

MINE ACTION COORDINATION AND PARTNERSHIPS

A study commissioned by the
Mine Action Support Group

Ian Mansfield

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1. INTRODUCTION

The Mine Action Support Group (MASG) is composed of 30 donor states and serves as a forum for the exchange of information. It also endeavours to assist in the coordination of the mine action programs of its member. Noting the evolution of mine action support, MASG members are seeking improved or enhanced means of incorporating coordinated approaches to their work. This includes taking better advantage of existing mechanisms as well as giving consideration to any new partnerships. The MASG wishes to maintain its focus to improve value for money as well as reinforce effective coordination in order to meet identified priorities and avoid duplication. In this regard, it was agreed in the MASG workplan for 2012 that a study should be undertaken to;

- Map donor interests and support to mine action
- Prepare an options paper exploring the contributions that the MASG may be able to make to improving donor coordination and partnerships in mine action.

The Terms of Reference for the study were agreed at the March 2012 meeting of the MASG and are attached at Annex A. The study was undertaken by the MASG Secretariat (Mr Ian Mansfield) through research, review of documentation and consultation (mainly by email) with key mine action stakeholders.

2. CONTEXT

It is estimated that 72 countries and seven territories (listed in Annex B) are affected by the presence of landmines or other Explosive Remnants of War (ERW)¹. Of these, about 50 states have established some form of national mine action program designed to plan, manage and implement operational activities covering demining, mine/ERW risk education (MRE), victim assistance and stockpile destruction programs. Most of these programs are reliant on some level of donor support to function properly. The actual conduct of activities is often undertaken by international or national non-governmental organizations, commercial companies or United Nations entities, at times on behalf of or at the request of national authorities.

At the international level the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC) and the Convention on Cluster Munitions (CCM) have successfully provided a focus for stigmatizing the weapons and have dramatically limited their use. Both Conventions contain obligations for affected countries to take steps to remove the hazards posed by these weapons and to assist victims, and for other countries to destroy stockpiles and to provide assistance where possible. In addition, the Amended Protocol II on Mines, Booby-Traps and Other Devices, and Protocol V on Explosive Remnants of

¹ Landmine and Cluster Munition Monitor 2011

War within the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) establish general restrictions and responsibilities regarding mines, cluster munitions and ERW. More recently, the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) has helped the various states parties of the above Conventions with a more systematic, sustainable and human rights based approach by bringing victim assistance into the broader context of persons with disabilities.

The Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD) recently undertook an assessment of the mine action sector when developing their new strategy². The analysis included a number of points relevant to mine action coordination and partnerships. They are:

- Progress will accelerate in terms of countries meeting treaty obligations, reducing and eliminating the impact, or assuming responsibility for their remaining contamination problem, implying a fall in both the total volume of assistance required for national mine action programmes and in the total number of countries needing and seeking mine action assistance from the international community.
- The assistance provided to some countries will not disappear, but may shift into wider explosives and weapons related activities or more targeted mine action support delivered, for example, via training workshops, short-term advisors, and South-South exchanges.
- There is a clear move among donors towards greater focus on projects and country programmes, as opposed to the past practice of providing core funding to organisations with global activities.
- Mine action is becoming a more competitive place. Contracting, compliance issues and business opportunities (e.g. with oil companies) are increasingly important. Resources are sometimes allocated to other activities, such as the destruction of a broader range of weapons. As a result, many mine action organisations are moving successfully into related fields.
- Given donors' increasing focus on value-for-money, countries and organisations are expected to provide more justification for their activities, with clearer evidence of effectiveness - development outcomes and treaty compliance - and efficiency, by better definition of the contamination problem and by using the most cost effective ways to eliminate threats and constraints.
- There is clear expectation that national authorities will assume greater ownership of mine action problems and their resolution, including managing treaty obligations and dealing with residual levels of contamination. The management of the long-term aspects of the problem, especially those affecting victims of landmines/ERW, has begun to shift towards other established social and governmental actors.

² GICHD Annual Report 2011

- As in most sectors, rapid changes in technology – particularly Information and Communication Technology (ICT) – are creating opportunities for innovation and challenges for established platforms.

For mine action donors, this implies that there will be more focus on ‘completion’ in the context of the APMBC and CCM, that the sector will continue to broaden out into wider weapons and explosives related activities, and greater emphasis will be placed on national mine action authorities to assume more ‘ownership’ and control of their programs.

3. DONOR INTERESTS AND SUPPORT FOR MINE ACTION

The Landmine and Cluster Munition Monitor tracks the international contributions to mine action. In 2011³ they reported that 31 donors contributed US\$480 million for mine action in 57 affected states and areas, an increase of \$34 million from 2009. This was the largest annual amount of donor contributions recorded by the Monitor and the fifth consecutive year that international contributions totalled over \$400 million per year. Contributions from the top eight mine action donors – the US, European Commission, Japan, Norway, Canada, Australia, Germany and the Netherlands (all MASG members) – accounted for 78% of all mine action funding. Of the total of \$480 million in mine action support, donors identified \$20 million as support to cluster munition specific activities. The majority of the funding was provided for activities in the following sectors: clearance and mine/ERW risk education (85%), victim assistance (9%) and advocacy (2%). Twenty four affected states provided \$157 million in national support towards their own mine action programs.

The Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD) undertook a study of donor funding trends in 2010⁴. With regards to the broader environment the study found that “even though the APMBC remains the central anchor of donor policy-making, it is no longer the only point of reference. Most donors view mine action as part of broader development cooperation, which includes humanitarian assistance. Donors no longer view mine contamination strictly as an emergency issue requiring an immediate humanitarian response”. Interestingly, the study also concluded that “Donors are generally in favour of coordination among themselves and mine affected countries but are not proactive in pursuing this coordination. They tend to respond to invitations from other donors to become part of a joint evaluation or assessment...”

