



MAINSTREAMING MINE ACTION INTO DEVELOPMENT



MINE ACTION TEAM

BUREAU FOR
CRISIS PREVENTION
AND RECOVERY

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Foreword

Tragedically, many of the world's most impoverished nations suffer the scourge of landmines and other explosive remnants of war, which continue to injure and kill civilians for many years after conflicts have ended.

Civil society took the lead in the late 1980s in bringing the landmine issue to the attention of the world. Many NGOs dedicated to mine action have since been established, and a small number of development or advocacy NGOs have incorporated mine action into their broader mandates. Multilateral organizations and many governments have also become seized of the issue.

Approximately two-thirds of the world's nations have ratified or acceded to the *Anti-personnel Mine Ban Convention*, which prohibits this insidious weapon and obligates countries in a position to do so to assist mine-affected states with the destruction of stockpiled mines, to clear mined areas, and to meet the needs of landmine survivors and their families. Other international legal instruments such as the *Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons* address the landmine issue within a broader context.

Many mine-affected states have established mine-action programmes, and some donor nations have created discrete, thematic mine-action units, commonly as part of

departments concerned with humanitarian or post-conflict matters, and provided them with modest but valuable human and financial resources. With a few notable exceptions, what has not yet happened to the degree warranted by the magnitude and nature of the landmine problem is the mainstreaming of mine action into the national development plans of mine-affected states—nor, therefore, into the normal operations of international development agencies throughout the world. This is largely because mine action has not yet been fully acknowledged or embraced as a development issue as well as a humanitarian issue.

Among the many lessons that almost a half-century of international development cooperation has taught us is that human-centred development is multifaceted in nature and requires a multidimensional and comprehensive approach. It is not enough that we have food, water, and shelter from the elements. We also need a clean environment, adequate health care, education, and the means to provide for ourselves and our loved ones over

the long term. We need to live in societies where rule of law prevails, where civil, political, economic, social, and cultural rights are respected—and where we can move about in safety. Intrinsic to all of this, and at the heart of the very notion of development, is the security of the person.

In addition to threatening life and limb, landmines inhibit rehabilitation and reconstruction, agriculture, water supply, education, and industrial and commercial development. They prevent the safe return of refugees and internally displaced persons, and impose significant and unnecessary costs on health systems already stretched to or beyond capacity. They breed instability and insecurity, and terrorize entire populations.

For these and a host of other reasons, mine action is very much a development issue, and there is no doubt that, in many affected countries, mine action can contribute a great

The return or resettlement of internally displaced persons and refugees requires favourable security and socio-economic conditions. Linking mine action to reintegration and area-based development programmes is a prerequisite to achieving safe and sustainable settlement in mine-affected areas.

deal to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.

The purpose of this paper is to briefly outline the relationship between mine action and development and to propose ways that the mine-action community and the broader international development community can work more closely to their mutual benefit. It is our hope that the conclusions and recommendations that have been set forth will stimulate further research, analysis, and dialogue, and thereby lead to more effective joint mine-action and development programming. In this way, we might all better serve mine-affected communities throughout the world in the years ahead.



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B A C K G R O U N D

The Landmine Problem

Landmines are victim-triggered weapons that injure or kill on contact. They are indiscriminate by nature, making no distinction between enemy combatants, farmers at work, or children at play. Nor do they cease to be a threat when a conflict has ended. Rudimentary landmines set in the ground more than a century ago still present danger.

More than 80 countries are contaminated with landmines, approximately 35 of them severely so. Since 1975 there have been more than a million reported landmine casualties worldwide, in excess of 80 percent of them civilian. Many more incidents in remote areas have not been officially reported or recorded.

Landmines continue to kill or injure between 15,000 and 20,000 people annually. There is also evidence that many more people suffer and die as a result of the indirect but equally lethal impact of landmines as an *obstacle to sustainable development*.

- Landmines that render potential agricultural land unusable contribute to food shortages and the nutrition deficit.
- Landmines that restrict access to potable water contribute to diarrheal diseases, the greatest cause of preventable death on the planet.
- Landmines that inhibit schools from being built or students and teachers from attending classes limit educational and training opportunities.

- Landmines that hinder the construction and maintenance of roads and other infrastructure can have devastating economic and social effect.
- Landmines breed insecurity that tear the social fabric of vulnerable states and foment further instability.

