Chapter 9

MINE ACTION, SECURITY AND DEVELOPMENT
KEY MESSAGES

• Mine action priorities and resource allocation should reflect a country’s broader social, political and economic context.

• Community liaison, priority-setting, handover, post-clearance assessment and outreach to wider humanitarian and development actors can be used to promote post-clearance land use and development.

• Using participatory, inclusive and gender-sensitive approaches adds value to mine action operations and contributes to development outcomes.

• Land release changes the value and status of land so mine action organisations need to adopt the humanitarian principle of ‘do no harm’ to prevent unintended negative consequences.

• Mine action organisations are well-placed to respond to wider security issues given their weapons and munitions experience and ability to work in unstable contexts, alongside security actors such as the police and military.

CHANGING CONTEXT, CHANGING PRIORITIES

Mine action refers to a range of activities that seek to reduce the risks associated with mines/explosive remnants of war (ERW). In contexts where mine/ERW contamination impedes post-conflict recovery, mine action can also facilitate socio-economic recovery and development. Mine action can be viewed within the broader context of development within a country, with the main priorities of a national mine action programme aligned with wider national and regional development priorities. Coordination and information-sharing mechanisms should be established between mine action authorities and organisations and wider humanitarian and development actors working within the government, non-governmental and private sector.

The broader social, political and economic context in a country has important implications for the focus of mine action. As the context evolves in mine/ERW-affected countries over time from conflict to stabilisation, reconstruction and longer-term development, so too should mine action priorities and the allocation of resources evolve.
• When a country is in conflict or emerging from conflict, mine action is driven by efforts to facilitate humanitarian assistance and the safe movement of refugees and internally displaced persons.

• As a country slowly begins to initiate reconstruction efforts, and national government capacity starts to develop, efforts focus on the establishment of a national mine action programme, and support for reconstruction projects.

• Once a mine/ERW-affected country moves into a more stable development context, mine action programmes focus on the transfer of responsibility to national authorities to manage residual contamination, with a corresponding reduction in international staff levels. National governments also focus on allocating greater national resources for mine action, and ensuring that mine action is reflected in development planning processes, strategies and budgets. States that are financially unable to meet their treaty obligations, but demonstrate commitment to those obligations, should be assisted by other States in a position to do so.

Such a linear process is rare in reality. For example, different areas within the same country may be at different phases and have different needs at the same time. The process doesn’t always advance: some countries emerging from conflict may return to conflict.

As time progresses and a country stabilises, several general trends in mine action can usually be observed:

• The level of national ownership of the mine action programme increases.

• There is greater involvement of sector ministries/agencies (eg agriculture, rural development, infrastructure, mines/energy, etc.) and different levels of government in prioritising survey and clearance operations.

• During emergencies, the availability and the timeframe for collecting primary data is limited and priorities for clearance are fairly standard, eg clearance of infrastructure to enable access for humanitarian assistance, clearance of homes to facilitate return, etc. as the context stabilises, priority-setting requires a more nuanced understanding of the operational context. Information management requirements increase as mine action planners/managers require better quality data about the scope and nature of the mine/ERW contamination problem, in order to make more informed decisions. There is also more time to collect data, and the time invested in data collection is justified by larger-scale clearance.
• The capacity of the national mine action programme increases, in response to the acquisition of new assets, staff training and the introduction of better organisational management systems.

• Additional actors become involved in mine action, as illustrated in Figure 11.

### ACTORS INVOLVED IN A NATIONAL MINE ACTION PROGRAMME ACCORDING TO COUNTRY CONTEXT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sector/Type of required programming</th>
<th>Key actors</th>
<th>Key challenges for mine action planning</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Humanitarian</td>
<td>United Nations (UN) agencies, international NGOs, Red Cross</td>
<td>• Dealing with many agencies which may disagree on priorities and strategy in a chaotic, rapidly changing environment.</td>
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</table>
| Security                           | Foreign and/or domestic militaries/police forces, NGOs | • Avoiding domination of dominating humanitarian and development needs by military priorities.  
• Security of staff if internal security not established.  
• Getting cooperation and data from militaries. |
| Reconstruction                     | World Bank and perhaps other agencies or multilateral trust funds; United Nations Development Programme. Major donors with showcase projects | • Large scale demining tasks under tight deadlines in support of major infrastructure projects.  
• Ensuring funds for demining are included in reconstruction projects. |
| Development | Government, World Bank, NGOs, UN and perhaps other multilateral agencies. | • Coordinating with many local and provincial governments on task priorities.  
• With committed government: coordinating with ministries of finance and planning to ensure national government gives adequate priority to mine action.  
• With uncommitted government: coordination with donors when overall donor coordination mechanism is lacking. |