The study went on to say that “The majority of mine action funding is channelled bilaterally (directed to a specific country), typically through a multilateral organization,

³ Landmine and Cluster Munition Monitor 2011

⁴ “Mine Action Funding: Trends, Modalities and Future Prospects” GICHD, November 2010

a non-governmental organization or an operator. Most donors provide some un-earmarked funding, for example, core funding through multi-lateral channels (UNMAS, GICHD) and through NGOs (ICBL, Geneva Call, ICRC) but these amounts are substantially smaller. The preference for bilateral funding is based on foreign policy and strategic development cooperation, as well as a desire to focus aid on those countries most in need. This partly explains why the majority of mine action funding focuses on less than 10 mine-affected countries”.

Other than the MASG, no other global donor coordination mechanism exists specifically for mine action. In the past there have been some specific thematic bodies, such as the International Test and Evaluation Program (ITEP), which aimed to promote a common and joint approach by eight nations to the testing of new equipment. In other cases some donors have agreed at the level of their capitals to undertake joint assessment missions or evaluations, although this has not been common.

Most donors have had some form of national policy or strategy covering their engagement and contributions to mine action in the past. However, few seem to have maintained a discrete ‘mine action strategy’. MASG members such as Australia, the EC, Switzerland, and the UK have current and published mine action strategies. Some countries include mine action as part of a broader development or humanitarian strategy (e.g. Norway, Sweden). Others may not have an explicit ‘national strategy’ but, for practical purposes, its funding comes from a specific program and there may be a program strategy (e.g. Canadian DFAIT’s Global Peace and Security Fund). Finally, a number of countries are able to provide updates on their current policies in papers or presentations to meetings (e.g. Finland, Japan). A list of the known mine action strategies of MASG members is attached at Annex C.

4. REVIEW OF EXISTING COORDINATION MECHANISMS

Coordination of mine action activities takes place at different levels – global, regional and at the country level. This next section reviews each of these and draws out points of relevance to the MASG, or the role they play in assisting donor coordination and partnerships.

4.1 Global Mine Action Coordination

Mine action coordination at the global level occurs through the following mechanisms.

4.1.1 The Mine Action Support Group (MASG)

The MASG was established in 1997 to informally discuss and regularly share information among donor countries on mine action policies, programmes and related concerns to enhance coordination efforts and cooperation among individual Member States of the United Nations. The MASG'S main tasks are assisting United Nations mine action activities, supporting relevant treaties and providing a forum for discussions between Member States. The MASG currently has 30 members and is chaired on a rotating basis. Full details on the background of the MASG are in Annex D.

The MASG does not have a formal mandate, has no procedures or processes in place, and the relative infrequency of its meetings(at most two per year in recent times) limits what its members are able to achieve. The rotating chair, along with a lack of dedicated resources and a fixed secretariat (until now) has made continuity difficult. It is an effective mechanism for information exchange, but it relies on the goodwill of its members achieving consensus and using their own individual authority if it wishes to achieve more.

Under the current chair, Australia, the MASG aims to enhance its contribution to international cooperation and assistance in mine action including by strengthening coordination and partnerships, achieving greater transparency about funding availability and needs, and by sharing different experiences in combating the threats of mines, cluster munitions and other explosive remnants of war. A part-time Secretariat was established in 2012 and an Implementation Plan was developed for the MASG, which included the commissioning of research relevant to the MASG. A dedicated website for the MASG has also been set up to facilitate information exchange. The existence of the MASG Secretariat has facilitated and enabled focused attention to be put to these efforts.

4.1.2 The United Nations

A total of 14 United Nations entities have responsibility towards mine action and their work within the United Nations system is coordinated through the Inter-Agency Coordination Group on Mine Action (IACG-MA). The lead entity is the United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS) which was designated by the United Nations General Assembly as the focal point for mine action within the United Nations system. Support to affected states and to mine action programmes on the ground is provided primarily by UNDP, UNICEF, and UNMAS, along with UNOPS as a service provider. The IACG-MA also addresses policy or treaty-related work, which in addition to those mentioned above, involves ODA, OCHA, and UNHCR amongst others. The work of the United Nations in mine action is informed by the "Mine Action and Effective Coordination: the United Nations Inter-Agency Policy" of 6 June 2005 which outlines the specific areas each United Nations entity is responsible for. It also captures common positions within the United Nations on topics related to mine

action and effective response. The implementation of its work is guided by the “United Nations Inter-Agency Mine Action Strategy: 2006-2010”. A new Strategy is being developed during 2012 (for implementation starting in 2013).

The United Nations entities involved in mine action do not have a mandate as such to coordinate donor activities; however they facilitate it in a number of ways. In previous years, UNMAS, as part of its global coordination function, provided secretariat support to the MASG Chair, including arranging MASG donor visits; organizing United Nations programme updates in regular newsletters; and contributing to the agenda setting of the MASG. UNMAS continues their contributions to the continuity of the MASG, as well as hosting the MASG website on EMINE (www.mineaction.org).

In the broader context, tools such as the UN Consolidated Appeals Process managed by OCHA contain mine action components or projects when relevant. There have also been strong examples of mine action being integrated as priority areas for fund allocations within ‘pooled funding’ mechanisms such as the UN Common Humanitarian Fund in Sudan and the UN Pooled Funding Mechanism in DRC. These help diversify the source of donor funding while contributing to viewing mine action in broader contexts. In addition, there have been successful examples of projects developed by the United Nations being funded through thematic trust funds, such as the UN Trust Fund for Human Security Trust Fund and the Peacebuilding Fund. The United Nations’ own mine activities are coordinated through mechanisms and tools such as the IACG-MA, the mine action policy and strategy, the Portfolio of Mine Action Projects, etc. which assists donors with their own coordination.

Each year UNMAS coordinates manages the global compilation of the consolidated “Portfolio of Mine Action Projects”– which includes any coordination with donors at the national level. UNMAS also manages the network of Country Portfolio Coordinators, including being a resource for guidance, updates and information on the Portfolio and related coordination processes.