Clearly, mine action is a *development* issue as well as a *humanitarian* issue, a *political* issue, a *social* issue, and, ultimately, a *human rights* issue—for nothing is more basic than the right to life, liberty, and security of the person.

International Legal Framework

There are various international legal instruments directed at curbing or ending the damage wrought by landmines and other explosive remnants of war (ERW)—instruments that regulate disarmament and the conduct of war, stipulate post-conflict obligations, and that seek to protect the rights of individuals and communities. Most far-reaching with respect to anti-personnel landmines is the *Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on their Destruction* (1997) (Anti-personnel Mine Ban Convention or Convention).

As of November 2004, 152 states had signed and 143 countries had ratified or acceded to the Anti-personnel Mine Ban Convention.

Moreover, many of the remaining states not party to the Convention have adopted its norms.

States Parties to the Convention are obliged, amongst other things, to end the use, production, stockpiling, and transfer of anti-personnel landmines (APMs) immediately; to destroy all stockpiled APMs within four years; and to clear all APMs in areas under its control within ten years. In addition, each State Party that is in a position to do so is required to provide assistance to other states with mine clearance and related activities, care and rehabilitation of mine victims, and mine-risk education activities.

Amended Protocol II (1996) to the *Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons* (1980) (CCW) strengthens the regulations governing the use of all landmines, including anti-vehicle mines, booby-traps, and other devices. It requires parties to a conflict to clear these weapons when fighting has ended and to take additional measures to protect civilians. It does not ban the use of any weapon. *Protocol V* (2003) of the CCW addresses the humanitarian impact of ERW and provides a framework for post-conflict clearance and exchange of information.

The *Fourth Geneva Convention* (1949) and its additional *Protocols of 1977* proscribe the use of indiscriminate methods or means of combat and weapons, and provide a legal framework for protection and assistance to civilians during times of armed conflict.

The failure to protect civilians from landmines also contravenes: the *Universal Declaration of*

Human Rights (1948), the *International Covenant on Economic Social and Cultural Rights* (1966), the *International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights* (1966), the *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women* (1979), the *Convention on the Rights of the Child* (1989), and the *Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities* (1993).

Given the impact of landmines on populations in motion, the *Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees* (1951) and its *Protocol of 1967* are also relevant.

Elements of Mine Action

Over the past two decades many mine-affected states have established comprehensive mine-action programmes comprised of five key elements, or ‘pillars’:

(i) Demining: Surveys, mapping, marking, and clearance activities.

(ii) Mine-Risk Education (MRE): To raise awareness of the risks of landmines and ERW, enabling at-risk groups to avoid them.

(iii) Victim/Survivor Assistance: Rehabilitation of survivors, providing them with new skills so they can continue to be productive members of their communities. Assistance is also provided to families and communities who have lost members to landmines.

(iv) Stockpile Destruction: Destruction of stockpiles of anti-personnel landmines.

(v) Advocacy: Working in support of all aspects of mine action, including universalization of the legal framework.

Much has been accomplished to date. New use of landmines has declined significantly and the number of countries producing mines has dropped from more than 50 to under 10. Since 1992, 52 million stockpiled anti-personnel landmines have been destroyed and vast tracts of land have been cleared. The number of new victims has fallen and thousands of landmine survivors have been rehabilitated and reintegrated into their societies as full, productive members.

Still, much remains to be done. Approximately 50 nations have not yet acceded to the Convention, and much of the world continues to be plagued with landmines and ERW that take thousands of lives each year and inhibit development.

Mainstreaming Mine Action into Development Programming

A credible and expanding body of research carried out in recent years has yielded evidence that well conceived and well managed mine-action programmes can significantly reduce direct and indirect casualty rates and at the same time generate high social and economic rates of return. For example, the World Bank and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) conducted a study

in Afghanistan in 2001 as part of their joint Afghanistan Watching Brief Project, which concluded that the average rate of return on mine-action projects was roughly double that of other sectors. In some cases, mine action was found to be necessary to advance related sectors, such as road infrastructure.

Benefit to cost ratios continue to improve as less expensive detection techniques are introduced, and as clearance activities are linked to spatial analysis for development. Improved methodology and targeting ensures that activities have maximum beneficial impact on affected populations.