## ENSURING MINE ACTION PROMOTES DEVELOPMENT

Humanitarian mine action was initially conceived as a humanitarian emergency response to prevent civilian deaths, particularly among returnee communities. The focus of mine action organisations was primarily on safely and efficiently removing the threat of mines and ERW to meet basic security needs of the civilian population and humanitarian workers. This remains a key priority for mine action.

In recent years, mine action organisations and their donors, have started to place an increasing emphasis on ensuring not only operational efficiency, but also developmental outcomes, i.e., that mine action also results in improved physical safety and access to basic services, thereby promoting improved livelihoods for all stakeholders. This partly reflects the increased recognition that in some countries, mines and ERW:

- Threaten community safety.
- Block infrastructure required for economic activity and mobility.
- Limit access to health care, education and other basic social services.
- Prevent the safe use of assets vital to sustainable livelihoods (e.g., water sources, irrigation channels and land used for agriculture).
- Deter investors’ confidence in making public and private investments essential for economic development.
- There are several aspects of mine action that have clear implications for post-clearance land use and development.
Community liaison

Community liaison (CL) involves interacting with women, girls, boys and men in mine/ERW-affected communities in order to exchange information, about the presence and impact of mines and ERW, to develop solutions to remove blockages and hazards and improve community safety. Among other things, CL teams can obtain information from communities regarding specific assistance they may require following the handover of released land. For example, they can share information with relevant actors if communities require development assistance or if they are encountering land-related conflict.

Priority-setting

The main aim of priority-setting is to make sure that mine action delivers the most value for money. Given that a country’s mine/ERW contamination problem cannot be resolved completely in one go, priority-setting involves (i) deciding what tasks should receive priority; (ii) ensuring adequate resources are allocated to the selected priorities.

Priority-setting in mine action has important developmental implications in that decisions are made about which land should be surveyed and/or cleared first. If post-clearance land use and development are priorities for mine/ERW-affected communities and governments, then this should be reflected as priority-setting criteria. Examples of specific development-related criteria that can be included in a country’s priority-setting system include:

- Land will be used for community development/existence of a community development plan.
- Land ownership is clear.
- Target beneficiaries are clearly identified based on needs (eg high risk of mine/ERW accident, economic level, marginalised groups, etc.).
- A development agency (government, commercial, NGO, etc.) will assist beneficiaries in making productive use of released land.
- The potential for land-related conflict is low.

Handover procedures

IMAS 04.10 defines handover as ‘the process by which the beneficiary (for example, the NMAA on behalf of the local community or land user) receives and accepts land which was previously suspected of containing an explosive hazard
but which has subsequently had this suspicion removed, or reduced to a tolerable level,\textsuperscript{7} either through non-technical survey, technical survey or clearance.\textsuperscript{7}

Following clearance, land should be handed over as soon as possible for productive use. Handover ceremonies and information dissemination are important because affected communities may not always be aware of survey/clearance operations, when operations are complete, the perimeters of the surveyed/cleared land, and if the previously contaminated land is safe to use.

Delays in carrying out handover procedures can lead to delays in communities being informed about the safety of the released land, and consequential delays in their use of the land. Delays can also result in confusion about which areas within their communities remain unsafe, highlighting the importance of community liaison work during clearance.

