

# IMAS Mine Risk Education Best Practice Guidebook 6

## COMMUNITY MINE ACTION LIAISON

*International  
mine action standards*



United Nations

# IMAS

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## **COMMUNITY MINE ACTION LIAISON**

*Geneva, November 2005*

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# Foreword

Over the last few years the mine action community has taken major steps towards professionalising its mine risk education (MRE) projects and programmes. A central element in that process has been the development of international standards for MRE by UNICEF, within the framework of the International Mine Action Standards (IMAS), maintained by the United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS). In October 2003, UNICEF completed seven MRE standards, which were formally adopted as IMAS in June 2004.

The MRE component of the IMAS outlines minimum standards for the planning, implementing, monitoring and evaluation of MRE programmes and projects. The IMAS are largely prescriptive, advising operators, mine action centres, national authorities and donors on *what* is necessary for the development and implementation of effective MRE programmes. They do not, however, guide stakeholders on *how* they might adapt their programmes and projects to be more compliant with the standards.

To facilitate the implementation of the MRE standards in the field, UNICEF entered into a partnership with the Geneva International Centre for International Demining (GICHD) to develop this series of *Best Practice Guidebooks* to provide more practical advice on how to implement the MRE standards. A total of 12 Guidebooks have been developed, using expertise from a variety of different people, countries and contexts. The Guidebooks address a wide range of areas covered by the MRE IMAS, including:

- ◆ How to support the coordination of MRE and the dissemination of public information;
- ◆ How to implement risk education and training projects;
- ◆ How to undertake community mine action liaison; and
- ◆ What elements should be considered to implement effective MRE projects in emergencies.

The primary aim of these Guidebooks is to provide practical advice, tools and guidance to undertake MRE programmes that are compliant with IMAS. They are

also meant to provide a framework for a more predictable, systematic and integrated approach to risk education, and are intended for use by anyone engaged in planning, managing or evaluating mine risk education programmes and projects, such as government ministries, mine action centres, United Nations agencies and bodies, and local and international organisations. Donors may also find them useful in assessing proposals for mine risk education projects and programmes.

But while the Guidebooks seek to provide practical advice for the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of programmes and projects, they remain general in nature and will need to be adapted to each new situation in its specific cultural and political context. UNICEF and the GICHD hope that they will prove a useful tool in making mine risk education more effective and efficient.

In addition to being distributed in hard copy, the *Best Practice Guidebooks* can be downloaded free of charge from the Internet at [www.mineactionstandards.org](http://www.mineactionstandards.org) as well as the GICHD website [www.gichd.ch](http://www.gichd.ch) and the UNICEF website [www.unicef.org](http://www.unicef.org).

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# Introduction

## Introduction to the Series

According to the IMAS, the term “mine risk education” refers to “*activities which seek to reduce the risk of injury from mines and ERW by raising awareness and promoting behavioural change, including public information dissemination, education and training, and community mine action liaison.*”<sup>1</sup> MRE is one of the five components of mine action. The others are: *demining* (i.e. mine and explosive remnants of war [ERW] survey, mapping, marking and clearance); *victim assistance*, including rehabilitation and reintegration; *advocacy* against the use of anti-personnel landmines; and *stockpile destruction*.<sup>2</sup>

The first two editions of the IMAS – in 1997 and 2000 – did not include MRE-specific standards and guides. In 2000, the United Nations Mine Action Service, the focal point for mine-related activities within the UN system, requested UNICEF to develop international standards for MRE. UNMAS is the office within the UN Secretariat responsible for the development and maintenance of international mine action standards. UNICEF is the primary actor within the UN in undertaking mine risk education.

In October 2003, UNICEF completed a set of seven MRE standards, which were formally adopted as IMAS in June 2004. The seven standards are as follows:

- ◆ *IMAS 07.11: Guide for the management of mine risk education;*
- ◆ *IMAS 07.31: Accreditation of mine risk education organisations and operations;*
- ◆ *IMAS 07.41: Monitoring of mine risk education programmes and projects;*
- ◆ *IMAS 08.50: Data collection and needs assessment for mine risk education;*
- ◆ *IMAS 12.10: Planning for mine risk education programmes and projects;*
- ◆ *IMAS 12.20: Implementation of mine risk education programmes and projects; and*



- ◆ *IMAS 14.20: Evaluation of mine risk education programmes and projects.*

To facilitate the implementation of the MRE standards in the field, in 2004 UNICEF contracted the Geneva International Centre for International Demining to develop a series of best practice guidebooks for MRE programmes and projects.<sup>3</sup> The following 12 *Best Practice Guidebooks* have been developed:

- ◆ *1: An Introduction to Mine Risk Education;*
- ◆ *2: Data Collection and Needs Assessment;*
- ◆ *3: Planning;*
- ◆ *4: Public Information Dissemination;*
- ◆ *5: Education and Training;*
- ◆ *6: Community Mine Action Liaison;*
- ◆ *7: Monitoring;*
- ◆ *8: Evaluation;*
- ◆ *9: Emergency Mine Risk Education;*
- ◆ *10: Coordination;*
- ◆ *11: The Collected IMAS on Mine Risk Education; and*
- ◆ *12: Glossary of Terms and Resources.*

The *Best Practice Guidebooks* seek to address the particular needs of MRE as an integral part of mine action. Each Guidebook is intended to serve as a stand-alone document, although some include cross-references to other Guidebooks or to other sources.

## Introduction to Guidebook 6

This Guidebook, number 6 of the Series, is designed to enable mine action organisations to use community liaison as part of their field operations in order to enhance their humanitarian impact. Community liaison is defined by the IMAS as “*a process designed to place the needs and priorities of mine affected communities at the centre of the planning, implementation and monitoring of mine action and other sectors*”.

Many people believe that community mine action liaison should form part of every MRE programme, at least once the initial emergency situation (for example, a repatriation of refugees or return of the internally displaced who are not fully aware of the dangers they will face when they go back) has been dealt with through public information dissemination (*see Guidebook 4*).

The evolution of community liaison also recognises the limitations, over the long term, of education and training (*see Guidebook 5*) as knowledge of safe behaviour is not enough to ensure safety when the situation forces people to take risks in order to survive. Telling someone who is knowingly entering a mined area to collect water or food to avoid starvation not to go there is not only pointless, it is disrespectful. You need to help them find options.

Finding realistic alternatives or solutions (a new well in a safe area, for instance) demands not only a mine action response but also a relief or development intervention. This means organisations engaged in community liaison must work

directly with government departments, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and United Nations agencies and bodies as well as with the communities themselves.

Community liaison has often been used to support the demining process – for example, to pass on information about location of mined areas and ERW to demining operators and the national mine action centre, to identify community priorities for demining (survey, marking, fencing and clearance), and to help ensure that the community has confidence to use demined land. Accordingly, this Guidebook describes how community liaison can be implemented before, during and after mine/ERW clearance operations, the destruction of abandoned stockpiles, and the marking and fencing of mined areas. To do this, a mine action organisation has to *communicate* with the community to gather the relevant information and cooperate.

The Guidebook also suggests how community liaison can be used to enhance mine action support for victim assistance projects and programmes, advocacy schemes and local (“village”) demining initiatives. Community liaison teams can, for example, help amputees who need surgical care or physical rehabilitation but who don’t know where or how to get assistance. Thus, community mine action liaison aims to ensure that all mine action projects truly address community needs and priorities.

The IMAS declare that community liaison is a “*strategic principle*” of mine action. But we should not underestimate the difficulties that community liaison faces. Communities as well as development bodies and organisations all have other pressing priorities to deal with. For this reason, anyone engaged in community liaison needs to understand that to be successful it requires particular dedication, skill and patience throughout an organisation, from the project or programme manager down to the field staff.

There are no hard and fast rules to implementing community liaison. There are no standard operating procedures. This openness (which may be read as “flexibility”) may be threatening to organisations used to working in a more structured environment. Creating a community liaison aspect to programming may arguably have the result of slowing down operations.

Certainly, taking time to build relationships within the developmental and the local community may be time-consuming and the results may not always correlate smoothly with the stated objectives of the mine action organisation. Participatory community liaison tools can throw up unpredictable results and are also time-consuming. In addition, mine action organisations will find that communities can consist of very diverse groups with conflicting interests, or perhaps communities with little interest in communal assistance and collaboration and high degree of insularity.

