Informal Village Demining in Cambodia
An Operational Study

Report by:
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Statement

By Handicap International Belgium, AusAID and Norwegian People’s Aid

From September 2004 to January 2005, Handicap International Belgium (HIB) commissioned an “Operational Study on Informal Village Demining” to determine how Humanitarian Mine Action organizations can best respond to the occurrence of informal village demining through the development of sustainable responses to the phenomenon.

The study was conducted by a team of 4 persons led by an anthropologist. This choice was made in an attempt to not limit the analysis to the sole Mine Action prospect but to tentatively bring this phenomenon under a different light offering new perspectives.

This study follows a first 6-month research on “Spontaneous Demining Initiatives” conducted in 2000 and a book on the same subject in 2003, “Crossing the Divide”, both commissioned by HIB and written by Ruth Bottomley.

The present document is the final version of the study report. Unquestionably, and as expected, it delivers an innovative reflection over the question and its sectoral and political environments. In a sometimes provocative style and demonstrative way, it opens the debate of the recognition of the Informal Village Demining’s contribution to the mitigation of the daily threat of landmines and UXO. It positively questions the Humanitarian Mine Action sector on its priorities and its working methods. With common sense, it challenges generally accepted ideas and standards and anticipates solutions to make Informal Village Demining even more contributive to the sector.

For the sensible reader, the study also presents weaknesses inherent to the social perspective adopted. The examination of the existing “New Approaches to Mine Action” initiated in Cambodia in the last years or months (some of which may certainly have contributed to bring the formal Humanitarian Mine Action sector closer to community needs), including their priorities, their methods and their impact is not comprehensively addressed. In particular, the study does not highlight how village deminers’ activities could relate to existing risk reduction strategies in place. Likewise, the assertion on the actual role of the Royal Government of Cambodia in giving precedence to certain types of lands over “livelihood lands” would also have deserved more analysis and discussions before adopting definitive conclusions and justifying important recommendations.

It remains that this report, through the justification of the persistence of Informal Village Demining initiatives, certainly contributes to rehabilitate the debate surrounding community-based responses to the scourge of landmines and UXO in affected villages of Cambodia. The report states that such activities can no longer be overlooked and disregarded by the overall mine action strategy that aims at getting rid of landmines and UXO. It also highlights that making informal demining activities illegal does little to address the problem. The fact remains that informal village demining is a livelihood choice. It is increasingly evident that vulnerable groups are willing to engage in informal clearance activities despite their knowledge of the risks involved.

With other recent reports aimed at refining existing Humanitarian Mine Action strategies in Cambodia, this report suggests that the sector now engages with more innovative programs,
more cost-effective approaches and more sustainable responses to mitigate the threat to the most affected population of Cambodia mainly by working closer to village needs and by empowering communities to generate their own responses. Some progress has been made but the report findings demonstrate that there is still a long way to go to before community needs are adequately addressed.

The question that still remains is how to effectively engage with the phenomenon of informal village demining in Cambodia. The fact that these practices exist highlights the vulnerabilities of villages living on mine affected land and the limitations of current mine clearance operations. It would be valuable to continue to monitor the occurrence of informal demining activities as a means to measure and inform how more formalised approaches are addressing community needs.

Consideration also needs to be given to the potentially positive contribution informal village demining makes to Cambodia’s overall mine clearance efforts. The report highlights that there is still a lot to learn about informal village demining and there are still uncertainties about the quality and extent of informal mine clearance activities. As a first step, the challenge now lies in the elaboration of complementary projects and initiatives aimed at quantifying the phenomenon to figure out more precisely how much Informal Village Demining today in Cambodia is objectively contributing to mitigate the threat.
Dedication

In November 2004, in the course of conducting interviews in connection with the research for this report, I met with an expatriate advisor in Phnom Penh who is intimately familiar with, and knowledgeable about, mine action in Cambodia.

“What do you think should be done about those informal village deminers?” I asked him.
“Give them medals,” he replied.

This report is respectfully dedicated to those brave men.

Michael L. Fleisher
January 2005
Many individuals contributed generously of their time and expertise to make this report possible. The author would accordingly like to extend his heartfelt thanks to:

Brian Agland (CARE Cambodia), Sarah Bearup (World Vision Cambodia), Marc Bonnet (NPA), Ruth Bottomley (NPA), Richard Boulter (Halo Trust), Stephen Bradley (MAG), Clare Brazenor (AVI and LUPU), Soun Chea (LUPU), Julien Chevillard (UNDP), Soth Diep (MAG), Raine Dixon (AusAID), Tony Felts (EU), Tang Sun Hao (Khmer Mine Action Service), David Hayter (MAG), Michel Le Pechoux (UNICEF), Cecile Letibe (Jesuit Service—Battambang), Chhiv Lim (CMVIS), Brian Lund (CARE Cambodia), Bruce Powell (MAG), Christian Provooost (Handicap International Belgium), Heng Ratana (CMAC), El Soy (LUPU), Ian Thomas (CMAA), Tong Try (CMAC), Keo Vannarin (CMVIS), In Vira (LUPU), Saom Vireak (CMAC), and Keo Vuthy (Handicap International Belgium).

An extra special debt of gratitude is owed to Chris Bath (Handicap International Belgium), who contributed so much to the thinking through of the ideas that came out of this study.

And last, but definitely not least, the author would like to thank all of the local officials who assisted the research team in Battambang and Banteay Meanchey provinces and in Pailin municipality, and all of the people who shared their experiences with us in the fourteen villages we surveyed, without whose patient assistance the research on which this report is based would not have been possible.
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Disclaimer: The views expressed in this publication are those of the author and do not necessarily represent those of Handicap International-Belgium, AUSAID, Norwegian People’s Aid or Ireland Aid.
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<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CBD</td>
<td>Community Based Demining (CMAC)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CBMRR</td>
<td>Community Based Mine Risk Reduction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CMAA</td>
<td>Cambodian Mine Action and Victim Assistance Authority</td>
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<tr>
<td>CMAC</td>
<td>Cambodian Mine Action Center</td>
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<td>CMAS</td>
<td>Cambodian Mine Action Standards</td>
</tr>
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<td>CMT</td>
<td>Community Mine Marking Team</td>
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<td>CMVIS</td>
<td>Cambodia Mine/UXO Victim Information System (CRC and HIB)</td>
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<td>CRC</td>
<td>Cambodian Red Cross</td>
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<td>DFID</td>
<td>Department for International Development (Great Britain)</td>
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<tr>
<td>ECHO</td>
<td>European Commission Humanitarian Aid Office</td>
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<td>EOD</td>
<td>Explosive Ordnance Disposal</td>
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<td>EU</td>
<td>European Union</td>
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<tr>
<td>GICHD</td>
<td>Geneva International Center for Humanitarian Demining</td>
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<tr>
<td>GPS</td>
<td>Global Positioning System</td>
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<tr>
<td>HALO</td>
<td>Hazardous Area Life Support Organization (Halo Trust)</td>
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<td>HIB</td>
<td>Handicap International Belgium</td>
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<tr>
<td>HMA</td>
<td>Humanitarian Mine Action</td>
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<tr>
<td>IDD</td>
<td>Integrated Demining and Development (CARE)</td>
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<tr>
<td>IMAP</td>
<td>Integrated Mine Action Program (World Vision)</td>
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<tr>
<td>IMAS</td>
<td>International Mine Action Standards</td>
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<tr>
<td>IVD</td>
<td>Informal Village Deminer/Demining</td>
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<td>LD</td>
<td>Locality Demining (MAG)</td>
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<tr>
<td>LIS</td>
<td>Landmine Impact Survey</td>
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<tr>
<td>LUPU</td>
<td>Land Use Planning Unit (of Provincial Department of Rural Development)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Acronym</td>
<td>Full Form</td>
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<td>---------</td>
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<tr>
<td>LWF</td>
<td>Lutheran World Federation</td>
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<tr>
<td>MAG</td>
<td>Mines Advisory Group</td>
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<tr>
<td>MRE</td>
<td>Mine Risk Education</td>
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<tr>
<td>MRT</td>
<td>Mine Risk Reduction Team</td>
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<tr>
<td>NGO</td>
<td>Non-governmental Organization</td>
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<tr>
<td>NPA</td>
<td>Norwegian People’s Aid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRIIO</td>
<td>International Peace Research Institute, Oslo</td>
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<tr>
<td>RCAF</td>
<td>Royal Cambodian Armed Forces</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RGC</td>
<td>Royal Government of Cambodia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOP</td>
<td>Standard Operating Procedure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TST</td>
<td>Technical Survey Team (CMAC)</td>
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<tr>
<td>UN</td>
<td>United Nations</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNDP</td>
<td>United Nations Development Program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UXO</td>
<td>Unexploded Ordnance</td>
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The Problem

What is informal village demining? It is, plainly and simply, a by-product—a perhaps unintended, but nonetheless predictable outcome—of the Royal Government of Cambodia’s mine action priorities as set forth in its National Strategic Plan, which mandates demining for development and for the creation/protection of infrastructure.

From a macro-economic and developmental perspective, these priorities may very well be sensible, even essential. If the country is to develop and prosper, it must have mine-free roads to facilitate commerce; mine-free schools in which to educate its children; mine-free health centers to ensure safe access to medical care; and mine-free temples where people can fulfill their spiritual needs. Land like this, liberated from the scourge of landmines, may justifiably be said to benefit everyone. These are not illegitimate priorities.

But to establish priorities is also, by default, to establish what not priorities are. So-called “private,” or “individual,” land has either a very low priority in Cambodia or no priority at all. There is, after all, simply too much of it that needs demining, and far too little in the way of funding for there to be any prospect of demining all of it within any foreseeable timeframe.

This having been said, the Cambodian government’s set of priorities, however reasonable and well-intentioned, exacts a heavy price from its citizens in that it ignores the Cambodian people’s livelihood needs:

1) In a country comprised overwhelmingly of peasant farmers, it condemns them to plant and harvest the crops that they require for their sustenance, on mined land;
2) It condemns them to construct and live in houses, on mined land;
3) It condemns them to forage for wild foods, hunt animals, cut firewood and bamboo, and engages in subsistence activities deemed essential by those who engage in them, on mined land.

There are exceptions:

1) A large strip of agricultural land1 may be demined by a mine operator and then divided into plots for anticipated new arrivals to the area;
2) Agricultural and/or house land is liable to be demined if they are located close by a road—the primary purpose being to protect the road;
3) If a family member is injured while planting rice, for example, a CMAC Mine Risk Reduction Team (MRT) may be called in to clear this farmland—whether it be a small plot in its entirety or a small portion of a larger plot—in what is termed in the demining trade a “spot job.”

And there are doubtless other exceptions that could be cited, but it is best not to become distracted by them, for they are merely the exceptions that prove the rule. And the rule is this: that so-called “individual,” or “privately held,” land—what we are going to refer to as “livelihood land”—is being systematically, overwhelmingly, ignored by Cambodia’s formal mine action sector. Informal village demining is the people’s response to this.

The number of landmine/UXO casualties attributable to this policy of ignoring livelihood land is by no means trivial. According to the CMVIS Annual Report for 2003 (see

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1 Agricultural land in Cambodia is of two broad types: tveu srue, for rice cultivation, and chankar, for growing all other crops. When we speak of a household’s or a village’s agricultural land in this report, we are referring to its combined landholdings of both types.
Table 1), forty-nine percent of such accidents in that year occurred either in forests, rice fields, or grazing fields—all places where people go to fulfill their livelihood imperatives. (House land and chamkar land are not included in these CMVIS statistics, but whatever the number of accidents occurring on those two types of land, their inclusion would inevitably increase the percentage to something higher than forty-nine percent.)

Table 1: Mine/UXO Accidents in Cambodia, 2003

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Where did the accident take place?</th>
<th>Mine</th>
<th>UXO</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In forest</td>
<td>161</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>222</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rice field</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grazing field</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>147</td>
<td>261</td>
<td>408</td>
<td>51%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>362</td>
<td>410</td>
<td>772</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the pages that follow, we will present our research findings and put forth a series of concrete proposals on where our research suggests we ought to go from here.
Executive Summary

Purpose:

To explore and document the current state of informal village demining in Cambodia; to assess the impact of the so-called “new approaches” to mine action—EOD, CBMRR, CBD, etc.—on this phenomenon; and to make recommendations concerning what appropriate formal role, if any, informal deminers might usefully play in the formal mine action sector in Cambodia.

Background:

In a compelling series of reports published in 2001 and 2003, Ruth Bottomley conveyed to the world the reality of informal village demining in Cambodia. In her accounts, these informal village deminers, most of them demobilized soldiers, work at demining their own land, alone, without protective clothing or medical backup, and utilizing only rudimentary tools—a knife, a hoe, a long metal rod or stick—to demine. Occasionally, they might demine a fellow villager’s land as a favor, but seldom, if ever, for money. Their work was, and remains to this day—with the exception of a single NGO, which we uncovered in the course of our research, and who have asked us to preserve their anonymity—wholly unsupported and unfunded by either the international community or by their own government, which regards their activities as violations of Cambodian law.

And yet, according to figures cited by Bottomley from two editions of the Landmine Monitor Report, for the years 1999 and 2000, these peasant agriculturalists may well have demined very nearly as much land on their own as all of the formal demining organizations—CMAC, MAG, and the Halo Trust—put together:

In 1999 the Landmine Monitor Report provided astounding figures regarding mine clearance activities by villagers, drawn from the CMAC database. As of the 14th August 1998, out of the total of 88,710,000 square metres of land cleared by the different operators, local people were reported to have cleared approximately 78% of the total (Bottomley 2001:16).

In a related footnote, Bottomley goes on to note that

The Landmine Monitor Report 2000 also gives figures for the area cleared of mines from 1993-1999 based on information obtained from CMAC, MAG and Halo Trust, January 2000. Out of a total of 154,737,761 square metres of land cleared, villagers are estimated to have cleared 69,780,000 square metres, 45% of the total. Although a significant reduction from the figures given in 1999, the area of land believed to be cleared by villagers is still notably higher than the area cleared by other entities. CMAC is estimated to have cleared the second largest amount of land, 53.88 square kilometres, 34% of the total (Bottomley 2001:16).

Bottomley plainly felt that it was inappropriate, and wrong, for these informal deminers—all of them, after all, ordinary citizens—to be forced to shoulder the hazardous burden of demining their own communities. She noted that, in her interviews with them, these deminers expressed a strong desire for the formal demining agencies to come to their
villages to demine their land for them. Bottomley urged that appropriate steps be taken to sharply reduce the risk of mine accidents, ideally to make it unnecessary for the informal deminers to continue carrying on their work.

In large measure in response to Bottomley’s work, the formal mine action sector in Cambodia has initiated a series of innovations—the so-called “new approaches”—designed, at least in theory, to effect a reduction in risk.

Handicap International Belgium has commissioned this present study for a number of reasons, the main ones being:

1) To update Bottomley: Has the phenomenon of informal village demining changed, or evolved, in the past few years, and, if so, how?

2) To evaluate whether—and, if so, to what extent—the new approaches have succeeded in reducing village risk and hence the frequency or extent of informal village demining.

3) To recommend additional avenues of advocacy and response relative to the informal village demining phenomenon. In other words, given Bottomley’s work, and this update, how ought the mine action sector to operationalize this knowledge? What should the donors and the mine action operators and the government of Cambodia do?

The report that follows endeavors to answer these questions and also to present precise recommendations for going forward, given what we now know.

**Principal Findings:**

1. A close reading of the Cambodian statutes relevant to mine action fails to substantiate the argument that informal village demining is prohibited under Cambodian law.

2. In Battambang and Banteay Meanchey provinces, and in Pailin municipality, informal demining entrepreneurs have emerged who sell their demining services, both within and outside their home villages, for money, working sometimes alone and sometimes in teams, and sometimes offering a ploughing service as an adjunct to their demining.

3. Although the fees charged by these informal demining entrepreneurs are not uniform, it is fair to say that they are demining land for roughly one percent of what it costs CMAC.

4. Twenty-two informal village deminers were individually interviewed in the course of this research. If the testimony we received from them is correct, these 22 men have alone been responsible for demining, in the course of their careers, an estimated total of about 148.5 hectares of land, containing, altogether, an estimated 9,900 mines (an average of about 66.7 mines per hectare).

5. In the course of the 381 man-years that these 22 informal village deminers told us they have been engaging in demining work, they claimed to have suffered only two demining accidents altogether—for an annual casualty rate of 0.5%—a casualty rate not dissimilar to what we have been advised informally is the CMAC casualty rate.2

6. Focus group discussions in these same 11 villages revealed that all 11—or 100%—of them had agricultural land that was contaminated by landmines.

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2 We readily acknowledge that our data on the entrepreneurial cost, productivity (area of land cleared, mines/UXO removed), and casualty rate associated with informal demining are not comparable with those of formal demining, given what may be great differences in the number of hours per day and days per year an individual formal and informal deminer work; as-yet-unknown differences in work quality; and perhaps other factors.
7. At least one internationally funded local NGO has taken to financing the demining of both community and private land in villages by freelance informal deminers.

8. Focus group discussions, which we convened in 11 of the 14 villages in our sample, revealed that people in eight—or 73%—of those villages had, at one time or another, requested assistance from informal village deminers in demining their land.

9. The new approaches to mine action—EOD, CBMRR, CBD, et al.—seem to have had a meaningful impact on informal demining activity. Asked whether, in their opinion, any of the new approaches had had the effect of reducing the landmine/UXO risk in their respective villages, 21—or 95%—of the 22 informal deminers we interviewed answered in the affirmative.

10. Asked whether any of the new approaches had been sufficiently successful to enable them either to reduce the amount of demining that they themselves did, or to cease demining entirely, 15—or 68%—of these same 22 respondents answered in the affirmative. Of the seven—or 32%—of these same respondents who answered in the negative, all of them cited the unwillingness of the demining organizations to demine agricultural and/or house land.

Principal Recommendations:

1. For quite some time now, Cambodia’s informal village deminers have been, and continue to be, significant contributors to the effort to reduce landmine/UXO casualties in Cambodia. Their contribution needs to be examined more closely—and appreciated more fully—than it has been.

2. The formal mine action sector ought to engage constructively and creatively with the informal mine action sector in Cambodia.

3. To accomplish this, we need to know the true scope of the informal village deminer phenomenon in Cambodia, i.e., how many informal deminers are there? How are they distributed within the country? CMVIS is uniquely situated and qualified to collect this information, and we therefore recommend that they be tasked with the responsibility of finding it out.

4. The land that has already been demined by informal village deminers needs to be mapped using GPS technology.

5. This having been done, we recommend that appropriate sampling procedures be employed to determine the extent to which land demined by informal deminers has been treated or cleared.

6. We also need to know how many accidents have occurred on land that has been demined by informal village deminers. Once again, we observe that CMVIS is uniquely situated and qualified to collect this information and recommend that they be tasked with the responsibility of gathering it.

7. The land demined by informal village deminers should be included in the national database, or in an adjunct to the national database, so that it may be freely accessible to all interested parties.
8. Absent any concrete commitment by the formal mine action sector to clear villagers’ “livelihood land” within any reasonable timeframe, individuals should be left free to demine their own land, if they choose to do so, without restrictions of any kind.

9. For informal-sector deminers wishing to demine land that is not their own, either as a favor to others or for a fee, it is recommended that an appropriate training program be devised and appropriate equipment provided.

10. We have devised a pilot project to test the soundness and efficacy of these proposals, and we recommend that it be implemented.
1. Introduction

Purpose

To examine and evaluate the current state of informal village demining in Cambodia; to evaluate the impact of the new mine action approaches—EOD, CBMRR, CBD, etc.—on informal demining activity; and to make appropriate recommendations regarding the role that informal village deminers might, or ought to, play in the activities of the mine action sector in Cambodia.

Objectives of the Study

1) To update Bottomley: Has the phenomenon of informal village demining changed, or evolved, in the past few years, and, if so, how?
2) To evaluate whether—and, if so, to what extent—the new approaches have succeeded in reducing village risk and/or the frequency or extent of informal village demining activity.
3) To recommend additional avenues of advocacy and response relative to the informal village demining phenomenon. I.e., given Bottomley’s work, and this update, how ought the mine action sector to operationalize this knowledge: what should the donors and the mine action operators and the RGC do?

