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Action in Afghanistan, ed mined land and an additional 450 sq km of land country in 1989. Originally tasked with helping the Afghans era, in fighting with resistance forces from 1996 to September day are killed or injured by mines and Nations following the Soviet Union's withdrawal from the Programme has evolved over time to deal with the mine and rid themselves of the land mines that the Red Army had laid, the country has been contaminated by UXO. November 1979-1989 Soviet-Afghan war. This includes the period of the Each successive conflict has resulted in a changed making it one of the most mine- contaminated regions, factional commanders, whom some 25 years five, employees of the Organisation for Mine Clearance and Afghan Rehabilitation, were claimed the lives of hundreds of civilians and dozens of Afghan and international aid workers, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs). The post-Taliban Afghanistan that emerged from the December 2001 Bonn negotiations following the Coalition military intervention formed an internationally recognized general government that indicated that it was ready to join international treaties, including the Ottawa Convention. Afghanistan has indeed joined the Ottawa Convention, becoming a State Party on 13 March 2003. In a tense region, Afghanistan's decision to unilaterally give up this weapon should be applauded; a number of Afghanistan's neighbors are not Parties to the Convention, including Pakistan, Iran, China, and Uzbekistan. That Afghanistan has taken this courageous step has provided the MAPA with the opportunity to plan its work.

Introduction
The Mine Action Programme for Afghanistan (MAPA) was established under the auspices of the United Nations following the Soviet Union's withdrawal from the country in 1989. Originally tasked with helping the Afghans rid themselves of the landmines that the Red Army had laid, the country has been contaminated by UXO. November 1979-1989 Soviet-Afghan war. This includes the period of the Each successive conflict has resulted in a changed making it one of the most mine- contaminated regions, factional commanders, whom some 25 years five, employees of the Organisation for Mine Clearance and Afghan Rehabilitation, were claimed the lives of hundreds of civilians and dozens of Afghan and international aid workers, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs). The post-Taliban Afghanistan that emerged from the December 2001 Bonn negotiations following the Coalition military intervention formed an internationally recognized general government that indicated that it was ready to join international treaties, including the Ottawa Convention. Afghanistan has indeed joined the Ottawa Convention, becoming a State Party on 13 March 2003. In a tense region, Afghanistan's decision to unilaterally give up this weapon should be applauded; a number of Afghanistan's neighbors are not Parties to the Convention, including Pakistan, Iran, China, and Uzbekistan. That Afghanistan has taken this courageous step has provided the MAPA with the opportunity to plan its work.

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opportunities and Challenges in Mine Action in Afghanistan, 2002-2003

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the potential of expanding MAPA's mine and UXO clearance rates that are a precursor to major infrastructure projects such as road construction, power line repair, and irrigation system rehabilitation. This type of funding, whether provided through a grant or a service contract, sends a signal to the same donor that is funding the infrastructure project. This allows the donors and their collaborators, among Ministries and implementation partners to review the demining themes as part of their overall available assets. This provides for maximum flexibility as the same donor controls the fund allocations for both the demining contractors and other construction contractors, and can thus line manage all of the contractors whose work is necessary for the completion of the reconstruction project.

Reconstruction Funding

Reconstruction funding is provided for the coordination and execution of mine and UXO clearance activities that are a precursor to major infrastructure projects such as road construction, power line repair, and irrigation system rehabilitation. This type of funding, whether provided through a grant or a service contract, sends a signal to the same donor that is funding the infrastructure project. This allows the donors and their collaborators, among Ministries and implementation partners to review the demining themes as part of their overall available assets. This provides for maximum flexibility as the same donor controls the fund allocations for both the demining contractors and other construction contractors, and can thus line manage all of the contractors whose work is necessary for the completion of the reconstruction project.

Peace-Building Funding

Peace-building funding is provided for the coordination and execution of the Mine Action for Peace (MAP) initiative and the destruction of anti-personnel mine stockpiles. MAP is a reintegration project designed to assist former fighters to demobilize through an Afghan-government community acceptance. It addresses the economic needs of demobilized fighters but also deals with problems of psychological adjustment and community acceptance. It also has the potential of expanding MAPA's mine and UXO clearance rates that are a precursor to major infrastructure projects such as road construction, power line repair, and irrigation system rehabilitation. This type of funding, whether provided through a grant or a service contract, sends a signal to the same donor that is funding the infrastructure project. This allows the donors and their collaborators, among Ministries and implementation partners to review the demining themes as part of their overall available assets. This provides for maximum flexibility as the same donor controls the fund allocations for both the demining contractors and other construction contractors, and can thus line manage all of the contractors whose work is necessary for the completion of the reconstruction project.

