

MINE ACTION SUPPORT GROUP

Annual Meeting, 5 September 2012

Update by Australia

1. Strategic priorities

Australia's mine action support is programmed against its mine action strategy for the Australian aid program which covers 2010-2014 and includes a \$100 million commitment. The strategy focuses Australia's assistance on the most heavily affected countries in the Asia-Pacific region, while maintaining the flexibility to respond to other emerging needs and priorities against its four outcomes:

- Improved quality of life for victims and their affected families and communities
- Reduced number of deaths and injuries
- Enhanced capacity of countries to manage their mine action programs
- Effective leadership and advocacy by Australia on mine action.

Australia is seeking to strengthen the effectiveness and impact of our mine action assistance in a number of ways. This includes by:

- Programming the majority of mine action assistance through country aid programs to ensure that our mine action is linked with broader development programs and national priorities of our partners. P
- Supporting well targeted and effective global mine action programs including those of the UN, the ICRC and international non-governmental organisations. S
- Working with countries, implementing partners and donors to coordinate and pool resources to strengthen national mine action programs (with a focus on those with long-term mine action challenges eg Afghanistan, Laos and Cambodia). W
- Focusing on coordinating effort with partners and donors to assist more and more countries to complete mine clearance. F
- Monitoring the quality and enhancing the transparency of our mine action assistance. M

2. Mine Action Funding

Australia has so far provided over \$92 million against our \$100 million mine action pledge. We are therefore exceeding our pro-rata mine action target of \$20 million per year and are certain to exceed our commitment of \$100 million within the current strategy period.

Australia's mine action funding is drawn from multiple sources within the aid budget, including bilateral (country), humanitarian and disability budgets:

- over 80% of our mine action funding is drawn from country aid budgets primarily Afghanistan, Cambodia, Laos and Sri Lanka but also including Chad, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Mozambique, Palau and Uganda.

Through its global mine action program (of approximately \$2.5 million per year), Australia supports advocacy, research, universalisation and victim assistance that is regionally or globally targeted and delivered by multilateral, international and non-governmental organisations.

Australia is also contributing approximately \$10 million per year to improve the quality of life for people with disabilities. This funding as well as our approach to making our aid program disability inclusive also provides some benefit to landmine and cluster munition victims, their families and communities.

3. Mid-Term Review of the Mine Action Strategy

Australia is just past the mid-point of implementing our five-year Mine Action Strategy.

An independent Mid-Term Review of the Strategy undertaken between October 2011 to June 2012 found that the Strategy remained relevant and consistent with Australia's overall aid priorities and approach. The Review concluded that the Strategy is being successfully implemented and making good progress against all four of its outcomes.

The Review made seventeen recommendations all of which were accepted. Many of the recommendations are already being implemented and some will be used to inform Australia's next mine action strategy. Recommendations of the Review can be categorized into those that concern Australia's funding approach, geographic focus and future strategy.

Funding Approach

- Develop criteria and priorities to guide our global mine action engagement.
- Increase the Global Mine Action budget to support a broader range of well-regarded global mine action programs and facilities; and to enhance flexibility in responding to emergency situations and emerging priorities.
- Reduce the number of mine action projects, including by focusing on fewer countries and engaging in more multi-year commitments.
- For countries facing significant challenges, focus on building national capacity and transitioning to national ownership.
- Consider providing support direct to national mine action authority when and if appropriate.
- Take a stronger approach to using the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disability-inclusive development as the framework for victim assistance.
- Require implementing agencies to improve data capture and report against the outcomes of the Strategy.

Geographic Focus

- Continue focus on countryaid programs.
- Assist the Pacific to more clearly quantify their explosive remnants of war problem and support a more structured response.
- Provide more targeted mine action in Africathrough fewer countries.

Future Strategy

- Considerbroader weapons abatement and destruction issues and the broader framework of explosive remnants of war.
- Specifically consider the issue of explosive remnants of war in the Pacific.

A copy of the Mid-Term Review Report and the Review of AusAID's Support to Mine Action in the Middle East is available on AusAID's website (www.ausaid.gov.au).

The Review recommendations will inform AusAID's approach to mine action implementation over the remaining life of the strategy(to end 2014) as well as the development of a future strategy.A new mine action strategy for the Australian aid program will likely cover the period 2015 to 2019 with preparations for its development commencing mid-2013.

4. Committed support 2012 to 2013

In 2012 to 2013, Australia has so far committed mine action funding as follows:

- Afghanistan \$5 million in both 2012 and 2013
- Cambodia \$2 million in both 2012 and 2013
- Global mine action programs\$2.5 million in both 2012 and 2013
- ICRC Special Fund for the Disabled \$1 million in both 2012 and 2013
- Iraq - \$1,500,000 in 2012 and \$1,200,000 in 2013
- Jordan - \$1,000,000 in 2012
- Laos – approx. \$1 million in 2012
- Lebanon – \$1,697,355in 2012
- Mozambique - \$3.5 million in 2012 and \$1million in 2013
- Palau - \$1,350,000 in 2012
- Sri Lanka approx. \$4 million in 2012 and \$1.5 million in 2013
- Uganda \$450,000 in 2012