However, the benefits of demonstrable and measurable humanitarian impact are a source of great pride to mine action organisations who have implemented a community liaison component as part of their programmes. Any organisation wanting to ensure that they contribute more than just cleared areas, and who wish to ensure that their demining and human resources are effectively used for humanitarian benefit, will find community mine action liaison the most straightforward, flexible and creative way to do so.

## Layout of the Guidebook

There are 11 sections to the present Guidebook.

**Section 1** describes what community mine action liaison aims to achieve. This is followed by guidance on who to contact in a community as part of liaison activities.

**Section 2** deals with the reporting of mines and ERW and describes the different structures for local reporting of mines and ERW, and how community liaison can be used to support these structures.

**Section 3** details the community liaison required before clearance takes place: the establishing of community relations; data gathering on the health and socio-economic impact; use of “dangerous area forms”; and priority setting.

**Section 4** focuses on how to conduct community liaison while carrying out demining operations. These operations may be clearance of land or community resources, marking of affected areas, or stockpile clearance. The section describes what details are required for information exchange, what information is necessary should operations be suspended while still incomplete, when mine risk education may be necessary, and how to deal with further requests for clearance of land or resources that are not prioritised by the mine action organisation.

**Section 5** gives details on why a handover event is necessary once a mine action organisation has cleared or marked land and resources. This section describes how to organise a public event and the procedures of a public handover of cleared/ marked areas.

**Section 6** describes the community liaison required after a demining operation is complete in order to assess the impact of the clearance. The section sets out procedures for conducting two phases of a post-clearance humanitarian impact assessment. The section also describes the benefits to a mine action organisation of carrying out post-clearance assessments.

**Section 7** focuses on community liaison and stockpile destruction. The processes of community liaison for stockpile destruction are similar to those for conventional clearance. However, this section covers particular political and social sensitivities that can directly affect community liaison during stockpile destruction activities.

**Section 8** details the close link between community mine action liaison and wider development programmes. The section gives three illustrations of development cooperation with, respectively, a UN agency, a government department and an NGO.

**Section 9** focuses on community liaison in village demining. The section starts with a definition of “village demining” (also called “spontaneous” demining) and of a village deminer and his/her activities. The section then gives recommendations to a mine action organisation on community liaison activities that may improve communication; clearance prioritisation processes; offers of land verification services; and offers for training and equipment use by village deminers. **Support for village deminers remains highly controversial in mine action because they are usually not professionally trained or equipped and the quality of their work is considered highly suspect.**

**Section 10** describes community liaison and victim assistance. It begins with a definition of victim assistance and the general areas of impact for survivors of

mines and ERW accidents. The section gives guidance for two types of mine action organisations: those with no specialist programme for survivors, and those that specialise in survivor assistance. For the latter, there are recommendations for community liaison for medical treatment, psychological rehabilitation, socio-economic reintegration, and for the psychological care for the survivor and the family.

**Section 11** gives practical information on the recruitment, training and capacity-building of community liaison staff. It is intended to help an NGO to recruit the right calibre of staff with appropriate experience and aptitudes. It also gives details of relevant training issues and describes how staff capacities may be enhanced in certain directions.

Two Annexes complete the Guide. Throughout the sections there are references to community liaison tools. These are participatory tools used by community workers to gather valid data. Descriptions of each tool, with objectives, procedure and long-term benefit, are included in Annex 1. There are a total of 12 tools, which are labelled Annex 1A, 1B, 1C, and so on, through to 1L. Annex 2 lists some of the main roles for community mine action liaison personnel.

A glossary of abbreviations and acronyms, the IMAS definition of key terms, and a selected bibliography and list of resources for all the *Best Practice Guidebooks* in the Series can be found in *Best Practice Guidebook 12*.

## Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> IMAS 04.10, Second Edition, 1 January 2003 (as amended on 1 December 2004), 3.157.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 3.147.

<sup>3</sup> For the purpose of the IMAS and these Guidebooks, a project is defined as an activity, or series of connected activities, with an agreed objective. A project will normally have a finite duration and a plan of work. An MRE programme is defined as a series of related MRE projects in a given country or area.



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# 1. What is community mine action liaison?

## 1.1 The aims of liaising with a community

We have seen that the ultimate goal of community liaison is to place the needs and priorities of mine- and ERW-affected communities at the centre of the planning, implementation and monitoring of mine action and other sectors. The following are some of the key objectives of liaising with a community to address its mine or ERW impact in pursuit of that goal:

- ◆ To obtain relevant background information on the community itself (e.g. population size and movements, main livelihoods or sources of income and other socio-economic concerns);
- ◆ To obtain information about the background to the mine/ERW problem in a specific community (history of local battles/conflicts);
- ◆ To identify specific at-risk groups in the community and understand the extent and underlying reasons for ongoing risk-taking in mined or ERW-contaminated areas;
- ◆ To provide accurate information on the location or types of mines and ERW to clearance and marking teams, which is necessary to direct mine action operations effectively;
- ◆ To ensure that community representatives are consulted on and involved in prioritising mine action interventions; and
- ◆ To support community development based on community participation – known as building social capital.

Community liaison assists in mine and ERW clearance, marking and stockpile destruction by enlisting the assistance of local people. The mutual assistance and cooperation of the mine action organisation and the community should be encouraged. A community may actively participate in the mine action process through:

- ◆ Information sharing and acting as guides;
- ◆ Contribution of casual labour;

- ◆ Contribution of resources (such as secure storage space, or rest areas); and
- ◆ Cooperation with local authority requests (e.g. to respect and safeguard equipment and marking materials).

## 1.2 Who to contact in the community

### 1.2.1 *Representatives of the community*

Your initial points of contact in the community should be the representatives of the community at large. These include a range of local leaders:

- ◆ Health workers/managers;
- ◆ Field-based managers of national and international NGOs;
- ◆ Locally appointed leaders, e.g. chiefs, tribal leaders;
- ◆ Religious leaders of local religious institutions (consider consultation with all locally represented religions to avoid bias); and
- ◆ Local politicians or political appointees and local government ministers (consider consultation with all locally represented political parties to avoid bias).

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The list may be added to depending on the organisational structures within communities and societies. From now on, these initial points of contact are described as “community representatives”. Community representatives should be able to provide information on:

- ◆ Mine or other ERW incidents;
- ◆ Population size and population movements;
- ◆ History of the rural village, or urban neighbourhoods;
- ◆ Access to local communities, at-risk groups and victims;
- ◆ Access to buildings and geographical areas;
- ◆ Who can act as guides to the village/neighbourhood; and
- ◆ Other resource persons and contacts.

Community representatives can usually advise mine action personnel on appropriate or traditional gathering places to meet community members, and appropriate times to meet them.

### 1.2.2 *Accessing ordinary members of the community*

In cases of highly hierarchically-structured societies, you may need permission to talk to community representatives from central and/or provisional governmental authorities. Following contact with community representatives, you should meet with community members, in particular known risk-taking groups. These may be adolescent males, scrap metal collectors, shepherds, farmers or others.

At-risk groups are the most difficult to engage with, and the most difficult to convince of behavioural change as their dangerous habits are often the direct result of an absence of alternatives. However, their active participation in liaison activities will improve the chances of finding realistic and sustainable solutions.

Ordinary community members ought to be able to provide information on:

- ◆ Population movements;



- ◆ History of the village/neighbourhood;
- ◆ Listing of significant local resources (e.g. paths, roads, health centres, educational facilities, government offices, and religious or cultural sites);
- ◆ Information on incidents and near-incidents;
- ◆ History of local conflict;
- ◆ Information on which armies/rebel groups/resistance movements fought there (leading to information on the types of mines and other ordnance that would have commonly been used); and
- ◆ Local needs and priorities for development.

A range of participatory information gathering tools may be used to gather appropriate detail (*see Annex 1 for the range of participatory community liaison tools*).

### 1.2.3 Accessing minority groups

In order to get representative views from a community, community liaison personnel need to become aware of the different groups within a community that may not be automatically accessed through large community-based meetings. These may include:

- ◆ Minority ethnic/tribal groups;
- ◆ Women;
- ◆ Disabled members of the community;
- ◆ Nomadic people or people with partially nomadic lifestyles (such as shepherds); and
- ◆ People of different age groups (the elder and younger members of the community).