Methodology

The research methods employed in this study were mainly qualitative methods—although efforts were made to quantify certain things, e.g., the number of hectares of land that the 22 informal village deminers we interviewed estimated they had treated in the course of their careers; the number of landmines they estimated they had demined; and the number of casualties they had suffered. The qualitative methods included:
1) A review of the literature pertaining to mine action generally, to Cambodian mine action in particular, and to the phenomenon of informal village demining;
2) More than 40 lengthy, open-ended interviews with managers and employees of mine action and development organizations, and other persons knowledgeable about mine action both in Phnom Penh and in the provinces;
3) Detailed profiles of the 14 villages where the research for this study was carried out, collected typically in lengthy interviews with the village chiefs;
4) Semi-structured interviews with 22 informal village deminers;
5) Focus group discussions with villagers in 11 of the 14 surveyed villagers addressing issues relating to mine action in general and informal village demining in particular; and
6) Brief case studies of subjects (e.g., illegal logging) relating to the research.

Selection of Field Sites

Fourteen villages altogether—in Battambang and Banteay Meanchey provinces and Pailin municipality—were chosen to serve as research sites in accordance with the following criteria:
1) Each was known to be heavily impacted by landmines/UXO;
2) Each was known to have formal-sector deminers and informal deminers either demining in the village simultaneously or in close chronological proximity to one another;
3) Each was known to have been exposed to two or more of the following mine action approaches calculated to reduce landmine/UXO risk in the villages, i.e., Mine Risk Reduction Teams (MRT), Community Mine Marking Teams (CMT), Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD), Technical Survey Teams (TST), Community Based Mine Risk Reduction (CBMRR); Community Based Demining (CBD [CMAC]); Locality Demining (LD [MAG]); Integrated Demining and Development (IDD [CARE]), Integrated Mine Action Program (IMAP [World Vision]), and Mine Risk Education (MRE).

On the basis of these criteria, the following fourteen villages were selected as research sites:

**Battambang province:**
1. Kampong Chamlong Loeu
2. Neang Lem
3. Ou Anlok
4. Ou Chamlang
5. Raksmeey Sangha
6. Tuol Tel
7. Preah Puth

**Pailin municipality:**
1. Baysey
2. Ou Cheukram
3. Psar Prum (alternatively called Thmey)

**Banteay Meanchey province:**
1. Banteay Ti Muoy
2. Banteay Ti Pir
3. Seila Khmaer
4. Khla Ngoab
Figure 1: Cambodia map (With Research Provinces Emphasized)
Figure 2: Battambang Province
Figure 3: Pailin Municipality
Figure 4: Banteay Meanchey Province
The Sampling Method

The sampling method employed here—known as purposive, or judgement, sampling—provides immense advantages in a research study such as this, but it also suffers from certain limitations. Unlike a random sample, which, properly taken, may rightfully be presumed to represent the features, or characteristics, of a much larger group—and yet may not, since it is random, contain the features, or phenomena, that one wishes to study—a judgement sample guarantees that investigators will find, at each site, the specific phenomena that are to be the subjects of the study, but they will not be able to extrapolate from this sample to the larger universe of which the sample is part, i.e., they will not be able to make judgments about individuals—in this case, individual villages—that are not in the sample.

In the case of this study, had we elected to select and visit a random sample of Cambodian villages, we might not have found a single one of them that included resident informal deminers, let alone one that had both formal and informal deminers working simultaneously or nearly simultaneously, or one that had both formal and informal deminers working there plus exposure to the mine action interventions we have listed. A judgement sample therefore sacrifices the desire to know a great deal about a larger universe than the sample in favor of a guaranteed close-up look at the phenomena that are to be the subjects of the study.

2. Scoping the Problem

Key Issues

- We already know that informal village demining plays a role—quite likely a major role—in working to resolve the landmine/UXO problem in Cambodia. But we have not yet arrived at a consensus as to what, precisely, that role ought to be.

- Partially in response to the informal village demining phenomenon, new approaches, e.g., LD and CBMRR, have been implemented to reduce landmine/UXO risk and thus to ameliorate, or even eliminate, the need for informal demining, but we do not know whether these innovations are making progress toward achieving this goal.
3. Background

The RGC’s mine action priorities, set forth in its National Strategic Plan, call for priority to be accorded to the demining of those types of land that will help it to achieve its macro-economic and development objectives, in short, land that is to be utilized for infrastructure and/or development projects.

In practice, this means “public,” or “community,” land—land that is used by the largest possible number of people. Thus it is that we see that roads are being demined to facilitate commerce and the free, rapid movement of goods to and from markets; that land for schools is being demined so that the nation’s children may be safely educated; that land for health centers is being demined to provide safe venues for receiving medical treatment; and that land where pagodas stand, or are slated to be built, are being demined in order to guarantee citizens the freedom to worship in safety.

To understand the informal village deminers’ raison d’être, it is therefore necessary to know what is not being prioritized for demining in the National Strategic Plan and hence not being demined by the formal mine action organizations:

1) The overwhelming majority of the country’s agricultural land, the source of livelihood and sustenance for the vast majority of its people, is not being demined—even though an MRT might demine a path to a water source or disarm and come to carry off a munition visible above ground.

2) Forest land, the source of numerous natural resources vital to the lives and fortunes of rural people—wild plant and animal foods; bamboo; firewood and wood for house construction; logs for (illegal) export; etc.—are not being demined.

3) And house land, albeit with some exceptions—e.g., land for houses constructed close by roads—is also not being demined, with the result that people are being forced to build their homes on mined land.

Informal village demining is the response of ordinary people in extremis. It is the product of the failure of the Cambodian government, and of the formal mine action sector, to come to grips with the problem of mined agricultural land, mined forest land, and mined house land. These are the places where people enact their livelihood strategies. They are the places where people live and work.

To accept the prevailing prioritization scheme, one has to swallow hard, because this policy consigns thousands to injury and death and imposes severe economic hardships on their family members. Nonetheless, one needs to acknowledge that, from a development and macroeconomic perspective, the RGC’s prioritization scheme is reasonable and that, in any case, the amount of “neglected” land is so vast that there are simply insufficient resources available to demine it.

Nonetheless, this realization leads us inevitably to a simple conclusion: If, for whatever reason, the formal mine action sector is simply not going to demine—within any reasonable, relevant timeframe—what we are calling “livelihood” land, then there can be no moral justification for prohibiting ordinary people from doing what they deem necessary to clear it themselves.
4. The Legal, Regulatory and Ethical Environment in Which Humanitarian Mine Action Operates

The Ottawa Convention

Cambodia signed the Mine Ban Treaty on December 3, 1997, and ratified it on July 28, 1999. The treaty entered into force in Cambodia on January 1, 2000 (Landmine Monitor Report 2001). Article 5 of the Ottawa Convention mandates that signatories must clear all of the landmine contamination within their borders within 10 years of ratification, although States Party is permitted to seek extension of the deadline.

For Cambodia, the clearance deadline comes due in 2009, and it is unimaginable that the country will come even close to meeting it.

The International Mine Action Standards (IMAS)

In 1993, the United Nations was given a mandate to assume the leading role in mine action. Three years later, in 1996, a conference was held at which the UN was directed to create mine action standards. In 1997, the International Standards for Mine Action (ISMA) were promulgated, but these were seen as technically unsound, and so, in 1999, the UN engaged the Geneva International Center for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD) to review the ISMA. In 2001, the International Mine Action Standards (IMAS) were published.

Especially relevant to our study is the IMAS provision stating that “National governments have the right to apply national standards to national programmes...” (GICHD 2004:8).

Cambodia is, in point of fact, availing itself of this permitted flexibility. Where IMAS mandates that “Land shall be accepted as ‘cleared’ when the demining organization has ensured the removal and/or destruction of all mine and unexploded ordnance hazards from the specified area to the specified depth,” and that “For buried mines and UXO, this depth should normally not be less than 13 centimetres below the original surface level” (GICHD 2004:56), this figure having been based on nothing more than the effective depth of metal detectors at the time the standard was written, Cambodia has adopted a more lenient national standard of 10 centimeters.

Domestic Legislation

Domestic implementation legislation was adopted by the National Assembly on April 28, 1999, and entered into force when King Norodom Sihanouk signed it one month later, on May 28th.


bans the production, use, possession, transfer, trade, sale, import and export of anti-personnel mines. It provides for criminal penalties, including fines and imprisonment for offences committed by civilians, or members of the police and the armed forces. It also provides for the destruction of existing mine stockpiles and the creation of the National Demining Regulatory Authority to co-ordinate activities related to the mine problem.
Royal Government of Cambodia No. 38 Sub-Decree (April 1999) “on administering and inspecting the importation, production, selling, distribution and handling [of] all types of weapons,” and which specifically includes “all types of grenades and mines” within its purview, merely states, in its clauses relating to the issues relevant to this report, that

Chapter 1, Article 2:

This law has efficiency to cover the ownership, possession, carrying, utilization, stock, loan, rent, transfer, distribution, transport, production, assembly, repair, import, export, purchase, sale of all arms, explosives, explosive substance and ammunitions.

Chapter 1, Article 3:

Any person at present, wherever they keep explosives or weapons shall take it to the competent authority through the determination of declaration of the inter-ministerial of Interior's Ministry and Defense's Ministry.

Chapter 1, Article 4:

It is absolutely forbidden to sell, exchange, donate, stock at home, or other locations, those kinds of explosives and weapons as stated in Article 2 of this Sub-Decree within the territory of the Kingdom of Cambodia.

Similarly, the Kingdom of Cambodia Draft Arms Law on “arms, explosive substances, and ammunitions” (November 2002), currently awaiting the formation of the new National Assembly for debate and passage, and which states that “This law has efficiency to cover the ownership, possession, carrying, utilization, stock, loan, rent, transfer, distribution, transport, production, assembly, repair, import, export, purchase, sale of all arms, explosives, explosive substance and ammunitions,” merely states, in its clauses relevant to this discussion, that

Chapter 1, Article 5:

Carrying, equipping, utilization, stock, loan, rent, transfer, distribution, transport, production, assembly, repair, import, export purchase, sale of all arms, explosives, explosive substance and ammunitions out of state management are forbidden.

Chapter 1, Article 12:

Any person who is carrying, keeping the arms, explosives, explosive substance and ammunitions as defined in art 3, 4 and 6 without permission, must hand over to competent authority with clear notification.

Listed below are the words that we feel form the crux of the laws deemed relevant to the subject of informal village demining. These key words, running through all of this legislation, are:

- possession
- trade
- export
- distribution
- carrying
- sale
- production
- handling
- transfer
- import
- selling
- ownership
utilization  stock  loan
rent  distribution  transport
assembly  repair  import
export  purchase  exchange
donate  equipping

But do informal village deminers actually do any of these things? Can they really be said to “possess” landmines when all they want to do is remove them from their livelihood land and either destroy them or hand them over, as quickly as possible, to some lawful authority?

Do they purchase them, sell them, own them, loan them, exchange them, or distribute them? Do they produce them, import them, export them, or sell them?

In fairness, some informal deminers do “utilize” landmines by refashioning the fuses to use for fishing, but wouldn’t it be more reasonable to enact a law against that?

And informal deminers certainly do “handle” landmines, but only for so long as it takes to prevent their being a continuing threat to life and limb.

And then there is the admonition in the Kingdom of Cambodia Draft Arms Law law that “Any person who is carrying, keeping the arms, explosives, explosive substance and ammunitions…without permission, must hand over to competent authority with clear notification.” In fact, that seems a perfectly reasonable requirement, and one with which the informal deminers we interviewed would be happy to comply.

The state has a legitimate interest in prohibiting its citizens from gathering and stockpiling weapons, but finding and immediately destroying weapons that pose a threat to oneself and one’s family ought not to be criminalized.

The Cambodian Mine Action and Victim Assistance Authority (CMAA)

Royal Decree No. 177, of September 2000, constituted CMAA as an inter-ministerial body chaired by the Prime Minister and charged with the responsibility of managing all clearance activities relating to landmines/UXO as well as assistance to landmine victims.”

In addition, CMAA serves as the sole representative of the RGC at international meetings on landmines/UXO, and is authorized to sign, on behalf of the Cambodian government, “any agreements, protocols and contracts of bilateral aid regarding mine action and unexploded ordnance clearance, and assistance to victims.”

CMAA’s primary responsibilities include: development and coordination of policies on mine action, UXO disposal, and victim assistance; mobilization of technical and financial resources within Cambodia and abroad; licensing of all demining operators working in Cambodia; managing a database on mine action and UXO clearance; and development of a policy on the use of demined land; and implementation in Cambodia of the Ottawa Convention (Griffin and Keeley 2004:18-19).

CMAA is opposed to informal demining and takes the position that it is illegal. One knowledgeable person we spoke with told us that efforts are under way at CMAA to ban the unauthorized importation of metal detectors in order to keep them out of the hands of ordinary citizens.
The Ethical Environment

There is nothing unethical about allowing impoverished, ill-equipped, sometimes inadequately trained men to walk into a minefield and attempt to demine it with a knife and a long stick—unless you are prepared to offer them a viable alternative, i.e., unless you are prepared to tell them that help is on the way. Absent that alternative, what is unethical is declining to help them or threatening to send them to jail if they try to help themselves.

What people term ethics is often a proxy for their economic interest. Mine action in Cambodia is a multi-million-dollar business. The formal demining organizations—CMAC, MAG, and the Halo Trust—all have a huge stake in it. All of the NGOs active in the mine action sector rake in a percentage of the donor funds that flow through their coffers. The large donations that foreign governments make to mine action in Cambodia serve to enhance their prestige and gain them influence within the country. And the fortunes of these entities will all decline if, as we will show is possible, informal deminers are liberated to demine huge areas of land at a cost approximating one-hundredth of what formal-sector demining now costs.

At stake also, in this discussion, is public relations, which is also money, or a precondition for making it. How is it likely to play in the Western press if a major donor funds a corps of informal deminers—only to have a few of them become injured or killed while attempting to reach a hospital without the benefit of a trauma surgeon or a backup ambulance? Far more prudent to go “tsk tsk” and do nothing rather than risk having one’s reputation sullied—and donations reduced.

We have concluded that assertions that informal village demining is illegal and/or immoral are unjustified and self-serving. Further on in this report, we will set forth a plan for incorporating informal demining into the mine-action mainstream.
5. The Informal Village Deminer Interviews

As part of its research effort, the research team conducted interviews with a total of 22 informal village deminers in the provinces it visited: 11 in Battambang, five in Pailin, and six in Banteay Meanchey.

The 11 informal deminers who were interviewed in Battambang province were interviewed in the following villages: three in Raksmey Sangha, three in Neang Lem, one in Ou Anlok, one in Kampong Chamlong Loeu; one in Ou Chamlang; and two in Preah Puth (see Table 2).

Table 2: Number of Informal Village Deminers Interviewed  
(N = 22)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Province</th>
<th>Village</th>
<th>No. of IVDs</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Battambang</td>
<td>Raksmey Sangha</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Neang Lem</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ou Anlok</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ou Chamlong</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Kampong Chamlong Loeu</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Preah Puth</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pailin</td>
<td>Ou Cheukram</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Baysey</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Psar Prum</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Banteay Meanchey</td>
<td>Banteay Ti Muoy</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Khla Ngaob</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Banteay Ti Pir</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Seila Khmaer</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The five informal deminers who were interviewed in Pailin municipality were interviewed in the following villages: two in Ou Cheukram, one in Baysey, and two in Psar Prum (alternatively, Thmey).

The six informal deminers who were interviewed in Banteay Meanchey province were interviewed in the following villages: two in Banteay Ti Muoy, one in Khla Ngaob, two in Seila Khmaer, and one in Banteay Ti Pir.

Almost all of the 22 informal deminers we interviewed were in their thirties or forties. One man was fifty. All of the informal deminers we interviewed were males. In Battambang province, the average age of these informal deminers was 40.9 years. In Pailin municipality, it was 42.2 years. In Banteay Meanchey province, it was 41.7. The average age for all provinces combined was 41.4 (see Table 3).
Table 3: Informal Village Deminers Interviewed: What is Your Present Age?  
(N=22)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Province</th>
<th>Informal Village Deminers</th>
<th>How Old Are You?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Battambang</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td>36</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td>37</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td>40</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td>43</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td></td>
<td>43</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td></td>
<td>44</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
<td>44</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td></td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Average age: 40.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pailin</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td>43</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td>45</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Average age: 42.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Banteay Meanchey</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td>26</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td>38</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td>44</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
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<td>49</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Average age: 41.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Overall average age (all provinces combined): 41.4

As asked whether they demine for themselves only or whether they also help other people by demining their land for them, 18 of the 22 informal deminers we interviewed—82% of them—told us that they demine for themselves and also help others (see Figure 5).
Figure 5: Do you demine for yourself only or do you also help other people?

(N = 22)

- [ ] Demine for themselves only (4)
- [ ] Demine both for themselves and also to help other people (18)

The 11 informal deminers whom we interviewed in Battambang province had been engaged in this work for an average of 17.6 years. In Pailin municipality, the average was 16 years. In Banteay Meanchey province, it was 19.5 years. The overall average, for all three provinces combined, was 17.3 years. The least experienced of these deminers had worked at informal demining for 5 years; the most experienced of them for 28 years. All told, then, these 22 men had been working as informal village deminers for a combined total of 381 years (see Table 4).

In all of this time, seven of our 22 informal deminers have experienced a total of eight landmine accidents, i.e., one man experienced two accidents, while the other six experienced one accident apiece. But only two of these eight landmine accidents were demining accidents: the other six occurred while the victim was engaged in non-demining activities, e.g., accidentally stepping on mines laid by fellow Khmer Rouge soldiers; stepping on a mine while farming; stepping on a mine while walking to his chamkar land. And of the two mine accidents that were incurred while demining, only one resulted in an actual injury, while the other resulted in an explosion only, but no injury whatsoever to the deminer. Still, we are going to count that as a landmine accident incurred while in the act of demining.

What all this means is that, over a period of 381 man-years of working, the 22 informal deminers we interviewed experienced only two landmine accidents, a casualty rate of 0.5% per year, virtually identical to that of CMAC, whose approximately 1,600 deminers, we have been told informally, have suffered 8 or 9 accidents in the year 2004 alone (see Figure 6).
Table 4: Informal Village Deminers Interviewed: For How Long Have You Been Engaged in Demining Work? (By Province) (N = 22)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Province</th>
<th>Informal Village Deminers</th>
<th>Number of Years Engaged in Demining Work</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Battambang</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
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<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>12</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>14</td>
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<td>5</td>
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<td>7</td>
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<td>23</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>24</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>11</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Average = 17.6</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pailin</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>9</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>22</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Average = 16</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Banteay Meanchey</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>13</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>13</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>20</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>23</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>23</td>
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<td></td>
<td>6</td>
<td>25</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Average = 19.5</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Average (all provinces combined) = 17.3

This seems quite extraordinary in light of the fact that the informal deminers we interviewed wear no protective helmets or clothing when they demine and employ only the most rudimentary of demining instruments. Only one of the deminers we spoke with, who worked at demining as a member of a small demining team, had access to a single metal detector that all of the team’s members shared. Another deminer was briefly loaned a metal detector in the early part of 2004, but has since returned it. Both of these metal detectors were reported by deminers in Battambang province. None was reported among informal deminers either in Pailin municipality or in Banteay Meanchey province.
Figure 6: Have you ever had a land mine/UXO accident?

![Bar chart showing responses to the question about land mine/UXO accidents.](image)

As asked what sort of help they would need to make their demining safer, 15—or 68%—of these informal deminers expressed a desire for a metal detector, while the remaining seven—or 32% of them—asked to be offered a demining course.

For all of these informal deminers, demining represented only a secondary, or even tertiary, activity. Asked to state their primary occupation, 20 described themselves as farmers, one as a fruit vendor, and one as a maker of charcoal (see Figure 7).

Asked to list their secondary occupations, one listed farmer; 11 listed agricultural laborer (two of whom had additional secondary occupations as charcoal sellers); one listed logger; one listed pig husbandry; one said that he helped CMAC look for landmines; two listed informal demining (one of them to assist fellow villagers, the other for money); three listed charcoal making only (two of whom had additional secondary occupations as agricultural laborers); one listed soldiering; one listed the growing of loganberries; one listed Chinese noodle vendor; and one described himself as having no secondary occupation. Note that the number of listed secondary occupations exceeds the number of respondents by two, because two of the charcoal growers also listed agricultural laborer as a secondary occupation (see Figure 8).

The man who said he assisted CMAC told us that he is paid the Riel equivalent of $2.00 per day. The agricultural laborers told us they were paid the Riel or Baht equivalent of between $1.00 and $2.50 per day. The man who raises pigs told us that this activity earns him Riel 2,000,000 ($500) per year. The soldier told us that he is paid the Riel equivalent of $7.50 per month. (Respondents were not asked to provide their income from either their primary or secondary occupations. It was recorded only on those occasions when respondents volunteered it.)
Asked what had led them to take up informal demining in the first place, 16 listed the need for agricultural land; seven listed the need for house land; three listed the need for a safe road or path, with one respondent noting particularly the imperative to have a safe path to the forest; one listed the desire to help others demine; two said that learning to demine had been required of them in the army; and four listed concern for the safety of family, especially children, as an incentive to demine (see Table 5).

