

**INTER – AGENCY STANDING COMMITTEE – WORKING GROUP  
49th MEETING**

**19-20 June 2002**

**at**

**International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies: Auditorium**

**Mine Action and Humanitarian Situations: Background Document by UNMAS and  
Agenda of Last Meeting**

Circulated: 4 June 2002

## **1. OVERVIEW**

### **A definition of mine action and its role in humanitarian activities**

Mine action refers to all activities addressing problems faced by people as a result of mine and UXO contamination. Mine action is not a pure technical discipline involving the simple detection and removal of land mines and unexploded ordnance. The aim of Mine Action is to help establish the conditions where people can live safely, and provide the necessary socio- economic conditions for human development.

### **UN and non UN players involved in mine action**

The United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS) is the focal point for mine action within the United Nations family. Within the UN system, it works most closely with UNDP, UNICEF, WHO, DDA and UNOPS.

- UNMAS: Coordination and emergency response
- UNDP: Capacity building of national mine action institutions
- UNICEF: Mine Risk Education and advocacy
- WHO: Victim assistance
- DDA: Implementation of the Ottawa Convention or Mine Ban Treaty
- UNOPS: Executing mine action projects on behalf of partner agencies

In 2001 the Secretary General of the United Nations presented the United Nations Mine Action Strategy 2001-2005 to the General Assembly (as attached to these notes). The strategy is an inter-agency strategy that articulates the vision for mine action in the future and contains specific and measurable objectives. UNMAS and its partner agencies are responsible for the successful implementation of the strategy before 2005.

The key non-UN agencies in mine action are the ICRC (mine risk education and victim assistance), the International Campaign to Ban Landmines (advocacy) and the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (information management, standards, research and technical support). A number of specialised NGOs (such as HALO Trust,

Handicap International, MAG and NPA) conduct mine clearance and mine risk education operations in the field.

### **Linkages with humanitarian agencies at Field Level**

UN assistance for mine action has expanded from 15 programmes in 1998 to 35 countries in 2002. The UN assistance programme addresses a variety of humanitarian and developmental needs. For example, UNMAS supports emergency assistance programmes in Afghanistan, DRC, Eritrea, FYROM, Lebanon and Sudan while UNDP supports programmes in Albania, Angola, Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cambodia, Chad, Ethiopia, Guinea-Bissau, Lao PDR, Mozambique, Thailand and Yemen that address mine action needs within the overall national development framework of these countries. In addition UNICEF provides support for mine risk education programming in a variety of humanitarian and development contexts in some 25 countries. The linkages with humanitarian agencies could be further strengthened by increased clarity of the role of the Humanitarian Coordinators in the effective coordination of mine action agencies and their humanitarian colleagues.

### **Linkages with humanitarian agencies at HQ level**

The Inter Agency Coordination Group (IACG) is the primary mechanism for consultation and coordination on mine related issues and activities within the UN system. The IACG is chaired by DPKO and includes representatives from DPA, DDA, FAO, OCHA, UNDP, UNHCR, UNICEF, UNOPS, WFP, WHO and the World Bank. The IACG meets on a regular basis at working group level chaired by the Chief of UNMAS and at senior management level (chaired by USG DPKO) on an “as required” basis. UNMAS would welcome the opportunity to share information from the IACG with the IASC.

The Steering Committee on Mine Action (SCMA) is modeled on the IASC and reviews operational activities and policy issues at the international level. The SCMA is chaired by UNMAS and comprises IACG members, ICRC, ICBL, GICHD, NGOs and other actors. The SCMA meets twice a year.

## **2. INCREASING COLLABORATION WITH HUMANITARIAN AGENCIES**

### **Participation in the IASC**

UNMAS would welcome the opportunity to attend meetings of the IASC and its working group, on subjects of interest to UNMAS (such as country reviews of mine-affected countries and policy discussions on issues relevant to UNMAS) and to have access to information on these issues provided by the IASC. We would also welcome the opportunity to present regular written updates on important mine action issues to the members of the IASC.