You can engage with excluded groups by:

- ◆ Sending specific invitation to them to be involved; or
- ◆ Addressing them through separate focus group discussions at a venue acceptable to them.

Mine action managers may also consider using community liaison personnel who have a similar background to the target minority groups.

### 1.2.4 Accessing women's representatives in the community

One of the most difficult things to manage during consultation with community representatives is the fact that religious and governmental institutions tend to be male-dominated, and therefore their views and priorities may be "one-sided". Gender representation is an obligation on all humanitarian organisations. This may be achieved by seeking out female representatives in:

- ◆ National and international NGOs;
- ◆ Local women's forums;
- ◆ Local women's cooperatives and business support institutions;
- ◆ Wives of religious leaders (who may hold informal office and counsel surgeries for women);
- ◆ Health institutions, including women's clinics, and feeding centres;
- ◆ Herbal healers and birth attendants; and
- ◆ Teaching or other educational institutions.



All of the above may include women who hold status in rural and urban neighbourhoods. They may be available to represent a female perspective by virtue of being consulted and confided in by local women. This may include additional information on:

- ◆ Local cases of accidents and near accidents;
- ◆ Developmental priorities, which are often centred on small-scale village-based concerns, livelihoods, access to basic resources, and their children's health and education; (this will avoid mine action organisations clearing status-based projects which have little positive humanitarian impact);
- ◆ Reflections of concerns on children's health and education, and access to relevant facilities; and
- ◆ Reflection on the daily work of women that involves access to basic resources (collection of water, gathering food, or gathering firewood, for example).

### 1.2.5 *Community mine action focal points*

A mine action organisation may wish to recruit and support a range of volunteers to act as mine action focal point on behalf of their communities. These volunteers are based in their home villages and may hold a role of responsibility for the community such as religious leader or social worker, and therefore be in a position of trust and have ease of access to community members.

Mine action focal points may be trained to carry out the following activities:

- ◆ Filling in and delivering dangerous area forms;
- ◆ Deliver MRE (perhaps supplied with educational materials);
- ◆ Assist in identifying other local community representatives (e.g. of women, minorities) to help gather pre-clearance information and participate in priority setting initiatives;
- ◆ Provide information to local survivors on available survivor assistance services;
- ◆ Help mine action community liaison personnel to organise local meetings, including for handover of cleared land;
- ◆ Participate in transect walks with mine action personnel; and
- ◆ Identify anyone in the village working as an unofficial deminer.

The aim of mine action focal points should be to act as a two-way information service, both to the community and to the mine action centre or other relevant body or organisation.

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## 2. Reporting of mines and ERW

You should liaise closely with the chosen reporting structures for local people who wish to report the presence of mines and ERW. These structures will vary from country to country; they may be the responsibility of the national mine action authority, the emergency services, locally-based mine action organisations, civil defence, the military or government departments. The reporting structures may involve more than one organisation, and the information gathered may be haphazard or inconsistent.

The IMSMA dangerous area forms<sup>1</sup> may be a suitable tool for collecting information, and can be adapted, if need be.

A reporting system should only be promoted to the public if there is clearance capacity or security procedures in the country to follow up on reports, and only when the reporting structures have been established. Once the structure has been established, the mine action coordinating body may use community liaison personnel from mine action organisations to publicise the reporting structure to the community; it should articulate clearly what the expected results and impact of reporting are to be. This may be achieved through a combination of:

- ♦ A mass media campaign;
- ♦ Publicity posters near the local reporting office; and
- ♦ Mobilisation of, for example, local representatives, religious leaders and teachers to inform local people about the reporting structure.

Often the most powerful publicity for a reporting structure is when clearance/ marking or MRE has begun in a community. The practical implementation of mine action often sparks people to report other dangerous areas and to spontaneously spread positive information about mine action activities within and outside of their community.

### 2.1 Structures for reporting dangerous areas

Reporting of dangerous areas may fall within one or more of the following structures:

- ♦ A national or regional survey to calculate the sites of all dangerous areas. This information should be available on a national database, through which a national coordinating body allocates clearance, marking, stockpile destruction and MRE tasks to mine action organisations.
- ♦ A system of locally based offices (e.g. police, local administration, emergency services), which are trained to collect local reports and to complete dangerous area report forms. These forms are then handed by a responsible local figure directly to a mine action organisation or mine action coordinating body. These local systems use publicity to encourage local people to report dangerous areas in their neighbourhood or village.
- ♦ In the absence of a formal reporting system, local people spontaneously approach community representatives or mine action organisations to report dangerous areas.

You may be given the task of collecting this information and acting on it if there is no formal structure for allocating clearance or marking tasks. In an organisation that fosters integrated mine action, demining teams and MRE teams will also encounter new and unreported dangerous areas. These should be systematically reported, logged, prioritised and tasked. Therefore, all field-based personnel in a mine action organisation should be briefed on how to fill out the dangerous area forms and should have them readily accessible.

Where mine action is new to a country, undergoing expansion or being restructured, you can play a role in identifying the local services and resources that would be most appropriate and accessible for communities to report to. The right approach to this is likely to vary from country to country.

#### **Box 1. Two examples of potentially inappropriate reporting structures**

##### **Example 1.**

In country Y, the police force had a consistent presence in every region and town and was considered an appropriate and organised institution to gather reports on mines/ERW presence. However, their history of corruption and political bipartisanship meant that local people considered them unapproachable for local reporting purposes.

##### **Example 2.**

In country Z, the local government offices were considered as the natural and ideal institution for establishing a reporting structure. In practice, however, the local government structures had suffered from long neglect and poor coordination and leadership. These realities meant that, although they were willing to engage in the mine action process, they were incapable of delivering an effective reporting system.

Community liaison personnel, because of their role and skills, should be consulted for recommendations of an appropriate local reporting structure.

In identifying such a structure for reporting dangerous areas, the community liaison teams will need to consider the following factors.

- ♦ The levels of trust the relevant institution holds among the general public, particularly political trust.

- ♦ To whom people would naturally report any danger or serious issue, irrespective of the institution's relevance to mine action. Using existing and established structures that work for people is preferable to setting up new institutions.
- ♦ The chosen institution will need to be assessed for human resource capacity, geographical presence, and communication skills and financial capacity. Most local institutions in conflict-affected countries are unlikely to be fully self-reliant and may need support. The assessment should recommend who will provide the support required.
- ♦ You will need to judge whether the institution has already established good relations with the mine action coordinating body and or/mine action organisation. If not, you can play a role in facilitating this.

### 2.2 Community liaison support for reporting dangerous areas

You can assist in reporting dangerous areas in the following ways:

- ♦ Conduct training of local officials or community representatives to complete dangerous area forms effectively and brief them on the process of prioritisation in the mine action organisation.
- ♦ Serve as a link between the community and the mine action coordinating body or mine action organisation, assisting in the completion and/or collection of dangerous area forms.
- ♦ Pass on to mine action organisations or the coordinating body any problems local community members have in using the forms (e.g. dual use of village names, or problematic categories). One issue may be the length of time it takes for a report to reach a coordinating body to be processed so it, in turn, can allocate tasks in response. This may be due to weak coordination, excessive bureaucracy, poor terrain or lack of transport. You should identify problems with poor response times and make recommendations to improve the situation.
- ♦ You can supply local offices with resources, such as posters or photo albums of common mines and ERW, so that community members are able to identify items they have seen. Such resources may be displayed in a public area of the office.

### 2.3 Cultural adaptation of dangerous area forms

If the IMSMA dangerous area form is to be used, you should critique the form for cultural and geographical relevance and make recommendations for adaptation. Recommendations should be presented to the mine action coordination body or mine action managers for approval and implementation.

The layout and structure and language of the form need to take account of the fact that it will be used by non-technical people. Necessary adaptations may include the structure of giving the address or locations and contact details.

## 2.4 Training in use of dangerous area forms

The chosen local institution's staff will need training on how to fill in the form accurately, including guidance on how to determine which information is essential and which is non-essential. This training should cover a number of different areas:

- ♦ **How to read maps and use a GPS receiver or compass to map plot coordinates.** Map-reading skills are often strongly culturally based, and may not be recognised as accurate by Western expatriates. You may want to learn how local people give locations and incorporate these cultural methods into the dangerous area form. Map-reading skills may be weak in some cultures or regions.
- ♦ **How to draw sketch maps.** These may be new or unfamiliar to certain cultures, possibly due to the materials used, perspective, or comprehension of distance;
- ♦ **How to complete the dangerous area form from a safe location.** This includes learning how to recognise a dangerous area and not to enter it.
- ♦ **How to recognise mines and ERW.**

Training should also be provided in basic MRE and community liaison skills: how to foster stronger relations with the community on the reporting of ERW, and how to offer the community useful information.

