

Background briefing : Humanitarian mine action, second progress report

September 2000

Introduction

1. DFID's Humanitarian Mines Action Strategy, approved in late 1997 and implemented over three years to March 2001 seeks to enhance UK assistance for reducing the social and economic impact of landmines and other unexploded ordnance on developing countries. An initial progress report was issued in March 1999. This Second Progress Report covers subsequent developments.

Overview

2. The Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on their Destruction came into force on 1 March 1999 for the UK and other states which had ratified it by the end of September 1998. By June 2000, The "Ottawa Convention" (or "Mine Ban Treaty" as it is sometimes known) had been signed by 137 states, of which 99 had also ratified. This is remarkable progress for an international treaty (Annex 1).

3. The First Meeting of States Parties was held in Maputo, Mozambique, on 3 – 7 May 1999, and attended by many countries, United Nations agencies and other international and non-governmental organisations (NGOs). It adopted the Maputo Declaration which called for renewed commitment to rid the world of the scourge of landmines. To maintain the international momentum of the "Ottawa Process" over the period until the Second Meeting of States Parties in Geneva in September 2000, five Intersessional Standing Committees of Experts (SCEs) were established. Mozambique and the UK have co-chaired the SCE on mine clearance which met in September 1999 and March 2000.

4. Article 6 of the Ottawa Convention requires those States Parties in a position to do so to assist other States Parties. The UK Government recognises this obligation and this forms the basis of DFID's programme of assistance. The Secretary of State for International Development launched our Humanitarian Mine Action Strategy in October 1997, and pledged to raise DFID's annual bilateral spend on humanitarian mine action from just under £5 million in 1997/98 to £10 million in 2000/01. This has been exceeded already with DFID expenditure of approximately £15 million in 1999/00, including exceptional expenditure of about £6.4 million for humanitarian mines action in relation to the Kosovo crisis. In addition, the UK attributable share of expenditure through the

EC is provisionally estimated at around £3.3 million for 1999. We anticipate that the £10 million target will be exceeded again in 2000/01. Mine action programmes supported by DFID have covered 18 countries. They are implemented through the United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS), UN Development Programme (UNDP), UNICEF, other international organisations, national Mine Action Centres (MACs), and (NGOs).

5. The four objectives which make up DFID's humanitarian mine action strategy are

- To promote the globalisation of the ban on Anti-Personnel Mines (APLs) and to help developing countries to implement their obligations under the Ottawa Convention;
- To undertake effective programmes of humanitarian mine action in poor countries, strengthening and expanding indigenous capacity where possible;
- To strengthen the international community's capacity – and particularly that of international organisations – to provide a more coherent, timely and cost-effective response to the global challenge of landmines;
- To encourage technological innovation to meet humanitarian mine action needs, thus improving safety, effectiveness and efficiency.

Promoting the ban on anti-personnel landmines

6. Through diplomatic fora such as the Conference on Disarmament and the Review Conferences on the UN Weaponry Convention, the UK continues to encourage the widest possible permanent ban on APLs.

7. A country's status under the Ottawa Convention is taken into account in making decisions on assistance, though in some cases urgent humanitarian reasons may justify support for mines awareness education or clearance even where the government concerned has not ratified the Convention. But opportunities are taken to encourage those countries to move towards ratification, given that donor assistance helps the host country to fulfil its Ottawa obligations. The status of the country helps determine the form or channel which assistance takes. For example, no assistance through government channels can be considered where re-mining is taking place with the encouragement or connivance of the government.

8. DFID has encouraged non-government organisations to promote the benefits of adhering to the Convention. For example, a seminar was held in Nigeria to encourage civil society interest in promoting understanding of the Convention, urging the Government to sign and give a lead in a region troubled by several conflicts. DFID has also supported the production of Landmine Monitor, published by the International Campaign to Ban Landmines, which contains annually updated information about the mine problem in each country and how it

is being addressed. Advocacy in favour of the Ottawa Convention is also undertaken by UNICEF as part of a DFID-funded programme of capacity building in mine action.

Undertaking Mine Action and Building Indigenous Capacity

9. About 90% of DFID funding is devoted to country-based programmes of mine action. In turn, most of these funds are applied to the clearance of landmines and other unexploded ordnance (UXOs).

