

MASG

Mine Action Support Group Newsletter

Permanent Mission of Switzerland to the United Nations

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1. Unofficial Minutes: MASG-Meeting 14 September 2004

1. After welcoming the different speakers and a delegation from Jordan, the chairman introduced the subject of the meeting: mine action and peace processes. He reminded the group that at the March meeting in Geneva the MASG had discussed several examples from the field (South Sudan, Afghanistan, Sri Lanka) where mine action did contribute in a concrete way to the peace process. At that meeting there was a vivid discussion on the political impact of mine action. Should it be neutral or can it also be political? The chairman was hoping to continue this discussion at today's meeting.
2. In the first presentation Afshan Khan from UNICEF briefed the MASG on the report of the UNDG/ECHA joint working group on transition, for which eight studies of countries in transition were the basis. The working group had agreed on a working definition of transition : the period in a crisis when external assistance is crucial in providing support to a still fragile cease-fire and peace process by helping to create conditions necessary for political stability, security, justice and social security. Consolidating peace is the key objective. The working group identified the following emerging lessons on transition : ownership and capacity are key ; transition programs and reconstruction are about people ; transition programs require sufficient, sustained and flexible funding. As far as transition and mine action are concerned, UNMAS is currently working with partners in the development of a Guidance Paper for mine action in transition situations. This strategy is consistent with the transition framework outlined in the UNDG/ECHA report. In the UNICEF specific context, there are efforts to integrate Mine Action across other sectoral areas, especially education and health.
3. Dr. Charles Call from DPA then explained that DPA is since 1997 the focal point for post-conflict peacebuilding. DPA assumes this role with very little resources. DPA is currently undertaking a review of DPA's role in peacebuilding. 45% of conflicts reignite within five years. The root causes of conflict have to be addressed. As shown in the example of Kosovo, peacekeepers do not solve the political problem, they focus on security and the causes of conflict remain. Post-conflict peacebuilding has evolved. Priority lies on state-building and job creation. In this context, mine action can play a role.
4. Fatemeh Ziai from DPKO talked about recent developments in peacekeeping and their possible implications for mine action. Peacekeeping has a military nature but many operations are multidimensional in nature and encompass also mine action. The number of peacekeepers will reach a new peak in 2005. A study by the Economist found that peacekeeping is cost effective. Economic costs of civil wars amount to approx. \$ 120 billion a year. The budget for peacekeeping operations is 3 billion, less than 0.5% of the worldwide military spending. The setting up of an operation is a huge logistical effort. There is also a commitment gap between the developing and the developed countries. The top 5 troop contributing countries (TCC) are from the South, whereas the money comes from the North. Other challenges are command and control issues, as well as the speed of deployment of a PKO. Currently it takes 6 months to deploy, whereas according to the Brahimi report, multidimensional operations should be deployed within 90 days (which is simply not possible). UNMAS has an important role regarding best practices that are useful for the rest of DPKO (especially for DDR). TCC have to deploy according to IMAS and IMSMA (as mandated by the Security Council).

5. Christian Ruge from Fafo explored the linkages between peacebuilding and mine action. At first the relationship seems straightforward since explosive remnants of war create serious obstacles to rebuild war torn communities. Removing them is a prerequisite for creating a sustainable peace after the fighting is concluded. The research project of the UK NGO Landmine Action and the Norwegian research foundation Fafo attempts to go further and to identify concrete linkages between the two sectors by documenting the on-the-ground experience of practitioners from both the mine action and the peacebuilding sector. The five activities of mine action function as entry points into the realm of peacebuilding, example: humanitarian demining implies an exchange of information between former combatants. Mine Action is one of 19 different peacebuilding tools of Dan Smith's Peacebuilding Palette, together with DDR, security sector reform and small arms issues. Mine action is however not only one out of many components but is also to a large extent integral to a majority of the other elements of peacebuilding. Preliminary findings include: Mine action takes place in the wider context of peacebuilding and peace implementation. Mine action projects can be crucial to successful peacebuilding, but may also have little, none or negative impact on peace processes. Conflict-sensitive approaches are necessary. Mine action may be employed strategically for political ends, but with the danger of politicising humanitarian assistance. Preliminary recommendations for policymakers include: Ensure policy and program coherence between assistance sectors. Recognize the long-term nature of post-conflict reconstruction and the amorphous nature of conflict zones. Improve communication with affected communities. *The complete presentation is contained in this Newsletter.*

6. In the ensuing discussion Ambassador Stahelin brought up the difference between the statement of Mr. Ruge saying that mine action is crucial for peacebuilding and the one of Mr. Call implying that mine action has not been a main topic in peacebuilding. Mr. Call answered that mine action is one of the least controversial items and has thus received less attention so far. He stated however that DPA because of its limited resources has to find ways to link the different topics and that he was very grateful to Mr. Ruge who had outlined some of these links. Martin Barber concluded that the discussion had shown the extraordinary range of links between mine action and everything else. But the potential of mine action is not fully explored yet. Citing the positive experience of UNMAS with the GICHD, Barber said that the DPA actually needed a "Geneva International Center for Peacebuilding" in order to get a resource for conceptualization and implementation. According to Barber, Eritrea is the one place where TCC conduct mine action according to IMAS. Afghanistan's mine action for peace program (financed by Japan) where former combatants clear mines is a fantastic example of a program with a double benefit (mine clearance and DDR). Martin Barber hopes that Explosive Remnants of War will become the new theme of mine action, since in contexts such as Iraq and Afghanistan abandoned ammunition easily falls into the wrong hands. There has been very little enthusiasm and publicity for the ERW process so far, but if countries accede to the protocol, it will make a huge difference. Marc Stritt from Switzerland then introduced the GICHD study on the role of the military in mine action. Marc Pecsteen from Belgium raised the question whether a conflict of objectives was possible in a mine clearance operation between the political objective of peacebuilding and the humanitarian objective of mine action. Sayed Aga answered that according to the context, mine action can be more oriented towards saving lives or towards peacebuilding or towards development. Asked whether there were situations where mine action was politicized too much, Mr. Aqa answered that it had happened. There were isolated cases where ex-combatants working as deminers went back to war. On the other hand mine action has a confidence-building aspect: it sends a clear message to the community that the signs of war are being removed. Christian Ruge confirmed that a conflict of objectives is possible, since mine action is always about priorities. The priority can be peacebuilding but in most other cases the operators (mostly western NGOs) have their own priorities. Mine action is thus politicized, but not very openly. Martin Barber agreed that one sees examples of politisation. The prioritization is very tricky. In a post-conflict environment the priorities of the government should be acknowledged, whereas in an ongoing conflict there have been situations where the UN has not responded to requests by governments because there was no access to the other side. There are mine action NGOs who have other views, some of them only work in rebel controlled areas. Is this politisation? According to Ambassador Stahelin, the

discussion had shown that there is an impact in two dimensions: how we look at mine action in our capitals and how the UN (DPA and DPKO) work on this multidimensional theme. Sayed Aga added that the Geneva Call, an organization which engages non-state actors to respect and to adhere to humanitarian norms, was another concrete evidence where mine action and peacebuilding come together.

7. Under AOB Martin Barber informed the MASG about the process of finding his successor as the head of UNMAS. After the deadline for applications (4 October 2004) a panel established by USG Guehenno shall interview shortlisted candidates. Martin Barber has promised that he will keep the donors informed of the process. In conclusion, the Chair informed the MASG on the very productive and constructive visit of the Resource Mobilization Task Force to the World Bank. Among other things, the World Bank has agreed to attend one of the future MASG meetings. A comprehensive report of the meeting is available with Earl Turcotte at UNDP. Martin Barber informed that UNMAS is looking for an additional donor representative on the International Mine Action Standards (IMAS) Review Board. Currently Germany and the UK represent the donors. A letter from UNMAS outlining the roles and responsibilities of the various groups in the IMAS management structure will be circulated shortly.
8. The next MASG meeting will take place on 14 October and will focus on the Nairobi summit for a mine free world.

The meeting was closed at 12:30 p.m.