## Endnote

<sup>1</sup> For further information on IMSMA please see the GICHD website at [www.gichd.ch](http://www.gichd.ch).

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## 3. Community liaison before demining operations

### 3.1 Organising pre-clearance data collection

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A mine action organisation needs to collect basic data on mine action and the wider developmental needs of a community to allow it to prioritise tasks and decide on the humanitarian objective for demining operations. Community liaison or data collection teams may be organised to collect such information.

Before you begin to collect primary data you should gather all available secondary data, in order to avoid repetition and excessive survey. Such data may be obtained from other mine action organisations, preliminary studies from other NGOs, government departments, mine action coordination bodies, and UN bodies.

Below is a description of how to collect data using a participatory community liaison approach. This approach will provide sufficient information with which to prioritise tasks, build local contacts, and enable a community to engage in sustainable development of their land and resources.

You should collect information from communities using survey procedures, such as the IMSMA dangerous area forms (*see Section 3.3 below*) and the impact survey form.

You should create a “village profile” to which information is added by the community liaison and demining personnel as mine action progresses. The village profile may include the following:

- ◆ Copies of community liaison participatory tools, diagrams and maps (*see Annex 1*);
- ◆ The action plan for development of cleared land;
- ◆ Key decisions that result from the survey;
- ◆ Details of follow-up mine action activities that are implemented;
- ◆ Progress reports of demining operations.
- ◆ Contact details of local community representatives and key figures;
- ◆ Map of mined/cleared areas/ marked areas;
- ◆ Contact details and decisions from NGOs collaborating in the development effort;

- ◆ Technical survey; and
- ◆ Post-clearance developmental progress.

The village profile provides a mechanism for monitoring and charting progress of mine action activities.

## 3.2 Consultation prior to data collection

You should gain consent from local community representatives to speak to groups and individuals in the community with information on local contamination.

Local community representatives may be approached using the tool *Introduction to the community* (see Annex 1A).

You must brief local community representatives on what the data collection process will involve and why it is necessary. Local community leaders must be kept informed on the process of the work (e.g. data gathering, prioritisation, technical survey, clearance, demolition, handover and post-clearance assessment).

## 3.3 Data collection for dangerous area forms

A dangerous area report is a record from community members and their representatives of dangerous areas in their geographical area. The report normally gives the location, contact name and address, and, where possible, a description of the dangerous item(s).

You have a role to play in the collection of information on dangerous areas in a community. The IMSMA dangerous area form is useful for this task, and may be adapted to specific cultural or conflict-related issues.

You can follow up the dangerous area form with the person reporting the danger, and (if different) a local community leader. There should be a minimum of two local sources to verify information.

You should ensure the form gives contact details; location references (including GPS – Global Positioning System – or compass readings); type of dangerous area, the type and size of area; and a sketch map with an approximate scale. The mine action organisation may also employ a photographic or sketch handbook to consult with the informer to identify the types of dangerous objects.

You can use the following community liaison tools to achieve these tasks:

- ◆ *Introduction to the community* (Annex 1A);
- ◆ *Individual and key informant interviews* (Annex 1C);
- ◆ *Observation* (Annex 1E); and
- ◆ *Transect walks* (Annex 1H).

## 3.4 Data collection for priority setting

You must try to obtain information from both male and female community members. Community members of different gender can usefully be addressed and consulted in separate and appropriate places. (For women, this may preferably take place in their own home or similar safe environment.) Those identified as high risk-takers should be involved at all stages of the consultation process.



You can use a range of participatory tools to collect information from identified sources. These tools should start with:

- ♦ *Introduction to the community* (Annex 1A);
- ♦ *Interviews of individuals and communities* (Annex 1C);
- ♦ *Community mapping* (Annex 1J); and
- ♦ *History timelines* (Annex 1B).

In addition, the participatory tool *ranking of problems/solutions* (Annex 1D) can be used at your discretion.

The community liaison team may also use other participatory tools to collect data from community members:

- ♦ *Transect walks* (Annex 1H);
- ♦ *Venn diagram* (Annex 1I);
- ♦ *Observation* (Annex 1E);
- ♦ *Resource cards* (Annex 1K); and, for target groups,
- ♦ The *daily routine diagram* (Annex 1F).

Information from the tools may be used to comply with IMAS Risk Assessment and Survey standards, as set out in IMAS 08.10. Any information gaps may be filled by further interviews with community representatives.

#### 3.4.1 Consolidation and verification of data

Time should be allocated to consolidate information and verification of data. Further trips to the field may be required to complete missing information from key informants, refine the “community map” into a professional, scaled map and to conduct the participatory tool *land use plan* (Annex 1L).

All documents and data gathered must be copied to the mine action organisation managers for analysis and to feed into the prioritisation process. They may be combined with technical survey data. All the information may be kept in the village profile,<sup>1</sup> together with the technical survey and progress clearance reports, so that a comprehensive dossier is built up of each village where clearance has taken place.

#### 3.4.2 Data storage

The data collected may be stored in one or more of the following places:

- ♦ Hard copy in the village profile on site;
- ♦ Hard copy at the offices of the mine action organisation;
- ♦ Digital format at the offices of the mine action organisation;
- ♦ Hard copy at the mine action coordinating body (government or UN); and
- ♦ Digital format at the mine action coordinating body (government or UN).

### Endnote

<sup>1</sup> As noted above in Section 2.1, this is a specific file on each village or urban neighbourhood cleared.





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## 4. Community liaison during clearance

Community liaison is required during clearance and marking to help ensure that mine action activities are efficient and productive. This keeps lines of communication open so that communities are fully informed of what is happening, where, and that any problems are swiftly addressed.

As demining teams inevitably remain in a community longer than community liaison personnel, they are likely to develop relationships and be put in a position of trust by the community members. Demining team members are likely to pick up knowledge and concerns of a community over a length of time; demining managers or supervisors, for example, may be engaged in direct liaison with community representatives. Therefore, where demining and community liaison teams are operating separately, care needs to be taken to ensure integration of information and mutual sharing of knowledge.

### 4.1 Community liaison in preparation for demining operations

Before beginning demining activities, you must accompany the demining team leader together with a local key informant to identify and agree on the location for clearance/markings activity. You must inform the local community representatives and ask them to inform the local community members in advance of a technical survey. They may also accompany the technical survey team to ensure cooperation with the local key personnel.

When demining managers have decided the start and end dates for clearance of a mined area, you must visit community representatives and members living around the dangerous area to notify them of the dates for clearance/markings.

## 4.2 Information-sharing during demining operations

You must inform the community representatives and community members of the activities to be carried out and the general types of equipment to be used (e.g. mechanical equipment or mine detection dog teams), and when it will happen.

You must also request local community representatives to help ensure that communities cooperate with necessary requests (e.g. using different routes or avoiding an affected building) for the time required.

Throughout clearance, maintain contact with both the demining teams and the community to ensure that cooperation and communication are clear. They should take the initiative to deal with any issues that arise (e.g. local interference with markings or equipment, liaison with local leaders, disruption of local activity, such as the use of routes) to allow for smooth mine action operations.

The community living and working around the dangerous area undergoing clearance or marking operations must be briefed on the methods of marking, signs, pickets and barriers to be used so they recognise and understand signs that may be new to their area.

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You must also carry out basic safety briefings for local residents living and working around the site of operation. The safety briefing should focus on advising people to keep away from the area of operation and not interfering with marking signs and demining equipment, or with the demining teams at work. These briefings must be carried out for children and for adults in separate groups. As with any MRE or community liaison activities, men and women may need to be addressed in separately.

You can request assistance from the local community, where appropriate (e.g. for labour, parking spaces or storage areas). This helps to build a collaborative relationship and ensure shared ownership of the humanitarian effort. The long-term goal of this collaboration is to encourage local responsibility for the maintenance and use of cleared/marked land or resources. Each community and the socio-economic circumstances are likely to vary in capacity and willingness, but most local communities will wish to contribute in some way, so try to identify an appropriate channel.