10. Humanitarian mine action contributes towards DFID's fundamental goal, the elimination of poverty. It also assists in fulfilling more specific objectives, such as the reduction of conflict and the immediate prevention of suffering. The initial impetus for involvement in mine action is humanitarian – to save lives and prevent injuries, and to enable displaced communities to return to their homes by making travel safe, and educating populations on the dangers posed by mines and UXOs. Beyond this, humanitarian mine action seeks to restore (or create) access to resources, such as land, forests and water, and to enable services, such as schools, clinics and public administration, to be safely provided. Once the immediate humanitarian priorities have been met, longer term considerations to sustain the livelihoods of people living in mine/UXO contaminated areas come into play to ensure that the social and economic benefits of costly mine action programmes continue to be maximised. This includes determining priorities for further mine action at local level to ensure that the benefits are captured by the poorest people.

11. Building indigenous capacity is normally justified where there is a mine problem that will take a lengthy period to resolve. However, realistic estimates of a sustainable or appropriate level of national capacity should be made: international resources should not encourage the development of expensive, over-manned institutional structures.

12. In 1990/00, about 90% of DFID's mine action programme was disbursed through country-level programmes. By August 2000, DFID assistance had been extended to 18 countries summarised below with plans for assisting another two (Ethiopia and Eritrea) under consideration. (Further details are at Annex 2).

Figures quoted represent spending since April 1999 :

Afghanistan: £1.7 million through the UN Office for the Co-ordination of Humanitarian Assistance to Afghanistan which works with the Mine Action Programme of Afghanistan.

Albania : £80,000 for a mines information liaison officer and explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) training equipment through an EOD unit of NATO.

Bosnia and Herzegovina: £500,000 through the Government of Slovenia's International Trust Fund for mine clearance in the Kupres region.

Cambodia: Nearly £3 million for mine clearance programmes managed by the HALO Trust, Mines Advisory Group (MAG), and the Cambodian Mine Action Centre.

Chad : £270,000 through UNDP towards a Level 1 Survey of the mine threat.

Croatia : £250,000 through UNMAS in support of the work of the Croatian Mine Action Centre.

Georgia: About £340,000 through the HALO Trust for mine clearance and awareness education in Abkhazia.

Guinea Bissau : £20,000 for training and mine clearance.

Iraq: Support to MAG's long-standing integrated mine action programme in the Kurdish areas of northern Iraq was continued at a cost of £452,000.

Jordan: The first phase, initiated at a cost of £587,000, of a programme to improve the efficiency of mechanical clearance equipment in support of the Jordanian Army's humanitarian clearance programme.

Laos: A further phase of support to tackle the extensive UXO problem at a cost of £833,000 through MAG.

Lebanon : Some £333,000 through UNMAS and UNICEF for mine awareness education and co-ordination in south Lebanon.

Macedonia : £52,000 through UNICEF for mines awareness.

Mozambique: £403,000 through the HALO Trust's programme in Zambezia province.

Nicaragua: An initial £283,000 contribution to the new clearance programme managed by the Organisation of American States through the Nicaraguan army in the North Atlantic Autonomous Region.

Sierra Leone : About £4,500 in support of the UN assessment of the mine threat.

Thailand : £300,000, through the Survey Action Centre, for a Level 1 survey to identify mine affected areas.

Yugoslavia - Federal Republic : £6.4 million in support of the UN Mine Action and Co-ordination Centre (UNMACC) emergency clearance programme in Kosovo and for mines awareness for refugees in Montenegro.

Kosovo

£6.4 million was spent on humanitarian mine action out of DFID's total emergency spend of around £107 million in relation to the Kosovo crisis in 1999/00. This reflected the seriousness of the UXO/mines problem which caused some 50 casualties per month in the period following the entry of NATO peacekeeping forces into the territory. DFID's strategy in tackling the mine/UXO threat in Kosovo was twofold: to render urgent assistance to address immediate dangers, and to assist the UN Mine Action Service (UNMAS) to set up an effective and properly co-ordinated longer term programme.