In order to ensure the handover process is transparent and inclusive, ceremonies should involve a broad cross-section of the community, including women, men, boys and girls and specific vulnerable groups. Sharing information with community members about the exact area that was cleared, items found, and any outstanding dangerous and/or suspected areas and their exact location is critical. This can help to increase community confidence in the released land, and prevent attempts to ‘grab’ land from intended beneficiaries.\textsuperscript{8}

Widely publicised handover ceremonies which involve a broad cross section of the community, including local land administration officers, can help to reduce the likelihood of released land being ‘taken’ by powerful community members or outsiders.

**Post-clearance assessment**

Post-clearance assessment refers to a form of survey\textsuperscript{9} that is implemented in communities close to released areas, usually six to 12 months after the handover of released land. The principal purpose of this survey is to collect community data on short to intermediate outcomes, to identify lessons learnt to inform future project design, and to share data with other stakeholders that may contribute to addressing longer term development needs of beneficiary communities.

In some cases post-clearance assessments and external evaluations may be implemented several years after land has been released. How the data from post-clearance assessments is used often depends on why it has been carried out and by whom. Post-clearance monitoring may be conducted by mine/ERW operators and national mine action centres/authorities to check if a job was done well and to
an agreed standard, whereas post-clearance assessment carried out for evaluation purposes, may be carried out by operators, as well as UN agencies and donors to check if the right job was done.

While operators may be more concerned with finding out whether the right SHA was prioritised, national mine action authorities and donors may be more concerned about whether land release is contributing to broader national priorities.\(^{10}\)

Post-clearance assessments can be used to determine whether:

- The most appropriate areas were prioritised, tasked and released.
- Released land is being used by intended beneficiaries for intended purposes.
- Women and men are equally involved in decisions relating to the use of released land.
- Beneficiaries are experiencing any problems in making productive use of released land (eg, land grabbing, disputes over use/ownership, lack of development support).
- Land release has led to an improvement in the livelihoods of beneficiary communities.
- Coordination between mine action and development actors is adequate.
- There is sufficient accountability to communities, mine-affected states and donors in terms of reporting on development outcomes and the proper use of funds.

It should be noted that there is no ‘standard’ post-clearance assessment methodology, and the practice of conducting post-clearance assessment is not yet widespread in the mine action sector. There is increasing emphasis on outcomes by donors, and a move by some operators, UN agencies and national authorities to improve coordination and capacity in this regard.

**Outreach to humanitarian and development actors**

In order to ensure mine action contributes to wider socio-economic recovery and development, it is important for mine action organisations to share information and coordinate where feasible with other organisations (government, UN, NGO and the private sector) involved in the delivery of humanitarian and development assistance to mine/ERW-affected communities.

Similarly, mine action organisations working at field level benefit from coordination between government ministries, UN agencies and others as this helps to better
inform their operations. Outreach activities could include:

- Finding out which humanitarian/development actors are working in contaminated areas and encouraging them to work in affected areas where communities require assistance.

- Providing regular updates on contamination, casualties and current/planned mine action activities that they can use for planning their assistance programmes.

- Sharing information on the location of damaged infrastructure and inaccessible assets (e.g., agriculture, grazing land), communities requiring development assistance and vulnerable groups engaging in high-risk behaviour (e.g., foraging or farming on suspected hazard areas).

- Sharing information about available mine action services, including timeframes and processes for requesting mine action assistance.

- Consulting with relevant stakeholders on priority areas for survey/clearance.

- Participating in relevant coordination bodies at national and sub-national levels.

- Considering integrated mine action and development projects.

**ADDED VALUE OF USING GENDER-SENSITIVE APPROACHES**

Gender equality is a precondition for sustainable development and efforts to eradicate poverty. All development programmes, whether focused on mine action or other sectors, benefit from gender mainstreaming. Given that mine/ERW contamination affects women, men, boys and girls in different ways, there
are clear advantages in ensuring that mine action operations are carried out using participatory, inclusive and gender-sensitive approaches.\textsuperscript{12}

As a result of their gender-specific mobility patterns, roles and responsibilities, women, girls, boys and men often hold different information on areas that are contaminated, or suspected of being contaminated, in their communities. Vital, life-saving information may be lost if not all groups in an affected community are consulted during information gathering activities.