2. Agenda for the MASG Meeting on 14 October 2004 in New York

1. Welcome address by the Chair
2. Adoption of the agenda
3. Briefing by Ambassador Dr. Wolfgang Petritsch, President-designate of the Nairobi Summit on a Mine-Free World
4. Discussion
5. AOB

NB : The meeting is exceptionally scheduled from 10:30am to 12:30pm

The location is as always the Swiss Mission, 633 Third Avenue (40/41 St), 29th Floor

3. Provisional Agenda for the Reinforced MASG Meeting on 27 October 2004 in New York (Millenium Hotel)

- 10 am Welcoming remarks and introduction by Amb. Staehelin, Chair of the MASG
- 10.15 am Opening address by USG Jean-Marie Guéhenno, Head of the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations
- 10.30 am Exchange of information among donor delegations on their current mine activities
- 12.00 am Country Presentation: Sudan
- Jim Pansegrouw, UNMAS
 - NGO [DCA, **TBC**]
- 1 pm Lunch Break
Key note address of Martin Barber, Director of UNMAS (4 year review and farewell remarks)
- 3 pm Preview on the Mine Action Portfolio 2005 by Martin Barber, Director UNMAS
- 3.30 pm Thematic Panel on how to build a comprehensive and inclusive national mine action program
- Ambassador Ismael Abraão Gaspar Martins, Permanent Representative of Angola
 - Donor [EC, **TBC**]
 - Sayed Aqa, UNDP
 - Ian Mansfield, GICHD
 - Bob Eaton, SAC
- 4:45 pm Wrap-up by Amb. Staehelin

NB: The afternoon session of the RMASG will be open for NGOs.

4. Mine action and peacebuilding

Presentation at MASG Meeting, New York September 14, 2004

By Christian H Ruge, Fafo Institute

Mine Action Contributions to Peacebuilding – exploring the linkages

- What are the linkages between peacebuilding and mine action?
- Are all mine action efforts per definition supportive of peacebuilding?
- Is there an untapped peacebuilding potential within mine action programs?

These and related questions form the basis of a research project jointly managed by the UK NGO Landmine Action and the Norwegian Research Foundation Fafo. The project, entitled Mine Action Contributions to Peacebuilding, sets out to explore some of the linkages between various forms of humanitarian mine action activities on one side and on peacebuilding and conflict resolution initiatives and efforts on the other side. The project has received generous support from the Governments of Norway, Switzerland and Canada, for which we are grateful.

At first, the relationship between mine action and peacebuilding seems straightforward, direct and definitely positive. All modern armed conflicts generate various degrees of residual hazardous items, in the form of mines and unexploded ordnance. These explosive Remnants of War constitute a real and tangible threat to individual's lives and community livelihoods, and as such creates serious obstacles to attempts to rebuild war torn communities. Removing them is a prerequisite for creating a sustainable peace after the fighting is concluded. As such, Mine action has a concrete effect in improving people's daily lives. It also has a symbolic significance, tackling the effects of an instrument of war that belligerent parties may be hesitant to give up when confidence in an enduring peace is lacking.

What we want to do with our project is to take this seemingly simple relationship some steps further, in an attempt to identify some of the concrete linkages between these two sectors.

The method we apply is an inductive one, engaging practioners from both mine action and peacebuilding in direct consultative processes through a series of facilitated roundtable discussions and follow-up case studies. The substance of the discussions comes from the participant's own experiences, and the aim is to generate more insights into the interrelationships based on concrete on-the-ground experience. Our assumption is that there is already a wealth of experience on how mine action can contribute to building sustainable peace, but that this experience to a large extent is poorly documented. We believe that holds true for practioners from both the mine action and the peacebuilding sector, and further that these two sectors benefit from focussed interaction with each other.

Five entry points to peacebuilding

Mine action consists of five distinct, yet related activities. A starting point to explore the linkages to peacebuilding can be to look at how each of these activities may function as entry points into the realm of peacebuilding, beyond their strict mine action role. A list like this is a typical result from discussions with mine action practioners.

It is a simple little list, but it is quite powerful in demonstrating the peacebuilding potential of mine action, for those who are in doubt of that.

Interestingly enough these are suggestions that come from mine action practioners themselves, indicating also that within the mine action community, in particular at the field level, there is no lack of creative, relevant and constructive reflections on their possible wider contributions to peace. The linkages proposed here are also among the key findings that came out of the first of our practioners roundtables – that took place in Jaffna, Sri Lanka in April.

Mine action as part of peacebuilding

Peacebuilding is a term encompassing a wide range of situations, actors, activities and processes in complex interaction, with the aim to transform violent conflict to sustainable peace. In a report on the peacebuilding potential of development assistance, Dan Smith has suggested to group some of the policy tools available in peacebuilding into four main categories;

- Security
- Socioeconomic foundations
- Political framework
- Reconciliation and Justice

In what he call the *Peacebuilding Palette*, Smith prefers the term Palette to the more commonly used term “Toolbox” because he believes that “...the interplay between the different elements of peacebuilding goes beyond the purely mechanical and is harder to predict than toolbox metaphor implies.” Smith finds that the palette is a better way to understand that peacebuilding tools can be combined in any number of ways specific to the situation in question – like mixing paints.

In his palette, Smith lists Mine Action as one out of 19 different peacebuilding tools. Mine action is firmly placed in the security part of the palette, together with Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration - DDR; Security sector reform and Small Arms issues. Peacebuilding is no straightforward exercise, as we all know, but this overview indicates that it is also an arena in which there is considerable competence and capacity within the international community – and that real trick is to combine and employ them in the optimal manner.

Mine action is integral to peacebuilding

But is Mine Action really only one out of several sub-elements of peacebuilding?

It is interesting to see what happens if we use the peacebuilding matrix on Mine Action – in an attempt to chart how mine action relate to the other sub-elements. Doing this we get what me may call the Mine Action Peacebuilding Palette. This matrix demonstrates how mine action not only is one out of many components, but also to a large extent is integral to a majority of the other elements of peacebuilding. Further that Mine action certainly warrants a place in peacebuilding beyond the security arena where it usually is placed.

Conflict sensitivity

Humanitarian mine action in former and present conflict zones does not take place in some sort of contextual vacuum. Each area in question is unique, with its own social, political and economic characteristics and dynamics defined by the conflict history, how it played itself out, the interactions between the various parties to the conflict and the levels of involvement by local, national regional and international actors – what analysts term *the conflict environment*. Mine action implementers must relate to this conflict environment one way or another when initiating operations. Mine action is an intervention, in almost all instances implemented by outsiders to the affected community in question, and very often it is also outsiders that define the size and scope of the problem, the priorities and remedies, when the action starts and ends, what areas will receive what kind of action. As such mine action involves decisions on distribution of often scarce resources in the area of operation.

Throughout its first formative decade, mine action programs and policies tended to be guided by an inward focus – on the efficiency and security of the activities, and with little view beyond its own realm. Emphasis has been on measuring efficiency in a numbers game; square meters cleared, persons receiving mine risk education, mines destroyed, countries acceding to the Ottawa Treaty etc. Less focus has been on the impact of Mine Action – what happens in the areas in the receiving end. Over the last 3 – 4 years this has started to change, and among mine action agencies and donors alike there has been an increasing will and competence to look at what impact mine action has on mine affected communities. The Landmine Impact Survey being one concrete example of that.

As almost all mine action takes place in present of former conflict areas it is vital to extend the emerging understanding of the broader social and economic impact from mine action to include conflict impact analysis. There has been significant improvement in understanding how humanitarian efforts interacts with conflict dynamics; the actors and processes involved in the actual conflict. To translate these insights into actual change of behavior by humanitarian operators in conflict zones remains a large challenge, although several large actors has signaled willingness to take such considerations seriously.

Mine action operators have probably not been any better than other humanitarian operators in analyzing how their activities interact with conflict affected communities, beyond reaching or not reaching the targets. Examples of land-grab of cleared land and negative social and health consequences of placing camps with relatively well paid deminers in poor areas point to reasons why it is important for mine action agencies to see beyond the minefields – towards the wider context that they work in. Integrating conflict analysis into policies and programmers is one way of improving performance.

The implementation context

Mine action in conflict zones often takes place in a broader context of regional or international efforts to bring an end to the conflict and build a sustainable peace. Peace Implementation vary in scope and strength with each situation, but in inevitably create certain political, financial and administrative conditions that affect the conduct of mine action programs, both by national and international actors. Practitioners with experience from countries like Cambodia and Bosnia can testify to the challenges of working within a context defined by international peace implementation.