The Portfolio is described as follows⁵:

The Portfolio of Mine Action Projects is a resource tool and reference document for donors, policy-makers, advocates, and national and international mine action implementers. The country and territory-specific proposals in the portfolio reflect strategic responses developed in the field to address all aspects of the problem of landmines and explosive remnants of war (ERW). This country and territory-based approach aims to present as comprehensive a picture as possible of the full range of mine action needs in particular countries and thematic issues related to mine action.

The Portfolio ideally reflects projects developed by mine- and ERW-affected countries and territories based on their priorities and strategies; the approaches are

⁵ EMine – Portfolio of Mine Action Projects 2012

endorsed by national authorities. The Portfolio does not automatically entail full-scale direct mine action assistance by the United Nations, but is in essence a tool for collaborative resource mobilization, coordination and planning of mine action activities involving partners and stakeholders.

Each Portfolio chapter contains a synopsis of the scope of the landmine and ERW problem, a description of how mine action is coordinated, and a snapshot of local mine action strategies. Many of the strategies complement or are integrated into broader development and humanitarian frameworks such as national development plans, the UN development assistance frameworks and national poverty reduction plans.

The Portfolio was started in 2001 at the request of donors who thought it would be useful to have a 'one-stop-shop' for mine action projects. It takes a considerable amount of work each year to compile the Portfolio, but this has decreased over the years due to established procedures, improved communications, and an automated, online system introduced in 2007 by UNMAS and managed through the EMINE site. However, the Portfolio has generally been under-utilized by donors. Initially this was partly because it did not contain NGO projects (which it has since 2005) and because of the perception by some that the Portfolio is only for UN entities and not for all partners. Increasingly, over the years, there has been a steady increase of national mine action authorities along with national and international NGOs who participate as appealing agencies. There has never been a case of all Portfolio projects being fully funded, but donors have appreciated submissions that are part of a coordinated process in line with national priorities. The Portfolio is not meant to represent a programme's sole manner of fundraising but should be viewed as a means to further those aims. On average there have been about 30 mine and ERW affected countries featured in the annual Portfolio along with a list of 'global' projects (although only 12 countries are featured in the 2012 edition). It is difficult to comment on the use made of the Portfolio by MASG members. Although the Portfolio process tracks all contributions, it is not clear if a project being in the Portfolio was the motivation for a donor funding it.

The Global Protection Cluster Mine Action Area of Responsibility (GPC Mine Action AoR) is an additional forum where mine action coordination takes place. The GPC could foster the establishment or strengthening of mine action coordination mechanisms in countries and territories under the scope of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee's (IASC) cluster approach to responses to immediate aftermath of conflict. In 2011, the re-activated Mine Action AoR managed an effective response to the conflict in Libya, involving a wide range of UN and NGO partners under a Joint Mine Action Coordination Team.

4.1.3 Trust Funds

There are a number of mechanisms available to donors to fund activities through the United Nations⁶ and other international organizations. The UN Voluntary Trust Fund for Assistance in Mine Action (UNVTF) was established in 1994 and is managed by UNMAS. It is intended to provide special resources for mine action programs and projects – including surveys, mine clearance, mine risk education, victim assistance, stockpile destruction and advocacy activities – in situations where other funding is not immediately available. According to its terms of reference, the UNVTF also contributes to enhancing mine action coordination, promotes global approaches to support humanitarian emergencies and rapid response, and is at times used by donors to contribute annual dedicated mine action funding.

The trust fund is managed by UNMAS and supports activities in all five pillars of mine action: survey and clearance, risk education, victim assistance, stockpile destruction and advocacy for a world free of the threat posed by landmines and explosive remnants of war. Since its inception, nearly US\$ 750 million has been contributed to mine action activities through this trust fund.

UNMAS costs for headquarters, coordination and programmes are supported through the UNVTF. Direct support has been provided to national/regional programmes or to non-governmental organizations for implementation of priority activities in support of national plans.

The UN VTF has also been used by donors to provide funding to national programmes, often through UNDP or UNICEF in addition to UNMAS programmes, in Cambodia, Chad, Colombia, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, Iraq, Lao PDR, Mozambique, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sudan. These funds have supported a wide range of activities covering the five pillars as well as capacity development.

Within UNDP, the Crisis Prevention and Recovery Thematic Trust Fund (CPR TTF) was established in 2000 to allow UNDP to respond to prevention and recovery needs. The CPR TTF annual report for 2010 states that “UNDP continued to work with nationally led mine action programmes in 40 countries to strengthen capacities of national authorities to manage, coordinate and plan mine action activities and speed up the clearance of mines and other explosive remnants of war”. UNDP have also established a number of in-country mine action trust funds in the larger programs in the past e.g. Cambodia and Laos, although now they would fall under the framework of the UNDP Multi-Partner Trust Funds. UNICEF usually receives earmarked funds for its mine risk education and victim assistance work, under the banner of Child Protection. The channel for funding can be through UNICEF’s Thematic or Emergencies Fund at headquarters, or direct to country offices. Other

⁶ See the following document for a detailed description of existing Trust Funds to which mine action funds are contributed “Exploring the options of trust funds to ensure the continuity of resources” ISU APMBBC, 15 May 2012

Trust Funds that have channelled funds to mine action include the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF), the UN Peacebuilding Support Fund and the UN Trust Fund for Human Security.

The ICRC Special Fund for the Disabled (SFD) and Special Mine Action Appeal aims to support physical rehabilitation in low income countries with a focus on restoring and maintaining physical mobility. The SFD endeavours to strengthen institutions and ensure sustainability of rehabilitation services. In 2011 only three MASG members (Australia, Norway and Switzerland) made contributions for landmine and ERW 'victim assistance' activities through the SFD⁷. The Special Mine Action Appeal is an annual appeal that seeks financial support for ICRC programs operated by its delegations in war affected countries to reduce the impact of mines and ERW on civilians. As a result of the 2011 appeal the ICRC raised nearly 13 million Swiss Francs which it used for a range of activities such as preventative action and the provision of rehabilitation services.