Gender-specific mobility patterns also mean that women, men, boys and girls benefit in different ways from released land. For example, if women and girls are responsible for collecting water and firewood, and water points and forested areas are prioritised for land release, then they are less likely to encounter mine/ERW-related risks while carrying out these activities. Similarly, in countries where young boys are often responsible for herding animals, they are more likely to benefit from the prioritisation of grazing/pasture land.

In some contexts, women can be hard to reach when implementing surveys as a result of gender-based discrimination. This means that their priorities – and frequently the priorities of their children – may be excluded. Depending on the cultural context, it may be appropriate to consult women and men separately, as well as to hold separate meetings with other vulnerable groups (eg, people with disabilities, minority ethnic groups) to ensure that their needs are taken into account.

Collecting high quality sex and age-disaggregated data (SADD)\textsuperscript{13} enables mine action organisations to:

- Monitor community participation in data-gathering meetings and handover ceremonies, to ensure a full range of stakeholders are consulted.
- Clarify who has access to and control over resources, labour patterns, the distribution of benefits between and among women, girls, boys and men, and who is most at risk from mines/ERW.
- Identify and understand the different capabilities, responsibilities, needs and priorities of different groups.
- Mainstream gender throughout project phases (planning, design, implementation and monitoring and evaluation) by assessing the different implications for women, men, boys and girls of any planned actions, and taking steps to prevent gender inequality.
- Provide concrete evidence for the formulation of policies and measures and design of projects; if statistics do not reflect the relevant gender
issues, policies and measures might not be appropriately tailored and could perpetuate or worsen inequalities.

- Ensure that employment opportunities are accessible to all individuals within the community to promote equal access to income generation and to facilitate the consultation of women, girls, boys and men in a community.

**LAND, CONFLICT AND MINE ACTION: IMPORTANCE OF A ‘DO NO HARM’ APPROACH**

Landmines and other remnants of conflict typically block access to, and use of, agricultural land, public services (such as schools and clinics), markets and infrastructure, among other things. The intrinsic value of mine action cannot be disputed in that it removes these barriers, saves lives and limbs, and restores safe access to key assets, in particular land.

However, in conflict-affected contexts, where land and access to other natural resources are common drivers of conflict, releasing land, which was previously inaccessible, changes its status and value. Doing so can have unintentional negative consequences. Mine action operations can potentially:

- Undermine food security, if clearance methods or their timing negatively impacts topsoil or damages crops.
- Lead to competition and disputes over ownership and use of land.
- Increase the likelihood of land being ‘grabbed’ from the vulnerable by powerful elites or commercial interests.
- Create or exacerbate conflict if clearance is done in areas where land ownership or boundaries are disputed.
- Reinforce or exacerbate gender inequalities in accessing land if women’s rights to land tenure and use are not recognised and respected.
- Put mine action staff and equipment at risk, if caught in the middle of a land-related dispute.
- Suffer delays to survey/clearance operations if operations need to be suspended as a result of a land-related dispute.

Mine action organisations need to ensure that they adopt the humanitarian principle of “do no harm”. This involves:

- Understanding the operational context – for example, finding out who has what rights to the land, how land is, and will be, used post-clearance.
• Assessing the potential positive and negative impact of land release on the context and conflict dynamics, including for the powerful and the poor, male and female.

• Taking practical steps to ensure that mine action contributes to positive outcomes as well as positive outputs.

Figure 12 outlines how to promote the ‘do no harm’ principle, with regards to specific aspects of mine action:15