Understanding and mastering such conditions – “herding cats” is one expression that has come up in Fafos work on peace implementation – conditions often marked by severe and subtle institutional infighting, centered around interpretation of mandates, authority and coordination, struggles that may have little or no relation to the actual situation on the ground – is not for innocents.

Practitioners in the field often deal with such issues far more efficiently and practical than their colleagues at HQs here and there. Still, there is little doubt that mine action operators would gain from having a better strategic understanding of the peace implementation context, how it affects planning and implementation of programs, and how to navigate such waters.

For many operators this also needs to be accompanied by a more sophisticated understanding of ones own role.

Sudan

I would like to briefly mention two of the cases we work with in our project, in Sudan and Sri Lanka.

In Sudan we work with a Crosslines organization called SLIRI – Sudan Landmine Information and Response Initiative. This is a Crosslines project set up to prepare for mine action on both sides of the frontlines between the Government of Sudan and the SPLM. The aim is to facilitate a systematic collection of mine related data that may be put efficiently to use as soon as the conflict is over. The organization is set up with parallel structures, with a string of local offices in both Khartoum-controlled and SPLM –controlled areas. This is to reflect the political realities, and in recognition that the mine problem is central on both sides of the frontlines and will need to be addressed as such. A further aim of the SLIRI is to create space for contact and cooperation across the frontlines, as one way of contributing to building a peaceful future. Needless to say – such an approach must be conducted with political sensitivity and firm understanding of the realities on the ground.

It is also worthwhile to note that mine action has been given priority in the negotiations between the Government and SPLM. A major challenge remains to translate political visions to concrete action reducing number of victims and freeing up farmland. In our scheduled roundtable for Sudan this will be a core issue – using experiences from the Nuba Mountains.

Sri Lanka

The demining and subsequent opening up of the north – south A9 Highway in Sri Lanka was an important part of the agreement between the Sri Lankan Government and the LTTE. Its also testimony to the importance of mine action in translating political efforts into concrete realities on the ground.

Sri Lanka has a substantial but manageable mine problem, when comparing to other mine affected countries. Mine action is necessary to facilitate IDP and refugee return and for resumption of economic activities. In a context of stalled peace negotiations and increasing insecurity, it is one of the few forward-looking constructive reconstruction activities that remains and continue.

Our work in Sri Lanka suggests that mine action may contribute positively to the quite difficult situation the peace process finds itself now. Just to mention three of these areas:

- Continued and increased mine action free up more land needed for proper return of refugees and IDP, while at the same time reduce social pressure from returnees now living in very difficult conditions. Increased mine action can also give war-weary Lankans a renewed faith in the peace process – create a demand for peace from below.
- Done the right way – Mine action and reconstruction efforts by the SL Army present in the North East may change and improve Tamil perceptions of them as a solely hostile force.
- MRE competence and capacity may be employed to convey messages of what the CFA and peace negotiations is about – balancing some of the very partisan media

And finally – to sum up where we are at this stage in the project, with two roundtables coming up in Sudan and Bosnia over the coming weeks:

Preliminary findings

- Mine Action takes place in the wider context of peacebuilding and peace implementation. The lessons learned over past decade on peacebuilding and peace implementation also applies to Mine Action.
- Mine Action projects can be crucial to successful peacebuilding, but may also have little, none or negative impact on peace processes. Conflict-sensitive approaches necessary.
- Mine Action may be employed strategically for political ends – but with the danger of politicising humanitarian assistance
- Mine Action can and should be implemented in all phases of conflict
- All conflict areas have its own characteristics. Priority must be given to flexible solutions over standard responses, without jeopardising safety

Preliminary recommendations for policymakers

- Ensure policy and program coherence between assistance sectors
- Recognise the long-term nature of post conflict reconstruction – view as investments in conflict prevention rather than short-term assistance (ref “Breaking the Conflict Trap”)
- Recognise the amorphous nature of conflict – zones. There are no clear-cut categories of pre/during/post conflict situations, but constantly overlap between all – in time and space – implications for programs
- Base programs on specific needs in affected areas, not on domestic needs
- Identify and support agents for peace rather than for conflict – improve ways of communicating with affected communities

Thank you

Mine Action contributions to Peacebuilding – exploring the linkages

Policy research project, by Landmine Action (UK) and Fafo Institute (Norway)

Aim

- To examine, identify and learn from the interrelationships between mine action and peacebuilding.

Objectives

- To identify and examine the peacebuilding impacts of mine action
- To identify and strengthen policies and practices in the implementation of mine activities that improve peacebuilding efforts within mine action community

Methods

- Engaging with practitioners in affected areas (Sri Lanka, Bosnia, Sudan) through roundtables and case-studies



5 core elements of mine action – 5 entrypoints for peacebuilding

- Mine Risk Education: direct link to war-affected communities. MRE teams can communicate broader messages re ceasefire/peace-agreements
- Humanitarian Demining – potential for transparency & CBM between former opponents (survey, mutual QA, common technical challenge), employment of combatants (DDR)
- Stockpile destruction – disarmament and ensuring no new use. Mutual Transparency
- Victim assistance – focus on common challenges for war victims, not differences between former opponents
- Advocacy – connecting local conflict to IHL framework, prepare for wider application of international norms



Mine Action: one element of Peacebuilding

The Peacebuilding Palette (Dan Smith 2003)

<p>Security</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Humanitarian Mine Action •Disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration of combatants •Security Sector Reform •Tackling SALW problems 	<p>Political framework</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Democratisation •Good governance •Institution building •Human rights
<p>Socio Economic Foundations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Physical reconstruction •Economic reconstruction •Infrastructure of health and education •Repatriation and return of refugees and IDPs •Food security 	<p>Reconciliation and justice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Dialogue between leaders of antagonistic groups •Grass roots dialogue •Other bridge-building activities • Truth and reconciliation commissions • Trauma therapy and healing

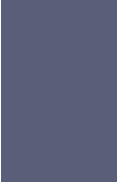


But also integral to other elements of Peacebuilding

The Mine Action Palette

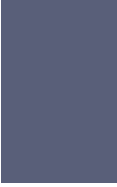
<p>Security</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Marking, fencing and clearance of minefields •DDR : Stockpile destruction, removal of instruments of war, employment for former combatants • Potential to engage with SALW challenges •Increased human security 	<p>Political framework</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Institution and competence building ; planning, diplomacy, advocacy and management •Human rights and IHL. Mine action is firmly based on HR approach and implementation of IHL •Role for active and critical civil society •Engagement with Non State Actors
<p>Socio Economic Foundations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Physical reconstruction •Economic reconstruction •Infrastructure of health and education •Repatriation and return of refugees and IDPs •Food security 	<p>Reconciliation and justice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Dialogue between former opponents •Opening up of public space •Trauma therapy and healing – victim assistance •Facilitation of evidence gathering





The need to be conflict sensitive

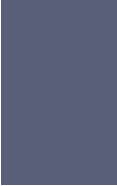
- All operators in (pre/active/post) conflict zones have an impact on the conflict dynamics
- To avoid negative impact – do no harm – operators must be sensitive to the specific conflict dynamics and act accordingly
- No one situation is like – similar actions may have opposite impact in different areas – e.g. recruitment of former combatants
- Conflict dynamics manifests themselves differently on different levels; local/national/regional - mine action projects can have different and contradictive impact on these levels.
- Mine action implementers must be sensitive to the specifics of the conflict dynamics in the area they operate – but also to the larger Implementation context.



Beyond mine action: The implementation context

- The nature of the agreement reached between contending parties, the peacemaking strategy implicit in it, and the clarity of the international mandate derived from it;
- The extent to which national actors and international implementers, and the broader international community around them, possessed the requisite political will to move forward in implementation;
- The establishment of adequate monitoring mechanisms, both with respect to actions taken by national actors and to ensure accountability of international implementation structures;
- The effectiveness of knowledge gathering and analysis and the flexibility to act upon findings, particularly when a process hits unforeseen problems





Sudan Landmine Information and Response Initiative SLIRI Mine Action as confidence building measure

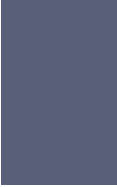
- Cross-lines project to start collection of data on mines on both sides of conflict line, before a comprehensive peace agreement is in place.
- Sudanese staff on all levels, parallel organisational structure in GoS and SPLM controlled areas.
- Landmine Action UK technical adviser, repository of sensitive information, cross-lines link within the programme and between GoS and SPLM.
- Data collection first (during conflict), development of relevant responses when peace/CFA in place - Nuba Mountains.
- Mine action has been important issue in GoS/SPLM negotiations, common ground for discussions between belligerent parties
- Challenge – implementation on the ground of strategic visions



Sri Lanka: Use of mine action in support of (stalled) peace process ?