4.1.4 Comment on Global Coordination

While trust funds in themselves are not a donor coordination mechanism, the fact that some donors contribute unearmarked funds into them means that the fund (or fund manager) takes on the responsibility for coordination aspects, such as priority setting, selection of activity type, etc. The existence of a global trust fund may also allow smaller donor countries who do not have representation in an affected country the opportunity to contribute to an activity. These contributions may be earmarked or unearmarked, but in either case the donor accepts that the fund manager will exercise some coordination functions on their behalf and as part of the fund's fiduciary responsibility. Earmarked contributions however, do restrict the amount of flexibility or 'coordination' that the fund can exert, unless the earmarking has resulted from a prior discussion with the fund manager to identify a list of priority needs. Multi-year funding also brings added security and predictability to meeting planned targets and goals.

However, at recent discussion in the context of the APMBC it appeared that there was little interest in establishing any additional thematic 'mine action' trust funds. Thus the existing trust funds are the ones that donors will have to consider using in the foreseeable future.

⁷ ICRC Special Fund for the Disabled – Annual report 2011

4.2 Regional Mine Action Coordination

The main regional players in mine action are the European Commission (EC) on the donor side, and the Organization of American States (OAS) and the International Trust Fund for Mine Action and Victim Assistance (ITF) on the affected regions side. The Pacific Islands Forum has recently shown growing interest to tackle the issue of UXO left over from WW II. The following paragraphs briefly describe their coordinating roles in mine action.

4.2.1 European Commission (EC)

Mine Action has been part of EC assistance and development programs in affected countries since the mid-1990's. Significant amounts of money were allocated to demining initially, and then progressively additional activities such as anti-personnel landmine destruction, mine risk education, victim assistance, rehabilitation and socio-economic reintegration. The EC has had a number of Mine action Strategies in the past (covering the periods 2002 – 2004 and 2005 - 2007). In 2007 a dedicated budget line for mine action was dropped (in favour of geographic budget lines) which resulted in the issue of "Guidelines on European Community Mine Action 2008 to 2013"⁸, rather than a new strategy.

The Guidelines recommend a three-step approach to integrating EC mine action into development and cooperation policies: (i) language insertion in Country/Regional Strategy Papers and respective Indicative Programs, (ii) integration of mine action components within stand-alone or broader EC projects/programs, and (iii) effective reporting of implemented mine action projects/programs. The European External Action Service (EEAS) is the focal point for mine action, and is responsible for reporting the total overview of EC mine action to the Council and European Parliament and also to international stakeholders such as the UN, NGOs and civil society active in the field.

More generally, the European Union (EU) places priority on aid effectiveness and how the EU and its member states coordinate and complement one another. With a view to improving the performance of EU cooperation policy, the Commission is proposing a voluntary Code of Conduct for better division of labour between the EU donors in developing countries. The Code is based on eleven principles designed to reduce the administrative formalities, to use the funds where they are most needed, to pool aid and to share the work to deliver more, better and faster aid. This implies: (i) in each country, if there is a government-donor coordination mechanism for mine action, one of the member states will be part of it and will represent all the member states and the EC, or (ii) if no member state wants to represent the European Community on that government-donor coordination mechanism, the EC will do so.

⁸ Commission Staff Working Document "Guidelines on European Community Mine Action 2008 – 2013", Brussels, 25 September 2008

4.2.2 International Trust Fund to Enhance Human Security (ITF)

The ITF⁹ was established by the Government of Slovenia in March 1998 to assist Bosnia and Herzegovina in implementing the Dayton Agreement of December 1995 by raising funds, providing services and managing mine action projects. Since its inception, the ITF has focused its fundraising activities and support to humanitarian mine action in SE Europe. It later expanded its operations to other mine-affected regions and countries as well, e.g. Cyprus, the South Caucasus, Central Asia, Latin America and Middle East.

The ITF recently expanded its mandate and its new mission is “a world free of the threat from post-conflict and disruptive challenges, including landmines, explosive remnants of war (ERW) and the illicit ownership and use of small arms and light weapons (SALW), and where the security of individuals and communities is assured”. The current ITF Strategy 2009 – 2013 aims to;

- Raise and manage funds from a wide range of donors
- Identify and manage projects on behalf of national authorities and donors, and
- Develop national and regional capacities to manage programmes and projects more efficiently.

Over the years a total of 27 donors have contributed funds to the ITF, which works on a system of matching funds from the USA. Almost all members of the MASG have made a contribution to the work of the ITF at some stage. The ITF is widely regarded as being successful and it has been the primary source of mine action coordination in South Eastern Europe.

4.2.3 Organization of American States (OAS)

The Organization of American States has played a key role in assisting the mine action efforts of its Member States, based on a mandate expressed through a series of resolutions by its General Assembly dating from 1992. The activities carried out by the OAS Mine Action Program (AICMA, for its name in Spanish) support the full range of integral mine action, including humanitarian demining, stockpile destruction, victim assistance, mine risk education and advocacy. AICMA assists requesting Member States through fundraising from the international donor community, financial management of received contributions to support mine action activities by the beneficiary countries, technical advice and assistance to national mine action authorities, and quality management of OAS-supported demining operations. This work has been made possible through the years by OAS coordination of financial support from some eighteen foreign governments and in-kind assistance from a

⁹ www.itf-fund.si

dozen OAS member governments, as well as with the help of international entities like UNMAS and GICHD.

The AICMA program relies on collaborative efforts with other international and nongovernmental organizations, and it has coordinated activities in affected countries in the region, often through military to military exchanges. AICMA has published a “Projects Portfolio –Mine Action, Arms Control and Destruction of Ammunition 2011 – 2012”. Over the years ten MASG members have contributed to OAS mine action projects. The OAS has played an important role in coordinating mine action in the region, in particular for donor coordination, and more operationally with technical cooperation and quality control aspects.