You should maintain regular dialogue with local community leaders and community members directly affected by clearance/markings operations to address any concerns or questions they may have.

## 4.3 Community liaison in event of suspension of demining operations

Where a suspension of demining operations is deemed necessary, the community must be informed of the decision and the reasons behind it. This helps to ensure that people continue to live and work safely around the area.

Thus, in the event of a demining team deciding to suspend or extend clearance activity, arrange a meeting with local community representatives together with the demining team leader to explain:

- ♦ The reasons for the suspension/extension of activity; and

- ♦ Any protection to be established during period of suspension (e.g. warning markings, further targeted MRE).

If education and training activities are carried out in the village/ neighbourhood, it should contain a briefing that specifically covers the areas cleared and the areas uncleared, areas marked and the areas surveyed. Community representatives may benefit from a technical map.

Community representatives should be informed if and when the clearance activity will be resumed and completed, with a specific or an approximate start date, as appropriate. They should also be informed if the clearance activity will be handed over to another mine action organisation or agency, and be given a contact name within that organisation, where possible, for further enquiries to be re-directed.

### 4.4 Community requests for clearance of non-prioritised resources

You may come across cases where communities request clearance of resources and/or land that is not considered a priority by the mine action organisation. This issue may arise during the initial data collection stage. You can interview community members (*see Annex 1C*), community representatives and high-risk groups with the aim of negotiating how uncleared land will be handled safely.

The community – with your help – may consider several options, including;

- ♦ Contacting another mine action organisation to clear the land;
- ♦ Contacting a development NGO which may be able to provide an alternative resource or solution to reduce risk;
- ♦ Asking the collaborating mine action organisation to mark the land;
- ♦ By (controversially) suggesting the use of local village deminers to clear the land (*see Section 9 on Village demining*);
- ♦ Using local people to improvise on marking and/or put up warning signs (also controversial); or
- ♦ Working together with local administration to identify other routes, land or resources that may be accessed as alternatives and which may be publicised to all in the community to reduce risk.

You can also assist communities by:

- ♦ Providing contact information on appropriate NGOs, mine action organisations and governmental bodies;
- ♦ Providing a forum for debate on development issues;
- ♦ Using their knowledge of community liaison and mine action to offer suggestions;
- ♦ Contacting relevant organisations to advocate on their behalf; and/or
- ♦ Supporting local clearance/marketing initiatives (*see Section 9 on Village demining*).



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## 5. Task handover

Once demining teams have completed clearance or marking, the land or resource that has been addressed needs to be returned back to the local community and its representatives for use. One way of achieving this is through a public handover event. Such an event serves three purposes:

- ♦ To engender a sense of ownership and responsibility for the land/routes; this encourages sustainable maintenance of cleared land and resources;
- ♦ To clarify in public, to users of the land and those responsible for maintaining the land, specifically what areas have been cleared or marked, and what have not; this ensures public safety through knowledge; and
- ♦ In areas where land rights and lack of access to land are a socio-economic problem, the public will benefit greatly from accurate information on ownership rights and maintenance responsibilities; this also serves to protect the mine action organisation from accusations of political partisanship.

### 5.1 Liaison prior to handover of land and resources

Community liaison personnel should arrange a meeting with community representatives to organise a public event where local people are invited for a signing-over ceremony of the cleared area. The meeting should agree on who should be invited (e.g. if a school area has been cleared it may include the head of the school or the school governors).

Community liaison personnel should also facilitate a short but constructive handover of cleared area to the public who will be using it and key figures who have authority over its use. The event should invite relevant people residing and working around the cleared site. "Relevant people" may include pupils and parents of a cleared school area, health workers and residents around a cleared health centre area, or all residents of cleared residential area.

The community liaison team should agree with demining personnel and key authority figures for an appropriate venue for the handover.

## 5.2 Public event for handover of cleared/marked area

The community liaison team should begin the event with introductions of all key personnel, from local authority figures to representatives from the mine action organisation. Key figures should be allowed time to make short speeches.

A public handover of cleared land must include a debriefing from the demining team leader. This debriefing should cover the following subjects: size and area of land cleared, description with map of defined area, and description of unverified areas. A document detailing the handover of cleared land must be read out publicly to ensure that the entire village is aware of how the land is to be used, and who it belongs to.

Community liaison personnel must then pass around two copies of the “handover of cleared land” document for appropriate signatures, and ensure that the audience have all understood the intention for the use of the land – as had been agreed during the pre-clearance survey period. The document must be written in the local language. The signatures may include that of the demining team leader, a key local authority official and relevant community representative (e.g. head teacher, health centre manager, residents’ committee official, depending on the type of area cleared).

The local community representatives should receive one original copy of the document together with a map of the cleared area. The community representative should preferably have an office where it can be displayed publicly. The second original copy should remain with the mine action organisation, together with a translation, to be kept in the village profile for its own records.

The community representatives and public should also be notified, where relevant, that the mine action organisation will conduct a post-clearance survey and be given the date of the first visit.

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## 6. Community liaison after demining operations

### 6.1 Assessing the impact of clearance

Assessment of cleared land is required to ensure that the humanitarian objective given for the clearance procedure is reached and sustained. The assessment allows a mine action organisation to measure its humanitarian impact and effectiveness. It is recommended that the impact assessment take place in two stages, as set out below.

The first or “initial” assessment allows you to judge whether the humanitarian objective has been reached, and if it has not, to assist to make it a reality. The initial assessment is made soon after the handover date. The aim of this assessment is to make an early judgement on the success of the operation. It also allows the liaison personnel from the mine action organisation to observe any hindrances and to initiate contact with government departments, NGO officials or UN agencies for extra assistance to the community. Visits as part of the initial assessment can usefully be made together with relevant personnel from a development NGO which may have collaborated on the humanitarian impact assessment and enabled resources to be further developed.

The second or “final assessment” ensures that the humanitarian objective has not only been reached but is also being sustained over the long term. The final assessment may evaluate local people’s perception of success and access as well as the observed reality. The final impact assessment takes place after the community has had sufficient time to develop and use the resource or land. This assessment gives an accurate reflection of humanitarian success for the mine action project during a period of stability.

### 6.2 Procedures for “initial post-clearance assessment”

The land or route cleared will already have identified a humanitarian purpose for its use at the pre-demining activity stage; accordingly, refer to the relevant



“land use plan” (see Annex 1L). You should follow up clearance activity with a post-clearance visit to evaluate success of the humanitarian impact. The first visit should take place roughly six to eight weeks after the handover date. Community liaison teams should send a message to key figures in the community notifying them of the time and place of the initial post-clearance visit, as well as its purpose.

An Initial Post-Clearance Assessment Form including details from the initial survey of which facility or facilities were blocked, and what numbers of people were prevented from carrying out activities as a result, should be used to guide your work. The assessment should supply details of any increase in activity and the number of primary and secondary beneficiaries from the clearance. You should meet with key local figures to discuss progress of the development intended and any complications or hindrances.

To complete the assessment form, the team can use the following participatory tools:

- ♦ *Introduction to the community* (Annex 1A);
- ♦ *Observation* (Annex 1E);
- ♦ *Transect walks* (Annex 1H); and
- ♦ *Individual interviews, key informant interviews and community interviews* (Annex 1C).

The community liaison team should refer to the data analysis of all participatory tools used in the pre-demining activity survey stage.

Local community representatives should be notified of the next stage: that the mine action organisation may conduct a final post-clearance visit and be given an approximate date for it (approximately six months after the end of clearance). The purpose of the final visit should be explained (i.e. to evaluate long-term success).

### 6.3 Procedures for “final post-clearance assessment”

You should carry out a final assessment visit to the cleared area. The purpose of this assessment is to ensure that the original development goals identified in the initial survey have succeeded and been sustained in the longer term. As mentioned above, the final assessment visit may take place six months after the handover date.

The process of conducting the final post-clearance assessment should follow a similar format to the initial post-clearance assessment for meaningful data comparison. The final assessment should follow the progress of the facility or facilities that have been freed and the resulting primary and secondary beneficiaries who have access to them.

For the final assessment you can use the following participatory tools:

- ♦ *Introduction to the community*(Annex 1A);
- ♦ *Observation* (Annex 1E);
- ♦ *Transect walks* (Annex 1H); and
- ♦ *Individual interviews, key informant interviews and community interviews* (Annex 1C).