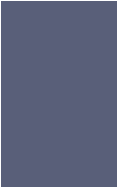
- Demining of A9 Highway, regular coordination meetings between Sri Lankan Army and LTTE. Potential for technical cooperation on clearance ("RAKE" method)
- Mine action necessary for return of IDPs and resumption of economic activities.
- Mine action continue in spite of stalled political negotiations. Increased investments in mine action may create increased "demand for peace" from below
- Mine Action has potential to change Tamil perceptions of SL Army in North East
- Technical capability in place, political and financial commitment needed





Preliminary findings

- Mine Action takes place in the wider context of peacebuilding and peace implementation. Lessons learned over past decade of peace implementation also applies to Mine Action.
- Mine Action projects can be crucial to successful peacebuilding, but may also have little, none or negative impact on peace processes. Conflict-sensitive approaches necessary.
- Mine Action may be employed strategically – but with the danger of politicising humanitarian assistance
- Mine Action can and should be implemented in all phases of conflict
- All conflict areas has its own characteristics. Priority must be given to flexible solutions over standard responses, without jeopardising safety



Preliminary Recommendations to policymakers

- Ensure policy and program coherence between assistance sectors
- Recognise the long-term nature of postconflict reconstruction – view as investments in conflict prevention (ref “Breaking the Conflict Trap”)
- Recognise the amorphous nature of conflict – zones. No clearcut categories of pre/during/post conflict situations, but constantly overlap between all – in time and space – implications for programs
- Base programs on specific needs in affected areas, not on domestic needs
- Identify and support agents for peace rather than for conflict – improve ways of communicating with affected communities



5. Updates

5.1. Update from UNMAS

MASG NEWSLETTER - 1 AUGUST THROUGH 30 SEPTEMBER 2004

POLICY, TREATY IMPLEMENTATION, INFORMATION AND RESOURCE MOBILIZATION

GENERAL POLICY

The UN Mine Action Service (UNMAS) convened a meeting of the Inter-Agency Coordination Group on Mine Action on 27 September 2004. Topics under discussion included: 1) the review of the UN Policy on Mine Action; 2) the development of the Framework for Mine Action Planning and Operational Response, 3) the United Nations Guide to Gender Mainstreaming in Mine Action, 4) the implementation of the UN Strategy on Mine Action: 2001-2005, 5) preparations for the Nairobi Summit, and 5) the preparation for the 2005 Portfolio of Mine Action Projects.

UNMAS compiled the draft of the Report of the Secretary-General on Assistance in Mine Action, which was circulated as an official UN document in late September (A/59/284). The report will be taken up by the 4th Committee of the General Assembly on 28 and 29 October, following the meeting of the Reinforced Mine Action Support Group on 27 October 2004.

During the month of September, UNMAS Director and Chief of Policy, Resource Mobilisation and Information visited their counterparts in Denmark, Finland, and at the EU in Brussels to discuss resource mobilisation activities.

INFORMATION

In August, the Information Unit announced the update of the landmine stockpile destruction database on the "E-mine" website (www.mineaction.org). The data are drawn from Article 7 reports, which the Department of Disarmament Affairs publishes on its website. In addition, the unit has published and is distributing to donors, a first-ever annual report targeted mainly to donors. In preparation for the upcoming Nairobi Summit on a Mine-Free World, the unit, in consultation with UN mine action partners, the Geneva Center for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD) and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), has organised briefings for the media and NGOs, produced information materials, and is setting up press trips in mine-affected countries. The unit is also developing a video, print, and web-based public service advertisement campaign to be aired in early November; in time for the Nairobi Summit.

GENDER

UNMAS is developing tools to facilitate gender mainstreaming within UN mine action programmes. These tools include a UN Guide to Gender Mainstreaming, a literature review that provides quick and easy reference for field personnel and other interested individuals, and input to the *Gender Resource Package for Peacekeeping Operations* (now published and available). Based on the work of a specialized consultant, the IACG Steering Group for gender mainstreaming has drafted the first set of gender guidelines, and shared it with focal points in UN mine action programmes globally. Focal point comments are being incorporated into the draft which will be reviewed by the Steering Committee on 11 October. A final working draft will be presented to mine action stakeholders in October. The guide will be field-tested for one year before being finalized and formally endorsed.

TREATY IMPLEMENTATION

UNMAS attended the informal consultation convened in Geneva on 24th September by the President-Designate of the Nairobi Summit, Wolfgang Petritsch, to discuss Summit documents for the Nairobi Summit was. Coordinated input was presented by the UN at the meeting, which allowed for a wide array of mine action stakeholders to present their comments on draft documents for the consideration of the President-Designate and other state representatives. UNMAS also attended an international symposium, entitled "Building the Road Beyond Nairobi" and hosted by the Mines Action Canada from September 15 to 17 in Ottawa.

UNMAS has now received national plans for mine action from 19 countries: Afghanistan, Albania, Angola, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cambodia, Chad, Eritrea, Guinea Bissau, Jordan, Malawi, Mauritania, Mozambique, Namibia, Sudan, Tajikistan, Yemen, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

PROGRAMME SUPPORT

AFGHANISTAN

An UNMAS delegation, including the Director of UNMAS and the Programme Officer for Afghanistan, visited Kabul, and met with representatives from the Government of Afghanistan, UN agencies, implementing partners, and the donor community. President Karzai, the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, and the Minister of Finance expressed their support for the mine action programme. Topics discussed included the transition of mine action coordination responsibility to the Government, increased integration of Government priorities into programme planning, and participation by the Government at the upcoming Nairobi Summit. The team also conducted a number of field visits, including visits to the clearance works at Kabul International Airport, and the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) initiative carried out through the "Mine Action for Peace" project.

A briefing on the Landmine Impact Survey in Afghanistan -- now 70 percent complete -- indicated the significant progress of the programme in making Afghanistan mine-safe. In most areas, minefields from the Soviet period have now been completely cleared. The survey will: result in an accurate picture of the remaining mine contamination; enable enhanced priority-setting and the allocation of assets for mine clearance and mine risk education; and provide a sound basis for the planned revision of the national strategic plan for mine action in early 2005.

The security situation in the country remains volatile. The Herat Area Mine Action Office was attacked recently, and the situation is expected to remain tense in the run-up to the elections. However, mine clearance and mine risk education activities are continuing throughout the country.

BURUNDI (ONUB)

On 1 June 2004, UNMAS initiated a mine-action programme along with the establishment of a new peacekeeping mission, the United Nations Operation in Burundi (ONUB). The aim is to support the operations of ONUB, and to facilitate the delivery of humanitarian assistance and the return and repatriation of internally displaced people and refugees. Three international staff deployed in Bujumbura to establish a Mine Action Coordination Centre (MACC) within ONUB Headquarters. The MACC objective is to oversee and coordinate mine clearance, victim assistance and mine risk education activities, and to support the Transitional Government of Burundi in establishing a national mine action capacity. Specifically, the MACC assists in: developing national procedures; setting up a national accreditation system; preparing the Article 7 transparency report; and in drafting a mine action plan. The MACC will be fully operational by mid-November when the Information Management System for Mine Action will be set up. Two international NGOs, the Swiss Foundation for Mine Action (FSMA) and Danish Church Aid (DCA), have also deployed, and will initiate mine action projects in October.

ETHIOPIA & ERITREA (UNMEE)

Review of bids for the mechanical and mine detection dog capacity to replace the departed Slovak contingent was finalized with MECHEM Consultants of South Africa winning the tender. The teams are expected to deploy in October. During the reporting period, five mine or UXO incidents were reported in the Temporary Security Zone. There was one confirmed death and one confirmed injury. Investigations are continuing on two of the incidents.