“The reason is that we have no land for doing chamkar and have no money to hire someone to demine. On the other hand, if we wait for Halo Trust, we do not know when they will come.”  (Preah Puth village)
“I wanted to have land for doing chamkar and nobody helped me. In fact, I don’t want to demine for myself but I have no choice.” (Ou Cheukram village)

“CMAC demined only the road. They didn’t demine agricultural land. So I cannot wait for help from CMAC because I need land for farming.” (Ou Cheukram village)

“I want land for cultivation and nobody helps me with demining.” (Banteay Ti Muoy village)

Table 5: Informal Village Deminers Interviewed: What Led You To Begin Doing This Kind Of Work?
(N = 22)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Province</th>
<th>Need agricultural land</th>
<th>Need housing land</th>
<th>Need for safe road or path</th>
<th>Help other people</th>
<th>Concern for family's safety</th>
<th>Army requirement</th>
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<td><strong>3</strong></td>
<td><strong>1</strong></td>
<td><strong>4</strong></td>
<td><strong>2</strong></td>
<td><strong>33</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In response to the question “If you have demined your own agricultural land, how large was this land, and how many mines did you find there?” our 22 informal deminers claimed to have demined about 33 hectares of their own agricultural land in Battambang province, containing an estimated 1,000 mines (or about 30.3 mines per hectare); about 7.6 hectares of their own agricultural land in Pailin municipality, containing an estimated 355 mines (or about 46.7 mines per hectare); and about 12.5 hectares of their own agricultural land in Banteay Meanchey province, containing an estimated 720 mines (or about 57.6 mines per hectare).

Altogether, in all provinces combined, these 22 men estimated they had demined about 53.1 hectares of their own agricultural land, containing an estimated 2,075 mines (or about 39.1 mines per hectare).

In response to the questions “About how many hectares of land have you demined since you began demining?” and “About how many mines would you estimate you have cleared since you began demining?” our 22 informal deminers claimed to have demined a total of about 107.5 hectares of land altogether—including their own agricultural land—in Battambang province, containing an estimated 3,521 mines (one deminer could not recall his hectarage total, and so no number was included for him), or about 32.8 mines per hectare; about 25 hectares altogether—including their own agricultural land—in Pailin municipality, containing an estimated 2,150 mines, or about 86 mines per hectare; and about 18 hectares altogether—including their own agricultural land—in Banteay Meanchey province, containing an estimated 4,231 mines (one deminer could not recall his hectarage total, and so no number was included for him), or about 235 mines per hectare.

Combining the figures from the two provinces and the one municipality—and noting that two of our 22 informal deminers could not recall the amount of land they had demined outside their own province/municipality, and that hence none of the non-agricultural land they had demined could be included in these estimates—reveals that these 22 men estimated that, in the course of their careers, they have demined a total of about 148.5 hectares of land altogether, containing an estimated 9,900 mines, or about 66.7 mines per hectare.
One extremely significant finding to emerge from this study is the discovery of the emergence on the informal demining scene of informal demining entrepreneurs, men who sell their demining services, both within and outside their home villages, for money, working sometimes alone and sometimes in teams.

**Fees Charged:**

In Reksmey Sangha village—located in Sdau commune, Rotonak Mondol district, Battambang province—we were told by one source that the going rate for demining is about Thai baht 1,800 (= Riel 180,000 or $45.00) per hectare, and that the going rate for ploughing is about Thai baht 3,000 (= Riel 300,000 or $75.00) per hectare. The going rate for demining and ploughing together is thus about $120 per hectare.

Another source in the same village quoted the rate for informal demining as being Riel 150,000 ($37.50) per hectare, and the rate for ploughing as Riel 300,000 ($75.00) per hectare. The combined cost of both demining and ploughing is therefore Riel 450,000 ($112.50) per hectare.

In Seila Khmaer village—located in Ou Bei Choan commune, in Ou Chrov district, in Banteay Meanchey province—we were told that a four-man team of informal demining entrepreneurs has been demining in this area since early January 2004. They charge between Thai baht 4,000 and 6,000 (= between Riel 400,000 and 600,000, or between $100 and $150) per hectare, depending on the difficulty of the terrain.

In Preah Puth village—located in Boeung Riang commune, Kamrieng district, Battambang province—we learned that informal deminers, operating in the area, had charged between Thai baht 150 and 200 (= Riel 15,000 and 20,000, or between $3.75 and $5.00) per day to demine a path into the forest to facilitate logging by local people. Another informal deminer, operating as a freelancer in the same general area, is charging his customers Thai baht 100 (= Riel 10,000 or $2.50) per day for demining services.

In Ou Cheukram village—located in Stueng Kach commune, Salakrau district, Pailin municipality—in the year 2000, villagers paid outsiders to clear and plough land simultaneously by tractor for Thai baht 1,000 (= Riel 100,000 or $25.00) per hour. By 2004, the price for this work had risen to Baht 1,300 (= Riel 130,000 or $32.50) per hour, owing to the rising cost of diesel fuel. The villagers told us they were dissatisfied with this work because it was not dependable.

Another finding of our study was that 17 of the 22 informal deminers we interviewed—77% of them—said that they would happily agree to work as deminers for CMAC, MAG, or Halo Trust if only they were given the chance to do so. Most cited two reasons for this: the appeal of the large salary and the desire to assist their respective communities.

One curious phenomenon that previous observers had noted with respect to informal demining is that, in some locations, informal deminers cease their demining whenever a formal demining organization is working in their village, only to resume it once the formals have departed the area—while, in other locations, the informal deminers go right on working even when their formal brethren are demining nearby.
CASE STUDY
The Angels of Heaven

In the course of its work, the research team learned of the existence of an NGO, headquartered in a large town and supported by both local and international funding, that contracts with three-person informal demining teams to carry out mine clearance in selected villages of the province in which it operates. (Because it is fearful of running afoul of Sub-Decree 38, we have elected to veil this organization’s true name with a pseudonym.)

Angels operates a range of community programs, including a health center, a women’s program, and an after-school recreational program for schoolchildren.

The organization also works directly with a large roster of informal deminers in whom it has confidence to subsidize the demining of both household agricultural land and community land in the half-dozen or so villages where it has chosen to operate. Its European sponsors are fully informed of this work and have made visits to Cambodia to evaluate the sites that Angels has proposed for clearance. As of 2004, Angels estimates it has sponsored the clearance of approximately 100 hectares of land, at a cost of about $75 per hectare.

Once having selected a site for clearance, Angels obtains signed contracts from both district and community officials—and from the deminers themselves—accepting liability for the deminers’ work. Provincial officials also give their assent to these contracts, although it was not clear from our interview whether they do so in writing. Angels of Heaven claims that, so far, in the five years or so that it has been engaged in this work, there has never been an accident of any kind of land it has paid to demine.

In eleven of the fourteen villages we visited, we were told that the informal deminers continue demining even when CMAC or another of the formal demining organizations is working close by. After all, our interlocutors said, there is no competition between the two groups: both understand that the formal deminers are not going to demine individuals’ land.

In three of the fourteen villages, however, we encountered a pattern of intimidation and threat.

In Ou Anlok village, in Battambang province, we were told that their informal deminers temporarily cease working when CMAC is present, because CMAC employees have threatened to have them put in jail.

In Baysey village, in Pailin municipality, we were told that their informal deminers temporarily cease working when CMAC is present, because CMAC employees have threatened to impose fines of Riel five million to ten million ($1,250 to $2,500) for those who demine without official authorization.

In Banteay Ti Muoy village, in Banteay Meanchey province, an informant told us that “Some informal deminers stopped work after MRT prohibited them.” But some “continue to demine because they need land to cultivate.” Another Banteay Ti Muoy informant confided that the informal deminers cease working whenever CMAC is in their village because “they’re afraid that CMAC will fine them and send them to prison.”

Before 2003, he said, when CMAC first arrived to work there, the village’s informal deminers “always demined without any worry.” But now “CMAC threatens that those who demine to get fuses for fishing will be put in jail for one month to one year and fined between one million and five million Riel.” And so nowadays, whenever CMAC is in their village, the informal deminers cease their demining work.
In all three of these villages, these threats have proved to be idle ones. We did not encounter anyone, in either of these villages, who had actually been sent to prison or had a fine imposed, for, in point of fact, CMAC has no legal authority to arrest or fine anyone. At one of its research sites, however, the team encountered a chilling exception:

### CASE STUDY

**The Village Chief Who Endeavored to Demine a Road**

In the course of its work, in a location outside the research area, the research team encountered the chief of a village of some 4,000 inhabitants who, within the past five years, had undertaken, without outside aid, to initiate and implement an ambitious demining project in his village.

This project entailed his organizing thirty village men to clear a swath of forest for the construction of a village road, with each village family contributing Thai baht 500 (= Riel 50,000 or $12.50) to the enterprise. Three metal detectors were purchased for this project, at a combined cost of Thai baht 16,000 (= Riel 1,600,000 or $400).

Work was halted midway through, however, by CMAC’s arrival to begin demining work in the village. Not too long afterward, the chief was arrested and imprisoned on the following charges, which the chief insists were trumped up:

1) Demining for the purpose of stockpiling landmines to use against the Cambodian government;
2) Membership in an armed insurrectionist movement;
3) Trafficking in women;
4) Engaging in heroin trafficking;
5) Attempting to pressure his fellow villagers into supporting an opposition political party; and
6) Deliberately planting landmines to cause landmine accidents.

Some weeks later, following a huge demonstration by his fellow villagers protesting his incarceration, the chief was set free. The village road, however, remains unfinished, and the chief professes to live in continual fear of re-arrest.

Assuming, for the moment, that the criminal charges leveled against the village chief were indeed trumped up, why would the authorities have come down so hard on a citizen whose only offense was to seek to demine land that CMAC had no intention of demining anyway? Are the RGC and CMAC seeking to protect the citizenry with these actions? Or their lucrative demining franchise?
Two informal village deminers at work

Two village deminers show off their handiwork
Returning home after a hard day's work

Posing with the day's "catch"
6. The “New Approaches” to Mine Action

In the wake of Bottomley’s work on informal village demining—and, at least in part, inspired by it—an assortment of new approaches, designed to reduce mine risk in the villages, has been added to the mine action arsenal in Cambodia. The risk-reduction approaches currently employed in Cambodia include:

1. Community Based Demining (CMAC)³
2. Community Based Mine Risk Reduction (CMAC)
3. Community Mine Marking Teams (CMAC)
4. Explosive Ordnance Disposal Teams (CMAC, Halo Trust, MAG)
5. Integrated Demining and Development (CARE)⁴
6. Integrated Mine Action Program (World Vision)
7. Locality Demining (MAG)
8. Mine Risk Education (CMAC, Halo Trust, MAG)
9. Mine Risk Reduction Teams (CMAC)
10. Technical Survey Teams (CMAC)

Community Based Demining (CBD)

Established by CMAC in September 2004, Community Based Demining (CBD) seeks to empower local villagers to demine high-priority minefields while at the same time reducing the cost of mine clearance and injecting money into village economies. It essentially duplicates the Locality Demining concept initiated by MAG earlier in the year (see below). Candidates for the new demining jobs were selected from among the poorest families in two heavily mined-contaminated villages of Battambang province: Ou Anlok and Ou Chamlang. Recruitment criteria included permanent residence in one of these villages and membership of a so-called “amputee family.” Applications from women were especially encouraged. Altogether, 31 recruits, 18 of them women, were selected for six weeks of training, after which they were dispatched to their home villages to commence demining operations. For the first few months, they were to be paired with experienced CMAC deminers in two-person teams, with each team being equipped with a single mine detector. The CBDs receive a salary of about $100 per month, roughly two-thirds that of a regular CMAC deminer.

Community Based Mine Risk Reduction (CBMRR)

Introduced in 2001—by CMAC, HIB, UNICEF, and other members of the Mine Awareness Working Group—CBMRR was designed as a sustainable and community-based approach to mine awareness in Cambodia, its ultimate goal being to facilitate a reduction in the number of mine and UXO casualties by enabling people to live more safely in contaminated environments through a multidisciplinary approach to mine action enhanced with community liaison. CBMRR thus seeks to integrate and link mine and UXO clearance, minefield marking, mine awareness, mine victim assistance, and development initiatives with communities living in contaminated areas. The project was implemented by CMAC, with technical assistance from Handicap International Belgium and UNICEF. CBMRR project

³ Community Based Demining and Locality Demining are different names for what is essentially the same approach.
⁴ Integrated Demining and Development and Integrated Mine Action Program are different names for what is essentially the same approach.
aims to reduce the number of mine/UXO casualties in its target areas through strategies contributing to risk reduction. Local people in the target areas are mobilized to become focal points for the mine/UXO problems in their communities through the establishment of Mine/UXO Committees at village, commune, and district level.

CBMRR also establishes links with community development projects to help reduce risk, and with victim assistance projects to facilitate the reintegration of individuals injured by landmines/UXO. CBMRR also performs a Mine Risk Education function, endeavoring to educate those potentially vulnerable to the dangers of landmines/UXO.

Community Mine Marking Team (CMT)

Established by CMAC in 1997, CMT has the role making rural communities more secure by reducing landmine/UXO casualties and supporting development activities in high-risk areas. CMTs conduct limited clearance tasks, such as clearing road access to water resources, schools, pagodas, and health-care center construction sites. CMTs also mark mined areas with long-term concrete marker poles to alert communities to the presence and extent of those danger areas.

During 2002, twelve CMTs were deployed in Battambang, Pursat, and Banteay Meanchey provinces and Pailin municipality. In 2003 and 2004, the number of CMTs was increased to fourteen and deployment to Siem Reap province was added.

Explosive Ordnance Disposal Team (EOD)

EOD teams are teams deployed to deactivate and destroy landmines/UXO and to respond to emergency requests from citizens for ordnance disposal. CMAC is the largest organization undertaking EOD in Cambodia. Halo Trust and MAG also do EOD work.

Integrated Demining and Development (CARE) and Integrated Mine Action Program (World Vision)

IDD and IMAP projects are ones in which demining organizations and development organizations form partnerships to apply their areas of expertise to a single project having both a demining and a development component. Examples of such projects are the CARE/CMAC IDD project in Bavel district, Battambang province, and the World Vision/MAG project in Banaan district, Battambang province.

Locality Demining (LD)

Established by MAG in January 2004, with the support of the Lutheran World Federation, this project provided the template for CMAC’s Community Based Demining, described above. Recruits, drawn from among the poorest families for the pilot project in Battambang province, include former soldiers, women, and amputees. MAG has endeavored to select the most vulnerable members of society for this work.

Following, four weeks of training, three twelve-person teams were deployed to areas of Battambang province to begin their demining work: two teams to Takrey commune, Kamrieng district, and one to Chak Krey commune, Phnom Prek district.

Each team works within its own local area, working from their own homes, on local land—but not on their own land—under the supervision of three experienced MAG demining experts. They employ the same equipment and protective clothing as professional deminers,
receive the same support and oversight (medics, ambulances, radios, insurance), and are
guided by the same SOPs.

**Mine Risk Education (MRE)**

MRE is an educational process intended to reduce landmine/UXO casualties by
educating those deemed vulnerable to the potential hazards of interacting with these
munitions. CMAC, Halo Trust, and MAG all operate MRE programs.

**Mine Risk Reduction Teams (MRT)**

Established in 2002 as a joint effort of HIB and CMAC, MRT is a multi-skilled unit
that engages in community liaison through village assessment tasks, minefield survey, mine
marking, mine clearance and UXO disposal, medical evacuation, and MRE.

There are, at present, six MRTs deployed and operating in Banteay Meanchey and
Battambang provinces and Pailin municipality.

**Technical Survey Team (TST)**

The role of TST, which was established by CMAC in 2002, is to collect sufficient
information to enable clearance requirements to be more accurately defined and clearance
operations to be carried out in a safe, effective, and efficient manner. Data gathered by TST
include: the dimensions of the areas slated for clearance, local soil conditions and vegetation
characteristics, and clearance depth. CMAC currently deploys two TSTs in Battambang
province, one in Banteay Meanchey province, and one in Pailin municipality.

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**CASE STUDY**

**MAG Locality Deminers**

On November 10, 2004, in Tuol Tel village—Takrey commune, Kamrieng district,
Battambang province—the research team encountered a half-dozen Locality Deminers, all of
them females, and asked each of them to tell us a little about their lives. Here is what they
told us:

1. Bun Sarom

   My name is Bun Sarom. I was born in Boeung Kampauk village, in Battambang
   province. I am 22 years old.

   I think it [locality demining] is a good job, because it is difficult to find a job near my
   village. If I take a job elsewhere, I will be far away from my parents. This way, I can go
   home every day.

   When I was little, I dreamed of becoming a doctor. But I realized I could not achieve
   this goal, because I had no money and I had to stop studying after grade 8 in order to find a
   job to help my family.

   With this job, I am hoping to save some money to open a small grocery shop after the
   job is finished.

2. Sam Nakry

   I was born in Kdel Tahaem village, but five years ago I moved to Damnak Sala
   village to find land there. I have five children—two sons and three daughters. I am 42. My
   husband died of malaria while working as a laborer in Pailin, and my eldest son, who is 21,
   suffers from a mental illness. My second son, age 19, has gone to work as a *chamkar* laborer.
in Thailand with my eldest daughter, who is thirteen. My other daughters, age five and seven, are both students. Demining is a good job. Before, I was a primary-school teacher, but the government salary was very low, and so I decided to change my job. My biggest dream is to have a better life.

3. Hong Kunthea

I was born in Takeo province, but I migrated to Samseb village, in Takrey commune, five years ago in order to find land. My husband left me for another woman. I have two sons, seven and eleven years old. I am 28.

Before this demining job, I was a porridge vendor. I have been a deminer for about ten months now. It is a good job, and I don’t worry about the danger because I am well-trained. When this job is finished, I want to use my savings to buy land for cultivating rice and cattle for ploughing.

4. Seun Neut

I was born in the Site Two Camp [i.e., a Khmer Rouge camp near the Cambodian border for people fleeing the invading Vietnamese]. I am 20 years old.

Five years ago, I came to Samseb village, in Takrey commune, to find land. I think demining is a good job, and I don’t worry about the danger because I have been well-trained in demining techniques.

When I was a little girl, my biggest dream was becoming a doctor, because then I would be able to earn money and to help my family when they became sick. But now my family is very poor, and I don’t know yet what I will do after this job is finished.

5. Huo Sokea

Five years ago, when I was 17, I left my birthplace, in Moung Reussey district, Battambang province, and came to Kamprang village, in Kamrieng district. My mother and sister had contracted a serious illness and had decided to sell the family house and rice land to raise the money for their treatment. I had heard that this area had lots of jobs and free land, and, because of this, my mother and sister followed me after they got well. We found [free] land for cultivating cash crops and purchased house land.

This [locality demining] job is the first job I have had in my whole life. It is a good job. I like it because I can earn money to help my family and help people avoid the risk of landmines.

Ten years from now, I hope I can have enough money saved to open a small grocery shop and buy land to grow rice and feed for livestock.

6. Moung Sopheap

I was born in the Site Two Camp [i.e., a Khmer Rouge camp near the Cambodian border for people fleeing the invading Vietnamese]. Then my family migrated to Thmor Korn district, in Banteay Meanchey province, where we live on somebody else’s land.

In 1990, we heard that the authorities had opened up free land for newcomers in Takrey commune and decided to go there.

I became a deminer ten months ago. I like it because I can earn money to help my family and also reduce the mine risk in the villages. The reason I became a deminer is that the LWF [Lutheran World Federation] went to each village in the commune to select a person from a very poor family. They came to our house and asked my parents what they thought of this, and they explained that all of those chosen would have to participate in training for demining.

My biggest dream is to become a vendor of rice or groceries in the market.
As part of our study, our team was tasked to attempt to gauge the impact of these new approaches generally on informal village demining. In an effort to accomplish this, we made inquiries of the 22 informal village deminers in our sample; of ordinary villagers assembled for focus group discussions in 11 of the 14 villages that comprised our field sites; and of local representatives of all of the formal demining organizations—CMAC, MAG, and Halo Trust—that were currently, or had been recently, active in those villages. Some or all of these approaches had at one time or another been employed in all of the villages in our sample.

**Informal Village Deminers:**

Asked to tell us whether, in their opinion, the new approaches implemented in their respective villages have been “good or bad, helpful or not helpful,” 21—or 95%—of our informal-deminer respondents said they had all been good as well as helpful. The twenty-second respondent said he had no opinion.