In June 1999, as soon as hostilities ceased and NATO troops moved in, DFID contracted five organisations (BACTEC, Defence Systems Ltd, European Landmine Solutions, The HALO Trust and Mines Advisory Group) to send 12 self-contained Rapid Reaction Teams to carry out survey and emergency clearance tasks under the direction of UNMAS. The HALO Trust was commissioned to conduct an initial survey of the location of minefields and UXO strikes and provide an early estimate of the size and scope of the problem. DFID continues to support these organisations which are tasked by UNMACC as part of a phased clearance programme to the end of 2000, with commitments of £8.6 million.

DFID supported the establishment of the UN Mine Action Co-ordination Centre (UNMACC) in Pristina, with grants, specialists and equipment. Particularly important was the provision of information technology and expertise, with the support of the UK Ministry of Defence, to develop a local database Information Management System for Mine Action (IMSMA), to facilitate co-ordination and programme planning.

With the rapid movement of populations and high initial rates of injuries, mines awareness was crucial. DFID contributed to UNICEF's mines awareness activities, initially for refugees in Macedonia, Albania and Montenegro and then in support of the resettlement of returnees in Kosovo.

The overall impact has been very favourable. Casualty rates have dropped significantly and UXO/mine clearance is contributing to Kosovo's physical rehabilitation.

13. The progress and impact of country programmes has varied, particularly where there are unresolved conflicts, such as in Afghanistan. On the other hand, working with different sides to the conflicts, as in Georgia/Abkhazia, has made a significant contribution to peace-building. Other programmes, such as

Mozambique, have been operating in a fairly stable context, with a clear end in sight for the phasing out of a large scale clearance programme. In several countries, such as Cambodia, the problem will remain a sizeable one for many years; in such a case, developing the capacity of the host country to take fuller responsibility for managing the national programme remains essential. Overall, global mine contamination is being reduced in the absence of re-laying of new mines in most countries, though accident rates remain alarmingly high in some places. Better measures of the wider impact on community development are still needed, and progress towards establishing an agreed approach has been made over the past year.

14. A common constraint to fuller and more effective indigenisation is limited available management capacity and experience, often to a greater extent than the shortage of technical skills alone. At the request of UNDP, DFID has funded the development of appropriate management training syllabuses and materials, specially tailored for senior staff of mine action centres, with the aim of enhancing this capacity at country level. The first course for senior managers (July-September 2000) was funded by DFID at Cranfield University in the UK.

15. The Kosovo crisis required the rapid mobilisation of a range of emergency mine clearance resources, which, for the first time were selected through a competitive process. (See Kosovo box in paragraph 12). We intend to look for further opportunities to widen the range of organisations which undertake mine action and widen the use of competitive selection procedures. This is intended to improve cost effectiveness and incentives for efficiency and high performance standards.

16. A systematic approach to mine clearance is not always possible where violent conflict continues or where there are immediate emergency needs to be addressed. But, where feasible, programme planning should include a full appraisal of the nature and extent of the mine threat and a consequent setting of priorities. The international mine action community is giving growing recognition to the need to undertake such surveys to enable the better planning and deployment of resources. DFID is contributing to the cost of Level 1 surveys in Thailand and Chad to be undertaken by the Survey Action Centre on behalf of the national Governments and the UN. At short notice, DFID also contributed to a brief initial UNMAS survey of the mine threat in Sierra Leone to enable the UN to decide how to tackle it, and to provide essential information for the safe deployment of UN peacekeepers. UNMAS has recently requested DFID assistance to arrange an immediate survey of the mine/UXO threat in the areas of Eritrea and Ethiopia affected by the recent conflict. The survey will facilitate movement within the Temporary Security Zone and the return and resettlement of displaced communities.

17. Finding mines – or confirming their absence – is exacting and dangerous work and there is often no alternative to painstaking manual clearance. The task

is time-consuming and labour-intensive. Hence, even when maximum use is made of local resources, clearance operations are expensive. Adequate attention has not always been given to measuring the threat and the consequent benefits of clearance to determine priorities. Cruder measures, such as numbers of mines identified and destroyed, or area of land cleared, do not in themselves indicate how the land is used – what it produces and who benefits from its regained productivity. Therefore, DFID is participating with others in a UN study, managed by the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD), which seeks to identify better measures of the social and economic impact of landmines.