CYPRUS (UNFICYP)

Review of bids for both the clearance and quality assurance contracts for the National Guard minefields in the buffer zone was completed. The selection of the contractors will be announced once EC funds have been received.

SUDAN

The Sudan National Mine Action Strategic Framework Conference was held from 25 to 27 August 2004 in Nairobi, and resulted in the signing of the Strategic Framework for Sudan by the Government of Sudan and the Sudan Peoples Liberation Movement. Clearance operations in the Nuba Mountains continued with Landmine Action UK (LMA) and Danish Church Aid (DCA). The Swiss Federation for Mine Action (FSMA) conducted survey operations, and Ronco is due to return from Rumbek to continue clearance operations. MECHEM continues with the clearance of the Kapoeta, Torrit, Juba, Mundri, Rumbek route, and supports WFP in the emergency repair of this key logistic route in South Sudan. Ronco has cleared an area in Rumbek in order to expand the Rumbek runway. Four members from the Swedish Rescue Services Agency (SRSA) have joined the program in Sudan. An assessment mission was conducted to all three states in Darfur with the aim of assessing the need for mine action in the Darfur areas. Preliminary results indicate that unexploded ordnance (UXOs) may pose a problem in some areas, while there has been no evidence of mine contamination. Assessments have also been conducted in the Malakal area.

New pledges in the VTF 1 August through 30 September 2004

01/09/2004	Switzerland	\$20,000	Landmine Safety (P04-GL08)
01/09/2004	US/CDC	\$26,121	Core Costs (P04-GL01)
09/09/2004	Italy	EURO 350,000	Sudan (P04-SU08/ P04-SU10) and advocacy
25/09/2004	Denmark	DKK 3,000,000	Core Costs (P04-GL01)
25/09/2004	Denmark	DKK 5,000,000	Afghanistan

New contributions in the VTF 1 August through 30 September 2004

12/08/2004	Germany	\$ 260,806	Ethiopia & Eritrea (P04-ER10)
12/08/2004	Australia	\$ 895,180	Afghanistan (P04-AF04, P04-AF06, P04-AF07)
24/08/2004	Netherlands	\$280,000	DRC (P04-DC04)
27/08/2004	Finland	\$600,650	Core Costs (P04-GL01)
09/09/2004	Finland	\$1,208,800	Afghanistan (P04-AF02/ P04-AF04)

TECHNOLOGY/ SAFETY

The membership of the IMAS review Board has expanded, and a survey on post-clearance sampling was initiated. UNMAS assisted in the preparations for an EU-funded workshop, entitled "Is Humanitarian Demining Technology a Broken Promise?" The workshop will be held in October in Brussels.

5.2. Update from UNDP

UNDP MINE ACTION UPDATE

September 2004

The following is a summary of key achievements, objectives, and funding issues for UNDP-supported country programmes, presented by region:

EUROPE & THE CIS REGION

Tajikistan

Key Achievements

- With financing from the Canadian Government, embarked on the second phase of support for the Tajik Mine Action Cell (TMAC), covering March 2004 to February 2006.
- With financial support from the United Kingdom, contracted the Swiss Foundation for Mine Action (FSD) to deploy a third survey team with personnel provided from the Ministry for Emergency Situations. This team is partly funded by contributions from Norway and Sweden via the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE).
- Initiated a project to position 2,000 large “*Hazardous Area*” warning signs to deter the inhabitants of communities living near the Uzbek border from straying into mined areas. The signs will be positioned by the Tajik Border Force and paid for by UNDP and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID).

Key Objectives

- Encourage interested parties to provide assistance to the Uzbek Government to create the necessary conditions for clearance of mines along the Uzbek /Tajik border.
- Review and update the five-year Strategic Plan, in light of recent operational experience.

Funding Update

- Sweden: Euro 50K (OSCE/FSD project in 2004)
- Norway: Euro 100K (OSCE/FSD project in 2004)
- Japan: US\$ 250K (OSCE/FSD project in 2004)
- Canada: C\$1.6 million (C\$1 million for OSCE/FSD project, C\$ 600K for UNDP support of TMAC)
- United Kingdom: US\$ 100K (UNDP for FSD survey team)
- OSCE: Euro 360K (OSCE/FSD project in 2004)
- UNDP: US\$ 92K (Dushanbe Conference, Hazard Warning sign project)
- USAID: US\$ 40,000 (UNDP – Hazard Warning sign project)
- NATO: US\$ 3K (UNDP – stockpile destruction)
- Italy (pledged): Euro 60K (UNDP – victim assistance and mine-risk education projects in 2005)

ARAB STATES REGION

Iraq

Key Achievements

- UNDP continues its cooperation and coordination with the United Nations Assistance Mission in Iraq (UNAMI), the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), the National Mine Action Authority (NMAA), and other stakeholders, aiming to assist the NMAA in the development of a national management capacity and the establishment of an indigenous and sustainable mine-action programme in Iraq.

- Mr. Salomon Schreuder, Senior Mine Action Advisor/Cluster Manager (Cluster 7), joined the UNDP Mine Action Team in mid-August.
- A coordination meeting between the NMAA (Director-General and Training Manager) and UNDP/UN Mine Action (Cluster 7) took place in Amman, Jordan, from 18 to 20 August 2004. Among the important issues discussed were the institutional development of NMAA, provision of international technical advisors to NMAA, development of local mine-action operational capacities, and the strategic planning process. The NMAA Director-General highlighted the draft strategic plan (objectives/projects) of NMAA for the 4th quarter of 2004 and 2005, and indicated an urgent need for the continuation, support, and expansion of explosive remnants of war (ERW) clearance and risk education in Southern Iraq, especially in Al-Basrah Governorate.
- UNDP Mine Action conducted internal meetings in September to discuss support of NMAA, administrative and financial arrangements for NMAA capacity-building missions, and implementation and reallocation of the UNDP Iraq Mine Action Team from Amman to Cyprus.
- Several meetings were held with Mines Advisory Group (MAG), International Mine Initiative (IMI), InterSOS, and Cranfield University in order to enhance UNDP coordination and support to mine-action projects. These meetings focused on the current situation of mine-action organizations working inside Iraq, possibilities of funding mine-action projects presented to UNDP, creation of local nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and firms, and the future direction of the national Mine Action Programme.
- With the support of UNDP and contracted through Vietnam Veterans of America Foundation (VVAFA), the Senior Technical Advisor for the Landmine Impact Survey (LIS), John Brown, made a presentation on the necessity of conducting an LIS for Iraq, and on the implementation method and the lessons learned from a previous LIS conducted in northern Iraq.
- A presentation of the UN Mine Action Cluster history, structure, role, and future direction was presented to a delegation of the Iraqi Ministry of Finance and Auditing.
- In an effort to expand local mine-action capacity, a questionnaire was sent to key mine-action stakeholders for recommendations and advice regarding the establishment of new local NGOs in the southern region of Iraq.
- A Request for Proposal (RFP) was issued in a competitive bidding process for the provision of 10 Technical Advisors to NMAA to work within Iraq in various areas, including Quality Assurance, Multimedia, Victim Assistance, Mine-Risk Education, Administration/Finance, and Public Relations. Selection and contractual arrangements should be finalized in September 2004, pending results of the NMAA review regarding the necessity, qualification, and number of technical advisors required.
- Coordination and preparation to develop the Mine Action Portfolio 2005 has been ongoing. A follow-up request has been sent to all mine-action agencies currently operating inside Iraq to ensure their contribution to the Portfolio.
- A project proposal review session was conducted to review the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) proposal for "Depleted Uranium (DU) Assessment and Capacity Building in Iraq," measuring the proposal according to evaluation criteria by the Mine Action Cluster. The final version of the proposal was submitted for Cluster Group review on 31 August 2004. The UNEP proposal will be executed by the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS).
- A senior member of NMAA has been nominated for the Senior Mine Action Managers Course scheduled to be held at James Madison University in Virginia from 22 September to 24 October 2004. UNDP will cover all costs of participation and is providing the nominee with full logistical and administrative support.