Key local community representatives should be notified that the mine action organisation’s involvement regarding the dangerous area cleared and the assessments as complete.

## 6.4 Analysis of post-clearance data

The minimum details to be included in data analysis are:

- ♦ Who the beneficiaries are (preferably a specific target group);
- ♦ How many beneficiaries there are;
- ♦ Why the community needed mine action assistance;
- ♦ The history or context of the mine/ERW problem in the area;
- ♦ The developmental issue (the land or resource that was blocked);
- ♦ The humanitarian issue (number of casualties);
- ♦ The geographical location of the affected community; and
- ♦ The dates of when the mine action activity took place.

Data should be shared with all the key stakeholders in the mine action process. This may include the mine action organisation's donors, the UN, the government and/or its mine action coordinating body, relevant government departments (e.g. the education department) and UN bodies (e.g. UNICEF), collaborating NGOs and community-based organisations, and other mine action agencies.

## 6.5 Benefits of post-clearance assessment to a mine action organisation

The mine action organisation should use the data analysed from the initial and final post-clearance assessment to:

- ♦ Understand the community and governmental priorities for land/resources clearance;
- ♦ Understand and respond to continuing concerns;
- ♦ Understand difference of priorities among the community;
- ♦ Identify and respond to ongoing risk-taking behaviour; and
- ♦ Assess the contribution of the freed resources to the local and national economy.

This information may be used to direct future mine action endeavours and to report to donors and governments on the successful humanitarian impact. Post-clearance assessment helps a mine action organisation to prove the humanitarian benefits of its work to all the programme stakeholders.



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## 7. Community liaison and stockpile destruction

### 7.1 Background to stockpile destruction

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Article 4 of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention requires that States undertake to destroy or ensure the destruction of all stockpiled anti-personnel landmines it owns or possesses, or that are under its jurisdiction or control, within four years of becoming a party to the Convention.

Community liaison to enable stockpile destruction follows a similar aim and methodology to that of community liaison for clearance and marking. There are, however, particular considerations and local sensitivities around stockpile destruction that you may encounter. For instance, a local stockpile in a community or neighbourhood may be regarded as a threat to the community's security and safety, or it may be regarded as a source of national pride and strength. The general perception of the role and existence of stockpiles must be acknowledged and addressed by you during your community liaison activities.

### 7.2 Local key sources of information

During the survey process, when stockpiles or cache sites are identified within a community, appropriate liaison should be engaged prior to destruction. The following resources may be used as liaison personnel or guides:

- ♦ Locally-based government officials;
- ♦ Locally-based military personnel;
- ♦ Former rebel leaders; and
- ♦ Community representatives and authority figures.

You can employ the following tools to gain the relevant information from the government/military personnel and community groups:

- ♦ *Introduction to the community* (Annex 1A);
- ♦ *Observation* (Annex 1E);
- ♦ *Transect walks* (Annex 1H); and

- ♦ *Individual interviews, key informant interviews and community interviews (Annex 1C).*

### 7.3 Liaison with community members

A focus group of local residents may also be interviewed to provide the mine action organisation information on impact (e.g. dangerous behaviour by residents, exposure of dangerous objects to the elements, children using the site as a playground).

Communities may be unwilling to talk about stores or caches in their area. Government and/or military authorities may also be unwilling to allow a mine action organisation to interview local residents about stocks or a cache. In these circumstances, interviews with the community for impact information should be abandoned in the interests of clearing the site, and you can use the following participatory tools to gain the necessary information:

- ♦ *Transect walks (Annex 1H); and*
- ♦ *Key informant interviews with relevant officials (Annex 1C).*

The mine action organisation must encourage the government/military officials to liaise with local residents and share information on stockpile destruction activities in the interests of public safety.

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## 8. Community liaison and development

The direct relationship between community mine action liaison and development has been addressed throughout this Guidebook, as it runs through all community liaison activities. Community liaison does not take place solely within the organisation nor only within “communities”. Community liaison is also used to involve feedback, information sharing and guidance from UN bodies, NGOs from all sectors in the development field, other mine action organisations, government bodies, and military liaison officers, among others.

The potential for mine action organisations to liaise with all these sectors needs to be explored much further than currently is the case. By linking into national and international development sectors, we can ensure that land or resources that are cleared or marked can play a significant part in the lives of beneficiaries, and thereby that the mine action organisation is responding to clearly identified and urgent needs.

This level of liaison may identify that much of the reconnaissance or pre-clearance survey has already been carried out with the beneficiaries and impact-identified, saving the mine action organisation much time and resources. A mine action organisation may achieve this by building a close relationship with an international NGO or governmental department, which then shares activities or the results of survey and assessment with the mine action organisation to identify needs, share resources to meet the needs, and collaborate in activities. The text boxes below describe how this may be achieved in practice.

### Box 2. Linking mine action with development – Scenario 1

A mine action organisation collaborated with an NGO that provided funding to protect natural springs and wells. The NGO called upon the mine action organisation where they had identified springs/wells for development but which were affected by mines/ERW, either around the water source or on a route to the source.

The NGO identified the number of beneficiaries and local contacts when carrying out their feasibility survey – allowing the mine action organisation to conduct a technical survey and carry out demining activities without a pre-clearance survey. The follow-up assessment was carried out by the NGO and the impact analysis shared with the mine action organisation.

### Box 3. Linking mine action with development – Scenario 2

A UN body in Angola decided to assist refugees being repatriated from a neighbouring country. The identified routes and checkpoint areas required clearance or verification for safety, and specific areas for resettlement required clearance.

The UN body carried out the necessary survey, identified the land and numbers of beneficiaries, conducted liaison with government bodies of the national government and the neighbouring government, and liaised with NGOs assisting in resettlement.

The mine action organisation carried out a technical survey of the identified routes and land, and carried out the verification, clearance and marking.

Assessment of impact for beneficiaries was carried out by the involved NGOs and the UN body, the results of which were shared with the mine action organisation

### Box 4. Linking mine action with development – Scenario 3

While liaising with Iraqi government departments, a mine action organisation discovered that the government was to focus significant funding on the rehabilitation of educational facilities, in order to restart the formal school programme after the end of the war. The mine action organisation therefore made a strategic decision to support the government in their efforts by prioritising educational facilities (and routes to these facilities) for clearance.

The organisation developed its demining teams into small, flexible roving teams to achieve a quick response to ERW and mine local reports. The mine action organisation advertised over the radio and in national newspapers and distributed posters via other NGOs to promote local reporting and their clearance activities. The mine action organisation carried out simple beneficiary assessment prior to clearance/marking and impact assessment after clearance/marking.

The three scenarios are examples of how a mine action organisation can feed directly into larger scale relief or development plans of a government or UN agency or an NGO. Through this collaboration, a mine action organisation may be able to cut out certain aspects of community liaison (such as pre-clearance survey or post-clearance assessment), as the burden of data collection and liaison is shared with other organisations. This frees up the mine action organisation's time to focus on demining tasks and still achieve significant humanitarian impact.

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## 9. “Village” or “spontaneous” demining

Village demining is the initiative of local people spontaneously taking on the responsibility for clearing an area in their village or neighbourhood to access land or resources. Clearance may also be undertaken for income generation in some communities. The urgent need for land often outweighs the fears that village deminers have for their own safety but they generally take rational safety precautions.

The IMAS defines village demining as “*self-supporting mine and/or UXO clearance and hazardous area marking, normally undertaken by local inhabitants, on their own behalf or the behalf of their immediate community. Often described as a self-help initiative or spontaneous demining, village demining usually sits outside or in parallel with formal mine action structures, such as demining undertaken by militaries or humanitarian demining such as is supported by the UN, international and national non-governmental organisations, private enterprise and governments, among others*”.<sup>1</sup>

Demining may be carried out using ordinary farm implements, either by disarming and/or destroying, often through burning. Some village deminers may keep the ordnance or mines for mine action organisations to remove and destroy. Village deminers are rarely supported, formally or informally, by the professional mine action community; indeed, the concept of village demining is extremely controversial.