4.2.4 Pacific Islands Forum - Secretariat (PIF)

Whilst there is no significant or emergency situation with landmines in the Pacific region, there is a growing awareness in eight countries of the problem of explosive remnants of war, such as unexploded ordnance (UXO) and abandoned munitions from World War II.

At the 42nd meeting of the Pacific Island Forum in New Zealand in September 2011 the meeting made the following statement with regards to World War II ordnance; “Leaders expressed concern at the continuing existence of unexploded WWII ordnance (UXO) which remains a human security problem for many Members, as well as a threat to public health, safety and the environment. They also recognised that UXO poses a serious obstacle to development. Leaders welcomed the development of the Regional UXO Strategy Framework as a practical approach to addressing the challenges of UXO in the region and called on the assistance of relevant international bodies and development partners in addressing this long neglected issue”.

There appears to be an opportunity for donors involved or interested in the region to promote a more systematic and coordinated approach to tackling the problem of explosive remnants of war in the Pacific region. The Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat is assisting the region with the development of the Regional UXO Strategy and proposes to play a leading role in coordinating UXO action in the Pacific.

4.2.5 Comment on Regional Coordination.

Regional coordination of mine action has been particularly effective in two cases – in South Eastern Europe by the ITF, and in Central and South America by the OAS. The presence of these two bodies has given donors the opportunity to contribute via a recognized process and to ensure that their funds are going to agreed national priorities and for well-coordinated activities. However, in other parts of the world

regional coordination has been less effective or non-existent. There is an emerging opportunity in the Pacific for interested donors to work in a more coordinated manner.

4.3 National Level Coordination

In 2003 the Good Humanitarian Donorship (GHD) initiative was established by 16 donor governments to enhance the donor contribution toward efficient and principled humanitarian action. In addition, other aid effectiveness principles are relevant, such as:

- Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness
- Busan Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation
- The New Deal for Fragile States (G7+)
- DAC Guidelines for Effective Engagement in Fragile States

These all advocate national ownership as a central principle for aid effectiveness and the various country-level coordination mechanisms are based largely on these aid effectiveness principles.

In 2006 attention was focussed by the GHD on the field level because it reported that “experience in development cooperation suggests that where donors work together to harmonize their procedures and to align with recipient government procedures it is more effective”. A GHD guidance paper¹⁰ suggests some points that donor coordination groups could focus on;

- Sharing funding intentions at key points in the planning cycle and considering readjustments where necessary to avoid imbalances
- Promoting shared and improved needs assessment and analysis
- Promoting where possible joint monitoring and evaluation efforts

A similar situation with regards to field level coordination was found in the GICHD study on donor trends. The report stated “Due to competing demands and reduced capacity, donor engagement at international mine action meetings and at field level is weak. Donors typically function in response mode, reacting to proposals submitted to them as opposed to developing their own programs. Visits from donors are few and far apart, and are typically for monitoring and evaluation purposes. Most of the liaison work is left to embassies. Donors tend to have a light footprint in host countries in terms of informing mine-affected governments of their decisions to fund a mine action project.....Direct contacts with central agencies occurs more frequently when countries integrate mine action with development ...”

¹⁰ A Rough Guide to Good Humanitarian Donorship Paper C GHD at Country Level, 2003

At this point it may be useful to make a distinction between ‘donor coordination’ (i.e. donors getting together among themselves, sometimes because the national mine action authorities are not in place or not providing leadership) and ‘aid coordination’ (or aid management) in which the national authorities convene meetings with donors (sometimes because national authorities are in a position to do so, or often because, one or more donors encourages the national government to convene donor coordination meetings). ‘Aid coordination’ should lead to ‘aid effectiveness’ – a process in which coordination deepens, going from simply exchanging information to (i) a joint understanding of needs then (ii) a joint strategy based on those needs and (iii) joint agreement on implementation and monitoring.

Over the years there has been some in-country ‘donor coordination’ efforts with formal or semi-formal donor groups established – often in the larger mine action programs and sometimes with the help of UNDP. For example, in Bosnia Herzegovina in the early 1990’s a Board of Donors met regularly and had power of veto over the national authority’s decisions (due to the political circumstance in the country at the time). In Cambodia a donors group was active from the mid-1990’s until 2004 and in Mozambique a body existed on and off until 2007. More recently the creation of a donor coordination body may be more ‘event’ driven, such as in the build-up to a key milestone (e.g. APMBC Article 5 clearance deadline and extension request formulation), from the initiative of a single donor or from UNDP, or by a small group of donors working to launch a joint donor evaluation (e.g. Cambodia in 2004, Mozambique in 2005 and in Laos on a number of occasions).

In a few countries ‘aid coordination’ for mine action has been part of the broader aid effectiveness effort – this is the case in Cambodia and Laos today, and was true for Afghanistan from about 2002 – 2009. This helps, but normally mines and ERW are not a sufficient priority for a special mine action group to be set up. Even when there has been an effective body set up, country level aid coordination is hard to maintain as key donor representatives turn over or change positions regularly, or the event or milestone has been achieved (e.g. a new strategy is developed or an Article 5 extension request approved). A realistic goal for in-country coordination might be increased aid coordination efforts at certain critical periods.

In addition, the annual UNMAS managed “Portfolio of Mine Action Projects” process, through its network of national level focal points, provides an opportunity for donors to engage in the setting of priorities and drafting of projects that are included in the Portfolio. As part of its successful bid to meet its ‘completion’ targets, Albania cited the regular use of the Portfolio processes as a useful means of coordination to draw in donor interest and commitment, while also allowing for effective communication of progress being made.