### **Threat Monitoring**

Information sharing could be enhanced between threat monitoring activities in the mine action field and threat monitoring activities of partner agencies in the humanitarian

sector. In New York UNMAS is a member of the Framework Team. Through the Framework Team, UNMAS identifies areas where mines are being laid and advocates for a cessation of mine laying and adherence to the Mine Ban Treaty. The treaty calls for an end to the production, stockpiling, transfer and use of anti personnel mines.

### **Rapid Response Plan**

When appropriate the UNMAS Mine Action Rapid Response Plan could be included when our partners in the humanitarian agencies are planning emergency response activities.

### **Consolidated Appeal Process**

UNMAS currently produces an annual Portfolio of Mine Related projects, which presents projects in 35 countries. Of these, 10 were also featured in the 2002 CAPs. The mine action agencies of the UN would like to ensure that presentations in the CAPs and Portfolio are consistent, and would also like to benefit from the experience of the CAP process and Common Humanitarian Action Plan in integrated programming and resource mobilisation.

### **Field Level Coordination**

Some UN Country Teams may see mine action, and particularly mine clearance, as a specialised quasi-military activity with little obvious relevance to their programmes. But successful mine action can often be a pre condition for the successful return of refugees and IDPs, recovery of agricultural production, or for the delivery of humanitarian aid. How mine action is prioritised can have a major impact on the success of humanitarian operations. For example in Eritrea when local communities made a request through UNICEF to clear a path leading to a water point, the UN Peacekeeping Operation and the Mine Action Coordination Centre (MACC) were able to execute a project that cleared the land of mines and allowed UNICEF to reconstruct one of the largest water dams in Eritrea.

### **Landmine Impact Survey**

Landmine Impact Surveys measure the humanitarian, social and economic impact that land mines have on a country at community level. This information is stored on a database and is used to assist in the prioritisation of land for clearance and the development of National Mine Action Strategies and Plans. The information has the potential to be used for humanitarian and development programming. For example, the Royal Government of Cambodia is planning to utilise information from the Landmine Impact Survey in the planning, implementation and review of the National Development Plan.

### **Advocacy**

UNMAS, UNDP and UNICEF are all involved in advocacy for the Mine Ban Treaty. UNMAS is considering the deployment of Regional Advocacy Officers to support Humanitarian Coordinators in promoting the ratification, accession and compliance with the Mine Ban Treaty at country level and would welcome IASC feedback on this idea.

**Key issues to be presented to the IASC**

1. UNMAS would welcome the opportunity to attend meetings of the IASC and its working group on subjects of interest to UNMAS and its UN partners.
2. UNMAS would like to have mine action integrated within the 2003 CAP at national and international level for planning and resource mobilisation purposes.
3. UNMAS asks that the specific responsibility for mine action be clarified in the terms of reference for Humanitarian Coordinators.
4. UNMAS and its partners would like to be involved in inter agency assessments of mine affected countries.
5. We would welcome feedback from IASC members with reference to how UN and NGO mine action agencies can work together to ensure that mine action in afflicted countries is responsive to humanitarian and developmental priorities.

**UNMAS**  
**31 May 2002**

## **Agenda of Last Meeting**

### **1. OBJECTIVE:**

- To increase the level of collaboration between mine action agencies and their partners in the humanitarian agencies.

### **2. KEY POINTS**

6. Attendance of UNMAS at meetings of the IASC and its working group.
7. Integration of mine action into the 2003 CAPs.
8. Clarification of the terms of reference for Humanitarian Coordinators.
9. Participation of UNMAS in inter agency assessments of mine affected countries (Please find attached a list of mine affected countries)
10. The UN agencies involved in mine action would welcome the views of IASC members to ensure that mine action in affected countries is responsive to humanitarian and developmental priorities.

### **3. PROPOSED OUTCOME**

- UNMAS is requesting that the IASC endorse the following proposals:
  1. UNMAS to attend meetings of the IASC and its working group on subjects of interest to UNMAS and its UN partners.
  2. Have mine action integrated within the 2003 CAPs at national and international level for planning and resource mobilization purposes.
  3. Clarify the specific responsibility for mine action within the terms of reference for Humanitarian Coordinators.
  4. UNMAS and/or its UN partners to be involved in inter agency assessments of mine-affected countries.

**UNMAS**  
**31 May 2002**