“They [i.e., the new approaches] are good,” one informal deminer responded, “because since they have come to this village, people always feel afraid of mines and they never touch them.”

“They are very good and helpful,” replied another, “because since the arrival of those teams, at least people are aware of mine accidents.”

EOD was singled out for special praise by five respondents: “EOD is the best one,” said one man, “because they come to this village to follow up every day except Saturday and Sunday.”

“All of them are good, but EOD is the best one,” said another man. “Because when people see a mine, they just tell CBMRR, and EOD will come to help us.”

CMT was singled out for special praise by three respondents: “They are good, but CMT is the best one, because when people see mine marking, they don’t go near there because they are afraid of mine accidents.”

“They are useful, especially CMT, “answered a second man, “because when people see the mine marking, they feel so afraid and they never come to those places.”

“They are really very good and useful,” replied yet another respondent, “especially CMT and EOD.”

As suggested in their opinion, any of the new approaches had had the effect of reducing the landmine/UXO risk in their respective villages, 21—or 95%—of our informal deminer respondents answered in the affirmative. One respondent said he had no opinion.

One respondent noted that “Since they [the new approaches] have been implemented in this village, I have rarely seen people have mine accidents.”

Another answered that the new approaches “reduce [risk] a lot, especially CMT, because when people see the sign they won’t go inside.”

Yet another said, “Yes, it reduces [risk] about eighty percent. [But] twenty percent still have [mine] accidents because of clearing land for cultivation.”

Asked whether any of the new approaches had been sufficiently successful to enable them either to reduce the amount of demining that they themselves did, or to cease demining entirely, 15—or 68%—of the 22 respondents answered in the affirmative and seven—or 32%—of them answered in the negative (see Figure 9).
Of the 15 respondents who said that the new approaches had been sufficiently successful to enable them to reduce, or cease altogether, the amount of demining that they themselves did, three credited EOD with enabling them either to stop or cut back. One respondent credited MRE, and one credited CBMRR.

Four credited a commitment by CMAC to demine their agricultural land. Two cited a commitment by CMAC to demine their house land—in at least one case, in connection with the demining of a road.

Another respondent, affirming that he had been able to reduce the amount of demining he did, answered “Yes. But not 100%. Only about 50%, because they [the demining organizations] demine only community land.”

Of the seven respondents who answered in the negative, all of them cited the unwillingness of the demining organizations to demine individual land, whether agricultural land or house land. Typical of these responses were these:

“No. Because they don’t demine individual land.”

“No, because CMAC doesn’t demine any land for my family.”

“No, because CMAC doesn’t demine house or agricultural land.” (See Tables 6 and 7.)
Table 6: Informal Village Deminers Interviewed: Which of the Following Mine Action Activities Have Occurred in This Village?

(N = 22)

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Province</th>
<th>Mine Action Activities</th>
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<td>Banteay Mancheay</td>
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Table 7: Informal Village Deminers Interviewed: For Those Mine Action Activities That Have Occurred in This Village, Please Tell Us Whether You Think They Have Been Helpful or Not?

(N = 22)

<table>
<thead>
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<td><strong>0</strong></td>
<td><strong>1</strong></td>
<td><strong>22</strong></td>
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</table>

 Asked whether they had ever been exposed to Mine Risk Education in their village, 18 responded in the affirmative and four responded in the negative.

 Asked “What did you think of it? Was it useful? Was it foolish?” all those who had been exposed to it regarded it as having been useful. (Those who had never been exposed to MRE were, of course, ineligible to respond to this question.)

 Respondents generally praised MRE as an effective means of reducing risk, stressing the anxiety it inculcated as successful in inhibiting people from contact with mines, and also its success in raising awareness of the difficulties that would beset their families if they had an accident.

 As one man put it, “It is very useful because it makes me think about mine accidents and it makes me so afraid.”

 Another said, “It was useful because people are aware of mine accidents and they know the difficulties when a member of their family has a mine accident.”

 “It is very useful,” a third man said, “especially for those who go to the forest for logging.”
CASE STUDY
Illegal Logging

In Veng Nop village (not its real name), in Battambang province, where our research team conducted interviews with informal village deminers, a formidable stack of heavy hand-hewn hardwood planks, cut from the nearby forest, stood by the main road awaiting the arrival of the large truck that would soon transport them to Thailand. Cambodian villagers are lawfully entitled to cut as much wood as they need from the forest for their own use, but they are forbidden to log the forest’s trees for export. The law notwithstanding, logging for export remains a vital, and lucrative, underpinning of the village economy. Since forested areas are often mined, villagers often endeavor to clear forest paths.

Three times a week, explained the village chief, the truck rolls down the road past the village to collect their wood, which, following its processing in Thailand, will ultimately reappear in Thai markets or be exported to other countries in the value-added form of doors, windows, and household furniture.

Once the contraband wood has been loaded, a pile of charcoal is poured over it to conceal its presence. The week we were there, however, the truck did not come. But the chief assured us that soon enough it would come and that business would continue as usual.

How much is a single truckload worth? The answer, we were told, is eight thousand Thai baht, or about $200. The village chief told us that he himself sells two to three loads a year.

Representatives of Demining Organizations:

The research team conducted a total of 22 field interviews with representatives of demining organizations and of integrated demining and development organizations. Between them, this group of interviewees had been involved in all of the approaches to mine actions that are listed above.

Asked whether they thought that informal village demining is a good thing or a bad thing, 16—or 73%—of the people we interviewed judged it a bad thing; two—or 9%—of them deemed it a good thing; and the remaining four respondents—the remaining 18%—declined to offer an opinion (see Figure 10).

Asked to explain their answer, seven—or 32%—of them cited the informal deminers’ lack of general training and skills, including training in the use of metal detectors; three—or 14%—cited their lack of metal detectors, but made no mention of their lack of training to use them; one—or 5%—said that they lack Standard Operating Procedures, i.e., of the kind employed by the formal demining organizations; two—or 9%—said the informal deminers provide a bad example to the younger generation; one—or 5%—said that there are other forms of employment available to them, e.g., as hired agricultural laborers; one said that because their work is deficient, it can cause others to have accidents; one—or 5%—cited the sorrow and hardship that their disability or death will inflict on their family members; and one—or 5%—replied that informal demining is a bad thing “because they [the informal deminers] dislike their life and are insolent.”
In your opinion, is informal village demining a good thing or a bad thing?

![Pie chart showing opinions on informal village demining]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Opinion</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Good thing</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bad thing</td>
<td>73%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No opinion</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Of the two mine action respondents—or 9% of the sample—who said that they deemed informal village demining a good thing, one argued that it serves to reduce villagers’ risk and that if they wait for CMAC to help them, too much time will pass; and the other stated that informal demining “is a good thing because they can help to reduce the risk of mine accidents in the village [and] people can have enough land for cultivation. Because if they wait for CMAC, they don’t know when CMAC will come.”

Four of those interviewed—the remaining 18%—did not respond to the question.

In all of these interviews with mine action personnel, the respondents were asked to list the mine action approaches with which they had been personally involved and to rate each approach in terms of whether, in their opinion, it had been successful in reducing risk, had had the undesired effect of increasing risk, or had left the level of risk the same as it had been before the approach was applied.

Almost always, these respondents asserted that the approach or approaches with which they had been associated had been successful in reducing risk in the villages where the respondents worked. There were, however, a small number of exceptions, and we note them here for whatever anecdotal value they may possess:

In Battambang province, a member of the CBMRR network told us that CBMRR has not succeeded in reducing risk in his village, because, he said, although he communicates to villagers the location of mine-suspect places, “Some people will not listen,” and persist in going to those places despite his warnings.

In another village in Battambang province, a member of the CBMRR village network told us that CBMRR has reduced the risk there, but that some people persist in demining for themselves despite his attempts to educate them.

In a village in Pailin municipality, a member of the CBMRR village network opined that CBMRR “has reduced risk for the original villagers and increased it for newcomers,” and then went on to explain that the mine marking signs that had been placed there had assisted the longtime residents in avoiding accidents, while some newcomers had tossed away the signs and constructed their houses on the mined land.

In a village of Banteay Meanchey province, a member of the CBMRR village network told us that although some villagers stay away from mines/UXO since receiving MRE, the risk level in his village remained substantially unchanged. The reason, he said, is that CMAC
hasn’t demined a path to the forest for cutting firewood or collecting wood for sale. He said CMAC had demined only pagoda land, leaving local people to demine their own paths into the forest.

“Even though villagers are aware of the dangers of UXO,” he went on, “some villagers still demine paths for cutting the forest and for cultivation because CMAC doesn’t demine those kinds of land for them.”

**Focus Group Discussions:**

Focus group discussions were held in 11 of the 14 villages that served as research sites for this research, with the typical discussion having between 10 and 20 participants.

Asked where the mines were to be found in their village, participants in all 11 discussions cited agricultural land. Mined housing land was cited in seven of these discussions. Water resources (lakes, streams, ponds) and roads were each cited in six of them. Paths were cited in three of them. Bamboo forest land and a catch-all category, “all kinds of land,” were cited in one focus group discussion apiece (see Figure 11).

**Figure 11: What types of land are contaminated by landmines in this village?**

![Bar chart showing types of contaminated land](chart)

Asked whether, in their opinion, “the demining organizations [are] doing a good job or a bad job of clearing the mines in this village,” eight of our 11 focus groups—73% of them—agreed they were doing a good job.

But when asked, in a subsequent question, whether “people here ask informal village deminers to help clear their land” for them, eight of our 11 focus groups—i.e., 73% of them—responded in the affirmative, with six of those eight having been among those who told us that the formal demining organizations are doing a good job (see Table 8).

The underlying message is clear: CMAC, Halo, and MAG may be doing a great job, but 73% of the villages in our focus-group sample still feel they need informal demining help to make them feel safe.
Table 8: Focus Group Discussions: Are the Demining Organizations Doing a Good Job? And Do People Here Ask Others with Demining Experience to Clear Their Land for Them?

(N = 11)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Province</th>
<th>Village Name</th>
<th>Demining Orgs. Doing Good Job</th>
<th>Ask Informal Village Deminers to Clear for Them</th>
<th>Orgs. Doing Good Job but Also Ask IVDs to Help</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Battambang</td>
<td>Raksmey Sangha Neang Lem Ou Anluk Preah Puth</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ou Cheukram Psar Prum (Thmey) Baysey</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Banteay Ti Muoy Khla Ngoab Banteay Ti Pir Seila Khmaer</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pailin</td>
<td>Ou Cheukram Psar Prum (Thmey) Baysey</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Banteay Ti Muoy Khla Ngoab Banteay Ti Pir Seila Khmaer</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Banteay Meanchey</td>
<td>Banteay Ti Muoy Khla Ngoab Banteay Ti Pir Seila Khmaer</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals:</td>
<td>(eight villages) 73%</td>
<td>(eight villages) 73%</td>
<td>(six villages) 55%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Asked whether there are any people in their village who do demining for money, only the focus group in one village—Raksmey Sangha, in Battambang province—responded in the affirmative, but focus groups in three of the villages in our sample—in Raksmey Sangha and Neang Lem villages, in Battambang province, and in Ou Cheukram village, in Pailin municipality—took us that people in their villages had, at one time or another, paid informal deminers to demine their land for them.

Asked whether people in their village fear that if their land is not cleared quickly, wealthy people might steal it, focus groups in six of the villages in our sample responded in the affirmative, while focus groups in the other five villages responded in the negative (see Figure 12).

Typical of those focus groups whose participants were fearful of the possible appropriation of their land by the wealthy were these comments:

"All of us are afraid that this problem will happen in our village again, because it has happened within the past few months."

"We all fear this problem because we are poor people. We have heard about this problem [occurring] in other villages, but poor people never win."
Figure 12: Do people here fear that if their land isn't cleared quickly, wealthy people might steal it?

No: 5 villages

Yes: 6 villages
7. Recognizing Informal Village Demining

Informal village demining is the people’s response to an overwhelming, wholly legitimate need: the need for livelihood land that is free, or at least reasonably so, of landmines and UXO. Because the RGC has elected not to clear such land, the people who live and work on that land have, out of understandable desperation, taken it upon themselves to demine it on their own. Those who have prior experience of laying and removing mines, owing to their past military service, are arguably the best suited to perform this task. For those who lack such experience—or who, quite understandably, lack the desire to acquire it—an informal-sector response has arisen to attempt to fill the gaping void in the government’s mine action agenda.

We can choose to fight over the government’s priorities, or we can accept them. Fighting over them seems pointless, in large measure because those priorities are not unreasonable ones. The alternative, more productive response is for government to legitimize the informal-sector response so as to enable it to impose training, performance, and equipment standards; to monitor this informal, but hugely productive, component of the mine action sector; and to weed out charlatans and rogue operators.

Legitimizing what is now informal village demining will generate huge benefits for Cambodia and its people, as well as for the donors and the gigantic, unwieldy mine action apparatus that their funding supports. These will include a hugely reduced casualty rate; a quantum leap in the availability of productive land; a wealthier, better fed, population; far greater freedom from fear than now prevails; and a drastic reduction in the various fraudulent practices (e.g., bribes and illegal fees demanded by village chiefs; the use of poor families as fronts by the wealthy to get the formal demining organizations to clear their land; etc.) that have been associated with the demining of agricultural land.

In the section that follows, we set forth a scheme for legitimizing the informal mine action sector and for resolving the objections that are commonly raised to this. We urge the mine action community in Cambodia to consider this plan and to assist in devising ways to improve it.

RESIDUAL RISK/LIABILITY

An informal mine action sector already exists in Cambodia, and village communities and individuals are already paying its practitioners cash money to perform demining tasks for them. At least one local NGO, which we have pseudonymously dubbed the Angels of Heaven, operating with financial support from outside the country, has already come forward to support these informal efforts.

When villagers employ informal deminers to demine their land for them, they understand that the informals are liable to do less than a perfect job—i.e., that the deminers they’ve hired will not be demining to IMAS standards—and that they, the villagers, will have to accept some residual risk (see Figure 13).
In practice, the villagers who employ informal deminers have their own “liability” system: when the informals are working, their customers watch them like hawks to ensure that the deminers search every meter of their land thoroughly for mines and UXO.

When the Angels of Heaven selects a site for clearance and hires informal deminers to demine, it first obtains signed contracts from both district and community officials—and from the deminers themselves—accepting liability for the deminers’ work. (Note that it is not Angels that is accepting liability here, but rather the community itself.)

Provincial officials also give their assent to these contracts. Angels claims that in the five years or so that it has been engaged in this work, there has never been an accident on any of the land it has paid to demine.

A study to determine the extent to which landmine/UXO accidents have occurred on informally demined land needs to be undertaken before any steps can be taken to devise an appropriate liability system. Care needs to be taken, however, to avoid imposing a scheme that would place such a heavy burden on informal-sector deminers that we would end up placing low-cost demining services beyond the reach of the intended beneficiaries. One idea worthy of consideration would be to limit the liability incurred by officials to providing, at no charge, the services currently available under the Cambodian health service.

**FUNDING**

The typical very poor family in Cambodia has a total landholding of 2,000 square meters—i.e., one-fifth of a hectare—for housing and farmland, usually measuring 20 x 100 meters. This is CMAC’s criterion for a single family.
A single cleared hectare, therefore, is typically divided into five family plots, each of which provides a viable amount of land for a family’s house and for the cultivation of its subsistence crops.

As part of our research, we gathered data on the fees charged by informal deminers, some of whom offered to plough the land they demined for an added fee. Rates differed, but typically ranged around $100 to $125 per hectare for demining plus ploughing.

The Angels of Heaven typically pays about $75 per hectare for demining and $37.50 per hectare for ploughing. Dividing these figures by five—to come up with the cost of demining and ploughing one-fifth of a hectare—yields a cost of $15 for demining a 2,000 square meter plot and an additional cost of $7.50 for ploughing that plot—for a combined demining-plus-ploughing cost of $22.50 for a 2,000 square meter plot.

CMAC’s cost of clearing that same plot, without ploughing, is estimated at about $2,000.

This dramatic potential cost reduction notwithstanding, $15.00 for demining, and possibly an added-on $7.50 for ploughing, may still be a sum beyond the reach of many poor families.

How, then, to fund this? Will the donors be willing? We think they should be, but we don’t know if they will.

Our recommendation is that the cost of legitimized informal demining be funded by revolving micro-credit schemes. For $15.00, under this system—$22.50 if ploughing were included—a poor farmer would acquire a cleared 2,000-square-meter plot and would have accepted some residual risk; and his community will have accepted liability.

TRAINING

For those wishing to demine land other than their own land, an appropriate training program is advisable, perhaps utilizing the CMAC training facility in Kampong Chhnang. For those who satisfactorily complete the program, a training certificate ought to be provided to certify the skills and knowledge that the graduates have gained.

A full course in demining should not be necessary, but should include instruction in demining to a depth of 10 centimeters, the clearance depth prescribed by the Cambodian Mine Action Standards. The trainees should also be instructed in “full excavation”—a fully accredited, albeit laborious, demining technique designed for dealing with “non-magnetic mines,” which have no metal—which would enable them to demine without metal detectors, as the vast majority of them do now, in the event that, for whatever reason, metal detectors are not made available to them.

If, as we hope will be the case, the newly trained informal deminers are equipped with metal detectors, then they would be able to employ the same procedures as formal deminers—marking off lanes, for example—to reduce the possibility of their failing to detect a landmine. But there is no need to compel these deminers to work in teams. Rather, as independent demining entrepreneurs, they should be free to work in whichever ways they choose. The addition of a ploughing service would serve to reduce their landholder customers’ residual risk even further by turning over the land prior to its being used.
DISPOSAL

To enable them to carry out a much-needed new role in the new sort of informal mine action envisioned in this report, the appropriate role of the police will need to be reconsidered. Their overseeing of disposals—to ensure that any munitions found by the accredited demining entrepreneurs are promptly destroyed and are not retained by the deminers or transferred into the possession of any unauthorized person—would be one option to consider.
8. Summary

All of the signatories to the Ottawa convention are pledged to clear all of the landmines on their territory within 10 years’ time, but Cambodia’s deadline is scheduled to come due in 2009 and there is no way on earth they are going to be able to meet it. Extensions are allowable under the Ottawa Convention, and Cambodia is most certainly going to need one.

As time drags on, however, the donors are liable either to significantly reduce their contributions to Cambodian mine action or to withdraw them altogether. If Cambodia is forced to go it alone, or with a drastically reduced budget, then Cambodia is going to have to make compromises, and these will almost certainly entail the adoption of a code of mine action standards that are significantly less stringent than IMAS.

IMAS is the 800-pound gorilla of mine action: nobody wants to tangle with it. But the IMAS standards are not heaven sent. Neither do they constitute a body of internationally codified laws. They are merely standards, and individual countries are explicitly authorized to modify them in accordance with their perceived national needs: “National governments have the right to apply national standards to national programmes…” (Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining 2004:8).

National standards are intended to take precedence over the IMAS standards. The IMAS call for landmine clearance to a depth of 13 centimeters, for example, but the Cambodian standards call for clearance to a depth of only 10 centimeters, and one hears no complaints about this. The real issue, then, is not whether the IMAS standards may be adjusted to meet the practical circumstances of individual countries—they may be—but whether the donors who support these programs will continue to support them once the standards are lowered.

If, or when, the donors substantially reduce their support of mine action in Cambodia, then Cambodia will have no alternative but to reduce its clearance standards accordingly to meet the new reality. At least two excellent reports—Serco Assurance 2002 (for DFID) and Griffin and Keeley 2004 (for UNDP)—have called attention to this issue: the former explicitly, by calling for different levels of treatment, and therefore acceptance of different levels of residual risk, for different sorts of land-use areas; the latter implicitly, by recommending that “areas that are already in use and that are presenting no problem to existing communities” be eliminated from clearance consideration altogether.

This report endorses a third option—that of legitimizing, training, and equipping Cambodia’s informal demining entrepreneurs—but this recommendation, like the other two, also requires that the IMAS standards not be regarded as holy writ. Indeed, it is our contention that any plan that is put forward in the hope of drastically reducing costs while continuing to support Cambodia’s demining effort is going to have to grapple with this issue and reach some sort of compromise—because the only alternatives are likely to be either to abandon Cambodia to its fate or to feed the mine-action beast for another 50 years.
9. Conclusions

1. “Individual,” or “privately held,” land—what we have been referring to as “livelihood land”—is being systematically, overwhelmingly, ignored by Cambodia’s formal mine action sector, which has failed to be sufficiently responsive to community needs.

