prod Tech Svy		#Tms BAC	Prod BAC		TOTAL ANNUAL PRODUCTION
2007	1	55,980		0	0	3	56,160		0	0		112,140
2008	30	6,429,303		1	1,040,000	57	4,680,000		5	357,240		12,506,543
2009	30	6,997,500		1	1,250,000	60	4,680,000		5	390,000		13,317,500
2010	30	6,997,500		1	1,250,000	60	4,680,000		5	312,000		13,239,500
Capability PROD		20,480,283			3,540,000		14,096,160			1,059,240		39,175,683

Overall Summary								
Yr	# Manual Tms	Cost Manual	#Tech Svy Tms	Cost Tech Svy	# BAC Tms	Cost BAC	# Mech Tms	Cost Mech
2007	1	95,000	3	135,900	0	0	0	0
2008	30	3,511,150	57	3,392,100	5	490,000	1	1,440,000
2009	30	1,951,500	60	1,620,900	5	120,250	1	513,000
2010	30	1,951,500	60	1,620,900	4	96,200	1	513,000

Staffing	
Manual	348
Mech	Est 45
Tech Svy	240
BAC	16
TOTAL	649

ANNEX C - LIST OF ACRONYMS

APM	Anti-Personnel Mines
BAC	Battle Area Clearance
BCPR	Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery
CCWC	Certain Conventional Weapons Convention
GICHD	Geneva International Center for Humanitarian Demining
ICRC	International Committee of Red Cross
IMAS	International Mine Action Standards
IMSMA	Information Management System for Mine Action
MA	Mine Action
MAC	Mine Action Center
MRE	Mine Risk Education
QA	Quality Assurance
QC	Quality Control
SOP	Standard Operating Procedures
TS	Technical Survey
TSS	Technical Safety Standards
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNMAS	United Nations Mine Action Service
UXO	Unexploded Ordnance