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OBSTACLES</th>
<th>REMEDIES</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Use Non-technical Survey, CL and MRE to collect land-related data and assess the likelihood of land-related conflict during and post-land release</td>
<td>Include questions in Non-technical Survey forms about land ownership and use, past and future potential for land-related conflict, and intended land use post-clearance. For example, South Sudan’s Hazard and Survey Report Form includes questions about land value and land disputes in the hazard/land area.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Releasing land and making it accessible often changes its status and value, which can create or exacerbate land-related tensions which have negative unintended consequences for beneficiaries, mine action staff and operations.</td>
<td>If there is evidence of a land-related dispute, postpone the task until the dispute is resolved. Mine/ERW operators should not become mediators. Report the issue to local government and national mine action authorities, and to local NGOs or the UN as appropriate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When setting task priorities, do not prioritise land that is subject to a dispute</td>
<td>Proceeding to conduct survey or clearance in an area where there is evidence of a land dispute could put affected communities, mine action staff and equipment in danger.</td>
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</tbody>
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### Ensure that clearance techniques minimise the risk of disturbing boundaries between land and property

In contexts where no documentation exists regarding land ownership, the physical markers between property boundaries and shared walls in buildings are crucial. If removed during clearance, they can result in disputes and even land grabbing. On agricultural land, mechanical assets can be used up to boundaries, with manual asset teams or mine detection dogs used to clear the boundary itself. If mechanical assets are used on the boundary, string can be used to mark the boundary above the ground. In residential areas, mechanical excavation may be used inside the structure, while manual assets and dogs can be used on the walls.

### Schedule clearance to avoid damage to crop harvests and prevent food insecurity

The removal of topsoil through clearance, if not well-timed, can affect crop harvests and undermine food safety. If contaminated land is being farmed, consult local communities and time clearance operations so that they do not result in crop damage.

### Put in place transparent, inclusive and timely handover procedures to strengthen community confidence in the land release process, ensure that released land is used by beneficiaries and to mitigate the risks of land-grabbing

Land release often leads to an increase in the value of land. In conflict-affected contexts, this can lead to land grabbing or conflict. Handover procedures which are not transparent and do not require wide information sharing within a community can further create opportunities for disputes and land grabbing. Ensure that handover ceremonies are widely publicised and involve women and men. Ensure that information about what land is safe to use and what remains contaminated is shared widely. Be explicit that handover documentation does not constitute legal evidence of land ownership.
Conduct post-clearance assessment to determine if released land is being used as intended and to check if beneficiaries have encountered any land-related issues, such as disputes, land-grabbing, expropriation, etc. and any gendered dimensions of this.

Without conducting post-clearance assessment, it is difficult to determine if: beneficiaries are using land as intended; whether they require assistance to use land productively, eg tools, training, inputs, etc.; and whether they are encountering any land-related issues.

Surveys conducted several months after land has been released and handed back to communities help to assess the effectiveness and efficiency of mine action planning, priority-setting and implementation processes, as well as to determine what impact land release has had on affected communities. Use post-clearance assessment to examine how land use has changed prior to and after land release. Have land values changed? Has any land been sold or grabbed? Have conflicts emerged? What value has the released land produced?

Ensure recruitment does not favour one group over another

Recruiting from specific ethnic, clan, religious, political and gender groups could create perceptions that mine action favours one group over another.

Ensure recruitment policy and procedures are gender and diversity-sensitive to avoid discrimination, based on gender, race, ethnicity, political and religious affiliation, at any stage of employment: recruitment, training, tasks, remuneration, promotion and redundancy.
USING MINE ACTION EXPERTISE TO IMPROVE SAFETY AND REDUCE VIOLENCE

Drawing on experience gained in a range of conflict-affected contexts, several mine action organisations are using their technical expertise and capacity to go beyond clearing mines and ERW, and are addressing wider threats to security posed, for example, by small arms and light weapons (SALW) and ammunition. This is largely in response to observed needs on the ground and direct requests for assistance made by national authorities in affected countries.

Mine action organisations are well-placed to respond to wider security issues given their weapons and munitions experience. They are able to work in unstable contexts, alongside security actors such as the police and military. Using experience from implementing mine action programmes, many operators have been able to establish good working relationships with authorities, which have helped to facilitate the establishment of programmes that address wider security challenges.16
Examples of the range of programmes being undertaken include:

- **SALW** collection and destruction activities which may be part of wider Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration (DDR) efforts in a country. Several organisations (NGOs, UN and multilateral agencies) are working with national police and militaries to develop national capacities to collect arms that have been turned in through DDR programmes or criminal operations, and safely destroy them using mobile equipment or through weapons destruction facilities. Some are also providing assistance in the development of SALW registries and armoury storage and management.