2. Informal village demining is the people’s response to this.

3. For quite some time now, Cambodia’s informal village deminers have been, and continue to be, significant contributors to the effort to reduce landmine/UXO casualties in Cambodia.

4. Informal village demining is not illegal.

5. For ethical as well as financial reasons, the formal mine action sector needs to engage constructively and creatively with the informal mine action sector in Cambodia.

6. For this to be possible, it is essential that we have accurate knowledge of the true scope of the informal village deminer phenomenon in Cambodia. How many informal deminers are there? How are they distributed within the country?

7. Until the land that has already been demined by informal village deminers is mapped and included in the national database, or in a readily accessible adjunct thereto, neither the RGC, the donors, nor the mine action community will have the capacity to gauge accurately the scope and extent of the remaining mine clearance task in Cambodia.

8. The extent to which land demined by informal village deminers has been treated or cleared is unknown.

9. The number and extent of the accidents that have occurred on land that has been cleared or treated by informal village deminers is unknown.

10. The RGC and the country’s mine action sector have failed to make a commitment to the Cambodian people to clear their livelihood land of landmines/UXO within a reasonable, foreseeable timeframe.

11. Informal village demining is the people’s response to that failure.

12. So long as this remains the case, people’s only alternatives will be to continue to live and work on mined land, or to demine it themselves. Demining it themselves is a justifiable alternative under the circumstances and deserves the wholehearted support of the RGC, the donor community, and the formal mine action sector.

13. An appropriate program of training and equipping informal demining entrepreneurs would benefit Cambodian society by enhancing informal deminers’ skills and making their work more reliable and effective.

14. It is envisaged that such a system, once put into place, would result in an explosion of freelance, low-cost demining firms that would compete to provide demining services to people living and working on landmine/UXO-contaminated land.

15. Such a system might well lock out the very poor, who might be unable to afford even the very low fees that the new demining firms would charge them for service. In order
to forestall this possibility, it is recommended that a study be undertaken to explore the feasibility of employing revolving micro-credit schemes to make it possible for the very poor to have access to low-cost demining services.

16. A pilot project for the purpose of testing these conclusions and the recommendations that follow from them has been devised and needs to be implemented.
10. Recommendations

1. A more constructive approach to the informal village demining phenomenon is in order. To the extent that informal village deminers have been marginalized vis à vis the formal mine action sector, this marginalization should end, and their contribution needs to be examined more closely—and appreciated more fully—than it has been.

2. Informal village demining should be formally recognized as a legitimate and constructive component of the mine action sector.

3. The formal mine action sector should engage constructively and creatively with the informal mine action sector in Cambodia, recognizing its practitioners as partners and colleagues who are playing a major role—if not the major role—in demining the country.

4. The formal mine action sector should seek to acquire, through a program of research, accurate knowledge of the true scope of the informal village demining phenomenon in Cambodia. How many informal deminers are there? How are they distributed within the country?

5. It is recommended that CMVIS, being the entity uniquely situated and qualified to collect this information, should be tasked with the responsibility of gathering this information.

6. To enable the RGC, the donors, and the mine action community to gauge accurately the scope and extent of the remaining mine clearance task in Cambodia, a comprehensive effort should be made to locate the land that has already been demined by informal village deminers and to map it using GPS technology.

7. To locate the land that informal village deminers have already demined, it is recommended that CBMRR be tasked to query the village deminers as to what land they’ve demined and where it is located, and then to communicate these findings to their superiors. (If the informal deminers agreed to cooperate with this survey only on the condition that their names not be disclosed, there is no reason why their desire for anonymity should not be respected.).

8. This task having been completed, appropriate sampling procedures should be employed to determine the extent to which land demined by informal deminers has been treated or cleared.

9. As one means of establishing the efficacy of informal deminers’ work, appropriate survey techniques should be employed to ascertain the number of accidents that have occurred on land that was previously demined by informal village deminers.

10. CMVIS, being the entity uniquely situated and qualified to collect this information, should be tasked with the responsibility of gathering this information.

11. The land demined by informal village deminers should be included in the national database, or in an adjunct to the national database, so that it may be freely accessible to all interested parties.

12. Absent any concrete commitment by the RGC and the formal mine action sector to clear villagers’ “livelihood land” within any reasonable timeframe, individuals should be left free to demine their own land, if they choose to do so, without restrictions of any kind.
13. For informal-sector deminers wishing to demine land that is not their own, either as a favor to others or for a fee, it is envisaged that an appropriate training program be devised and appropriate equipment provided.

14. Upon satisfactory completion of training, the new trainees should receive a certificate attesting to the knowledge and skills they have acquired in their course.

15. To enable them to carry out a much-needed new role in the new sort of informal mine action envisioned in this report, the appropriate role of the police will need to be reconsidered. Their overseeing of disposals—to ensure that any munitions found by the accredited demining entrepreneurs are promptly destroyed and are not either retained by the deminers or transferred into the possession of any unauthorized person—would be one option to consider.

16. But because such a fee-for-service system might well lock out the very poor, who might be unable to afford even the very low fees charged for demining services, it is recommended that a study be undertaken to explore the feasibility of employing revolving micro-credit schemes to make it possible for even the very poor to have access to low-cost demining services.

17. Finally, it is recommended that a pilot project should be undertaken to test the soundness and efficacy of these proposals.
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Annexes

Annex A

Terms of Reference of the Study

1. Definition of informal village demining

The term ‘village demining’ refers to mine clearance and at times, disposal activities undertaken by villagers who are not professional mine action staff. As described in the HiB report "Spontaneous Demining Initiatives - Mine clearance by villagers in rural Cambodia (SDI), there are perhaps two principal categories of people within villagers who are involved in mine clearance and disposal of one sort or another.

The first group comprised people who openly identify themselves as village deminers, or those who “doh min”, which translated, literally means to clear mines. This refers to “…those villagers who carry out a more technical, comprehensive type of clearance, involving the prodding of the ground and often the extraction and dismantling of the mines once they have been removed”\(^5\). It was to these people that the researchers would be generally directed to by village authorities and other villagers.

The second comprised villagers who may also clear mines or UXO but in a much less technical and comprehensive manner. In most cases, this group would only remove those mines which were visible and would not attempt to disarm the ordnance but simply move it out the way. Others did not touch mines they had found, but would place firewood around them and try to burn them in-situ. The research found that villagers often confessed to doing both of these things, although they did not consider themselves to be village deminers.


"I have never demined, but whenever I find a mine, or do my farming in my chamkar with mines, I just collect them up and leave in one place. If I found an unknown mine which I’m not able to pick up, I ask for help from the village deminers, or sometimes I collect firewood and put it on the mine, and then burn it so as to destroy it”.

Villager, Pem Ta village, Ta Touk commune, Samlot district, Battambang province.

2. Background and justification

The fact that villagers are involved in conducting mine clearance in Cambodia has been noted and documented to some extent since the early 1990s. Information available at that time led to considerable debate within the mine action sector in Cambodia as to how this issue should be addressed. “Some practitioners felt that the village deminers should be trained to improve the safety and quality of their work, while others felt that training villagers would increase the risks for both them and their fellow villagers. In the late 1990s, this debate remained unresolved, and both villagers and mine action organizations continued their work largely independent of each other”.

One of the first indications of the extent of informal village demining in Cambodia came from Cambodian Mine Action Centre (CMAC) database records. In 1999, the Landmine Monitor Report quoted figures provided by CMAC suggesting that approximately 78% of the total area of land cleared up until August 1998 had been accomplished by local people. A similar picture was also described in the 2000 report, estimating that village demining accounted for some 45% of total area of land cleared between 1993-1999. Such figures illustrated that village mine clearance activities were occurring on a relatively large scale throughout Cambodia, prior to and despite the arrival of mine action organizations.

Concerned about the risks that villagers were undertaking by entering mine contaminated areas and clearing mines, Handicap International Belgium decided to instigate a six-month study to investigate the occurrence of informal village demining initiatives (SDI). The SDI study was carried out in the heavily mine-contaminated regions of north-western Cambodia between July 2000 and January 2001.

What this research and further analysis of informal village demining confirmed was that village mine clearance “…is a strategy employed by particularly vulnerable families who have few existing resources or support systems …is carried out only when required and as dictated by livelihood needs. Usually there is very clear understanding of the risk involved in the activity, both to the deminers themselves and to others, and it is this awareness of the inherent danger of the activity that often dissuades villagers from undertaking mine clearance work for other people.” (Bottomley, 2003:130)

Another crucial finding concerned the extent to which informal village demining was occurring in the same villages and at the same time as formal mine action operations. In fact, such parallel activity was noted in almost two out of every three villages surveyed during the study. This raises the important question as to whether the type and amount of land cleared by mine action organizations is actually meeting the real needs and priorities of mine-affected communities.

With its focus on safety and as near to 100% clearance as possible, professional demining is ultimately slow. As a result, the number of direct beneficiaries is generally very limited,” …leaving the majority of mine-affected villagers to cope alone with their mine-affected environments. This is perhaps one of the major factors for the continued occurrence of village demining in Cambodia today”.

Mine action organizations working in Cambodia openly recognize this and have adopted a number of different approaches in an attempt to better respond to the needs and priorities of mine-affected communities. Most of these have involved adapting existing operational structures, such as the creation and deployment of smaller, more mobile demining teams. Others have focused on achieving greater community engagement through the use of liaison teams or strategies designed to develop and enhance local community capacity in planning and problem solving. A good example of this is the Community Based Mine Risk Reduction (CBMRR) project of CMAC.

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8 Based on information provided by CMAC, the Mines Advisory Group and Halo Trust.

9 Study on the Phenomenon of Spontaneous Demining Initiatives in rural areas of Cambodia; funded by HIB, ECHO, 2000 and “Crossing the Divide - Landmines, Villagers and Organizations”. Bottomley, R, March 2003.
While the adoption of such initiatives represents a positive shift within mine action, their impact in terms of addressing the needs and underlying vulnerabilities fueling informal village demining is still largely unknown. Even if such responses can be scaled-up in the near future, they are still unlikely to meet the needs of all villagers living in mine-contaminated areas in Cambodia until the roots of the existence of informal village demining are clearly identified.

As such it is imperative that the sector intensifies its efforts on “…developing low key, flexible and inexpensive response capacities”. It is equally obvious that this needs be done in tandem with those who are most affected. Village deminers in Cambodia “…have demonstrated that there are local-level capabilities that are being used by people … to deal with the environment in which they live. These capabilities should not be ignored because they contradict the dominant justification for mine action. Instead, they should serve to inform mine action practitioners of the strengths and weaknesses of the recipient communities, and of the strengths and weaknesses of the intervention itself. …The real issue is not one of village versus professional deminers, but one of the need to free mine contaminated land and resources for local community use”.

“As funding for mine action declines, it is going to be imperative that the sector becomes more accountable to its recipients and more developmental in its approach”. This much is generally agreed within the Humanitarian Mine Action (HMA) sector. As such, there is a need to seriously consider the issues raised by recent research and begin to rethink and redesign some of the “…processes, approaches and concepts of mine action”.

The operational study proposes to examine how HMA organizations in Cambodia have responded to some of these challenges, and in light the findings of the two previous HIB investigations (SDI and Crossing the Divide), explore what further initiatives could be pursued to mitigate levels of risk associated with informal village demining and optimize the match between HMA responses and actual community need.

3. Organization leading the study

HANDICAP INTERNATIONAL BELGIUM (HIB) is involved in humanitarian mine action programs as a preventative means of tackling one of the main causes of disability in countries affected by civil war. In Cambodia, HIB has been directly involved in humanitarian mine action programs since 1992, initially supporting teams of Cambodian deminers working under the supervision of the United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC).

From 1993 to 2000, HIB principally provided support to the Cambodian Mine Action Centre (CMAC) and worked in collaboration with the Cambodian Red Cross to develop the Cambodia Mine/UXO Victim Information System (CMVIS), which provides data on the landmine and UXO casualty situation in Cambodia. In addition, HIB has been involved in the development and support of a land-use planning process for demined land (LUPU), and from 2001 to 2002 provided technical assistance and support to CMAC in the development of an integrated and sustainable community-oriented risk-reduction project, Community Based Mine/UXO Risk Reduction (CBMRR).

Also in partnership with CMAC, HIB is working on the development of a new mine-clearance concept through the establishment of Mine Risk Reduction Teams (MRRTs) combining mine risk education, community liaison, limited mine clearance, village survey and UXO destruction towards mitigating the impact of landmines and UXO to the most affected communities in Cambodia.

An issue that has been of particular interest to HIB since the early 1990s has been the occurrence of mine clearance activities by villagers in Cambodia. It was for this reason that HIB carried out a six-month research study to investigate village mine clearance activities in the summer of 2001. The study of village mine-clearance has proven its relevance in that the findings have continued to inform other projects developed by the Mine and Disability Prevention Department of HIB Cambodia office. HIB in Cambodia continues to ensure that village demining is an issue that is kept on the mine action agenda.

4. Principal objectives of the study

Global objective

To determine how Humanitarian Mine Action organizations can best respond to the occurrence of informal village demining, describing the types of advocacy and operational responses that would not only minimize levels of risk associated with such clearance activities, but lead to the development of sustainable responses based on a thorough understanding of the principal causes and underlying vulnerabilities driving the phenomenon.

Specific objectives

1. Expand the existing theoretic framework proposed to explain the phenomenon of informal village demining and develop a comprehensive matrix describing how vulnerabilities and relative risk factors common to mine affected communities contribute to the occurrence of such clearance activity.

2. Describe what HMA responses are currently in use or are under investigation to address the incidence of informal village demining, particularly in areas where such clearance has or is still occurring in parallel with formal mine action operations.

3. Assess and describe how these responses have contributed to mitigating risk associated with informal village demining, as well as optimizing the overall responsiveness of HMA to actual community need.

4. Determine the ethical, legal, regulatory and operational boundaries governing the scope of HMA operations in Cambodia and identify possible impediments to village demining activities.

5. Within the determined boundaries, describe additional forms of advocacy and operational responses, including greater engagement with and support for village deminers that HMA organizations could legitimately adopt to mitigate risk associated with informal village demining and better respond to community need.

6. Taking into account issues of operational capacity, cost benefit and likely impact, analyze the feasibility of implementing such responses and determine what combination would be most effective in achieving the desired outcomes outlined in the global objective.

7. Describe what organizational culture, material and human resources and institutional partnerships would be required by HMA organizations to effectively implement the recommended options.

8. Share study recommendations with HMA implementers operating in Cambodia and gain maximum support from national and international HMA stakeholders.

5. Expected key outputs

It is envisaged that the study will provide the following key outputs:

Objective 1

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11 This refers to the theoretic framework proposed by R. Bottomley in the report “Crossing the Divide - Landmines, Villagers and Organizations; PRI0, HIB and UNICEF 01, 2003).

12 It is intended that the study use a health promotion approach to problem analysis identifying predisposing, enabling and reinforcing contributing risk factors across a spectrum of domains (e.g. individual beliefs, attitudes and practices; socio-economic, cultural, legal and regulatory environments; availability and relevance of mine clearance, Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) and mine risk education (MRE) assistance; etc).

13 Refers to national legal frameworks as well as international laws, treaties and agreements.

14 Refers to national regulatory frameworks as well as compliance with International Mine Action Standards (IMAS).

15 Refers to national mine action priorities, overall sectoral capacity, cost effectiveness of responses, quality assurance requirements, etc.
Development of a comprehensive matrix proposing the principal community and individual vulnerabilities and relative risk factors\(^{16}\) that pre-dispose, enable and reinforce rural villagers undertaking informal mine clearance. Although this guide will be used primarily as a planning and assessment tool for the purposes of study, it is likely to provide a useful framework for informing the development and deployment of future HMA responses.

**Objectives 2 & 3**
- Description of what responses HMA organizations\(^{17}\) have implemented to address the occurrence of informal village demining, particularly in areas where such clearance has or is still occurring in parallel with formal mine action operations.
- Assessment of what impact these responses have had on mitigating risk associated with informal village demining, as well as optimizing the overall responsiveness of HMA to actual community need.

**Objective 4**
- Determination of the ethical, legal, regulatory and operational boundaries governing the scope of HMA operations and village demining activities in Cambodia.

**Objective 5**
- Identification and description of what additional advocacy and operational responses, including greater engagement with and support for village deminers\(^{18}\), HMA organizations could legitimately adopt to mitigate risk associated with informal village demining and better respond to community need.

**Objectives 6 & 7**
- Identification and description of different advocacy and operational responses that could be feasibly implemented\(^{19}\) by HMA organizations to mitigate risk associated with informal village demining and better respond to community need. This would also include assessment of the type of organizational culture, material and human resources and institutional partnerships required to effectively implement such options.
- Design of a Logical Framework document describing the goal, objectives, outputs, indicators, means of verification, assumptions and risks for each of the advocacy and operational components of the recommended options. The Logical Framework will come with a detailed budget outlining various options’ components.

**Expected secondary outputs**
- Listing of resource information concerning informal village demining and HMA responses to the phenomenon.
- Establishment of consultation and coordination processes that will assist in guiding the study and development of subsequent recommendations.

**6. Proposed study methodology**

The study will comprise a number of sequential investigative steps, leading to the design of a comprehensive logical framework describing various advocacy and operational options that would contribute to mitigating risk associated with informal village demining as well as optimizing the overall responsiveness of HMA to actual

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\(^{16}\)Covering domains such as individual beliefs, attitudes and practices; socio-economic circumstances (e.g. levels of household income; seasonal food security; access to farming land; access to communally exploitable resources such as fuel wood, harvestable flora and fauna, water, etc; family networks and other social supports); cultural, legal and regulatory environments; availability and relevance of mine clearance, EOD and MRE assistance; etc.

\(^{17}\)For example, deploying emergency mine action capacity (clearance, marking, EOD and MRE); engaging with community through liaison staff, CBMRR district focal points or village mine representatives to reassess task priorities.

\(^{18}\)For example, utilization of village deminers as key local informants & resource persons; provision of training & basic equipment; identification & notation of areas informally cleared, including quantity & type of ordnance lifted &/or destroyed; provision of timelier and more comprehensive EOD responses; etc.

\(^{19}\)Based on an appraisal of operational capacity, cost benefit and likely impact.
community need. The methodology employed for the study will be largely qualitative in nature, involving the use of:

- Extensive document reviews.
- Structured interviews with key informants from relevant regulatory authorities and HMA organizations (covering staff working in the areas of strategic planning and organizational management, program planning and development, coordination and management of field operations, community liaison, training and actual mine clearance/EOD).
- Semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions with community mine action representatives, local authorities, leading community figures, households identified as being especially vulnerable to mine/UXO risk and villagers engaged in mine clearance activities.
- Case studies.
- Other participatory tools where appropriate (e.g. village wealth ranking; demographic, resource and mobility mapping, etc.)

Specific activities will include:

**Phase 1: Staff recruitment/ orientation, desk reviews and sectoral consultation**

i. Recruitment and orientation of Principal Researcher and Research Assistant to HIB, study background, objectives, proposed methodology and expected outputs.

ii. Literature search and desk review of published material dealing with the subject of informal village demining.

iii. Development of consultation and liaison processes with key HMA organizations.

iv. Orientation interviews with social researchers, development workers and mine action staff with substantial understanding and knowledge of informal village demining in Cambodia.

v. Extensive consultation with key sectoral stakeholders.

vi. Compilation of available documentation20 and desk review of recent HMA initiatives designed to enhance operational responsiveness and community engagement21.

vii. Further development of the existing theoretic framework, describing the principal community and individual vulnerabilities and relative risk factors contributing to the occurrence of informal village demining.

viii. Review and description of the ethical, legal, regulatory and operational boundaries governing the scope of HMA operations in Cambodia.

   **This will cover:**
   - Common ethical principles or codes of practice governing HMA.
   - Cambodian laws and applicable international treaties or agreements dealing with the removal, handling, stockpiling, use or trade of explosive remnants of war and small arms.
   - Cambodian mine action regulatory frameworks and International Mine Action Standards (IMAS).

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20Project designs, annual work plans, periodic monitoring and end of year reports, Standard Operating Procedures, project reviews and evaluations, etc.

21For example initiatives such as:

- Formation of small, mobile demining teams capable of responding to emergency spot clearance tasks (MAG current Mine Action Teams & past Rapid Response Teams, CMAC Community Mine Marking Teams)
- Formation of intermediate-sized demining teams capable of responding to medium-scale clearance requirements (CMAC Mine Risk Reduction Teams).
- Formation of community liaison structures and building of community risk reduction capacities (MAG Community Liaison Teams, World Vision Cambodia Mine Action and Awareness Teams, CMAC CBMRR project, MAG locally demining strategy, etc).
- Training of village deminers in clearance operations, safety drills, basic survival and rescue techniques (see “Training session for Demining villagers”, Adjutant Phillipe Houliat, MCTU/UNTAC, 1993).
- National mine action priorities, overall sectoral capacity, cost effectiveness of responses, quality assurance requirements, etc.

ix. Development of question guides and field-work methodologies.

x. Identification of mine action operational areas where informal village demining is suspected or known to be occurring.

xi. Compilation of a sample frame and selection of study sites.

xii. Review of community profiles and pre-clearance assessments\(^{22}\) for selected sites (where available).