Another excellent example of a national government taking ownership of its mine action program, elaborating a clear national strategy and then getting buy-in from donors is Cambodia. In early 2011 the Royal Government of Cambodia and the

major development partners (donors) signed a document titled “Partnership Principles – for the Implementation of the National Mine Action Strategy 2010-2019 as a single Framework for Mine Action Related Assistance”. The document is attached in Annex E and outlines principles with regard to ownership and leadership, alignment, harmonization, management for results and accountability. It is considered that this type of partnership arrangement would be extremely useful in most donor supported mine action programs.

5. COORDINATION ROLE OF INTERNATIONAL TREATIES

The Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC) and the Convention on Cluster Munitions (CCM) both have provisions for ‘Cooperation and Assistance’ in their text and the subsequent treaty architecture that has evolved includes standing committees on these topics. The Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) also contains provisions for assistance and cooperation.

5.1 Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention.

The articles in the APMBC dealing with Cooperation and Assistance state the following;

- “Each State Party has the right to seek and receive assistance, where feasible, from other States Parties to the extent possible.”
- “Each State Party in a position to do so shall provide assistance for...” mine victims, mine awareness (i.e., mine risk education) programs, mine clearance and related activities, and the destruction of stockpiled anti-personnel mines.
- “Each State Party giving and receiving assistance under the provisions of this Article shall cooperate with a view to ensuring the full and prompt implementation of agreed assistance programs.”

Following the 2nd Review Conference in Cartagena, the APMBC established a Standing Committee on Resources, Cooperation and Assistance to look at issues related to resource mobilization and partnerships. In the lead up discussions a paper produced by Norway made the following comments on coordination¹¹.

“Mine Clearance is an area where states, international organizations, global and national private companies and NGOs interact and cooperate in a more or less coordinated manner to support, plan and undertake the work. The need for improved coordination among those providing assistance has been identified by

¹¹ Strengthening International Assistance and Cooperation for Mine Clearance – Discussion Paper, President of the APMBC 2nd Review Conference, 24 June 201

several as a key to efficient distribution and use of resources....By defining coordination of assistance and cooperation as an aspect of the two building blocks of the Convention; national ownership and international partnerships, the discourse changes from one of donor priorities to one of partner responsibilities. The challenge of coordination would be to ensure that contributions to mine clearance reinforce that States Party's capacity to implement Article 5 as effectively as possible"

The APMBC benefits from having an active set of standing committees which regularly monitor the progress of the Convention. They are also an opportunity for States Parties to exchange information and provide regular updates on their mine action assistance. The Landmine and Cluster Munition Monitor provides detailed information which informs all of the discussions and considerations of the Convention. The APMBC also benefits from having a full time and efficient Implementation Support Unit (ISU). While the ISU does not have a role to coordinate donors as such, it provides valuable information and resources to them on which to base funding decisions e.g. a state's progress and challenges against Convention obligations, resource requirements, clearance deadlines, the outcome of extension requests, etc.

5.2 Convention on Cluster Munitions

The CCM contains similar provisions on cooperation and assistance as the APMBC. Article 6 of the Convention outlines the rights of affected States Party's to 'seek and receive assistance' and the obligations of each State Party to 'provide technical, material and financial assistance to States Parties affected by cluster munitions. Such assistance may be provided, inter alia, through the United Nations system, international, regional or national organizations or institutions, non-governmental organizations or institutions, or on a bi-lateral basis'.

In 2010 a total of 12 donors made cluster munition-specific contributions totalling US\$20.52 million. However, many donors find it difficult to break down expenditures on cluster munition-related activities as their contributions are often related to general mine action work, including mine clearance, explosive ordnance disposal and battle area clearance. Funding for victim assistance is also often provided through a larger framework than the Convention.

Whilst much newer than the APMBC, a similar set of standing committees has been established in the framework of the CCM, including a Standing Committee on Cooperation and Assistance. A full time Implementation Support Unit for the CCM is currently in the process of being established.

5.3 Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons

The Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) is less prescriptive but the mine action-related protocols (APII and PV) have provisions on assistance and cooperation. For the last years an intersessional programme has been functioning for both protocols with some interesting activity, though less active than the APMBC and the CCM. For example, states parties to Protocol V have developed a template for the submission of a 'request for assistance'-mainly for ERW clearance- and three countries have submitted requests so far (Serbia, Belarus and Ukraine).

5.4 Comment on Conventions

The Conventions have well established processes for dealing with cooperation and assistance, and have or are forming Implementation Support Units to assist with their implementation. The relatively recent extension request process in the APMBC has played a major role in affected States Parties having to define the remaining contamination to be cleared, and determining the time and cost it will take to complete the work. It is generally agreed that the funding for victim assistance reported in the context of the Conventions does not tell the full story and that much more funding is made available for people with disabilities through bilateral cooperation between States to enhance healthcare systems. Given the membership of Conventions by MASG members is mixed, it is felt that the MASG as a body is not the appropriate forum for discussion on the Conventions or that it would have little extra to add to the existing Convention coordination mechanisms.

6. CONCLUSIONS

6.1 In the mine action sector in the future, there will be more focus on 'completion' in the context of the APMBC and CCM, the sector will continue to broaden out into wider weapons and explosives related activities, and greater emphasis will be placed on national mine action authorities to assume more 'ownership' and control of their programs.

6.2 MASG members account for the majority of funding that is provided to for mine action activities. However, the MASG is the only donor coordination body that exists at the global level.

6.3 The MASG does not have a formal mandate, has no procedures or processes in place, and the relative infrequency of its meetings limits what its members are able to achieve. It is an effective mechanism for information exchange, but it relies on the goodwill of its members achieving consensus and using their own individual authority if it wishes to achieve more.

6.4 Mine action donors have not been proactive in attempting to coordinate their assistance to affected countries, and fewer donors are maintaining thematic, or mine action specific policies and strategies.

6.5 The United Nations entities involved in mine action do not have a mandate as such to coordinate donor activities; however they facilitate it in a number of ways. These include a coordinated United Nations response through the IACG-MA, production of the annual 'Portfolio of Mine Action Projects' and the management of trust funds.

