



Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs): Linking Mine Action and Development

Q. What does linking mine action and development (LMAD) mean?

A. Linking mine action and development simply means ensuring that mine action is doing all that it can to support and promote development in mine affected communities and areas, particularly in contexts where contamination by landmines and Explosive Remnants of War (ERW) impede post-conflict reconstruction and development.

Q. Why link mine action with development?

A. As mine/ERW contamination impede reconstruction and development in many mine-affected countries, it only makes sense to ensure that mine action and development interventions in contaminated areas are effectively coordinated at all levels – community, subnational, national and international. Furthermore, mine/ERW contamination is not just a humanitarian concern. Once a country emerges from conflict, the presence of landmines and other ERW often continue to constrain post-conflict reconstruction and development. This makes it essential that mine action interventions are linked to longer term development planning and funding. Better coordination and linkages would result in:

- Greater benefits from mine action expenditures
- Lower costs for reconstruction and development projects in areas affected by contamination
- Avoiding 'doubly-damned' communities, as development agencies stop bypassing communities that are affected by contamination
- Enhanced capacities in mine-affected states to assume responsibility for their contamination problems
- Greater stability for mine action funding during in the peacebuilding, reconstruction and development phases in post-conflict countries

Q. How does mine/ERW contamination impede development?

A. Mine/ERW contamination negatively affects development in many mine affected countries in several ways. For example, through the loss of lives and limbs; through damage caused to infrastructure and basic facilities, e.g. roads, schools, clinics, homes; by impeding access to key resources, e.g. agricultural, grazing and commercial land, water and irrigation channels, markets and health and education facilities; and by preventing the return of refugees and the internally displaced.

Q. Why isn't mine action already linked to development?

A. The tendency in the past has been for the mine action sector to operate in a stand alone manner because:

- Mine action has been focused more on clearing landmines and UXO safely and efficiently, as part of short-term emergency assistance. Responding to the needs and priorities of mine-affected communities started later;
- Generous donor funding, earmarked for mine action, has inhibited mine-affected countries from integrating mine action into national development plans and budgets;
- Donors, multilateral agencies and development banks often lack the mechanisms to effectively coordinate mine action with their own development assistance programmes;
- There is a lack of practical recommendations and tools to guide mine action and development practitioners, governments, and donors on how to establish better linkages.

Q. But isn't the problem of landmine contamination mainly a short-term humanitarian issue?

A. While landmine and UXO contamination often result during conflict, the legacy remains long after, impeding post-conflict reconstruction and development – hence the need for better coordination and linkages with development cooperation. Clearance during or right after conflict tends to focus on clearing roads to facilitate

access to different regions and to transport relief supplies. However, as the country moves towards greater stability, mine action needs to be coordinated with broader reconstruction and development interventions.

Q. If a mine-affected country doesn't prioritise mine action or include it in their national development plan (or Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper – PRSP), then why should donors/official development cooperation agencies support it?

A. As yet, few mine-affected countries have highlighted mine action as a national development priority and have failed to integrate it in national development plans or budgets, in part because:

- Mine action has been generously funded as a separate activity by many donors.
- As well, in many countries landmine and ERW contamination is not a nation-wide problem (and rarely a problem for officials in capital cities), but is still an intense problem in certain areas and for certain sector development programmes.
- Mine action officials and practitioners have not always built the case for mine action with local officials and sector ministries so that the national planning and budgeting units understand why mine action should be incorporated into their plans and budgets.

Official development cooperation agencies should assist mine-affected countries in this regard by encouraging their officials to engage with local administrators and sector ministries, as well as national planning and budgeting units, to document the need for mine action in support of development.

Q. Is LMAD Mine Ban Treaty-compliant?

Yes. The Nairobi Action Plan 2005-2009 was one of the main outcomes of first review conference of the Ottawa Treaty in 2004. Several of the action points identified in the Nairobi Action Plan specifically call for greater linkages between mine action and development.

Q. What about countries that have not adopted the Mine Ban Treaty?

A. Linking mine action and development is relevant for all countries in which conflicts have resulted in landmine and ERW contamination that constrains development programmes, regardless of whether those countries have acceded to the Mine Ban Treaty. The development needs of innocent people in mine-affected communities cannot be fully achieved unless the contamination is addressed.

Q. What about article 5 of the Mine Ban Treaty that requires the destruction of anti-personnel mines in mined areas?

A. Linking mine action with development is largely a question of prioritisation. It only makes sense that when planning the clearance of all mined areas, we start with those areas that will provide the greatest benefits to people in mine-affected communities.

Q. We already allocate earmarked funds for mine action. Isn't this enough?

A. No – linking mine action with development is less a question about the amount of funding available for mine action than ensuring that the funds which are available are used to deliver the greatest possible benefits to people in mine-affected areas.

Q. Won't linking mine action to development result in less funding for mine action in the long term?

In the past, donors have tended to fund mine action primarily through their humanitarian assistance channels. However, with greater recognition that mine/ERW contamination is a developmental constraint, and greater integration of mine action in bilateral and multilateral official development assistance, this will actually mean an expansion in the amount of funding available for mine action.

Q. Is this just an initiative of the Canadian government or is there broad-based recognition and support for this issue?

Efforts to link mine action with development do not just stem from the Canadian government, which has been a strong supporter. LMAD is reflected in the Nairobi Action Plan, which all States Parties have signed on to, and there is increasing recognition and support for LMAD among a wide group of mine action and development practitioners internationally – and particularly within countries where mine/ERW contamination is a developmental constraint.

Q. What is GICHD doing about this?

A. In late 2006, GICHD initiated a dedicated programme to examine and strengthen the linkages between mine action and development. This programme is aimed at supporting donors, development and mine action practitioners, and officials from mine-affected states to better align mine action with development priorities. Key activities and outputs will include the following:

- Producing case studies, lessons learnt, good practice and programming guidelines (for mine affected states, mine action organisations, development partners, official development cooperation agencies; and other state actors)
- Sharing and disseminating information via both the GICHD website and a virtual practitioners' network
- Providing technical advice and capacity development support to key stakeholders, including development cooperation agencies
- Feeding into the OECD's Development Assistance Committee (DAC) work on armed violence and poverty reduction, undertaken as part of the DAC Conflict, Peace and Development Cooperation (CPDC) network
- Supporting the LMAD Contact Group