Conclusion

In order to mobilize resources through the humanitarian, reconstruction and peace-building channels, the United Nations and the MAPA NGOs have had to accept a myriad of different funding modalities alongside the traditional grants-based approach of the VTF. This has taxed the NGOs' ability to administer the grants and contracts management side of their operations. The United Nations has also been forced to increase its diversity in skills base. The United Nations Mine Action Center for Afghanistan (UNMACA), working out of eight major cities in Afghanistan, now employs over 150 people, including 170 personnel, to coordinate the increasingly complex MAPA and to manage host government and donor relations. Five of these expatriates, (including lawyers, fund raisers and finance staff) work full time and another three senior managers dedicate part of their time to raise money or help the NGOs administer and report on the money that has been raised, with the rest of the expatriate time spent coordinating the NGO's field operations or in support functions. To lessen the reliance on expatriates and to smooth the way for the eventual transition to national administration, the UNMACA has also beefed up the training capacity within the Programme and has in place dedicated specialized training courses for the NGOs in financial administration and accounting.

Despite the challenges, the emergence of a post-Taliban Afghan government has had a positive impact on mine action in the country. One of the key challenges is being able to plan with a recognized government that is a State Party to the Ottawa Convention and also able to work with that government to raise the resources necessary to pay for the plan. The next challenge is to create the opportunity to transition a programme that has been administered by the United Nations for the past 18 years to a national authority that has the capacity and commitment to manage this complex Programme in the years ahead. A thorough and detailed transition plan that sets out the criteria and mechanisms for a successful transition should be released in the coming months.

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The APMBC provides a global sounding board in which ideas compete for attention and generate much action on the activities and functions of what we have come to call "mine action. As an American involved in the mine action community, being a citizen of the United Nations, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), donors, and the United Nations would not have been able to define and propose action plans to address the wide scope of mine action challenges. The pur e set of having real-time discussions among groups that might ordinarily never see one another, much less engage in dialog, has led to new partnerships, new approaches to mine action activities, and if not always a clear consensus, then at least a greater understanding of the problem and an awareness of others engaged in the effort. The fact that national governmental agencies of countries at risk are routinely coordinating with NGOs, visiting military, the United Nations, regional organizations and donor countries is truly amazing. The meetings of the various venues in which the APMBC provide a good sounding board in which ideas compete for attention and general approval.

Stockpile Destruction

Another clear benefit of the APMBC is that it has provided a finite, acceptable and measurable way to destroy stockpiles of anti-personnel landmines. We need not assume that all landmines that have been thus destroyed were viable or that all landmine stockpiles have been accurately accounted for. The salient fact is that massive numbers of landmines have been systematically destroyed and that national programs are being brought on board for this purpose have been not only successful, but have facilitated the coordination of complementary humanitarian efforts within some countries. Indeed the use of some military organizations to carry out the destruction of landmine stockpiles has enhanced their role in humanitarian efforts.

Seldom has a mine caused such peltish among like-minded people, in this case those concerned with mine action. The Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMC) of 1997, commonly called the "Mine Ban Treaty," or more often the "Ottawa Treaty," is lauded by some—loathed by others. To some it is the lynchpin of mine action activities, to others it is a distraction from pragmatic mine action challenges. Some will not take action against mines without it being invoked, others will not take action if it is "out." As an American involved in the mine action community, being a citizen of the United Nations, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), donors, and the United Nations would not have been able to define and propose action plans to address the wide scope of mine action challenges. The pure set of having real-time discussions among groups that might ordinarily never see one another, much less engage in dialog, has led to new partnerships, new approaches to mine action activities, and if not always a clear consensus, then at least a greater understanding of the problem and an awareness of others engaged in the effort. The fact that national governmental agencies of countries at risk are routinely coordinating with NGOs, visiting military, the United Nations, regional organizations and donor countries is truly amazing. The meetings of the various venues in which the APMBC provide a good sounding board in which ideas compete for attention and general approval.

Restriction of NPIs by the Convention on Conventional Weapons

On the other hand, the APMBC is not the only international instrument to restrict the use of anti-personnel landmines, but for some reason, many "Mine Ban Treaty" advocates often fail to add the authority of Protocol II of the Convention on Conven-