6.6 At the regional level mine action coordination has been effective in some regions. These include the European Commission on the donor side, and the ITF and OAS for the affected regions. The ERW problem in the Pacific is starting to be addressed by the Pacific Islands Forum and opportunities exist to provide coordinated donor assistance.

6.7 At the country level, the principle of national ownership is being more strongly promoted as part of the solution to an effective response to the landmine and other ERW problem. However, few countries have donor coordination bodies established for mine action. A realistic goal for in-country coordination might be increased aid coordination efforts at certain critical periods. The 'Partnership Principles' developed and implemented in Cambodia are an excellent example of cooperation and coordination between government, donors and mine action operators.

6.8 The Conventions dealing with landmines and cluster munitions have well established coordination procedures and there is little that the MASG as a body could add to this.

7. OPTIONS FOR THE MASG TO CONSIDER

Based on the above description and analysis of the gaps in donor coordination, there are a number of options that the MASG may wish to consider. These options take into account what the MASG can usefully and realistically do to improve mine action coordination and partnerships given its limitations, particularly a lack of a formal mandate and resources.

7.1 Global Level

Option 1. The MASG should be more proactive in coordinating the work of its members through such actions as;

- Discussions and consultations on strategic policy considerations
- The conduct of joint assessments, monitoring and evaluation
- Exchange of information on funding intentions, funding expectations and cost comparisons

- Harmonization of the reporting requirements of partners
- Sharing lessons learned through briefings, websites, etc.

Option 2. MASG members should establish some principles in relation to donor coordination and partnership, which could include the following;

- elaborate a national mine action policy or strategy, or make it clearer where its mine action policies and priorities are located within broader development and humanitarian policies and strategies
- agree to regularly share their strategies, provide regular updates on their support to mine action, raise coordination issues that may arise, ensure their assistance is clear and accountable to the national mine action program and any other donors working in the country
- make greater use of the UN Portfolio of Mine Action projects and consider involvement with the Portfolio process at country level, particularly in national aid coordination efforts
- utilize existing mine action trust funds when appropriate, and endeavour to make un-earmarked multi-year contributions whenever possible
- capture total assistance to VA including through health and disability support

Option 3. The MASG should consider expanding its membership and encourage other mine action donors or potential donors to become a member, such as Brazil, Oman, Qatar, Russia, etc.

.Option 4. The MASG should increase its efforts at information exchange, including further development of the MASG website, the wide distribution of MASG meeting minutes, utilization of the MASG Secretariat for information exchange and dialogue etc.

7.2 Regional Level

Option 5. Interested MASG members should assist in developing and implementing the draft regional UXO strategy for the Pacific Islands Forum and assist Forum countries to develop national UXO plans.

7.3 In-country Level.

Option 6. The MASG should promote coordination at the country level by:

- maintaining a focus on countries with emerging/emergency programs, or that are nearing 'completion'
- including emerging/emergency programs and completion on its meeting agenda

- encouraging its members to take a lead donor role in support of one or more mine affected countries
- promoting the concepts of national ownership and encourage all donor supported mine affected countries to establish similar ‘Partnership Principles’ as have been agreed in Cambodia

Option7. In the absence of a legitimate government or an effective mine action program, the MASG should develop a framework for in-country mine action donor coordination, which could include;

- ensuring that mine action is included as a regular agenda item on any broader donor coordination mechanism
- providing advice on the establishment of mine action donor coordination bodies if relevant
- establish TORs or guidelines for mine action coordination bodies

End

22August 2012

ANNEXES:

- A. Terms of Reference
- B. List of Mine Affected Countries and Territories
- C. List of Donor Country Mine Action Strategies
- D. Background to the MASG
- E. Partnership Principles - Cambodia

ANNEX A.

TERMS OF REFERENCE

STUDY INTO EFFECTIVE MINE ACTION COORDINATION AND PARTNERSHIPS

Introduction

Coordination is fundamental to effective cooperation and assistance in mine action. Noting that coordination at the country level should generally be a nationally owned and led process, there may be instances (such as in particular countries) where a case can be made for donor coordination to be supported by the MASG.

Partnerships are central to progress in mine action by taking advantage of the relative strengths, experiences and joint goals of donors. As such, there is opportunity to facilitate partnerships for mutual beneficial gain such as:

- Strategically assist countries meet their mine action obligations;
- Assist countries nearing completion to finish completion;
- Assist in building capacity and resources for countries with long-term challenges;
- Ensure that all pillars of mine action are being adequately addressed.
- Better matching available resources with resource requirements.

Objective

In the Implementation Plan for the Chair of the MASG it was agreed that the Secretariat should be tasked to:

- map donor interests and support to mine action
- prepare an options paper exploring the contribution that the MASG may be able to make to improving donor coordination and partnerships in mine action

Scope of work

The study would look at a range of issues related to donor coordination of mine action at various levels – the global, regional and national level.

Global mine action coordination

- Identify and describe the role of the Mine Action Support Group and its contribution to global mine action coordination.
- Identify and describe the relevant aspects of the coordination role and mechanisms of other global mine action players, such as UNMAT, UNMAS (and the Portfolio of Mine Action Projects), UNDP, UNICEF, the EC and the OAS.
- Identify and describe the coordination role and mechanisms of relevant convention architecture including the APMBC, the CCW, the CCM and the CRPD.
- Identify and review mine action coordination currently taking place between donors.
- Review donor country mine action strategies and identify common goals, objectives and interests
- Recommend the ways in which the MASG could improve global coordination, including coordinating with other donors, mine action players and mechanisms.