Mine action has also proven to be a powerful confidence building measure when negotiating and/or sustaining peace. It eliminates some of the signs of war and is a tangible indication to the population that trust is being restored. It is often one of the first issues upon which disputing parties can agree, and one of the first service areas (mine-risk education, victim assistance, and demining) to reach vulnerable groups. In Afghanistan, Sudan, and Bosnia & Herzegovina, for instance, mine action was among the first areas of agreement between opposing parties. In some areas, mine action teams comprised of members of both sides were among the first groups to work ‘cross-lines’.

As evidence that landmines are increasingly recognized as a development issue, a small number of mine-affected states have established mine action as a development as well as a humanitarian priority, and have included it in their national development plans, strategies, and budgets. Similarly, some bilateral,

multilateral, and civil society development agencies have also begun to regard mine action as a full and legitimate sector of development in and of itself, and as a means to advance work in other, more traditional development sectors.

The United Nations currently has 13 departments, programmes, or funds involved in various aspects of mine action. UNDP has been actively engaged in mine action for many years, with a focus on strengthening national capacity in mine-affected states to undertake all aspects of mine action over the longer term, and to address the socio-economic consequences of landmines. Mine action is one of 30 service lines offered by UNDP.

With the support of Canada, the Netherlands, Norway, and the United Kingdom, UNDP recently commissioned a study on the *Mainstreaming of Mine Action into Development* carried out by the International Peace Research Institute, Oslo (PRIO). The study has added to the accumulated body of research and analysis dedicated to this important issue by many individuals and organizations within the mine-action and development communities.

Five salient facts have emerged on a consistent basis:

- *First*, the complex nature of the landmine problem requires a multi-dimensional and comprehensive response.
- *Second*, national ownership is of paramount importance. As in so many other areas, mine action achieves the best and most enduring

results when it is country-led and, to the extent possible, undertaken with domestic resources.

- *Third*, the international community can provide valuable support when required. The UN system, international financial institutions, bilateral agencies, international NGOs, and the private sector can play a complementary, facilitative role, providing external technical and financial support to help mine-affected states achieve established targets and deadlines.

- *Fourth*, involvement of non-traditional actors in mine action, such as the development community, need not supplant existing actors or channels of support. To the contrary, if coordinated and managed well, it can bring significant additional support.

- *Fifth*, landmines and ERW have significant human and development impact. Mine action already contributes a great deal to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals, and there is potential for even greater contribution through enhanced partnerships.

On the basis of the conclusions drawn at this very early stage in the history of mine action, UNDP, in collaboration with partner agencies within and outside the UN group, has formulated preliminary recommendations, which are set forth in the following section of this paper. These are presented for the consideration of mine-affected states, mine-action practitioners, and the international development community. It is our hope that they will stimulate further analysis and discussion, leading to more effective and efficient mine action and development programmes.

Role of Mine-Affected States

It is recommended that Mine Affected States, with support from the international mine-action and development community:

Legal and Policy Environment

1. Develop a legislative framework that will create an optimal ‘enabling environment’ for Mine Action, which reflects international norms.

2. Ensure that Mine Action Centres are legally mandated to manage and/or coordinate Mine Action activities throughout the country and to cooperate with all relevant ministries and civil society partners.

Historically, mine-action centres have been created by decree, with little guidance as to how their mandates are to be fulfilled. National legislation should clearly delineate roles, responsibilities, and mechanisms for implementation and standards to be maintained. The guide on Developing Mine Action Legislation, commissioned by UNDP and developed by the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD), can be a useful reference in this regard.

3. Ratify or accede to all relevant international legal instruments, including the Anti-personnel Mine Ban Convention and the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons.

4. When warranted by the degree of landmine contamination, include Mine Action among national priorities.

Ensure this is reflected in national plans such as Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs), Interim-PRSPs, and related sub-plans, strategies and budgets.

5. Develop policies governing the delivery of Mine Action to international standards.

Comprehensive international mine-action standards (IMAS) based on best practices in mine action have been developed and are readily available. They ensure efficiency, effectiveness, and safety of mine-action operations. National mine-action standards should likewise reflect these norms.