**Phase 2: Field-based investigations**

i. Examination of how initiatives designed to enhance HMA operational responsiveness and community engagement are perceived within the sector itself and identification of improvements or other responses that could be adopted (key informant interviews with headquarters and provincial staff\(^{23}\)).

ii. Identification of groups of households especially vulnerable to mine/UXO risk within selected study sites (derived from review of community profiles and key informant interviews with village leadership, other leading community figures, etc).

iii. Examination of community perceptions as to why informal village demining is occurring and how initiatives adopted by HMA organizations have contributed to mitigating risk associated with such clearance activity as well as improving overall responsiveness to community need (key informant interviews with CBMRR focal points, village mine/UXO representatives, local authorities and leading community figures).

iv. Examination of why particular households are at high risk of mine/UXO injury and how well initiatives adopted by HMA organizations are perceived to have responded to their needs (key informant interviews/ focus group discussions with households at high risk of mine/UXO injury and with villagers involved in informal village demining activities, case studies).

v. Initial formulation and discussion of additional forms of advocacy and operational responses, including greater engagement with and support for village deminers, that HMA organizations could legitimately adopt to mitigate risk associated with informal village demining and better respond to community need.

**Phase 3: Analysis, development of recommendations and final reporting**

i. Feasibility analysis of identified options (taking into account existing operational capacity, cost benefit and likely impact).

ii. Description of recommended options including assessment of what type of organizational culture, material and human resources and institutional partnerships would be required to effectively implement such options.

iii. Further expansion of the existing theoretic framework and matrix describing the principal community and individual vulnerabilities and relative risk factors contributing to the occurrence of informal village demining.

iv. Presentation of principal findings and recommendations to key HMA stakeholders (most likely conducted in a workshop environment). Consideration & incorporation of sectoral critiques and suggested changes.

\(^{22}\)For example, community profiling and mapping conducted by community liaison staff, CBMRR focal points or village mine/UXO representatives.

\(^{23}\)From areas covering strategic planning and organizational management, program planning and development, coordination and management of field operations, community liaison, training and actual mine clearance/ EOD.
Drafting of a comprehensive Logical Framework document describing the goal, objectives, outputs, indicators, means of verification, and assumptions and risks for each of the advocacy and operational components of the recommended options.

Preparation of a final report outlining context and justification, study methodologies, principle findings in the analysis of the principal causes and underlying vulnerabilities, recommendations and proposed operational plan for the types of advocacy and operational responses to be implemented (*including discussion of the relative strengths and weaknesses of each recommended advocacy and operational component*). This narrative part will come with a comprehensive Logical Framework document as referred in #5 Expected Key Outputs, objectives 6 & 7.

Although beyond the ToR range, the present study will suggest a later phase which will include proof-reading, publication and diffusion of the report among HMA national and international communities and relevant HMA authorities as well as communication, discussion and sharing through report circulation, conferences, seminars, workshops and roundtables on outcomes of the study and eventually envisage extension to other similar contexts and countries.

### 7. Target areas/ Geographical coverage

Field-based investigations will be undertaken in a minimum of ten sites where informal village demining is suspected or known to occurring in parallel with the following mine/UXO risk reduction operations:

- CMAC Community Based Mine Risk Reduction (CBMRR) and Mine Risk Reduction Teams (MRRT) in Battambang, Banteay Meanchey and Krong Pailin
- MAG Mine Action (MAT) and Explosive Ordnance Disposal Teams (EOD) in Battambang and Preah Vihear
- Halo Trust community clearance in Otdar Meanchey
- World Vision Cambodia Mine Action Teams (MAT) in Preah Vihear

A more detailed sample frame will be developed in consultation with key HMA organizations and review of National Level One Survey and Cambodia Mine/UXO Victim Information System (CMVIS) data.

A proportion of the time allocated for field work will also be spent at CMAC and MAG Headquarters in Phnom Penh, Halo Trust Headquarters in Siem Reap and at each Provincial Demining Unit in Battambang, Banteay Meanchey, Krong Pailin, Otdar Meanchey and Preah Vihear.

### 8. Timeframe

It is expected that the study will occupy 20 weeks divided into three distinct phases. In brief, these will cover desk reviews of relevant documentation and consultation with key HMA stakeholders in Phnom Penh and Siem Reap; field-based investigations visiting mine-affected communities and risk reduction operations in at least five provinces; analysis of findings, development of recommendations and final reporting.

**Phase 1: Staff recruitment/ orientation, desk reviews and sectoral consultation (8 weeks duration)**

- Start-up activities such as recruitment and orientation of Principal Researcher and Research Assistant, completion of literature searches and reviews, orientation interviews with key research and mine action informants, liaison with key sectoral stakeholders and development of consultation and coordination processes should be completed within the first three weeks.

    Following this, the team will have up to five weeks to review the existing theoretic framework and develop an initial matrix of principal vulnerabilities and relative risks (*as per objective 1*), consult with key HMA stakeholders, and prepare a comprehensive logical framework document as referred in #5 Expected Key Outputs, objectives 6 & 7.
stakeholders, compile and critique all relevant documentation related to objectives 2, and define and describe the boundaries governing the scope of HMA operations in Cambodia (as per objective 4). Final activities of phase 1 including development of question guides, compilation of a sample frame, selection of study sites and review of community profiles and pre-clearance assessments should be completed by the end of week eight.

**Phase 2: Field-based investigations (up to 6 weeks duration)**

- All field-based investigations, including the formulation and discussion of additional forms of advocacy and operational responses that HMA organizations could legitimately adopt. (as per objective 5) should be completed within a period of six weeks.

**Phase 3: Analysis, development of recommendations and final reporting (6 weeks duration)**

- Upon completion of the field-based investigations, the study team will return to Phnom Penh to analyze the principal findings of the study to date, expand the existing theoretic framework and matrix where necessary and develop recommended advocacy and operational options as envisaged in objectives 6 & 7. This work should be completed within a four-week period, and the results presented to key HMA stakeholders for review during a structured analysis workshop shortly thereafter.

- The remaining two weeks of the study will involve reviewing sectoral critiques of the findings and suggested changes to the recommendations and incorporating these into a comprehensive Logical Framework document and final report.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phase</th>
<th>Key Activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Phase 1</td>
<td>Development of comprehensive local framework, data gathering, policy &amp; program planning, stakeholder engagement, community mobilization.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phase 2</td>
<td>Formulation of detailed action plan, advocacy &amp; operational strategies, review of community profiles and pre-event assessments, development of action guides.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phase 3</td>
<td>Presentation of sectoral options, consideration of additional forms of advocacy &amp; operational strategies, preparation of cost estimates.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Weeks | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 |
| Actions | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X |

Proposed Project Schedule
# 10. Proposed team composition

## Brief description of major responsibilities and relationships

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Responsibilities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Study Team Leader</strong></td>
<td>Responsible for: Overall quality, planning and implementation of the operational study; support to Principal Researcher with literature search and desk review of documentation; design of research activities, question guides, other qualitative tools and sampling frames; liaison with relevant agencies and statutory bodies; conduct of selected key informant interviews and focus group discussions; routine checking and validation of interview notes and other research data collected by study team; analysis of findings and drafting of required documents; organization and reporting of analysis workshop and preparation of final report; recruitment, induction and tasking of study team; maintenance of project records; management and acquittal of project funds.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Principal Researcher</strong></td>
<td>Responsible for: Literature search and desk review of documentation; support to Team Leader with design of research activities, question guides, other qualitative tools and sampling frames; logistic organization and scheduling of field-based investigations; liaison with provincial and district offices of relevant agencies and local authorities; conduct of key informant interviews and focus group discussions; support to Team Leader with analysis of findings and drafting of required documents/ reports; assistance with the organization, facilitation and reporting of an analysis workshop.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Research Assistant</strong></td>
<td>Responsible for: Support to Principal Researcher with literature search and desk review of documentation; support to Team Leader and Principal Researcher in liaising with provincial and district offices of relevant agencies and local authorities; contacting key community informants and scheduling field-based interviews/ focus group discussions; translation of documents and interpreting for Team Leader; other logistic support as required.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Annex B**

**Vulnerability Matrix**

**FACTORS PROMOTING PERSISTENCE OF INFORMAL VILLAGE DEMINING**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Predisposing Factors</th>
<th>Enabling factors</th>
<th>Reinforcing factors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Risk reduction motivation</td>
<td>* Self-regulation (not clearing mines while drunk, ill, or tired or when other people present)</td>
<td>* Esteem of fellow villages.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Knowledge that landmines are dangerous.</td>
<td>* Only removing and neutralizing mines with which they are familiar.</td>
<td>* Political powerlessness.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* People don not want to suffer accidents or for other people to suffer accidents (fear).</td>
<td>* Lack of responsiveness on the part of formal mine clearance organizations.</td>
<td>* People neutralize mine without suffering negative outcome.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Specific fears for the safety of children.</td>
<td>* Lack of clarity regarding the process by which formal clearance priorities are set.</td>
<td>* Process is affective and results in useable metal.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Need to utilize land safety (for farming and other needs).</td>
<td>* Minimal resources required to locate mines by sign or by prodding.</td>
<td>* Possible to sell or use scrap metal, fuses, or explosives afterwards.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Military experience has given people a prior understanding of the mechanics of mine (and confidence they can handle them safely).</td>
<td>* Minimal resources required to destroy mines by burning.</td>
<td>* Lack of information on when or if a formal clearance program will occur.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* General exposure to mines has people an understanding of the mechanics of mines and confidence they can handle them safely.</td>
<td>* Political powerlessness.</td>
<td>* Lack of consistent sanctions/approval by authorities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Desire to achieve economic security through use of land for farming, foraging, logging, and housing, etc.</td>
<td>* Esteem of fellow villages.</td>
<td>* The (for some) adrenaline rush that come from demining.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Economic motivation**

| * Need for cash income. | * Lack of responsiveness on the part of the formal mine clearance organizations. | * Fishing with group approval. |
| * Need safe access to land for | * Lack of clarity regarding the | * Formal clearance |
| Farming and foraging.  
* Farming and foraging are principal available income generating opportunities.  
* Potential sales value of scrap metal, fuses, explosives.  
* Potential economic benefits of fishing with explosives from dismantled mines.  
* Earn income by demining other people’s land.  
* Potential income from logging.  
| Process by which formal clearance priorities are set.  
* Lack of influence over the prioritization process.  
* Severe economic insecurity.  
* Presence of mines makes it impossible to safely pursue economic goals.  
* The existence of a market for explosives, fuses, and scrap metal.  
| Creates the risk that powerful outsiders will grab land.  
* Lack of consistent sanctions/approval by authorities.  
* Migration changing household economic circumstances. |
Annex C:

Research Instruments:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Village Profile Form</th>
<th>Code number………</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Village Profile</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date…………………..</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Village……………….</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commune……………….</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District……………..</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Province……………..</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Background/Demography/Geography**

1. In what year was this village first settled?
2. How did this village come to be settled?
3. In what year did peace come to this village?
4. What is the population of this village?
5. How many households are there in this village?
6. What ethnic groups are represented in this village?
7. Approximately what percentage of the village population has migrated here in the past five years?
8. What effects do you think this in-migration has had on life in this village?
9. Does this village have a school? (If so, how many?)
10. Does this village have a health center?
11. What percentage of the people in your community would you classify as poor?
12. What percentage as average?
13. What percentage as rich?
14. Can you tell us what you mean by poor? By average? By rich?
15. What are the ways in which the people of this village earn their livelihood?
16. Are there people in this village who migrate outside the village to find work?
17. In the course of a year, how many of the villagers migrate outside the village to find work?
18. Where do they go? What sorts of work do they do?

**Impact of Landmines**

19. Where are the mines? Which lands do they affect?
20. What has been the impact of the mines on the village?
21. How many people have been injured or killed by mines in the past two years?
Informal Village Demining

22. How many Informal Village Deminers live in this village?
23. What are their reasons for engaging in this work?
24. Are they demining only their own agricultural land?
25. Are they demining other people’s land? Out of friendship? For money?
26. If a formal demining organization is working in this village, do the informal village deminers keep working at the same time?
27. Or do they cease their demining work until the formal deminers have left the village? If they cease demining until the formal deminers have left, what is their reason this?
28. Is it a help to this village that you have Informal Village Deminers working here?
29. If yes, what do you feel are the advantages?
30. Are there any disadvantages? If so, what are they?

Formal Sector Demining (CMAC, MAG, Halo Trust)

31. Are there any formal mine clearance organizations working in this village at this time?
32. If so, who are they?
33. When did they begin working here?
34. What sort of land are they clearing, or have they cleared? (Pagoda? School? Clinic? Road? Etc.?)
35. Has MAG ever done any Locality Demining in this village?
36. If the answer is yes, what land areas did the Locality Deminers clear?
37. Has CMAC done any Community Demining in this village?
38. If the answer is yes, what land areas did the Community Deminers clear?
39. Do you have CBMRR in this village?
40. If yes, what services have they performed here?
41. Has MRT ever done any work in this village?
42. If yes, what services have they performed here?
43. Have you ever had any EOD in this village? (If yes, when?)
44. Were the people of this village involved in choosing which portions of the village’s land was to be cleared: by CMAC, by MAG, by Halo Trust?
45. Are the people here happy with the clearance decisions that were made?
46. If your answer is no, why are they unhappy?
47. Has there been any mine risk education (MRE) in this village?
48. If yes, please tell us when it occurred?
49. Do you feel the MRE was a success or a failure? Was MRT helpful or unhelpful? What are the reasons you feel this way?

50. Has there been a Community Mine Marking Team (CMT) working in this village? (If yes, when? If no, please skip to question #52.)

51. Has the work of the CMT been helpful in reducing landmine risk in this village? (If yes, please tell us in what ways it has been helpful.)

52. Has there ever been an Integrated Demining and Development project in this village?

53. If yes, what was the name of the demining organization involved? And what was the name of the development organization involved?

54. In your view, was the project successful? Did it succeed in reducing the risk of landmines/UXO in this village?

55. Do you have any suggestions of your own for ways to reduce the risks villagers face in living in an area where mines are present?
**Informal Village Deminer Form**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code number……………</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Informal Village Deminer</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Date…………………….
Village………………….
Commune………………
District………………….
Province………………….

### I. Personal Information

*First we would like to ask you some questions about yourself:*  
1. Male of female? (Circle one)  
2. How old are you?  
3. Where were you born?  
4. If you have migrated to this village within the past five years, where did you live before?  
5. When did you come here and why?  
6. If you are a returnee, when did you leave this village?  
7. When did you return to this village?  
8. Why did you return to this village?  
9. What is your main occupation?  
10. In addition to your main occupation, what other kinds of work do you do?  

### II. Demining Activities

*Now we would like to ask you some questions about demining.*  
10. How long have you been doing demining work?  
11. What led you to begin doing this kind of work?  
12. How and when did you learn to demine?  
13. Do you demine alone or with others, as a member of a team?  
14. Have you had an accident while demining?  
15. For each accident, can you tell us what happened?  
16. Do you demine for yourself only, or do you also help other people?  
17. If you have demined your own agricultural land, how large was this land, and how many landmines did you find there?  
18. If you have also demined agricultural land for others, about how many mines do you usually find on a family’s agricultural plot?  
19. What sorts of tools do you use to demine?
20. What are the main reasons why you demine?
21. If you demine for other people, how much do you usually charge them?
22. If you do not charge them money, do they usually compensate you in some other way? Can you tell us these other ways?
23. About how many hectares of land have you cleared altogether since you began demining?
24. About how many mines would you estimate you have cleared altogether since you began demining?
25. Have you ever taught demining to someone else?
26. If yes, how long did it take you to teach them?
27. How much did you charge them for your teaching?
28. If you were offered a job as a deminer with CMAC, MAG, or Halo Trust, would you accept?
29. Has anyone ever tried to stop you from demining?
30. When CMAC, MAG, or Halo Trust of working in your village, do you stop demining here and wait until they leave? If so, why?
31. When CMAC, MAG, or Halo Trust is working in your village, do you continue demining on your own even while they are working here?
32. For the land that you have cleared, would you estimate that it is 100% safe? 90% safe? 80% safe? 70% safe? Less than 70% safe?
33. Which of the following mine-action activities have occurred in this village:
   a) Mine Risk Reduction Teams (MRT)
   b) Community Based Mine Risk Reduction (CBMRR)
   c) Mine Risk Education (MRE)
   d) Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD)
   e) Community Mine Marking Teams (CMT)
   f) Integrated Demining and Development (IDD)
   g) Locality Demining (MAG)
   h) Community Demining (CMAC)
34. For those that have been used here, please tell us whether you think they are good or bad, helpful or not helpful?
35. Have any of them reduced the risk of mine accidents in this village?
36. Have any of them been so successful that you have been able to stop demining? Or to reduce the amount of demining work that you do yourself?
37. Have you ever been exposed to Mine Risk Education in this village? If so, when?
38. If yes, what did you think of it? Was it useful? Was it foolish?
39. If you were asked to do Mine Risk Education, what changes would you make? How would you do it?
40. Can you tell us what sort of help you would need to help make your demining safer?
1. What are your responsibilities, and what duties do you perform, with respect to your work in this organization?

2. Have your duties within your organization involved you with any of the following activities:
   a) Mine Risk Reduction Teams (MRT)
   b) Community Based Mine Risk Reduction (CBMRR)
   c) Mine Risk Education (MRE)
   d) Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD)
   e) Community Mine Marking Teams (CMT)
   f) Integrated Demining and Development (IDD)
   g) Locality Demining (MAG)
   h) Community Based Demining (CMAC)
   i) Technical Survey Team (CMAC)

3. For each of the above risk-reduction activities with which you have been involved, please tell us whether or not you feel they were effective in reducing risk in mine/UXO-affected communities and why:
   a) Mine Risk Reduction Teams (MRT)
   b) Community Based Mine Risk Reduction (CBMRR)
   c) Mine Risk Education (MRE)
   d) Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD)
   e) Community Mine Marking Teams (CMT)
   f) Integrated Demining and Development (IDD)
   g) Locality Demining (MAG)
h) Community Demining (CMAC)  
i) Technical Survey Team (CMAC)

4. In the course of your work, have you ever encountered Informal Village Deminers working in a village?

5. If your answer is yes, were they working in their own village or in villages other than the ones where they are living?

6. Were they working to demine their own land only? Or were they demining other people’s land?

7. If they were demining other people’s land, were they doing this work as a favor, or were they doing it for some kind of fee or payment?

8. If the organization with which you were working (CMAC, MAG, or Halo Trust) was doing demining in a village in which Informal Village Deminers were also operating, did the informal deminers continue working while your organization was there, or did they cease working until your organization had left?

9. If they ceased working while you were there, why do you think they ceased?

10. Do you think that Informal Village Demining is a good thing or a bad thing? And what is your reason for your opinion?

11. For each of the mine action activities listed below in which you yourself have been involved, please tell us whether you think the activity has resulted in a reduction of Informal Village Demining; an increase in Informal Village Demining; or had no effect at all on the amount/frequency of Informal Village Demining:
   a) MRT: Reduced______ Increased______ Same______
   b) CBMRR: Reduced______ Increased______ Same______
   c) MRE: Reduced______ Increased______ Same______
   d) EOD: Reduced______ Increased______ Same______
   e) CMT: Reduced______ Increased______ Same______
   f) IDD: Reduced______ Increased______ Same______
   g) Locality Demining (MAG): Reduced______ Increased______
      Same______
   h) Community Demining (CMAC): Reduced______ Increased______
      Same______
   i) Technical Survey Team (CMAC): Reduced______ Increased______
      Same______

12. For each activity that you feel was successful in reducing risk in the village(s) where you worked, please tell us why you think the activity was successful and the name and location of the village where it was carried out.
We have come here today to ask you about the landmine problem in your village and to try to learn how well the job is being done and how it might be improved so that it is better.