Key Objectives

- Continue to provide management and technical support to the NMAA and other mine-action stakeholders in Iraq.
- Follow-up and assist the NMAA strategic planning process.
- Conduct follow-up meeting with NMAA after its strategic planning meeting in Baghdad in early September.
- Follow-up on action points agreed with NMAA during the recent coordination meeting.
- Support and facilitate proposed donor conference, planned by NMAA for October 2004.

- Review Mine Action Cluster Strategic Plan and funding requirements for 2005 and beyond.
- Participate in a meeting with the Manager of the U.S. Department of State Mine Action Team, scheduled for 6 September 2004 in Amman, to gain insight regarding the future U.S. mine-action role in Iraq.
- Participate in UNAMI strategic planning/coordination meetings.
- Continue engaging mine-action NGOs on key issues.

Key Challenges

- The security situation in Iraq.
- Deployment of a focal point for UN Mine Action in Baghdad to coordinate mine-action activities in the field.
- Expansion of operational capacity, notably MRE and mine/UXO clearance.
- Establishment of local mine-action NGOs and private firms.
- Movement of UN mine action personnel within Iraq.
- Reallocation of UNDP Iraq Mine Action Team from Amman to Cyprus.

Funding Update

- UNDP has recently received US\$5.4 million, through the first half of 2005. Additional needs for this time period is approximately US\$4.9 million.
- Estimated total funds needed for the entire Iraq mine-action programme for 2005 is between US\$60 and US\$120 million.
- The European Commission contributed Euro 2 million to support a Landmine Impact Survey and the development of national demining capacities.
- Italy contributed Euro 4.5 million to support institutional development and technical support to NMAA and for development of national demining capacities.

AFRICA REGION

Eritrea

Key Achievements

- Two explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) teams have completed their specialized EOD course and are ready to continue training (large loop detector and leadership) prior to preparing for accreditation and operations.
- The newly deployed 2 x 20 Manual Clearance Teams are tasked in the Shilalo area in Gash Barka and are currently preparing for accreditation according to the International Mine Action Standards (IMAS).
- The final report of the Landmine Impact Survey (second edition) was received and is under review by the Eritrean Demining Authority (EDA) and other national stakeholders in preparation for approval by the general manager of EDA and submission to the UN certification committee.
- Inputs were provided to the Consolidated Appeals Process (CAP) of the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), which includes the three most urgent projects related to mine-risk education, mine clearance for the repatriation of internally displaced persons (IDPs), and strengthening prosthetic capacity.
- Staff of the EDA, the Eritrean Demining Operation (EDO), the Ministry of Labor and Human Welfare, and UNICEF developed detailed objectives, including resource requirements, for the National Mine Action Strategic Plan. The draft plan has been completed and is under review by stakeholders, including the facilitator, Cranfield University.

Key Objectives

- Advise and assist in finalizing the LIS report, Articles 5 and 7 of the Ottawa Treaty, and the National Mine Action Strategic Plan.
- Advise and assist EDA operations planning for the return of approximately 19,000 IDPs to the Shilalo area and facilitate agreements for the use of the United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE) peacekeeping force and mine action centre to facilitate this process.

- Assist EDA and EDO to develop an HIV/AIDS training plan in consultation with a visiting international consultant.
- Assist in the deployment and accreditation of the new mine clearance and EDO teams.

Funding Update

- The funding situation in Eritrea has not changed over the past month. The UNDP Mine Action Portfolio funding shortfall for September 2004 continues to be US\$3,252,798.

Somalia

Key Achievements

- The EU-funded Landmine Impact Survey (Phase II) has begun in Puntland.
- The Somaliland Mine Action Centre is now demonstrating leadership in mine-action coordination in Somaliland.
- HALO Trust has submitted an MOU with the Government of Puntland to commence clearance operations in Puntland.
- Geneva Call hosted a mission to Somalia, including the Swiss Foundation for Mine Action (FSD) and the Danish Demining Group (DDG), which visited Puntland, Beletwain, and Wagid.
- Clearance operations by HALO Trust and DDG continue in Somaliland.
- Somaliland Police Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) teams continue operations, and have destroyed up to 17,000 items since starting operations in 2002.

Key Challenges

- The MOU agreement between the Service Action Center and Puntland Mine Action Center will be signed in September 2004.
- Finding funding to continue training of Police EOD teams in Puntland and Jowhar, where all teams have yet to complete their required operational training.
- Getting the HALO Trust MOU signed by Puntland authorities.

Key Objectives

- Complete LIS recruitment and training.
- Complete the Landmine Impact Survey.

Funding Update

- The Somaliland Mine Action Centre (MAC) is funded through 2004. Funding is required for 2005.
- The Puntland Mine Action Centre is funded partially until 2006 with CN\$330,000 over 3 years from the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), but requires an additional US\$19,000 for 2005.
- Somaliland Police EOD teams require US\$20,000 for 2005.
- The UNDP capacity building team requires funding for 2005. Currently, these expenses appear in proposals in the Mine Action Portfolio and the Consolidated Appeals Process.
- Continuation of Police EOD training in Jowhar and Puntland (1 EOD instructor for 4 months or 2 for 2 months) urgently requires US\$50,000.

Sudan

Key Achievements

- UNDP facilitated the strategic planning process in Sudan during August 2004. Separate strategic planning sessions, involving civil society and the international community, were held with the Government of Sudan and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement, who then agreed on a common mine-action strategic framework. This framework was endorsed by both parties on 27 August 2004 in Nairobi and consists broadly of the following:
 - A Sudan free from the effects of landmines and Explosive Remnants of War (ERW).

- Where mine action is a humanitarian imperative that has been removed from politics, and where all people in Sudan enjoy durable peace and sustainable development built on the promotion of human security, ensuring law and order, respecting human rights, and adhering to the principles of good governance.
 - A Sudan that adheres to all international protocols on landmine issues.
- Sudan is to develop and implement a sustainable national mine action programme capable of:
 - The development and implementation of a mine-action strategy and policy.
 - The supervision and empowerment of a National Mine Action Office to act as an executive and coordination body.
 - Clearing medium and high-priority mine and ERW-contaminated areas in Sudan.
 - Raising public awareness of the mine-action situation.
 - Rehabilitating the most serious mine victims.
 - A smooth transition from an international to a national mine-action capacity.
- Further, in order to ensure the safety and well-being of the people of Sudan as well the planned development of the country, by 2011 Sudan must: [NOTE: The following items are highly redundant. Most of them appear in the list immediately above, or are mentioned in the initial paragraph. I have highlighted several of the most obvious. I suggest we delete these.]
 - Implement national policies, a strategic plan, and priorities for mine action.
 - Strengthen and support national mine-action structures.
 - Ensure that Sudan honors its international mine-action obligations.
 - Develop and implement a national mine-action information management system.
 - Establish a credible and sustainable national mine-action capability.
 - Clear all high and medium-priority mine and ERW contaminated areas in Sudan.
 - Implement a strategy to raise public awareness of the mine/ERW situation.
 - Ensure the physical, social, and economic reintegration of mine/ERW victims.
 - Support peace building, recovery, and development initiatives.
 - Mobilize adequate resources to achieve the mine-action mission.
- The Kenya Coalition Against Landmines (KCAL) drafted a project proposal for a regional advocacy workshop. The workshop will include participants from East Africa, the Great Lakes Region, the Horn of Africa, the Democratic Republic of Congo, and Chad. The objective of the workshop is to enable civil society in the region to assist their governments in preparation for the First Review Meeting of the Ottawa Convention, to take place in Nairobi during November/December 2004. The proposal was forwarded to the UN Mine Action Service (UNMAS) and UNDP for endorsement, and donors are encouraged to support this worthy cause. An SPLM (Sudan People Liberation Army) advocacy workshop will precede the regional workshop.

5.3. Update from Unicef

Bosnia and Herzegovina

UNICEF Bosnia and Herzegovina continues to provide technical, financial and logistical support to the Bosnia and Herzegovina Mine Action Centre (BHMAC) and to implementing agencies involved in MRE and Landmine Victim Assistance (LMVA).