Planning, Coordination, and Budgeting

6. Establish inter-ministerial regulatory and oversight bodies comprised of senior representatives of relevant Ministries.

Include Ministries responsible for Finance, Planning, Health, Urban/Rural Development, Agriculture, Water, Education, Infrastructure, etc., and the body charged with the management and delivery of mine-action programmes.

7. Establish formal and informal coordination bodies at the national, district, and local levels, including government officials and NGO representatives of the Mine Action and development communities.

Ensure there is regular dialogue and sharing of information. Such a forum can also serve a valuable ‘brokerage’ role and promote strategic partnerships among donors, development actors, and mine-action operators.

8. Develop multi-year Mine Action plans with predictable funding commitments in order to facilitate planning and implementation.

Procurement of relatively expensive specialized equipment, training of personnel, and collaboration with development practitioners are only a few of the areas that could benefit from multi-year planning and funding.

9. Allocate, to the greatest extent possible, domestic human, financial, and technical resources to support all elements of Mine Action.

There is no greater testimony to the priority accorded an issue than the degree to which a nation’s own resources are dedicated to it. If well applied, these resources will afford a generous return on investment in a multitude of respects.

10. If external resources are also required, bring Mine Action forward as a humanitarian and development priority during consultations with donors, particularly during Consultative Group (CG) meetings, UN joint-assessment deliberations, and/or bilateral discussions/negotiations with the international community.

11. If grant resources are unavailable or inadequate to meet requirements, be prepared to borrow from institutions such as the World Bank, regional development banks, etc., on the most concessional terms possible.

Most developing countries qualify for ‘soft’ loans. Heavily indebted poor countries (HIPCs) must, nonetheless, keep debt within manageable bounds.

12. Include the cost of mine clearance in reconstruction budgets (e.g., for roads through contaminated areas) and in other relevant sector budgets.

There are numerous cases where failure to accommodate mine action within original plans and budgets of infrastructure projects delayed construction and increased costs by forcing implementers to pay a premium to bring mine-clearance teams in on short notice.

13. Consider the inclusion of Mine Action in Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration (DDR of ex-combatants) activities.

Mine action can be an important area of employment transition for demobilized former combatants. It provides immediate employment as well as opportunities for vocational training, which may lead to other types of long-term employment. Local communities should, however, be consulted in this process to avoid perceptions that former combatants are taking jobs away from other

members of the community. If done properly, the reintegration of these combatants can be seen by citizens as a form of community service that helps restore trust and mend the social fabric of war-torn societies.

Programme Implementation

14. Undertake comprehensive assessments to determine the full humanitarian and development impact of landmines and ERW on their population, especially the most vulnerable communities.

This will include landmine impact assessments, other relevant sector assessments, socio-economic cost/benefit analyses, etc.

15. Validate data and proposed programming choices through broad-based consultations with all relevant stakeholders, especially affected communities, to ensure that interventions respond to their needs.

Such consultations will afford opportunities for better coordination and occasions to form strategic alliances among implementers. Priority should be given to clearing areas where landmines have the most severe impact on lives and livelihoods.

16. Accommodate the special needs of refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs), who may wish to return to their home areas before routes and residential land have been cleared.

In order to ensure the safety of refugees and IDPs while they are in flight, in camps, or after they have returned to their homes, it is important to:

- encourage timely communication and coordination among national, regional, and local mine-action authorities, mine-action NGOs, aid agencies, and government officials responsible for refugee and IDP settlement/resettlement;
- include mine-action in programmes and budgets dedicated to refugee/IDP needs and in appeals to donors; and
- provide mine-risk education to allow refugees and IDPs to protect themselves until mines and ERW can be removed—MRE kits and methodologies should be carefully designed to be effective in the specific geographic, demographic, and cultural context.

17. Undertake a Sector Wide Approach (SWAP) to Mine Action, where appropriate.

SWAPs have proven effective as a means to optimize coordination and division of labour in many other sectors, with each party working to comparative advantage. In some instances, this has involved the pooling of resources.

18. Where joint Mine Action and development programming is not the norm, undertake pilot projects to determine best practices and disseminate results widely.

19. Strengthen local capacity as required to ensure that Mine Action can be undertaken efficiently and effectively over the long term, if required.