1. Please tell us what types of land are contaminated by landmines in this village.
2. In your opinion, are the demining organizations doing a good job or a bad job of clearing the mines in this village?
3. If you feel they are doing a bad job, what do you think they could do to do their job better?
4. Can you tell us any ways in which the demining organizations have made your village safer?
5. In this village, are there people who demine their own land by themselves? (If yes, about how many such people are there?)
6. Are there people who ask other people, who have demining experience, to clear their land for them?
7. Are there people who will demine other people’s land for money?
8. If the answer is yes, what amount do they charge to clear one hectare?
9. If you have ever paid someone to demine your land for you, did they do a good job?
10. Have there been any mine accidents on your land since the job was done?
11. Are you happy with the results of their work?
12. Do the people here fear that if their land is not cleared quickly, it might be stolen from them by wealthy people?
13. Suppose you had a choice between having your land cleared one year from now, with the guarantee that the land would be cleared of landmines one-hundred percent, or having your land cleared right away---today!--with the guarantee that it would only be cleared about eighty percent, with the possibility that some landmines might still be buried in the ground
after the deminers left. Which would you choose---clearance, today, of 80%? Or clearance one year from now, of 100%?
14. Have any of you ever paid someone to demine your land for you?
Annex D:

Legal Documents

Kingdom of Cambodia

Nation Religion King

Royal Government of Cambodia No. 38 Sub-decree

Sub-decree on Administering and inspecting the import, production, selling, distribution and handling all types of weapons

Royal Government of Cambodia having:

• Seen Kingdom of Cambodia Constitution
• Seen Royal Decree No.1193/72 dated on November 30, 1998 concerning the appointment of Royal Government component of Kingdom of Cambodia
• Seen the Royal Order dated on July 20, 1994 which was promulgated the law on organization and functioning of Council Ministers
• Seen the Royal Order No. 0196-08 dated on January 24, 1996 which promulgated the law on Establishing the Ministry of Defence
• Seen Sub-Decree No. 16 dated on December 20, 1993 on Organization and functioning of the Ministry of Interior
• Seen Sub-Decree No. 37 dated on February 16, 1999 on Reforming the Structure of Ministry of Defence
• Seen Decree No. 11 Dated on February 07, 1992 which promulgated the law on punishment of illegal handling of weapons and wearing of uniforms
• Seen the Transitional Criminal Procedure
• Receiving agreement by Ministers' Council in plenary on April 30, 1999

Now decides:

Chapter 1 General Regulation

Article 1:
This sub-decree aims to protect and to depress in order to administer and inspect on supervision, stock, import, production, exchanges, distribution and handling all types of weapons without authorization from the competent institution.

Article 2:
Weapons are considered to include:
• all types of firearms and pistols
• firearms which emit substances which cause watery eyes gas, faint or poisonous
• all types of automatic or semi automatic firearms
• soundless firearms or soundless equipment
• all types of rockets
• all types of chemical weapons
• all types of biological weapons
• all types of electricity shock's stick
• all types of grenades and mines
• all types of explosive substance
• all types of bullets
Article 3:
All types of explosives and weapons mentioned above are not subjected to the individual property. Any person at present, wherever they keep explosives or weapons shall take it to the competent authority through the determination of declaration of the inter-ministerial of Interior's Ministry and Defence's Ministry.

Article 4:
It is absolutely forbidden to sell, exchange, donate, stock at home, or other locations, those kinds of explosives and weapons as stated in Article 2 of this Sub-Decree within the territory of the Kingdom of Cambodia.

Article 5:
The import and production of all types of explosives and weapons is the jurisdiction of the Royal Government of Cambodia:
Through the request of the Minister of Defence, if those weapons are to serve in the interests of national defence.
Through the request of Minister of Interior, if those weapons are to serve in the interests of national security.
All types of internal weapons transportation is the responsibility of the Ministry of Defence, if the weapons are to serve in the interests of national defence or it is the responsibility of the Ministry of Interior if the weapons are to serve in the interests of national security.

Chapter 2
Administering and Inspecting all types of Explosives and Weapons

Article 6:
The Ministry of Defence has the duty to administer and inspect the utilization of all types of explosives and weapons inside the Royal Cambodian Armed Forces and Gendarmerie including all type of explosives and weapons which are kept inside its storehouses.

Article 7:
The Ministry of Interior has the duty to administer and inspect the utilization of all types of explosives and weapons inside the National Police, civil servants, militia and security guards of the Cambodian National Bank, including all types of explosives and weapons which are kept inside its storehouses.

Article 8:
The import, utilizing, transportation and stocking of all types of explosives or explosive substances to serve the product or public service, shall be approved by the Ministry of Interior.

Chapter 3
The jurisdiction of issuing the authorization papers to handle all types of explosives and weapons

Article 9:
Ministry of Defence is entitled to issue the authorization paper on handling all type of explosive and weapon to the Royal Cambodia Armed Force and Gendarmerie.

Article 10:
The Ministry of Interior is entitled to issue the authorization papers on handling all types of explosives and weapons to the National Police, Civil Servants, Militia and Security Guards of the Cambodian National Bank.

Article 11:
Procedures and conditions of requests for the authorization papers on handling explosives and weapons for the Royal Cambodian Armed Forces, Gendarmerie, National Police, Civil Servants, Militia and Security Guards of Cambodia National Bank, shall be determined by the declaration of the inter-Ministerial of Interior's Ministry and Defence's Ministry.
Chapter 4
Rights to handle a pistol as private property

**Article 12:**
Civil servants authorized to handle a pistol per person as their own property is determined by levels of seniority as following:

*Legislative Institutions:* Senators, Parliamentarians, Constitutional Council Members and Magistracy Supreme Council Members.
*Justice:* Chief of Supreme Court and Prosecutor General of Supreme Court.
*Ministry and Institutions:* From the director general to the top.
*Provinces and Municipalities:* Phnom Penh Capital: from the deputy governor to the top.

District and Khan level: District and Khan governor

**Article 13:**
The Royal Cambodian Armed Forces, Gendarmerie and National Police are authorized to handle a pistol per person as their own property- from the rank of General upwards.

**Article 14:**
Regarding the Royal Cambodian Armed Forces, Gendarmerie, National Police, besides the determination in Article 13 of this Sub-Decree, can handle weapons during their operations with the following provisions:

- During a given operation, they shall have the attached mission and authorization papers of the collective weapon utilization.
- Regarding the mission orders of the Royal Cambodian Armed Forces, they shall not be signed by either the Cabinet of the Ministry of Defence nor Royal Cambodian Armed Forces Headquarters Cabinet nor Land Commander, Water Commander, Air Commander, Gendarmerie Commander, Division Commander nor sub-military Division Commander.
- The competent authority who signs the mission orders of the Royal Cambodian Armed Forces who is not stated in the above article shall be determined by the Commander General of the Royal Cambodian Armed Forces.
- The mission orders of the National Police and security guards of the Cambodian National Bank shall be signed by the General Director of National Police or by the provincial municipal Police Commissioner.
- All weapons with authorization papers are to be stored at the relevant unit after ending the operation.
- The limitation of the necessary operation shall be determined by the inter-ministerial of Interior's Ministry and Defence's Ministry on utilizing all types of weapons.

**Article 15:**
The alien is not entitled to handle all type of weapon. Article 16: It is not authorized to handle the firearm as private property

**Article 17:**
All types of weapons and explosives are forbidden to be brought into the capital Phnom Penh, except when there is an authorization from the Ministry of Interior or the Ministry of Defence. The form and condition to request the authorization to bring the weapon into Phnom Penh is the responsible of the Ministry of Interior and the Ministry of Defence.

Chapter 5
Penalty

**Article 18:**
Any individual who has acted in violation of the law on illegal handling of weapons and wearing of uniforms or the law on transitional criminal procedures shall be imprisoned for the following violations:

- Acting in violation of Articles 3, 4, 8, 12, 13, 14, 15 and 16 of this sub-decree
- Importing, selling, exchanging or keeping weapons or explosive substances without authorization papers
- Providing, lending or renting weapons to other individuals
- Pointing a weapon at another individual or threatening to shoot another individual or shooting in the air during rain or storms or shooting for the purposes of testing away from the testing area determined by the Ministry of Interior or Ministry of Defence
**Article 19:**
Weapons and authorization papers shall be deprived from any individual who has lost the relevant authorization papers or bullets or is over the quantity of weapons or explosives specifically stated within the relevant authorization papers.

**Article 20:**
Evidence linked to any crime related to this sub-decree shall be confiscated to keep as the State's property and shall be sent to the National Police Department General to administer, except heavy weapons which shall be sent to the Royal Cambodian Armed Forces.

**Article 21:**
Weapons and authorization papers shall be permanently deprived to any individual who uses them to commit any offence.

**Article 22:**
Any competent authority that issues the authorization papers for handling weapons against the limitations which are stated in Articles 12, 13 and 14 of this Sub-Decree shall be punished by the effective law.

**Chapter 6**  
**Inter Regulation**

**Article 23:**
After this sub-decree comes into effect, the Ministry of Interior and Ministry of Defence shall discuss on transferring the militia from Ministry of Defence to Ministry of Interior.

**Article 24:**
Individuals entitled to handle a pistol as their private property as stated in Articles 12 and 13 of this Sub-Decree shall submit a request to Ministry of Interior. All relevant individuals within the National Police, Civil Service, Ministry of Defence, the Royal Cambodian Armed Forces and the Gendarmerie shall submit the aforementioned request within two months of this Sub-Decree coming into effect. In cases where the above determinations are disrespected, the concerned individual shall be responsible before the law and the weapon shall be confiscated to keep as the property of State.

**Article 25:**
Upon this Sub-Decree coming into effect, every shooting club and sport entertainment club shall be closed. All types of weapons at the above clubs shall be taken to the National Police Department General to be kept as the property of the State.

**Chapter 7**  
**Conclusion**

**Article 26:**
Sub-Decree No. 62 dated on July 31, 1995 and every regulation which is contradictory to this Sub-Decree shall be abrogated.

**Article 27:**
Minister in charge of Council of Ministers, Co-Ministers of Interior, co-Ministers of Defence, Ministers, Secretaries of State of all related Institutions and Ministries, Provincial and Municipal Governors shall implement this Sub-Decree with immediate effectiveness from the date of signing.

Made at Phnom Penh Capital April 30, 1999

**Informed to:**
Samdech Prime Minister Hun Sen  
Co-Ministers of Interior: Sar Kheng You Hockry  
Co-Ministers of Defence: Tea Banh Prince Sisowat Serey Roath

**CC:**  
- Cabinet of the King  
- Secretary General of Senate  
- Secretary General of Parliament  
- Cabinet of Prime Minister  
- As the Article 27

- Chrono File
Kingdom of Cambodia  
Nation Religion King  

The law on  
Arms, explosives, explosive substances  
and ammunitions  

Chapter 1  
General Provisions  

Art 1:  
The law goal is to insure lasting security, calmness and peace for the people of Kingdom of Cambodia and to develop civil society without arm. This law helps to eliminate the threat caused by illegal arms, explosives and ammunitions, and to strengthen to the government the controlling and responsibility on arms, explosives and ammunitions use.  

Art 2:  
This law has efficiency to cover the ownership, possession, carrying, utilization, stock, loan, rent, transfer, distribution, transport, production, assembly, repair, import, export, purchase, sale of all arms, explosives, explosive substance and ammunitions.  

Art 3:  
The arms in this law are mentioned to:  
- The rifles, pistols of big and small calibers and all kinds arms accessories that are produced to attack, to wound, to threaten though these arms can fire non-automatically, semi-automatically or automatically, though these arms fire with projectile or flame or tear gaz or toxic gas or biological agent, though these arms are made in any kind.  
- Rifle is fire arm joined with butt or foldable butt, long barrel, when fire people put the butt against or on shoulder. It can measure from........ And, the rifle which the butt or barrel is cut off, when fire people can hold on hand, is considered "pistol".  
- Artillery is gun that is used for curve fire in a short or long distance that its projectile trajectory is curve or straight forward the target though this target is visible or invisible.  
- All kind of small or big, short, medium or long range missiles and mount.  
- Explosives and explosive substances in this law are mentioned to:  
  * All projectiles that are produced for the arms as defined in art 3.  
  * Bombs/grenades, explosive devices and all kind of explosive substances even any origin that have the blast and cause a danger or destruction.  

Art 5:  
Carrying, equipping, utilization, stock, loan, rent, transfer, distribution, transport, production, assembly, repair, import, export purchase, sale of all arms, explosives, explosive substance and ammunitions out of state management are forbidden.  

Art 6:  
The arms, explosives, explosive substance are allowed:  
- Pistol used as self-protection and protect property in case of eventual menace.  
- Arms/ammunitions used as collection, historical arms/ammunitions, shooting arms/ammunitions, arms/ammunitions for making the signal, arms/ammunition for sport and entertainment.  
- Arms fired without bullet; arms propelled firework or arms used only to explode without bullet for art performance.  
- Explosive/explosive substance for public service or decorative blast. Procedure and condition for provision application are defined by the Royal government.  

Art 7:  
Definitions below are the law goal:
- Civil person is individual person that is out of officials sector of Royal government or elected officials.
- Civil services are officialized persons of Kingdom of Cambodia
- Uniformed forces are mentioned to Royal Cambodian Armed Forces, gendarmerie, national police, intelligence officials or agent from Ministry of Defense or Ministry of Interior or custom agent, tax agent, national bank, environment, forestry and fishery and others uniformed forces as defined in the laws.

Art 8:
The arms, explosive, explosive substance as defined in art 3 and 4 are not considered as object of private possession.

Art 9:
Equipping of all kind of arms, explosive, explosive substances and ammunitions to the uniformed forces and civil officials is defined by the Royal government.

Art 10:
The citizen who has Cambodian nationality, being at least 25 years old, has right to request a permission for:
- To sell or to repair arms and ammunitions as defined in art 6 or open shooting club or sport club.
- To sell explosives or explosive substances for ceremony decoration or for public service.
  
  Procedure and condition of permission are competent of ministry of interior.

Art 11:
Any foreigner who is living or traveling in Cambodia has not right to obtain permission for carrying or using all kinds of arms, explosives, explosive substance and ammunition, in the territory of the Cambodian Kingdom.
  
  Except international envoys or protection agent for high ranking leaders who visit Cambodia or diplomatic envoys as defined in the bilateral agreement or treaty or international treaty. This case must be permitted by the Royal government.

Art 12:
Any person who is carrying, keeping the arms, explosives, explosive substance and ammunitions as defined in art 3, 4 and 6 without permission, must hand over to competent authority with clear notification.
  
  This principle is defined by inter ministerial declaration of interior and defense.

Chapter 2
Import, export, production, management, use permission, transport and security guarantee

Art 13:
- Import, export, production of all kinds of arms, explosive, explosive substances and ammunitions are government competence how to consider and decide.
- If fore national defense purpose, it will be proposed by the ministry of national defense.
- If fore internal security protection and public services, it will be proposed by ministry of interior.
- All export of arms, explosives, explosive substance, proposed by ministry of defense or ministry of defense or ministry of interior must be coordinated with ministry of justice, ministry of commence and ministry of foreign affairs for guaranteeing the compatibility to concerned international or regional treaty or agreement.

Art 14:
The internal transport of arms, explosive, explosive substances and ammunitions is within the competence of ministry of defense when the is security protection and public services.
Art 15:
The transport of arms, explosive, explosive substances and ammunitions through the Kingdom of Cambodia must be approved previously by the Royal government via ministry of interior.

Art 16:
All transport of all kind of arms, explosive, explosive substances and ammunitions through Phnom Penh must be permitted.

art 17:
Ministry of defense is responsible for management of all kind of arms, explosive, explosive substances and ammunitions belonging to the Royal Cambodian Armed Forces.

Art 18:
Ministry of interior is responsible for management of all kind of arms, explosive, explosive substances and ammunitions belonging to national police, uniformed forces, officials and civilian persons.

Art 19:
The ministry of defense is within the competence to license to the Royal Cambodian Armed Forces all kind of arms, explosive, explosive substances and ammunitions use.

Art 20:
The ministry of interior is within the competence to license to the national police, uniformed forces, officials and civilian person all kind of arms, explosive, explosive substances and ammunitions use.

Art 21:
- The ministry of defense is responsible for safety and security on transport and stock of all kind of arms, explosive, explosive substances and ammunitions of the Royal Cambodian Armed Forces.
- The ministry of interior is responsible for safety and security on transport and stock of all kind of arms, explosive, explosive substances and ammunitions of national police, uniformed forces, officials and civilian person.

Art 22:
Procedure and condition for application of art 14-15-16-17-18-19-20 and 21 are defined by inter-ministerial declaration of defense and interior.

Art 23:
To guarantee security, ministry of defense and ministry of interior:
- Alert, ban the traffic or evacuate temporarily the population in case that area may explode and damage lives and materials.
- Control around the stockpile of all king of arms, explosive, explosive substances and ammunitions, fore preventing possible disaster.
- Request to vehicle user or property owner or warehouse owner to allow fore control being suspected of hiding of all kind of arms, explosive, explosive substances and ammunitions.
- Design armament and explosive specialist, equipped with technical materials to control some area where the traffic of all kind of arms, explosive, explosive substances and ammunitions is.
- Investigate, collect information regarding to arms, explosive, explosive substances and ammunitions and send to the tribunal.

Chapter 3
Loss, destruction of all kind of arms, explosive, explosive substances and ammunitions

Art 24:
In any case, person who loses all kind of arms, explosive, explosive substances and ammunitions, under his/her control, must report immediately to competent at least before 24:00 H.
Art 25:
Any kind of destruction of all kind of arms, explosive, explosive substances and ammunitions may be carried out if there is permission from ministry of defense if they are served as defense sector or there is permission from ministry of interior if they are served as security and public service sectors.

**Expert conception regarding to penalties:**

- Any person violates the provision on carrying out his law has efficiency to cover the ownership, possession, carrying, utilization, stock, loan, rent, transfer, distribution, transport production, assembly, repair, import, export, purchase, sale of all arms, explosives, explosive substance and ammunitions will be sentenced.
- Any person profits his/her role and competence fore seeking his/her own interest or uses his/her role to cheat or lose arms/ explosives will be sentenced.
- Any person destroys all kind of arms, explosive, explosive substances and ammunitions without permission will be sentenced.
- Any person loses all kind of arms, explosive, explosive substances and ammunitions will be sentenced.
- Any person uses fake arms fore intimidate other person(s) will be sentenced. In fake arms use fore other crimes, this fake arm is considered as real arms and he owner will be sentenced.
- Any person is careless by letting someone to use arms fore crime will be sentenced.
- Any person is no competent but he/she bars the competence from existing operation on all kings of arms, explosive, explosive substances and ammunitions he/she will be in any cases, sentenced.
- Any person licenses the use of all kind of arms, explosive, explosive substances and ammunitions contrary to his/her competence will be sentenced.
- Any person holds fake license of arm uses will be sentenced.
- Any residence owner who allow armed person to lodge without report to competent authority will be sentenced.
- Any guardian whose minor carries arms will be sentenced.
Annex E:

Village Portraits

Battambang province:

Kampong Chamlong Loeu

First established in 1999, in the immediate aftermath of the fighting between the Cambodian government and the Khmer Rouge, Kampong Chamlong Loeu village—located in Takrey commune, Kamrieng district, Battambang province—was settled by migrants from Battambang, Siem Reap, Kampong Cham, and Pursat provinces who cleared the bamboo forest there to create their village. The population today stands at between 1,000 and 1,100 people, residing in 225 separate households, 31 of whom have migrated here from Kampong Cham province within the past five years.

The village has its own school. It has no health center, but it does have a private clinic. By the reckoning of the village chief, about 80% of the village population is poor, about 20% is of average means, and only about 1% is considered well off.

The people of Kampong Chamlang Loeu earn their livelihood growing rice; by working as agricultural laborers on other people’s land, growing corn and soyabeans; and by clearing other people’s land for agriculture. In the course of the year, an estimated 10% of the village population migrate to neighboring villages in Cambodia to find work, while another 10% journey to Thailand to work as laborers there.

The village claims five informal village deminers—all of them former soldiers—as residents, but these men are said to have no demining training and to remove only those landmines that are visible on the ground surface, as opposed to those buried beneath the ground, and hence ought to not properly be regarded as “deminers.”

Both CMAC and MAG are currently demining in Kampong Chamlang Loeu, having both initiated operations here in 2004, this work to lead ultimately to the distribution of demined community land to villagers for farming. Kampong Chamlang Loeu has benefited from Locality Demining, CBMRR, EOD, MRE, CMT, and IDD projects involving CMAC, MAG, Lutheran World Federation, CARE, and Oxfam, which constructed a well here.

Neang Lem

First established by King Norodom Sihanouk in 1959, and then resettled, in 1996, following the demise of the Khmer Rouge regime, Neang Lem village—located in Sdau commune, Rotonak Mondol district, Battambang province—today has a population of 651 people living in 143 households. Within the the past five years, 47 new families have arrived here, migrating from Prey Veng, Kampong Cham, Kampot, and Pursat provinces.