18. DFID, in liaison with the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and the Ministry of Defence, is also considering how we might help developing countries to dispose of their stockpiles of mines. UK expertise may be useful in advising on means of disposal and safety and quality control issues. The problem is at its most acute in several countries in Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States.

Strengthening the international response

19. The UK has actively promoted a strong co-ordinating role for the UN in global mine action, and provided financial, political and technical support for the UN Mine Action Service (UNMAS) as the focal point for mine action. Constraints of staffing, organisation and resources facing UNMAS have been identified. These require decisive action if the full potential of the UN's role is to be realised and discussions have been initiated with like-minded contributors to international mine action. Meanwhile UNMAS potential was demonstrated when speedy UK assistance helped them to set up the UN Mine Action Co-ordination Centre (UNMACC) in Kosovo, to oversee a major new programme. The new UNMAS response in Ethiopia/Eritrea is being modelled on this.

20. The European Commission's mine action programme totalled some £18 million in 1999 of which about £3.3 million is attributable to UK. The programme has focused on mine clearance in 7 countries and the development of improved detection systems. We continue to work with the EC towards greater co-ordination to achieve more international effectiveness in deploying available resources.

21. However extensive and effective the resources made available for mine clearance, it is not usually possible to eliminate the mine threat very quickly. Hence mine awareness education remains essential, especially in new or changing circumstances such as the return of refugees and internally displaced persons, or during continuing conflicts and mine laying. Within the context of a long-term partnership with UNICEF, DFID has committed funding for a three-year programme to enhance UNICEF's world-wide capacity to provide mine awareness education.

22. DFID has also followed up its initial core funding by providing technical expertise and administrative support to the newly founded Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining. The GICHD was set up mainly to assist the UN by providing services for mine action. Staffing and administrative constraints in the UN system do not apply to the GICHD, which is undertaking on behalf of the UN a number of studies and other pieces of work which will promote better understanding of the issues and more effective and efficient ways of proceeding. As part of the programme, DFID is supporting the following:

- Revision of mine action standards and equipment procurement guidelines.
- Study of operational needs - to analyse shortfalls in existing technical capabilities of current mine action programmes in relation to the needs of mine action operatives.
- Socio-economic impact study - the impact of landmine contamination on social and economic development.

23. The UK has played an active role in the "Ottawa Process", which takes forward the work of the Ottawa Convention. Through our co-chairmanship of the mine clearance Intersessional Standing Committee of Experts, we have sought to stimulate discussion and understanding of key issues, highlight particular needs, encourage coherence, and recommend specific actions to be taken forward in relation to:

- Standards and Criteria
- Measures of Impact and Benefit
- Planning and Prioritisation
- Co-ordination
- Building National Capacity

24. We have also actively contributed expertise to most of the other Standing Committees of Experts : on Technology, on Stockpile Destruction and on the Status and Operations of the Ottawa Convention.

25. We are channelling a larger proportion of our new country mine action initiatives through multilateral channels, notably through the UN. This approach encourages greater commonality of purpose among different donors, reduces the administrative burden on individual programme countries and often brings more influence to bear than a bilateral programme alone can do. For example, in Nicaragua, we are funding (jointly with the USA) a clearance programme in one region through the Organisation of American States and we are joining Norway and USA in funding the Level 1 Survey in Thailand. We have revived our programme in Bosnia and Herzegovina by contributing through the International Trust Fund for Mine Clearance established by the Government of Slovenia.

Technological innovation

26. Mine clearance can be speeded up enormously by the application of suitable technologies, though the dream of a single catch-all solution is likely to remain as such. Instead, a range of technologies to suit particular types of soil, terrain, landmine type and distribution has to be deployed.

27. DFID has funded the development, testing and field trials of particular pieces of equipment, for example "The Tempest" vegetation clearance vehicle and the "Pearson Tractor" in Cambodia. DFID, as part of a European consortium, has co-funded development and field trials in Mozambique of an airborne multi-sensor detection system. Where possible we encourage local production of equipment, such as the "Tempest" in Cambodia.