Regional / National level coordination

- Identify all mine affected countries and their current and planned donor support
- Consult with authorities in a range of mine affected countries
- Broadly examine national coordination mechanisms and identify positive or negative contributing factors.
- Establish what (if any) in-country donor coordination mechanisms exist in each country, and review their effectiveness and role
- Recommend ways in which the MASG could help to improve regional / national level coordination

Methodology and workplan

The study would be undertaken as a desk review. The Secretary of the MASG (Mr Ian Mansfield) would undertake the study using 15 days of his MASG consultancy (thus at no additional cost to the MASG). The timetable for the study would be;

- Approval of TOR; 29 March 2012 (at the MASG meeting)

- Inception phase; April 2012
- Desk study; May/June 2012
- Draft report July 2012
- Final report; August 2012

Outputs / Outcomes

The study will result in an 'Options Paper' no more than 10 pages long, outlining possible contributions that the MASG could make to improving donor coordination and partnerships, particularly at the mine affected country level.

End. 14 June 2012

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ANNEX B

LIST OF MINE AFFECTED STATES OR TERRITORIES¹²

Africa	Americas	Asia-Pacific	Europe and CIS	Middle East-North Africa
Angola	Argentina*	Afghanistan	Armenia	Algeria
Burundi	Chile	Bhutan	Azerbaijan	Egypt
Chad	Colombia	Cambodia	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Iran
Djibouti	Cuba	India	Croatia	Iraq
Dem. Rep. of Congo	Ecuador	Lao PDR	Cyprus	Israel
Eritrea	Peru	Myanmar	Denmark	Jordan
Ethiopia	Venezuela	North Korea	Georgia	Lebanon
Guinea-Bissau		Palau	Kyrgyzstan	Libya
Mauritania		Pakistan	Moldova	Morocco
Mali		Philippines	Montenegro	Oman
Mozambique		South Korea	Russia	Syria
Namibia		Sri Lanka	Serbia	Yemen
Niger		Thailand	Tajikistan	<i>Palestine</i>
Republic of Congo		Vietnam	Turkey	<i>Western Sahara</i>
Senegal		<i>Taiwan</i>	United Kingdom*	
Somalia			Uzbekistan	
South Sudan			<i>Abkhazia</i>	
Sudan			<i>Nagorno-Karabakh</i>	
Uganda			<i>Kosovo</i>	
Zimbabwe				
<i>Somaliland</i>				
20 states and 1 area	7 states	14 states and 1 area	16 states and 3 areas	12 states and 2 areas

¹² Landmine and Cluster Munition Monitor 2011

ANNEX C

TABLE OF MASG MEMBERS MINE ACTION STRATEGIES

MASG MEMBER	CONTRIBUTION to MINE ACTION IN 2010 (source LMM 2011) US\$ million	MINE ACTION POLICY or STRATEGY
Australia	24.4	Mine Action Strategy for the Australian Aid Program 2010-2014
Austria	1.9	
Belgium	11.9	
Canada	30.1	Global Peace and Security Program
China	?	
Denmark	10.2	
Estonia	?	
European Commission	49.8	Guidelines on European Community Mine Action 2008-2013
Finland	6.7	Finland's Donor Perspective on Humanitarian Mine Action ¹³
France	3.6	
Germany	23.4	
Ireland	4.5	
Italy	4.0	
Japan	46.8	Briefing Paper submitted by the Government of Japan, 28 March 2012
Kuwait	?	
Lithuania	0.2	
Luxembourg	0.9	
Netherlands	22.8	Policy rules tender Humanitarian Mine Action and Cluster Munitions 2012 - 2016
New Zealand	3.3	
Norway	50.3	Norwegian Humanitarian Policy paper, 15 September 2008
Portugal	?	
Republic of Korea	0.25	
Saudi Arabia	?	
Slovenia	0.7	
Spain	5.4	Mine Action Update ¹⁴
Sweden	13.0	1. Save lives and ease suffering -

¹³ Email from MFA Helsinki, 11 July 2012

¹⁴ Email from Spanish Mission to the UN, Geneva

		Policy for Swedens humanitarian aid
		2. Strategy for humanitarian assistance through the Swedish International Development Agency (Sida)
		3. Peace and security for development – Policy for security and development in Swedish development cooperation
Switzerland	15.7	Mine Action Strategy of the Swiss Confederation 2012 – 2015
United Arab Emirates	?	
United Kingdom	16.3	DFID's Programme Strategy 2010-2013 on Mine Action – "Creating a safer environment: Clearing landmines and other explosive remnants of war".
United States	129.6	US Landmine Policy 2004

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ANNEX D

BACKGROUND TO THE MINE ACTION SUPPORT GROUP

In response to the rising momentum of mine action in the mid-1990s, the MASG was established in New York in 1997 by the Government of Norway to informally discuss and regularly share information among donor countries on mine action policies, programmes and related concerns to enhance coordination efforts and cooperation among individual Member States of the United Nations. The MASG agreed that its main tasks were (i) supporting United Nations mine action activities and in support of relevant treaties and (ii) providing a forum for discussions between Member States on national, United Nations and implementing partners' mine action activities on the ground, lessons learnt and best practices and Member States' funding priorities. The MASG has been chaired by Norway (1997-1999), the Netherlands (1999-2000), Belgium (2001-2002), Germany (2002-2003), Switzerland (2004-2005), the United States of America (2006-2007), and on a rotating basis between France, United Kingdom, European Commission, Slovenia, and United States (2008-2011). The current chair of the MASG is Australia (2012 – 2013). Initially the MASG met on a monthly basis with secretarial support being provided by the United Nations Mine Action Team (UNMAS, UNDP, UNICEF, ODA, etc.), coordinated by UNMAS. MASG members reduced meetings to a quarterly frequency in 2008 and to annual meetings starting in 2009.

Currently, 30 donors comprise the MASG: Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, China, Denmark, Estonia, European Union, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Kuwait, Lithuania, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Saudi Arabia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, and the United States of America. In addition, certain international organizations participate in MASG meetings as observers including the United Nations Mine Action Team (UNMAS, UNDP and UNICEF), the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD), the Organization of American States, and the International Trust Fund – Enhancing Human Security (ITF).

ANNEX E

PARTNERSHIP PRINCIPLES – CAMBODIA



Signed Partnership
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