### 9.1 What is a village deminer?

According to one definition, by Ruth Bottomley: “*Village deminers are defined as (those) who clear mines in a reasonably technical and comprehensive way, often drawing in existing military knowledge... This differs from villagers who simply move mines out of their way when they see them... They may have settled in areas where they were soldiers and have local knowledge of mine deployment.*”<sup>2</sup>

Village deminers often clear dangerous objects when their own priorities and expectations are not met by the professional mine action authorities, for example,



where the mine action organisation has geographical or target constraints. In these circumstances where a mine action organisation can not directly assist in the conventional manner, they may still facilitate mutual support in a number of ways as set out in Section 9.2 below. Before engaging with village deminers, a humanitarian mine action organisation should check on the legal status of village demining or any legal conditions that restrain village demining activities.

## 9.2 Recommendations on village demining

### 9.2.1 Recommendations for communication strategies

You should contact village deminers to try to obtain the vital local knowledge they hold. This may include knowledge of suspect areas, location of military bases, types of ordnance, dangerous patterns of behaviour among local people, and known patterns of deployment. Personnel contacting village deminers need to consider that demining activities may be seasonal or sporadic, so village deminers may be hard to identify at first.

Mine action organisations should take care that MRE messages do not portray village deminers as ill-informed to avoid alienating them. MRE messages should instead address the prevailing knowledge and the reality of livelihood predicaments.

You must clarify very early on in the process of liaison what your organisation is and is not prepared to clear and the reasons why. This is to avoid creating false expectations. Making these clarifications (often more than once) will help reduce unnecessary village clearance.

If the villagers perceive the priorities of the mine action organisation as limited and inadequate in meeting their immediate needs, these may be addressed during the liaison to find solutions or compromises. Thus, for example, if the mine action organisation deems clearing of agricultural land to be a low priority, this needs to be explained and other solutions examined with the community.

Some village deminers are under the impression that they will be paid by mine action organisations for the mines or other ordnance that they hand over to them. MRE personnel in general and community liaison personnel in particular must contradict false information, and state that mine action organisations prefer to clear the land themselves, as village demining by “amateurs” is dangerous and unhelpful. Accurate information may be portrayed through MRE posters.

You could investigate whether alternative occupations to agriculture are viable and sustainable in the community. Where this is the case, they should collaborate with other development NGOs for alternative income-generating projects. This would, in the words of Ruth Bottomley, “relieve the livelihood pressures that are the main motivations behind high risk activities”.

### 9.2.2 Recommendations on priority setting

By developing a stronger understanding of the priorities of local communities for clearance of land, you may be able to prevent village demining by recommending professional clearance operations in a timely fashion. As Ruth Bottomley points

out, “Village deminers frequently claimed they had to clear mines because they could not wait for the mine clearance organisations to clear the land for them”, especially “where there is a lack of alternative livelihood options” or due to fear of accidents among family members.

Village deminers will clear mines when their reports to official organisations go unheeded. MRE programmes should avoid misleading local people into believing that reporting to mine action organisations will lead to swift clearance of mines or other ordnance when this is in fact unlikely, due to geographical, coordination or budgetary constraints on the organisation. MRE and community liaison groups and organisations need to check in advance that the clearance contacts they give are realistically prepared to act on information reported. (See Section 2, above, on reporting of mines and other ERW.)

Where reporting structures are weak and ineffective or involve long delays, there is an increased chance of village demining. Mine action organisations would do well to assist in the strengthening and support of local reporting structures. This may be achieved through the training of community representatives to fill reporting forms, and training of mine action support staff to respond quickly to reports. Messages to villagers “should be consistent and realistic”, and backed up by “clear procedures that are easy for villagers to follow and understand”.

Mine action organisations could consider forming “quick response” or “roving” teams of demining staff who can clear small but vital areas rapidly and at short notice, “doing limited clearance of small tasks in high risk areas”.

### 9.2.3 Recommendations for land verification

Village deminers are unlikely to mark an area they have cleared or mark a suspect area. This has implications for mine action organisations that may come at a later date to officially clear land. Detailed survey and community liaison will be required to verify these areas.

Local residents and village deminers do not usually believe that the land cleared by village deminers is 100 per cent safe, or that the procedures are as effective as professional clearance using detectors. Therefore clearance or verification by the mine action organisation may still be required. Mine action organisations may support village deminers by providing a quality assurance service for land cleared by village deminers, to build the confidence of local people who have to use it.

### 9.2.4 Recommendations on training and equipment use

Where a mine action organisation decides to train village deminers, that training may cover issues such as safe practice, safe drills to extract themselves and others from a mined area, first aid, and safer practices during clearance.

Mine action organisations may develop appropriate MRE programmes to promote safer practice among village deminers. This may involve training in basic detection techniques for small local cooperatives of village deminers.

A mine action organisation may train village deminers to work at the same time as a mine action organisation in the same village, but on non-prioritised land, which would allow for some level of quality surveillance.

A mine action organisation may support village deminers through the provision and/or loan of safety equipment, safety clothing and clearance equipment. The mine action organisation may choose to supply outdated (though safe), unused or replaced equipment. The mine action organisation may organise a contract loan scheme (in lieu of deposit) for equipment. All equipment loan schemes must be combined with training in equipment use and basic safety measures.

## Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> IMAS 04.10: Glossary of mine action terms, definitions and abbreviations, Second Edition, 1 January 2003 (as amended on 1 December 2004), Definition 3.271.

<sup>2</sup> R. Bottomley (2001), *Spontaneous Demining Initiatives – Final Study Report, Mine Clearance by Villagers in Rural Cambodia*, Handicap International Belgium, Phnom Penh, Cambodia.

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## 10. Community liaison and survivor assistance

The Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention requires, in its Article 6, paragraph 3, that: “*Each State Party in a position to do so must provide assistance for the care and rehabilitation, and social and economic reintegration, of mine victims*”. However, the ability of many mine-affected countries to address the needs of survivors is inadequate. The assistance of NGOs, including mine action organisations, is usually necessary to provide for the care and rehabilitation of mine and ERW survivors.

Community liaison personnel can do a lot to facilitate the provision of assistance to these survivors, by identifying those in need of medical treatment, physical or psychological rehabilitation, and assistance to ensure their effective reintegration into society.

### 10.1 Definitions of survivor assistance

The Convention’s Standing Committee on Victim Assistance and Socio-Economic Reintegration defines a “mine victim” as including:

- ◆ Directly affected individuals;
- ◆ The families of directly affected individuals; and
- ◆ Mine-affected communities.

Consequently, victim assistance is viewed as a wide range of activities that benefit individuals, families and communities. However, the term *survivor assistance* is sometimes used to describe activities aimed only at the individuals directly affected by a landmine incident.

### 10.2 Areas of impact for survivors

In areas where employment opportunities are minimal, where people with disabilities are stigmatised or where there is a shortage of training and rehabilitation facilities, mine survivors face enormous challenges.

### 10.2.1 Health

The health needs of landmine survivors are typically long-term, in many instances lasting a lifetime. Medical problems can resurface years after the original incident. To ensure sustainability, assistance to landmine survivors should be viewed as a part of a country's overall public health and social services system.

### 10.2.2 Economic

Socio-economic reintegration is not always easily achievable or sustainable. Vocational training programmes and other methods to facilitate economic reintegration struggle to succeed in economies with high levels of unemployment in the general population.

### 10.2.3 Social

In most agrarian societies, the loss of a limb makes it almost impossible for a person to find work and survivors may be ostracised. People who have been injured by mines may not only be considered a burden on their families and communities, but are often no longer perceived as being productive members of society.

## 10.3 Community liaison for organisations offering non-specialist support to survivors

Community liaison personnel from a mine action organisation may assist mine survivors in the following ways.

The mine action organisation should maintain dialogue and contact details of organisations (whether governmental health services or national and international NGOs) who provide:

- ♦ Medical care for survivors of landmine and ERW accidents;
- ♦ Rehabilitation and prosthetics for survivors;
- ♦ Support for social and economic integration of disabled people; and
- ♦ Psychological care for trauma victims.

To be effective and avoid duplication, a mine action organisation that does not specialise in survivor assistance should coordinate closely with the health sector. The goal here is to inform of free and/or available services. The mine action organisation should check whether the survivor assistance body or organisation is able to absorb recommendations for assistance from the geographical areas in which the mine action organisation operates and what restrictions are in place for the application of assistance, if any.

During liaison with local community representatives and community members the mine action organisation can ask for the contact details of survivors in order to recommend them onto specialist assessment. This may be done while the mine action organisation is collecting primary or secondary victim data. In order to do this, you will need to be trained by medical assessors on disability recognition.