28. A new mine action research programme (MAR) was launched this year. This encourages inventors, entrepreneurs and mine action operators to make proposals to DFID for funding which will foster promising technological solutions to mine action problems by providing funding for the development of prototypes which can be tested first under laboratory conditions and then in the field. It also welcomes proposals for furthering the range of approaches and techniques available to the mine action community for the application of more effective principles and procedures in tackling the global mine threat. Although this initiative is mine action specific it is modelled on DFID's successful wider Engineering Knowledge and Research Programme. The first call for mine action related proposals, in late 1999, stimulated nearly 40 responses under the themes of minefield survey, mine detection, clearance, operational safety and management systems. Five proposals were shortlisted and final arrangements are being progressed subject to the outcomes of negotiating on negotiations.

29. The UK has also agreed to join the International Test and Evaluation Programme for Humanitarian Demining (ITEP). Under ITEP, a number of national centres of excellence will undertake the testing and evaluation of equipment and share information. This will reduce duplication and streamline existing testing practices, and promote shared approaches in the provision of technological solutions. The designated UK centre of excellence is the Defence Evaluation and Research Agency (DERA) of the UK Ministry of Defence.

Policy and Management

30. Within DFID, the humanitarian mine action programme continues to be supervised by the Conflict and Humanitarian Affairs Department (CHAD). DFID's particular contribution to removing the threat posed by landmines and UXOs fulfils the UK's obligations under Article 6 of the Ottawa Convention on International Co-operation and Assistance. DFID works in close collaboration with the FCO and MOD in the Interdepartmental Working Group on Demining, whose reports are lodged in the Library the House of Commons.

31. Information on DFID's mine action programme is updated regularly on the UNMAS website www.un.org/Depts/dpko/mine/

Annex 1

Countries that subscribe to the Ottawa Convention

As at 31 July 2000, the following 137 countries had signed the Ottawa Convention; the 100 countries that had also ratified, approved or acceded are indicated [R]:

Albania [R] Gambia Norway [R] Algeria Germany [R] Panama [R] Andorra [R] Ghana [R] Paraguay [R] Angola Greece Peru [R] Antigua & Barbuda [R] Grenada [R] Philippines [R] Argentina [R] Guatemala [R] Poland [R] Australia [R] Guinea [R] Portugal [R] Austria [R] Guinea-Bissau Qatar [R] Bahamas [R] Guyana Romania Bangladesh Haiti Rwanda [R] Barbados [R] Holy See [R] St Kitts & Nevis [R] Belgium [R] Honduras St Lucia [R] Belize [R] Hungary [R] St Vincent & the Grenadines Benin [R] Iceland [R] Samoa [R] Bolivia [R] Indonesia San Marino [R] Bosnia & Herzegovina [R] Ireland [R] Sao Tome & Principe Botswana [R] Italy [R] Senegal [R] Brazil [R] Jamaica [R] Seychelles [R] Brunei Darussalam Japan [R] Sierra Leone Bulgaria [R] Jordan [R] Slovakia [R] Burkina Faso [R] Kenya Slovenia [R] Burundi Lesotho [R] Solomon Islands [R] Cambodia [R] Liberia [R] South Africa [R] Cameroon Liechtenstein [R] Spain [R] Canada [R] Lithuania Sudan Cape Verde Luxembourg [R] Suriname Chad [R] Macedonia, FYR [R] Swaziland [R] Chile Madagascar [R] Sweden [R] Colombia Maldives Switzerland [R] Cook Islands Malaysia [R] Tajikistan [R] Costa Rica [R] Malawi [R] Tanzania Cote d'Ivoire [R] Mali [R] Thailand [R] Croatia [R] Malta Togo [R] Cyprus Marshall Islands Trinidad & Tobago [R] Czech Republic [R] Mauritania Tunisia [R] Denmark [R] Mauritius [R] Turkmenistan [R] Djibouti [R] Mexico [R] Uganda [R] Dominica [R] Moldova Ukraine Dominican Republic [R] Monaco [R] United Kingdom [R] Ecuador [R] Mozambique [R] Uruguay El Salvador [R] Namibia [R] Vanuatu Equatorial Guinea [R] Netherlands [R] Venezuela [R] Ethiopia New Zealand [R] Yemen [R] Fiji [R] Nicaragua [R] Zambia France [R] Niger [R] Zimbabwe [R] Gabon Niue [R]

Annex 2

Notes on country mine action programmes

The country-based activities listed below have formed the core of DFID's current support. All the countries are seriously or substantially affected by mines and most are among the world's poorest.