- Physical Security and Stockpile Management (PSSM) programmes which typically involve several components: developing national standards; strengthening ammunition management capacity; safe destruction of excess, degraded and unstable ammunition and surplus or damaged arms; and the construction or refurbishment of ammunition management stores and armouries.

- **SALW** risk awareness education campaigns delivered through the media, schools and community institutions to promote awareness about the risks of SALW and risky behaviour. In some contexts, eg Somaliland, awareness-raising also includes delivering messages about how to store personal arms and ammunition safely.

- Community safety programmes that involve the development of community safety plans in association with conflict-affected communities in rural and urban contexts. The delivery of a range of activities identified as priorities by local communities and authorities and in national plans, such as: conflict management education, SALW risk awareness, dialogue meetings and enhanced cooperation with security providers, and capacity development of community and local government institutions.

In several mine/ERW-affected countries, mine action has also contributed to peace-building and DDR programmes through the provision of training and stable employment to demobilised ex-combatants. For example, lessons learned from Afghanistan indicate that by training former ex-combatants in mine action and providing them with alternate employment options, they are less likely to return to armed conflict.

Mine action efforts to strengthen the capacity of the police and military in mine action, as well as ammunition safety management and SALW control, also contribute to wider efforts to reform the security sector in affected countries.
As mine action typically involves the military or police working alongside civilian actors such as UN/international agencies, NGOs and commercial operators, these programmes can help to restore trust in security providers as well as the state as a whole.

ENDNOTES

1 See also Figure 5, The Architecture of Mine Action: Actors, Arenas, and Linkages in Chapter 4, Management of mine action programmes.

2 Commitment in this context refers to the willingness of a government to assume national ownership of the mine action programme and actually deliver the required mine action services.

3 Outputs in this context refer to the products, capital goods and services which result from a mine action intervention, for example the number of square kilometres of land that is released. Outcomes refer to the likely or achieved short-term and medium-term effects of an intervention’s outputs. Outcomes are related to the ‘effectiveness’ of an intervention.


5 See Chapter 7, section on Community liaison 2.2.3 for a more in-depth examination of community liaison.

6 For a more in-depth discussion of priority-setting, see the series of Issue Briefs produced by GICHD on Priority-setting in Mine Action.

7 A tolerable level of risk is defined in IMAS 01.10 as ‘risk which is accepted in a given context based on the current values of society.’


10 For example, see the Landmines and Livelihoods Surveys undertaken in Afghanistan and Yemen, which were conducted by GICHD in association with the Afghan and Yemen national mine action centres.

11 Risk education can help to address high-risk behaviour, but in stable communities where certain groups engage in high-risk behaviours as a livelihood necessity, it is helpful to share this information with other NGOs that may be able to offer alternative livelihood strategies. During Risk Reduction Education (as opposed to MRE) safe alternative and risk mitigation behaviours that are appropriate for the context are explored.

12 See for example: UNMAS (2010) UN Gender Guidelines for Mine Action Programmes; and the Gender and Mine Action Programme (GMAP).
IMAS 5.10 on Information Management encourages data collection that is disaggregated based on sex and age.

The ‘do no harm’ framework was developed in the early 1990s by several international and local NGOs who were interested in looking at how the assistance given in conflict settings interacts with the conflicts. The ‘do no harm’ framework was developed to help NGOs providing assistance better understand the conflict environments where they work, and to deliver assistance in a way that ensures better outcomes. See Collaborative Learning Projects (2004). *The ‘Do No Harm’ Framework for Analyzing the Impact of Assistance on Conflict: A Handbook.*


For example, see: Sharmala Naidoo (GICHD) (2012). *OAS SALW and Munitions Destruction Programme, Guatemala: Mine Action and Armed Violence Reduction Case Study.*


For example, see: See Albert S. Mülli (GICHD) (2012) *Handicap International’s SALW Risk Awareness Project in Libya: Mine Action and Armed Violence Reduction Case Study.*