The village has both a primary and a secondary school. According to the village chief, about 83% of the village population is poor, about 14% are of average means, and about 2% may be characterized as well off. The people subsist by growing rice, corn, sweet potatoes, chilies, and soyabeans. About 100 residents of Neang Lem migrate outside the village each year to find work: as bakery workers, in Thailand, for Baht 200 (USD 5.00) per day; as chamkar laborers elsewhere in Cambodia, for Riel 5,000 (USD $1.25) per day, or as loggers, also in Cambodia, at the rate of Riel 300,000 (USD 75.00) per hectare cleared.

Landmines are common in Neang Lem in the backyards of houses and on chamkar land, resulting in low rice yields and dead cattle. In 1997, villagers here hired informal deminers to demine land for 60 families.

Six informal village deminers are said to reside here now, all of them former soldiers in the Pol Pot regime. These deminers demine their own agricultural land as well as paths to facilitate logging. They also assist their fellow villagers with the demining of their own land,
but out of neighborliness, not for money. When CMAC is working in the village, the informal deminers continue their demining, noting that although the men of CMAC do warn them of the dangers, they do not threaten them with punishment for their activities.

CMAC (since 2000) and MAG (since 2003) are both engaged in demining operations in Neang Lem. The village has benefited from EOD, MRE, and CMT, and IDD projects sponsored by both World Vision and Jesuit Service—Battambang.

Ou Anlok

First settled by only 30 families in 1991, Ou Anlok village—is located in Tasaen commune, Kamrieng district, Battambang province—now has 415 households totaling 1,601 people, with approximately 100 of those families having arrived within the past five years.

Ou Anlok has both a primary and a secondary school, but no health center. According to the village chief, 32% of the village population is poor, 56% are of average income, and 12% are well off.

Most of the people of Ou Anlok are farmers. Twenty percent are laborers. At least 30 villagers migrate out of the village in the course of the year to work as farm laborers in Thailand, harvesting corn for Baht 80 (USD 2.00) per day.

Landmines contaminate mainly agricultural and housing land in Ou Anlok. People are fearful of tending their chamkar on mined fields, and are compelled to construct their houses on mined land.

Ten informal village deminers, all of them former soldiers, reside in Ou Anlok. They use their skills to demine their own housing and agricultural land, paths to the forest to facilitate logging efforts, and the land of their own relatives.

CMAC has been demining here since 2002, and Halo Trust since 2003. Halo is demining about seven hectares of community land that, once cleared, will be distributed to individual villagers. CMAC has demined about three hectares of agricultural land, as well as land for a school. A team of CMAC Community Deminers is in the process of demining a road. Ou Anlok has benefited from CBMRR, MRT, EOD, and MRE.

Ou Chamlang

Once a forest, Ou Chamlang village—in Tasaen commune, Kamrieng district, Battambang province—was first settled in 1989 by 300 migrants from Battambang, Kampong Speu, Takeo, Prey Veng, and Siem Reap provinces. Today, there are 566 people, in 149 households, living in Ou Chamlang, with fully one-third of the current village population having migrated here within the past five years.

The village has a concrete schoolhouse built in 2002. Although it has no health center, it does have a private clinic, and sometimes villagers with medical problems go to the health center in Traing commune.

Sixty percent of Ou Chamlang’s residents are poor, according to the village chief, while 30% are of average means and the remaining 10% are well off. The villagers engage in chamkar farming, work as laborers harvesting soybeans on other people’s land for Baht 60 (≈ Riel 6,000 = $1.50) per day, and work as grocery vendors to earn cash income. They do not, as a rule, migrate outside their village to find work.

The area is heavily mined. Three or four informal village deminers reside in Ou Chamlang, but the only land they demine is their own—although most villagers here nowadays are able to remove mines and UXO that are visible on the surface of the land by themselves.

The three major demining organizations—MAG, Halo Trust, and CMAC—are all working in Ou Chamlang: CMAC since 2002, MAG since 2003, and Halo since 2004. The village has benefited from CBMRR, MRT, EOD, MRE, and CMT.
Raksmey Sangha

First established by King Norodom Sihanouk around 1960, and then resettled in 1998, following the demise of the Khmer Rouge regime, Raksmey Sangha village—located in Sdau commune, Rotonak Mondol district, Battambang province—today has a population of 1,291 people living in 266 households. Roughly half the village population—some 133 families—consists of migrants from Sneng village, in Battambang province, and from Kampong Cham, Prey Veng, and Svay Rieng provinces, who have taken up residence here in the past five years.

The village population is poor, even by rural Cambodian standards, with the village chief estimating that 89% of the villagers are poor, around 8% of average means, and about 3% well off.

Villagers here earn their livelihood by cultivating rice, doing chamkar, making charcoal, and selling firewood. Many migrate to Samlot, Pailin, and the Thai border to work as agricultural laborers: clearing land for farming and planting corn and soyabees, for a rate of Riel 5,000 (USD 1.25) per day. Raksmey Sangha has two school buildings and two private clinics. People also avail themselves of the services of the Sdau Health Center, in Sdau town.

This area witnessed a good deal of fighting during the war and was heavily mined. Three informal village deminers live here, demining their own land and selling their demining services to other households for money. In addition, they hire themselves out as agricultural workers, gather firewood for sale, labor on their own chamkar, and earn money from illegal logging.

The villagers count it as a benefit to have these informal deminers living among them, but are fearful that, lacking proper demining equipment, they may be vulnerable to landmine/UXO accidents.

At the present time, both MAG and CMAC are both engaged in demining operations in Raksmey Sangha, having first arrived in 1998. The village has benefited from EOD, MRE, CMT, and IDD projects sponsored by both World Vision and Les Soeurs de Providence. Even when the formal demining organizations are working in their village, however, the informal deminers carry on demining.

Tuol Tel

Tuol Tel village—located in Takrey commune, Kamrieng district, Battambang province—was established in 1998 by migrants from the refugee camp at Siem Reap, near the Thai border, and from Siem Reap, Battambang, Takeo, Pursat, Kampong Chhnang, and Prey Veng provinces. It has a population of about 700 people, living in 139 households, with about 60% of the village population having migrated here within the past five years.

Tuol Tel has a wooden schoolhouse, built by the villagers. It has no health center, with those in need of medical care going to Takrey commune for treatment. According to the village chief, about 72% of the village population are poor, with the remaining 28% of average means, and none of them well off.

The people of Tuol Tel earn their livelihood by growing rice and chamkar farming, and by clearing farmland and harvesting corn and soyabees for their fellow villagers for cash. In the course of the year, most particularly at harvest times, roughly two-thirds of the village population migrates outside the village to find work as agricultural laborers and construction workers.

Tuol Tel village is heavily contaminated with landmines. The number of informal deminers who probe for and remove mines from beneath the ground surface in Tuol Tel is not known. Most, it is said, remove only the mines they find on the surface, and this only on their own agricultural land, never to assist others.
MAG has been working here since 2000: clearing village roads, land around lakes and wells, house land, and agricultural land totaling, so far, around 30 hectares. The village has benefited from Locality Demining, EOD, MRE, CMT, and IDD.

**Preah Puth**

Once a bamboo forest, Preah Puth, an area of heavy fighting between the government and the Khmer Rouge, was first settled in 1990, but was only officially established by the government, and populated by people from the Thai border camps, in 1996, after the fighting had ended.

Six hundred sixty—120 families altogether—now live in Preah Puth, with 30-40 of those families having migrated here within the past five years: from Kampong Thom and Siem Reap provinces; from Bavil district, Battambang province; from Angkor Borey commune, Takeo province; and from the Thai border camps. The village chief classifies 55% of the village population as poor, 40% as average, and 5% as well off.

The village has a school, but no health center—the sick usually go to the health center in Kamrieng district—but Preah Puth was a hospital during the Pol Pot regime, and quite a few of the present-day residents are doctors and nurses.

People earn their living doing chamkar farming, as owners of small shops, and renting out their truck, if they have one, for the transport of goods.

Every day, roughly 200-300 people—one-third to one-half the village population, mostly young people between the ages of 18 and 20—migrate out of the village to find work, as chamkar laborers outside the village, or clearing land for farming, and/or harvesting corn, watermelon, and potatoes in Thailand.

Chamkar land in Preah Puth is said to be heavily mined.

Three informal village deminers reside in Preah Puth. All of them have been injured in landmine accidents. They demine chamkar land, and also forest land to facilitate logging. They are said to demine for themselves only, not for others.

The three major demining organizations—CMAC, MAG, and Halo Trust—are all working in Preah Puth: MAG and CMAC since 2000, Halo Trust since 2003. The village has benefited from EOD, CBMRR, MRE, CMT, and TST.

**Pailin municipality:**

**Baysey**

Established in 1997 by migrants from Siem Reap, Takeo, Kampong Speu, Kampong Thom, Prey Veng, and Kampot provinces, and the Thai border camp, Baysey village—located in Stueng Trang commune, Sala Krau district, Pailin municipality—today has a population of 855 people residing in 215 households, with approximately 100 of those households having migrated here within the past five years.

Baysey has no school of its own, but its children attend classes at Preal village. It has no health center, but rather depends on government health-care staff, who dispense medicines. According to the village chief, 80% of Baysey’s population is poor, 20% are of average means, and none of the families are well off.

The people of Baysey earn their livelihoods by cultivating corn, soyabeans, sesame, peanuts, and green soyabeans; and by clearing forest land to create farmland for other village residents for Riel 5,000 (USD 1.25) per day. In 2004, only five boys from this village crossed over the Thai border in hopes of finding work.

Landmines are prevalent here, particularly on the paths to chamkar land. A half-dozen informal village deminers, all of them former soldiers, reportedly reside here, removing landmines and UXO from the road and from their own house land. Prior to the arrival of CMAC, in 2004, these informal deminers also demined the land of fellow Baysey
residents, but no longer. They claim that CMAC’s mine awareness efforts have persuaded
them to stop. When villagers find UXO, they generally collect them and burn them on their
own.
Baysey has benefited from CBMRR, MRE, and CMT, and is currently one of the sites
of a CARE Cambodia/CMAC IDD project.

**Ou Cheukram**

First established in the period 1998-1993, Ou Cheukram village—located in Stueng
Kach commune, Sala Krau district, Pailin municipality—was reestablished in 1998, by
former residents and by migrants from Kampong Speu, Takeo, Kampong Chhnang,
Battambang, Pursat, and Siem Reap provinces, following the end of the war between the
government of Cambodia and the Khmer Rouge. Today, the village has a population of
1,550, residing in 240 households, with perhaps 50% of them have migrated here within the
past five years.

The village has a concrete school building, but no health center, with those requiring
medical treatment availing themselves of the services of the health center in Pailin.
According to the village chief, 70% of Ou Cheukram’s people are poor, 20% are of average
means, and 10% may be classified as well off.

People here earn their livelihood by growing corn, soyabeans, and sesame, or by
working as day laborers—clearing farmland, or harvesting potatoes, corn, and fruit—on other
people’s farms for a daily wage of Baht 70-80 (USD $1.75-$2.00). During the harvest
seasons, roughly 200-300 villagers migrate out of their home village to find work.

Four informal village deminers are said to have resided in Ou Cheukram, but two of
them were killed in mine/UXO accidents while attempting to scavenge scrap metal. The
remaining two are still actively engaged in demining, despite their both having been injured
while endeavoring to extract fuses from mines. They carry on demining even when CMAC is
working in their village.

CMAC has been working in Ou Cheukram since 1999. The village has benefited
from CBMRR, MRT, MRE, and CMT.

**Psar Prum (Thmey)**

Psar Prum (alternatively known as Thmey) village—located in Stueng Kach
commune, Sala Krau district, Pailin municipality—was established in 1997, with each family
receiving 200 square meters of land. The current village population is 4,513, residing in
1,065 households, with an estimated 15% of the population having migrated here within the
past five years.

The village has a school, but no health center. The village chief classifies 60% of the
village population as poor, 30% as of average means, and 10% as well off. The villagers
raise soyabeans, sesame, and corn. Some are vendors. About 10% of the village population
migrates outside the village to find work as farm laborers, either in other Cambodian villages
or in Thailand.

CMAC has been demining here since 2002. The village has benefited from CBMRR,
EOD, MRT, MRE, and CMT. When CMAC is present, however, the village’s informal
deminers, fearing arrest and imprisonment, cease working.
Banteay Meanchey province:

Banteay Ti Muoy

First settled by fifteen families in 1982, Banteay Ti Muoy village—located in Toul Pongro commune, Malai district, Banteay Meanchey province—was the site of an army camp during the war between the Khmer Rouge and the Cambodian government. By 1996, there were 144 households in Banteay Ti Muoy, and today the village is home to 1,382 people residing in 279 separate households, nearly half of whom have migrated here within the past five years from various other provinces and from Khmer Rouge camps.

There is no schoolhouse in Banteay Ti Muoy, but its children attend school in Toul Pongro commune. There is also no health center, but many of the villagers were medical personnel during the war and for serious problems, villagers seek help at the Malai district health center.

In the opinion of the village chief, 90% of the villagers are poor, 10% are of average means, and none of Banteay Ti Muoy’s residents is well off. Families cultivate small rice fields, cut bamboo, and gather firewood.

A few families migrate to Thailand to work as laborers for the entire year, while others cross the border only as day laborers to work in factories, plant cucumbers, and harvest sugarcane.

Thirty informal village deminers are said to reside in Banteay Ti Muoy village, demining their own agricultural land for chamkar farming, rice cultivation, and to garner fuses for fishing—and also demining other people’s land in return for the fuses they find there.

CMAC has been working in this village since 1999 and has demined about 50 hectares of house land. The informal deminers carry on working there, however, because CMAC never demines their chamkar land.

Banteay Ti Muoy has benefited from CBMRR, MRT, EOD, MRE, CMT, and an NPA/CMAC IDD project.

Banteay Ti Pir

First settled by the families of four soldiers, in 1993, Banteay Ti Pir village—located in Ou Sampoar commune, Malai district, Banteay Meanchey province—grew in size as people migrated there from other provinces to buy land and settle there. By 1996, the number of resident families had grown to 96, and today the village population numbers 1,333 people, residing in 273 households, with nearly two-thirds of the current population having migrated here within the past five years.

The village has a concrete schoolhouse. It has a private health clinic, but no health center. People sometimes go to the health center in Tuol Pongro commune for treatment. In the opinion of the village chief, 70% of the village’s residents are poor, 30% are of average means, and none of the villagers are well off.

The people of Banteay Ti Pir earn their livelihood through rice cultivation and chamkar farming—of soyabeans, green soyabeans, sesame, and corn—and by working as laborers in Thailand and in other Cambodian villages. An estimated 90% of the village’s working-age population migrates outside the village to find work in the course of the year: to neighboring villages, within Cambodia, to harvest soyabeans, clear land for chamkar farming, or to cut down trees; or to Thailand, to hire themselves out as agricultural laborers during the harvest.

Three or four informal village deminers are said to reside in Banteay Ti Pir. In the past, they demined paths, house land, and chamkar land for their own families, but not for others. By the time of our research team’s visit, we were told they were no longer demining.
CMAC has been demining here since 1998, clearing a road, a school area, and land for CMAC’s own office in this village. The village has benefited from CBMRR, MRT, EOD, MRE, and CMT.

Seila Khmaer

First settled sometime prior to 1987, Seila Khmaer village—located in Ou Bei Choan commune, in Ou Chrov district, in Banteay Meanchey province—was an army encampment during the war between the Cambodian government and the Khmer Rouge. When peace came to the area, in 1991, many of the soldiers continued to reside there and were soon joined by people migrating from other provinces. Today, the village is home to 1,507 people residing in 404 households, with only 10 new families having arrived here to live in the past five years.

The village has had a schoolhouse since early 2004. It has no health center, but does have a private clinic. Those with more serious medical problems go either to the health center in Ou Bei Choan or to Thailand for treatment.

The village chief reckons that 40% of Seila Khmaer’s population is poor, that 30% are of average means, and that 30% are well off. People here earn their livelihood from rice cultivation; from the farming of corn, potatoes, sugarcane, and sesame; or as vendors in the marketplace or from their homes.

Nearly all of the villagers work as day laborers outside the village. Most work in Thailand, planting and harvesting crops and earning Baht 80-120 (USD 2.00-3.00) per day. Some remain in Seila Khmaer and sell their labor there, but this earns them less: Riel 5,000-8,000 (USD 1.25-2.00) per day.

There are said to be mines on the village’s dirt road, in the areas of the small forest that are used for cultivation, and at the Thai border. Most landmine accidents occur when people from other villages, unfamiliar with the area, come to Seila Khmaer to cut down trees to sell for lumber.

Only two informal village deminers reside here now, although as many as thirty were said to live here in the past, until mine accidents forced them to give up the work. The two who remain demine land for chamkar and rice cultivation and to create a safe path to the forest to cut down trees to build houses, for firewood, and to sell. They do not demine for other people. Nonetheless, their fellow villagers benefit by being to utilize the safe paths they have cleared.

CMAC has been demining in Seila Khmaer since 2003. While they are working in the village, the informal deminers continue their own demining, undeterred by CMAC’s presence. The village has benefited from CBMRR, occasional EOD, and from MRE (since 2003), and the people of Seila Khmaer count all of these interventions as successes.

Khla Ngoab

First settled in 1979 by migrants from Takeo, Svay Rieng, Kampot, Battambang, Prey Veng, Kampong Thom, Siem Reap, and Otdar Meanchey provinces, Khla Ngoab village today has a population of 501 people residing in 82 separate households, only about two percent of whom have settled here within the past five years.

Khla Ngoab has no school of its own, but the villagers are in the process of raising money to build one, and, in the meantime, their children attend classes at the school in Toul Pongro commune. Neither does the village have a health center, but six health-care workers are residing there until one is completed.

The village chief estimates that 50% of the village population is poor, 40% are of average means, and 10% may be classified as well off. The people earn their livelihood by cultivating small rice fields and by growing sesame, soybeans, corn, and green soybeans. In the harvest months of November and December, fifty or sixty of Khla Ngoab’s inhabitants
migrate to other Cambodian villages, and to Thailand, in search of work as laborers, cutting sugarcane and working on other people’s chamkar land.

Most of the landmine accidents in Khla Ngoab occur during the rainy season, when people venture out to find bamboo. Three informal village deminers are said to reside here, demining their own agricultural land as well as that of their neighbors, and asking no compensation.

CMAC has been demining here since 2003, clearing land for houses for 20-30 families, for a health center, and for paths to a lake and a pond. The village has benefited from MRT, MRE, CBMRR, CMT, and a roving EOD team.
Annex F:

Extract from Landmine Monitor Report 2001:

Village Demining

*Landmine Monitor Report 1999* and *Landmine Monitor Report 2000* reported a large amount of demining done by villagers in Cambodia, and this continues in most mine-affected areas. In February 2001 a village demining team comprising 76 people was asked to clear for a future village site in Pailin after villagers were facing eviction.

An ad hoc committee of the CMAA met in February to consider the village demining issue. The safety of village deminers and assurances that land cleared by villagers can be registered as free from mines are key issues.

Handicap International (Belgium) initiated a study on “spontaneous demining” in Cambodia in 2000. The findings showed that the majority of village deminers are adult males with knowledge of clearance techniques gained through previous military experience. Demining is largely driven by livelihood needs and clearing is done autonomously and with locally available materials.

The study uncovered various reasons why villagers engage in demining activities. These include villagers returning to old villages that have been mined, the lack of available land for housing and agriculture in heavily mined areas, and land grabbing by powerful people forcing villagers to move onto contaminated land. In terms of livelihoods, villagers tend to clear land for individual agricultural land and also to access common property resources such as forests and water sources. They often take on demining activities because they feel they cannot wait for professional mine clearance. The main reason that motivates villagers to stop demining activities is when they have enough land and access to resources to meet their family livelihood needs. However, villagers will also stop demining due to poor health or old age.

Most village deminers feel they are more likely to be injured by stepping on a mine than by demining. Many would like to discontinue demining because of fear of injury, but feel they have no choice because of their need to support their families. Families of village deminers are worried about the risks taken by their relatives who demine. Authorities claim not to support their activities, but acknowledge that the deminers assist in reducing risks for others. Villagers also believe that deminers reduce the risk in villages, but rarely believe the cleared land is 100% safe.

The villagers, including village deminers, have high hopes that land will be cleared by mine clearance organizations but they experience difficulty in making clearance requests and often complain that there is a lack of response once the request is made. There is a long wait for clearance to begin and many claim that agricultural land is not cleared. Land for a house is good but they cannot live without agriculture.