AFGHANISTAN

Ottawa Convention: Non-signatory; there is no internationally recognised Government. The Taliban who control most of the country have publicly stated their support for the APL ban.

APL Problem: 62 districts (about 40%) affected, mainly along current or former frontlines; "security" minefields around major civil settlements and key infrastructure. Residential Kabul and rural community facilities, agricultural land and irrigation systems are extensively mined.

Impact: Rural depopulation and major disruption to agricultural production, transportation, and the return of refugees and IDPs. Casualty rates unreliable but believed to remain very high particularly in certain areas.

DFID funding in 1999/2000: £1.7 million (UNOCHA).

Project Objectives: To reduce the risk and accelerate the resettlement of IDPs. To support the "national" programme of co-ordinated comprehensive humanitarian mine action including capacity building.

Constraints: Continuing hostilities; some re-mining; the inflexibility of Taliban policies on human rights, access and control of donor assistance. UK Government advice (August 2000) was that British expatriates should not visit or work in Afghanistan.

Plans: The guidance on British expatriates is kept under review. DFID expects for the time being to provide any assistance solely through UNOCHA. A joint donor review of the programme will take place in late 2000.

ALBANIA

Ottawa Convention: Ratified 29 February 2000.

APL/UXO problem : Over 200,000 mines affecting about 650 hectares deployed in 1997, and an estimated 2 million in army stockpiles. Unknown numbers of mines and other weapons thought to be held by the general population.

Impact: A sharp increase in casualties during and following the conflict in 1997. This has been reduced following measures taken by the Government, assisted by NATO and international agencies, to instigate clearance and mine awareness.

DFID funding in 1999/2000: £52,000 for a mines information liaison officer and £28,000 (through NATO) for protective equipment for Albanian army teams trained by NATO in stockpile disposal.

Project Objectives : To reduce the risk to civilians and support a programme of mines awareness for Albanians, refugees and aid agencies. Project completed

October 1999, following the launch of the Government of Albania's Mine Action Programme.

BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

Ottawa Convention: Ratified 8 September 1998.

APL/UXO problem: Most severely affected country in Europe. 18,000 minefields identified. Located in the Zone of Separation and in combat areas, mainly in the Federation. Widespread UXOs.

Impact: Affects agricultural land and hence small-scale and subsistence farming families. Casualty rates decreasing as mine threat more widely known.

DFID funding 1999/2000: £500,000 through the International Trust Fund for Mine Clearance established by the Government of Slovenia.

Project Objectives: To undertake rapid mine clearance in the Kupres region and reduce risk to all communities.

Constraints: The existence of separate Mine Action Centres for the national and entity structures' administrations mirrors political reality but does not appear to lead to operational efficiency. Ensuring accountability for the use of funding is a challenge.

Plans: A monitoring mission took place in May 2000 and the future pattern of assistance is under consideration.

CAMBODIA

Ottawa Convention: Ratified 28 July 1999

APL/UXO problem: 9 out of the 22 provinces are contaminated by APLs and UXO are a hazard across the country. The undertaking of a Level 1 Survey will systematise knowledge of the mine threat which, even after some years, is still patchy.

Impact: The APL threat constrains land use, access and the resettlement of refugees.

DFID funding in 1999/2000: £1m (HALO Trust); £1 million (MAG); £88,500 for trials of Pearson tractor vegetation cutter; £187,500 for Cambodia Mine Action Centre (CMAC).

Project objectives: To reduce risk, facilitate resettlement of IDPs and refugees. The HALO Trust operates mainly in Banteay Meanchay province demining

existing village areas and those areas designated for village settlement. MAG operates mainly an integrated mine clearance and mine awareness project in Battambang province. Contribution to CMAC is additionally intended to promote institutional reform.

Constraints: Allegations of corruption and mismanagement in CMAC led to a crisis of confidence in the organisation. CMAC has embarked on a process of reform aimed at producing more effective and accountable management and more efficient programmes in the field. There have been allegations that not all land cleared has been put to good use.

Plans: DFID plans to direct more support towards building national capacity have been delayed due to the problems within CMAC though we stand ready to help further as reform progresses. In the longer-term we expect mine action to be integrated more closely with rural development objectives.