In September, the BHMAC held a technical working group meeting that gathered representatives of 18 agencies involved in mine risk education (MRE) at community level. International and local NGO's, Red Cross, Civil Protection, SFOR and BHMAC representatives presented their achievements and plans; and lessons learned from on going pilots were shared. Participants of the technical working group were introduced to the Nairobi Summit for a Mine Free World and reminded of the obligations of BiH on the Ottawa Treaty. Participants gathered in small workshops focused on several issues directly related to the preparation of Standard Operating Procedures for MRE; integration of permanent and urgent marking in MRE; and insurance requirements for MRE personnel. Other working groups issued recommendations on presented project proposals and on SFOR produced MRE TV spots.

On the second day, representatives from the Ministries of Education joined the group for the presentation of the MRE component of the BiH Mine Action Strategy and were requested to provide input into the detailed strategic plan for MRE within a one-month period.

In September also, the BHMAC gathered government and NGO representatives to present the final draft of the LMVA component of the National Mine Action Strategy. Participants were requested to provide input into the detailed strategic plan for LMVA within a one-month period. In addition, participants in three small workshops were requested to review three project proposals and provide their technical opinion before submission to donors.

The UNICEF commissioned survey on MRE in the education sector in BiH was completed with the collaboration of the Federal Ministry of Education of BiH, the Republika Srpska Pedagogical Institute, and the Education Department of Brcko District. The results of analysis show that pupils do receive MRE through schools, with 83% of teachers including MRE in their teaching. The finding regarding an unconscious minimisation of risk perception confirms the outcome of previous research with almost 90% of children believing that the incidence of mine accidents in BiH is high, while only 20% of children living in high impacted areas reporting that mines represent a threat or an obstacle to them or their family. The report also highlights a very high number of children declaring having access to weapons. The report is in process of editing and printing.

With UNICEF technical and financial support, the local NGO AMI is piloting a project integrating permanent and urgent marking and the training of community representatives. MRE and permanent marking activities were completed in three communities, Kula Grad, Lipnje and Sultanovci of Zvornik municipality. Permanent marking was conducted in accordance to BiH SOP and with support from the community. Lessons learned were shared with implementing agencies and SOPs for permanent marking as a part of MRE are being developed. The local NGO AMI is now carrying out urgent marking in 8 communities of the municipality of Lopare.

With UNICEF support, the local NGO 'Genesis Project' continues with the implementation of comprehensive school-based MRE and a small arms/light weapons (SALW) project. In August 2004, the Genesis Project conducted four trainings and one interactive puppet theatre performance, which was attended by 50 school children. Schoolteachers, 120 of them, were included in MRE trainings and peer-to-peer education. In September 2004, the project got into full swing and Genesis conducted 23 interactive puppet theatre performances that included 2,980 children of age group 7-11. They also organised 16 workshops for MRE training that 46 teachers attended, and 56 peer educator's workshops that 208 children attended. Continued activities with six MRE training of teachers for self-sustainable MRE in primary schools were attended by 180

teachers. Evaluation activities have started with tests for basic knowledge on MRE for 20 groups of peer-educators, which included 208 children.

With UNICEF support, the Italian NGO Intersos commenced in August the implementation of the Community Mine Risk Management project. The project is designed to address issues identified during the previously conducted sociological research related to risk attitudes of working-age men and women. The project is implemented in collaboration with the BHMAL, the Civil Protection, local authorities, trade unions and local associations in six municipalities of Central and Eastern Bosnia.

In accordance with the BHMAL training plan, the Civil Protection organised in August the 6th training for MRE field personnel. In total, 21 participants attended the course and participants from local NGO's, Red Cross, SFOR and Civil Protection acquired the skills necessary to facilitate community mine risk management and education. The first week of October, the BHMAL is running the 3rd Course on Mine Risk Management; senior and middle managers from the Civil Protection, the BHMAL, the Red Cross, international and local NGOs and the armies are attending.

UNICEF Bosnia and Herzegovina's Mine Action programme has been supported by contributions from the Government of Italy, the Department for International Development (DfID), and the UNICEF National Committees of Ireland and Austria.

A considerable constraint to the implementation of the UNICEF Mine Action Programme is the lack of funding for programme activities beyond 2004, which put the programme in great jeopardy. To be able to maintain its support to mine action in BiH, UNICEF BiH urgently requires 950,000 US dollars.

Eritrea

In July, UNICEF signed two Project Cooperation Agreements, one with War Child Netherlands (WCN) and a renewal of the previous PCA with the Eritrean Demining Operations (EDO). The PCAs clearly define roles and expectations for projects in the coming months. The agreement with War Child Netherlands focuses on psychosocial care and the provision of safe play areas for children in mine-affected areas to help protect them from the danger of mines and UXO, using a community based approach. This is a key programmatic area, which UNICEF will further develop in the coming year.

Following the signing of the PCA with War Child Netherlands, three sub-projects have been nearly completed: the two designated play areas in Tsorona and Senafe have been constructed (only the fencing of Tsorona playground is still ongoing), and psychosocial training has been conducted for the MRE field teams. In September, the Senafe playground was officially inaugurated. The fencing was constructed by community volunteers and the local administration provided the land.

UNICEF continues to support mine risk education (MRE) field operations through six EDO field teams. The new PCA with EDO also encompasses the training of 35 community volunteers, based on the Landmine Impact Survey results, who will be used to establish community based MRE networks in the coming months.

The draft of the National Mine Action Strategic Plan 2005 – 2009, including MRE, has been discussed and revised with counterparts from the Eritrean Demining Authority EDA and the EDO.

In August, the EDO MRE Coordinator, together with UNICEF, has given MRE safety briefings for staff from UNDP, UNFPA and WFP.

Also in August, the six UNICEF-EDO field teams targeted 5,646 people with MRE activities, out of which 2,474 were children.

In September, the EDA, together with the Red Cross and UNICEF, organised a training of Facilitator's Course on MRE and data collection. Eleven Red Cross volunteers successfully passed the final course evaluation, which includes a presentation test.

UNICEF has begun the development of comprehensive joint programmes for mine action with other UN actors – notably UNDP mine victims assistance.

Upcoming in October:

- Inauguration of the playground in Tsorona
- Field assessments in accordance with the MA National Strategic Plan 2005 – 2009 ahead of the re-deployment of MRE teams in different highly affected areas in accordance with LIS results
- Continuation of recruitment of 35 community volunteers as outlined in the PCA signed with EDO in July
- Finalisation of field testing of MRE posters and leaflets, preparation for printing
- Printing of 100,000 notebooks and 100,000 badges for MRE activities in primary schools
- Continuation of field activities and MRE safety briefings for UN Agencies and NGOs by UNICEF and EDO



Georgia

UNICEF continues to strengthen MRE and survivor assistance programmes in affected areas of Georgia and the Abkhazia region. Presently, this is being accomplished largely through UNICEF project support and cooperation with the HALO Trust.

Through UNICEF's support in the form of MRE communication materials, children and families in the secessionist republic of Abkhazia, as well as in Zugdidi and the Sagarejo regions of Georgia are being educated in mine/UXO awareness and risk reduction. UNICEF is also facilitating the development and production of culturally appropriate, age specific and locally accessible communication materials (i.e., copybooks and board games with MRE messages for schools, and colouring books with MRE messages for kindergartens), which are employed in HALO's MRE

initiatives. Additionally, over 34,500 students at 214 schools take part in interactive MRE workshops conducted by the HALO Trust.

Organised jointly with the HALO Trust and the Sukhumi Rehabilitation Center Rainbow, UNICEF Georgia has funded a one-month rehabilitation summer camp for child survivors, their families and teachers in mine-affected regions of Abkhazia. Spanning the month of August 2004, the programme was successful in:

- Creating a positive, safe and supportive environment for children who have been injured by landmines;
- Laying the groundwork for the development of a community-based rehabilitation network involving information sharing, advocacy, community mobilisation, social reintegration and participation for children who have been injured by landmines, their families and community members;
- Promotion of self-acceptance, self-confidence and psychosocial development amongst injured children through non-formal education, play and recreation using interactive learning techniques.

UNICEF's ongoing efforts to develop a programmatic framework that will link elements of mine action, young people's health and development, inclusive education, and child development continue with great promise. We are committed to ensuring that an integrated approach to mine action is supported, and related activities are sustainably embedded within existing UNICEF programming in Georgia.

Iraq

UNICEF continues its support to mine action in Iraq through the provision of technical advice and training to national governmental and nongovernmental partners. As the deputy task manager for the mine action cluster, UNICEF coordinates its activities with UNDP and other agencies within the larger UN country team.