External resources and interventions, whether UN, bilateral, or NGOs, are important in initial stages. If the problems require a long-term response, each intervention should include national and local capacity development from the outset and should have a clear capacity development and exit plan. UNDP has commissioned a separate study on capacity development, carried out by the GICHD.

20. Ensure that land that has been cleared of mines is returned to productive use. When required, provide other inputs to ensure that cleared land is utilized.

There will be diminished return on investment if cleared land is not put to good use as soon as possible. In order to ensure that communities are able to utilize and develop cleared land, mine action centres should coordinate their activities at the national and local levels with humanitarian and development organizations, which can provide necessary post-clearance support to affected communities. For example, in some instances additional inputs such as irrigation, seed, or basic farming implements may be required.

Effective priority-setting by national mine-action institutions requires development expertise among mine-action practitioners.

Quality Assurance

21. Ensure that all Mine Action activities conform to or exceed current International Mine Action Standards (IMAS).

IMAS should be adapted to suit local circumstances.

22. Where the military are participating in Mine Action, activities should be carried out under civilian oversight.

In some countries the military have carried out most mine-action activities and may well provide the most sustainable national mine-action capacity. Civilian oversight, normally provided by the national coordinating regulatory body, ensures that military mine-action assets and practices advance national humanitarian and development priorities and conform to international mine-action standards.

23. Ensure that Mine Action Centres include individuals with expertise in development planning, even in conflict or early post-conflict stages when civilian administration may be rudimentary and the scope for socio-economic analysis is limited.

24. Increase knowledge among members of the mine-action and development communities of each others' activities and approaches. Key managers should possess a comprehensive understanding of both areas.

25. Ensure there are adequate reporting mechanisms and practices in place so that results achieved are apparent and communicated to all stakeholders.

26. Monitor and evaluate performance in Mine Action in all of its aspects, and as it relates to development, peace and security, and other national priorities.

Among other things, undertake post-clearance assessments to confirm that cleared land has been returned to productive use.

27. Incorporate lessons learned into future programming.

Manuals that include current mine-action and development information, including 'best practices', should be produced and provided to practitioners on a regular basis.

28. Address any management, governance, and/or probity issues that might reduce the effectiveness or efficiency of Mine Action programming.

29. Develop communications and outreach strategies in order to increase understanding of Mine Action and its contribution to national development.

30. Participate in mine-action consultations at the international level on an ongoing basis.

Role of the International Mine Action and Development Communities

The international mine-action and development communities can provide assistance to realize the actions suggested in each of the recommendations in the previous section. It behoves each international actor to determine its comparative advantage and render support in concert with others. It is expected that the standards and state of the art practices that apply in other sectors of development can be brought to bear on mine action.

It is recommended that the international mine-action and development communities, including United Nations agencies, international financial institutions, bilateral donors, and international NGOs, in collaboration with Mine-Affected States:

1. Should work in close partnership to further develop policies and common programming approaches with respect to Mine Action and to ensure that they are formulated as an integral part of the broad international development effort.

2. To the extent possible, and without diminishing complementary effort, should delineate clear roles and responsibilities based on comparative advantage.

R E C O M M E N D A T I O N S

- 3.** Ensure that personnel possess sufficient knowledge and understanding of mine action to (i) appreciate its relevance to development, and (ii) deliver effective and efficient programming.
- 4.** Where circumstances warrant, should ensure that Mine Action is an integral part of UN Development Assistance Frameworks, World Bank Country Assistance Strategies and Transitional Support Strategies, Overseas Development Assistance packages, and the development plans and budgets of international NGOs.
- 5.** Include Mine Action in consultations with the governments and development actors of mine-affected states.
- 6.** Strengthen national capacity in mine-affected states to undertake Mine Action as part of national development programmes over the long term where necessary.
- 7.** Provide substantial technical and financial support from development budgets on a grant basis, complemented by soft loans from lending institutions, when necessary.
- 8.** Explore opportunities for cross benefits. For example, actors engaged in peace-building and transition initiatives—including disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration programmes—can use Mine Action as a confidence building measure and point of entry.
- 9.** Ensure that the Development Assistance Committee of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development records and tracks investments in mine action, in order to more effectively gauge the international community's progress towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals.

In recognition of the socio-economic impact of landmines, some donor governments are now allocating development funds in support of mine-action programmes.