CHAD

Ottawa Convention: Ratified 6 May 1999.

APL problem: There is an unknown number of mines deployed over the past 30 years throughout the country possibly affecting up to 10,000 locations.

Impact: Restricts access to water supplies, communications and agricultural land. Most areas are unmarked.

DFID funding 2000/01: £270,000 through UNDP towards the cost of a Level 1 Survey undertaken by Handicap International.

Project Objectives: To establish locations and extent of mine affected areas.

Constraints: Lack of maps or reliable data on mine deployment

Plans: The survey commenced in mid 2000. The full results will be published a year later.

CROATIA

Ottawa Convention : Ratified 20 May 1998.

APL problem: Up to 25 % of the land area is affected by mines or UXO from the conflict in the 1990s.

Impact: While areas still affected are predominantly agricultural, significant pockets of habitation, industry and infrastructure remain contaminated.

DFID funding 1999/00,2000/01: £250,000 through UNMAS.

Project Objective: To support the work of the Croatian Mine Action Centre in mine clearance and capacity building. The project is on-going and will be reviewed in Autumn 2000.

GEORGIA

Ottawa Convention: Non-signatory.

APL/UXO Problem: Areas of secessionist province of Abkhazia affected along former front lines, restricting access routes including river crossings, infrastructure and agricultural land. Some scattered UXO problem.

Impact: Restriction on use of land and movement.

DFID funding 1999/2000: £340,000 (The HALO Trust).

Project objectives: To clear minefields and occasional UXO. To establish an indigenous mine clearance facility and undertake mine awareness education in schools, etc. Project is jointly funded with German Government. Project also has useful conflict reduction spin-off in that it is a sizeable employer of deminers from both the Abkhaz and ethnic Georgian populations.

Constraints: No active hostilities, but lack of a permanent political settlement makes future uncertain, particularly the prospects for handing over fully to local management.

DFID Plans: Following substantial DFID support to establish programme, future financing is expected to reduce.

GUINEA BISSAU

Ottawa Convention : Signed 3 December 1997.

APL problem: A legacy of landmines over the last 25 years and as recently as the conflict in 1998. Estimates of up to 8,000 mines around the capital.

Impact: Relatively low impact due to mapping and relatively small areas affected.

DFID funding 2000/01: £20,000 through HUMAID

Project Objective: Training and equipping demining teams to work in the Bissau area.

Plans: Project continuing.

IRAQ

Ottawa Convention: Non-signatory.

APL Problem: Several million mines and UXO in northern Kurdish region.

Impact: Resettlement of refugees and access to much agricultural land limited. Substantial casualty figures.

DFID funding 1999/2000: £452,000 through MAG in Northern Iraq.

Project objectives: To enable rural communities and other civilians to live safely in areas affected by landmines. The project integrates mine clearance and mine awareness and has a significant conflict reduction spin-off in that it works with both Kurdish factions.

Constraints: The presence of certain humanitarian mines action agencies is not sanctioned by the Baghdad Government and the long-term future of the project may be influenced by political developments. Meanwhile, tensions among rival factions within Northern Iraq can create difficulties and the sanctions regime can make imports of relevant mechanical aids cumbersome.

Plans: Contribution of programme subject to review of proposals and operating constraints.

JORDAN

Ottawa Convention: Ratified on 13 November 1998.

APL Problem: Mainly along the Jordan River.

Impact: Rural communities denied safe access to agricultural land; some impact on tourism.

DFID funding 1999/2000: £587,000 for the purchase and upgrading of Aardvark flails to assist clearance.

Project objectives: To improve efficiency of current clearance programme undertaken by Jordanian Army.

Progress and Plans: Two new Aardvarks have been supplied and trialed to assess performance as primary clearance equipment. Initial results are encouraging. Plans to upgrade more equipment are under consideration.

LAOS

Ottawa Convention: Non-signatory.

APL/UXO Problem: Few landmines, but very heavy contamination by UXO of over half the country.

Impact: Land cultivation in an essentially agrarian country is constrained and the resettlement of hill tribes hampered.

DFID funding in 1999/2000 : £833,000 (MAG).