In partnership with Handicap International (HI), UNICEF has finalised a new project cooperation agreement for implementation of an MRE project in Baghdad and its surrounding areas. The project is expected to start in October and will focus on MRE training and capacity building of schoolteachers and community members.

In coordination with the National Mine Action Authority, UNICEF has also organised an MRE Needs Assessment and Strategic Planning workshop in Amman, Jordan from 10-14 October. All key stakeholders including government ministries, and international and local NGOs will participate.

UNICEF has initiated the development of an MRE materials kit that will be distributed to social/health and other community workers. The distribution will take place after a comprehensive MRE training of trainers' course. The package will be finalised and ready for printing by mid-November.

Nicaragua

The Landmines and Unexploded Ordnance Accident Prevention in Nicaragua Project is developing MRE activities in five municipalities of the Department of Jinotega. In September, field promoters carried out information and awareness activities in 20 communities at risk and in 22 educative centres where they reached 168 girls, 202 boys and 1,000 men and women. During the development of the activities, 19 landmine survivors were identified, most of whom had suffered a landmine or UXO accident in the late eighties and early nineties.

In the communities of Wamblán and El Barro in the municipality of Wiwilí, 17 boys and 14 girls were trained as local promoters. They will take part in the MRE campaign that will be held next month. They will be visiting houses in their community to inform about the risk of landmines and UXO.

The Project's field team continued coordination activities with the Nicaraguan Army's Demining Units. Through periodic meetings, information is shared and joint activities are agreed upon. In September, the army supported information and awareness activities in schools.

Russia – Northern Caucasus

As of the end of September, 717 children under the age of 18 have been killed or injured by mines/UXO in Chechnya, according to the UNICEF-supported victim incident database – IMSMA: Information Management System for Mine Action, which gathers information related to mine/UXO incidents in Chechnya since 1995.

To review and improve prevention strategies and minimise the number of mine/UXO incidents, UNICEF carried out a five-day KAP (Knowledge, Attitude, Practice) survey with the involvement of the Ministry of Education of Chechnya, the Danish Refugee Council and Minga Fund (UNICEF partner). The main objective of the survey was to provide a general snapshot on the knowledge, attitudes, practices, perception and sources of information in the teenager population living in Groznenskiy district of Chechnya with regard to the problem of mines and UXO. The results of the survey, which targeted 400 teenagers through cluster sampling, will provide a baseline for further evaluations of the MRE activities undertaken by UNICEF and its partners.

Two experts from the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian De-mining (GICHD) provided technical support to UNICEF's mine action programme in September. As a result, the data collection process has been further revised through a more precise identification of causes and location of mine/UXO incidents and a new classification of activities. In addition, the IMSMA database has been strengthened through the installation of new programmes.

Mine Risk Education (MRE)

With the beginning of the new school year, MRE instructors from Voice of the Mountains (VoM) resumed their sessions in schools in Chechnya. During the reporting period, three VoM teams have been working in schools no. 8, 3, 1, and 9 in the Shali district, covering 1,238 students; and in schools of Barzoy, Aslambek Sheripova of the Shatoyiskiy district, covering some 543 students. Posters, notebooks and pens with MRE messages have also been disseminated.

During the reporting period, the State Chechen Theatre has conducted one MRE drama presentation for 300 children and adults from the village of Gekhi-Chu in the Urus-Martanovskiy district (Chechnya). The Theatre and the local NGO 'Let's Save the Generation' (LSG) have reported that 3 drama circles with 30 children, two in Gekhi-Chu and one in Urus-Martan, have been created and local children have been trained for MRE drama performances.

Three leisure centres supported by UNICEF and ECHO continue to provide recreational opportunities for children in three secondary schools of Grozny (no. 41, 44 and 47). On average, some 35-40 children participate in the leisure centre activities on a daily basis.

Survivor Assistance

UNICEF, through LSG and VoM, distributed 17 wheelchairs and 45 pairs of crutches to children in Shalazhi and Grozny. Minga Fund has started the distribution of assistive devices in Grozny, Nozhay-Jurtovskiy, Shalinskiy and Urus-Martanovskiy districts in Chechnya.

The provision of prosthetic-orthotic assistance to mine/UXO affected children in the Vladikavkaz Prosthetic Workshop (PW), financially supported by the Governments of Germany and the Netherlands and from the Dutch National Committee for UNICEF, as well as the training on orthopedic footwear for four specialists of the Grozny Prosthetic Workshop, supported by DfID, have been temporarily suspended due to the closure of North Ossetia's administrative border with Ingushetia and the tensions generated by the events in Beslan. However, they are due to resume shortly. Meanwhile, physical rehabilitation has been provided by Grozny's Republican Clinical Hospital for mine/UXO-affected children and for children with other disabilities. Hospital staff, which were trained by UNICEF in 2003, have also conducted special massage and physiotherapies.

Training on prosthetic-orthopaedic assistance to disabled people has been organised by UNICEF, with support from DfID, for one doctor from Grozny's Prosthetic Workshop. The training started on 15 September at St. Petersburg's Scientific Centre and will be completed on 31 December. One of the specialists from Grozny's PW has already completed the training, which was also supported by DfID. Additionally, UNICEF is supporting the six-month training of two Chechen nurses in Armenia (Stepanakert), which started on 27 September. The nurses will be trained on delivering physical rehabilitation support to mine survivors and disabled children at the Armenian Centres of 'Universally Christian Solidarity'.

Sudan

(North)

UNICEF continues to support MRE activities primarily in the area of the Nuba Mountains of Sudan. The number of beneficiaries of direct implementation in the villages for the past three months has been somewhat low, largely due to the rainy-season, which makes most of the roads impassable. Support has primarily been given in 'emergency situations' where mines and UXO have been found. The MRE teams have also been giving community liaison support to the demining teams conducting survey activities in some villages.

Negotiations have started in Khartoum to broadcast a series of radio dramas. This series is geared primarily towards the IDPs who live in the Omderman area. It is based on a similar production that was done successfully in the Nuba Mountains in May 2004. It is hoped that the broadcast will begin in late October 2004.

A four-day workshop on "Communication Tools in MRE" was attended by twenty-six participants from ten NGOs and three government ministries. The objective of the workshop was to provide organisations working in MRE with an in-depth understanding of the range of tools available for disseminating information and the process of developing educational material for MRE projects. Particular attention was paid to traditional communication methods and the need for more participatory approaches to MRE.

From 14-17 October, an annual four-day refresher course has been organised for seven implementing NGOs and Government of Sudan employees. The workshop will be conducted in the Nuba Mountains where participants will have direct contact with persons living in mine-affected villages.

Sudan

(South)

The UNICEF child protection section continues to support, coordinate and provide capacity building initiatives to communities being educated on MRE. During September, a series of discussions were conducted between UNICEF, the UN Mine Action Service (UNMAS) and the steering committee, which focused mainly on improving the involvement of authorities and mine action agencies in MRE training and workshops.

Mainstreaming of mine action into development and refugee/IDP returns has also been one of the key areas of emphasis in all workshops carried out by respective NGOs. The use of the return module is currently on going and is being incorporated into many sectors, especially where the element of sustainable returns is involved. The local authorities and agencies working in returns as well as returnees themselves have an understanding of the risks posed by mines/UXO.

The reporting system is also improving in terms of getting information from indigenous mine action agencies through the steering committee. General information on the number of trainings conducted, target groups met, injuries and other basic information is collected, to be put into the IMSMA database system.

Within September, UNICEF also facilitated two trainings and workshops:

- Presentation of mine awareness and safety behaviour at the three-day security workshop – attendance was over 75 participants from different agencies and NGOs.
- Facilitation of the mine, return and reintegration module in the Emergency Preparedness & Response as part of capacity building to counterparts, local authorities and agency staff who are involved in emergency needs assessments.

Efforts on mainstreaming the training module to all NGOs, as well as the authorities is being passed to both Operation Lifeline Sudan (OLS) and non-OLS NGOs.

The MRE life skills module is at its final stage and has been planned for field-testing in October. Seven areas in the SPLM controlled areas will be used for the testing by trained mentors and the mine action steering committee, which is supported by the UNICEF protection section.