

INTEGRATED MINE ACTION IN CAMBODIA

The integration of mine action with development refers to the potential for mine action to not only reduce the direct and indirect threat of mines/ERW, but to also promote socio-economic development and poverty reduction in contaminated areas and communities, strengthen community ownership and empowerment after clearance has taken place, and ensure communities are provided with the resources, skills and tools need to support and promote sustainable livelihoods.¹ Integrated Mine Action (IMA) initiatives are still relatively new. However in Cambodia, AusAID has been funding three Australian development NGOs (CARE, Austcare and World Vision) since 2006 to implement three year (2006-2009) IMA programs in Battambang, Preah Vihear, Pailin and Banteay Meanchey provinces.



Photo: CMAC Community Based Deminer, Banteay Meanchey province, Cambodia, February 2008

The IMA programs are underpinned by the recognition that that mine/ERW contamination in Cambodia impedes development and is directly linked to community insecurity, rural poverty, limited livelihood opportunities and inadequate land access in Cambodia.

Austcare's Integrated Mine Action in Banteay Meanchey (AIMAD) is working through local partner organisations and existing government structures to provide livelihoods support to 16 villages in two districts of Banteay Meanchey province, which are among the most mine-affected parts of Cambodia, located alongside the heavily mined K5² mine belt. Austcare is also focusing on

¹ Sally Campbell Thorpe (for Austcare), Integrated Mine Action : Lessons and Recommendations from Austcare's Program in Cambodia, January 2007.

² The K5 is also known as Tumnap Kor Pram, an dis a 600km long mine belt which comprises approximately 2-3 million mines (www.icble.org/lm/2004/cambodia.)

building community and partner capacity through problem identification and agricultural training. Mine/ERW clearance in these villages is being undertaken by the Cambodian Mine Action Centre.

CARE is implementing the Australia-Cambodia Integrated Mine Action (ACIMA) program in 28 villages in Pailin, where mine accidents continue to undermine community safety. Despite awareness of the risks involved, many families farm on suspect mined areas due to poverty and lack of alternate livelihood options. The program focuses on: reducing mine/UXO deaths and injuries through clearance and mine risk education and reduction; strengthening the capacity of local communities to sustainably manage and control economically important natural resources; and assist communities to generate economically important resources and improve their livelihoods. ACIMA is being implemented through a range of local institutions, partner NGOs and existing government structures, e.g. village development committees, commune councils and Sangkats.

World Vision is partnering with the International Women's Development Agency (IWDA) on the Community Strengthening and Gender Mainstreaming in Integrated Mine Action (CSGMIMA) program in Battambang and Preah Vihear provinces. The program is working across 15 villages to undertake mine/ERW clearance of land for resettlement and infrastructure, and provide livelihoods support and training. IWDA is supporting World Vision's field implementation activities through gender mainstreaming capacity building for village development committees, Mine Action Planning Unit (MAPU) officials, MAG staff and community groups. IWDA is also working at the national level to mainstream gender considerations into national level mine action policy in association with the Cambodian Mine Action Authority.

In February 2008, GICHD participated in an in-country midterm review of these AusAID-funded integrated mine action programs. The review team comprised Ian Teese (team leader/evaluation specialist), Sun Boreth (community development specialist) and Sharmala Naidoo (GICHD LMAD research officer). The purpose of the review was to assess the performance of the three Integrated Mine Action (IMA) NGO Cooperation Agreement projects which AusAID has been funding since 2006 with CARE, Austcare and World Vision/International Women's Development Agency (IWDA) – both individually and in terms of the overall integrated mine action approach. The review took place between 11-25 February, with meetings in Phnom Penh and fields visits to IMA project sites in all three provinces.

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