Project objectives: To reduce risk and facilitate poverty elimination through rural development. MAG's programme operates in three highest risk districts of the Saravanne province and forms part of the national UXO clearance programme.

Progress and constraints: Local management capacity is limited but progress in clearance is steady as Phase I draws to a close.

Plans : Further assistance to building local capacity will be considered.

LEBANON

Ottawa Convention : Non-signatory.

APL problem: A legacy of conflict since the mid-1970s, culminating recently in the withdrawal of Israeli forces from southern Lebanon.

Impact: Estimates vary but about 600 minefields, mainly unmapped, are estimated to remain in both urban and rural areas of the Bekaa Valley. The impact in south Lebanon is a constraint to resettlement.

DFID funding 2000/01: £333,000 through UNMAS for the establishment and co-ordination of an emergency programme and through UNICEF for mine awareness education.

Project objective: A functioning mine action co-ordination cell capable of undertaking emergency humanitarian work and mine awareness programme for populations returning to southern Lebanon where the mine risk has not been quantified.

Plans: Project is commencing mid-2000 and will be reviewed later in the year.

MACEDONIA

Ottawa Convention: Acceded 9 September 1998.

APL problem: The Government does not acknowledge a mine problem.

DFID funding 1999/00: £52,000 through UNICEF

Project Objective: Mine awareness for refugees from Kosovo and host communities. Project completed in late 1999.

MOZAMBIQUE

Ottawa Convention: Ratified 25 August 1998

APL problem: Extensive deployment of landmines in several provinces – randomly in arable land and targeted also at national infrastructure and community services.

Impact: Reducing after seven years of peace, clearance and awareness programmes but the problem remains substantial in several areas.

DFID funding 1999/2000: £403,000 through the HALO Trust.

Project objectives: To make Zambezia Province safe from mines and UXO.

Progress: The project managed by the HALO Trust has contributed to the reduction of the mine threat in Zambezia. The National Demining Commission has been restructured as the National Demining Institute (IND) and is likely to be more effective.

Constraints: Severe floods in February 2000 displaced some mines. The UN provided emergency mine clearance and mine awareness information to displaced communities in the affected areas.

Plans: The present project is drawing to a close leaving the need for a residual "fire fighting" capacity in Zambezia to deal with isolated cases of landmine contamination. The progress of the IND in addressing the problem at national level will be monitored.

NICARAGUA

Ottawa Convention: Ratified on 30 November 1998

APL Problem: Mines laid in the 1980s during the civil conflict affect several regions of the country.

Impact: Many mines were directed at infrastructure and were used to terrorise local populations but they also affect agricultural land

DFID funding in 1999/2000: £283,000 as the first instalment of funding through the Organisation of American States jointly funded with USA.

Project Objectives: To free the North Atlantic Autonomous Region from landmines and remove a constraint to its development.

Progress : The project in this Region, which trains and uses the army under the supervision of experts, has only recently started operations.

SIERRA LEONE

Ottawa Convention: Signed 29 July 1998.

APL problem: To identify the risk arising from recent conflict.

Impact: Potential constraint to resettlement of refugees and displaced persons, and deployment of peacekeepers.

DFID funding 1999/00 : £4,500 via UNMAS towards rapid assessment of mine threat.

Project Objective: To verify level of risk to UN peace-keepers and the civilian population.

Outcome: Mine threat was found to be relatively small and action to address the problem will be co-ordinated by UN within existing systems.

THAILAND

Ottawa Convention: Ratified 27 November 1998.

APL problem: Most of Thailand's borders are mined. The Army also holds stockpiles estimated at about 400,000.

Impact: Risk to civilians and refugees at borders and constraint to rural development of border areas.

DFID funding 2000/01: £300,000 through the NGO Survey Action Centre (SAC) for a survey undertaken by Norwegian People's Aid.

Project objective: To confirm location of mine affected areas and provide data for programme planning by the Thailand Mine Action Centre .

Plans: DFID co-funding with US and Norway. Project commenced in early 2000. A review will be held later in the year.

YUGOSLAVIA - FEDERAL REPUBLIC (KOSOVO)

(See box in paragraph 12 of the main text for detailed description of the programme).

DFID funding 1999/2000: £6.4 million;

2000/2001 (commitments): £8.6 million.

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