Alternatively, mine action organisations may first hear of a local landmine survivor if they are involved in a rescue and giving first aid. In this case, you may

follow up, initially with informal visits to the family, to recommend appropriate services and assistance available, and fill any other gaps in knowledge of services.

Survivors may be interviewed to check what medical and social assistance they have received and from whom as part of the process of collecting “victim data”. They may be referred to appropriate organisations that can assist. **Specific training is required for community liaison personnel handling interviews with survivors of landmine and ERW accidents to ensure that sensitivity and confidentiality are employed effectively.**

In order to avoid giving out misleading information that may raise false expectations among survivors, you need to ensure they are very familiar with the operation of the survivor assistance programmes. They should ideally recommend locally-based organisations that are able to offer the relevant service for ease of access.

Where a survivor has difficulty accessing transport, you may be able to arrange lifts for rural-based survivors who have medical appointments in urban centres. This may be arranged in coordination with other community liaison activities carried out in the village.

You can also distribute posters and/or leaflets to health clinics and government offices in rural areas, advertising the services of survivor assistance programmes. This should be done in consultation with the service organisation being advertised to ensure that appropriate geographical areas are targeted. They may also advertise the services by word of mouth to health personnel, government officials, religious leaders or ordinary community members.

The mine action organisation, in its general coordination with non-mine-action NGOs, mine action coordination bodies and government bodies, may advocate the urgent needs of survivors who lack appropriate assistance in certain geographical areas. The mine action organisation may advocate for services where they have ascertained a specific need.

## 10.4 Community liaison support by specialist survivor assistance programmes

NGOs should ensure that landmine survivors receive the same opportunities in life – in health care, social services, income, education, and participation in community activities – as anyone else in society. The ultimate goal of survivor assistance programmes should be the complete rehabilitation of mine survivors and their reintegration into the wider community.

### 10.4.1 *Medical treatment*

Following rescue and immediate first aid, a mine and ERW survivor is likely to need medical treatment. This may be major or minor depending on the extent of the injuries sustained. Local healers and family members, a local clinic, or an urban hospital may offer the treatment. A survivor may, of course, use more than one source of medical assistance.

Community liaison personnel who plan to follow up cases should link into formal as well as informal sources of treatment. Information on the type of medical

treatment sought will give an organisation vital information about the local culture, what sources of medical assistance people trust (and the reasons why), medical sources they are able to afford and are able to access easily, and the type of injuries commonly sustained. This information will help an organisation to target its resources to cater for most common treatments required, in identified geographical areas, and to develop appropriate training for local healers or medical staff.

NGOs providing medical treatment and rehabilitation of survivors should liaise regularly with government health ministers and relevant UN bodies to ensure their programmes are in line with national health policies. Liaison with governmental bodies should further the aim of national ownership of activities. Similarly, liaison is required with other NGOs and UN bodies to ensure that all activities fit in within a developmental perspective of a long-term plan.

### 10.4.2 *Physical rehabilitation*

Organisations involved in the physical rehabilitation of survivors can use community liaison skills effectively to determine the kind of services that are required. Liaison with survivors – both those currently receiving treatment and those who have received assistance in the past – is vital to ensuring that the assistance given can be sustained by the survivor and his or her family in their environment. So, for example, wheelchairs should not be given to people living in hilly or rocky areas with few roads or paths; and prosthetic limbs should be simple, sustainable, affordable and available.

Community liaison should ensure that once the survivor returns to his or her community, he or she is using prosthetics or other medical equipment or drugs appropriately. This may be carried out in the form of home visits. Any problems may be followed up on with appropriate action, advice or referrals.

Community liaison personnel at this stage may also enquire as to how the survivor is coping psychologically, how the family is coping and able to care for the survivor and what, if any, socio-economic assistance be required and is available.

Care is best accessed locally: if the family of the survivor is not able to provide the necessary physical or psychological care, you can make enquiries in the village/ neighbourhood about other sources of support. These sources for counselling or practical help may include:

- ◆ Local health clinics;
- ◆ Local disabled persons support networks;
- ◆ Religious personnel and institutions that may raise funds or provide counselling;
- ◆ Local community workers;
- ◆ Local government officials who may be able to access resources on their behalf; and
- ◆ Traditional healers or wise men/women who can provide counselling.

Sources of support will vary between countries and cultures enormously, but local community members should be a source of information as to what is available. Often people in a community are willing to offer support to a survivor and his/her family when approached. However, an individual and his or her family may be unwilling to make requests for help due to pride or “saving face”.



Community liaison personnel, under their official role, may be able to fill the gap by galvanising local support. By using local sources, the community liaison will ensure that support is sustainable, acceptable and appropriate.

### 10.4.3 *Socio-economic reintegration*

Organisations providing socio-economic assistance to disabled people after physical recovery, in the form of training, work cooperatives and income-generating schemes, must employ community liaison activities during the feasibility stage prior to project set-up.

The feasibility study enables an organisation to understand the kinds of projects that would offer sustainable income, be easy to establish in the geographical and social areas where the disabled people live, and would prove popular for the target group. Community liaison tools (*see Annex 1*) may be used to ensure a genuinely *participatory* needs assessment, to generate practical solutions and to agree on indicators that show changes in income and quality of living.

Community liaison should aim to establish relationships and understanding with disabled people and their families. Community liaison is required not just with the disabled survivors but also with families of survivors and the community at large to understand how to make the socio-economic projects a success. This is because the community and family are likely to be ultimately supporting the disabled individual.

Community liaison activities may be used to assess the viability and success of such projects through interview with communities (*see Annex 1C*) and analysing economic patterns of the communities in which the disabled person lives. This should lead the organisation to improve and develop new programmes that serve a relevant socio-economic need for the community.

### 10.4.4 *Psychological care for the survivor and family*

Community liaison may be used to further develop traditional systems of support for vulnerable people in a local community. For this, some form of social anthropological assessment may be required, either developed by the organisation or accessed as a form of secondary data.

An organisation that links in with local forms of support (whether they be religious institutions, local healers, local wise people or leaders) will ensure a more sustainable approach to developing social support for disabled clients and their carers. These local sources of support may be given training in:

- ◆ Counselling (using participatory approaches to highlight traditional methods);
- ◆ Exploration of local attitudes to disability;
- ◆ Understanding needs of disabled clients; and
- ◆ Methods of offering assistance.

An organisation can continue to offer support through assessment and provision of materials to locally-based sources of traditional support.





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# 11. Recruitment, training and capacity development

## 11.1 Recruitment and professional qualities of community liaison personnel

Community liaison personnel are usually recruited from a community/public health, teaching, or social/welfare background. The pool of community liaison personnel should ideally be representative of the communities with whom they will be liaising, in gender, ethnicity, tribe, language and so on.

During recruitment an employer should look for the following key qualities.

- ♦ **An interest and concern for local communities.** This may be assessed from the candidates' paid and voluntary experience and why they want the job.
- ♦ **An interest in social and economic issues.** This may be assessed by asking the candidates to discuss a social issue, other than mine action, of concern to them and why.
- ♦ **An understanding of how data is analysed and for what purposes.** This may be assessed by giving the interviewees a simple graph or bar chart describing a social issue, asking them to analyse it while they wait for the interview, and then asking the interviewee questions from their analysis of it.
- ♦ **A level of empathy, ability to convey confidentiality and maturity.** This may be assessed through overall impression during the interview and also by giving the interviewees a scenario of a typically difficult situation and asking how they would choose to handle it.

## 11.2 Training of community liaison personnel

Training of community liaison personnel may include the following subjects:

- ♦ Introduction to the mine action organisation and its objectives;
- ♦ Introduction to humanitarian activities and mine action principles;

- ◆ Structure of the mine action programme;
- ◆ The goals and five main pillars of mine action;
- ◆ Simple identification of common mines and ERW;
- ◆ Field visit to a clearance team at work;
- ◆ Basic first aid training;
- ◆ Health and safety briefing;
- ◆ Principles of community liaison in mine action;
- ◆ Principles of community data collection;
- ◆ Application of standard operating procedures/work guidelines:
  - prior to mine/ERW action,
  - during mine/ERW action,
  - post mine/ERW action;
- ◆ Tools of community data collection:
  - community mapping,
  - semi-structured interviewing of individuals and key informants,
  - focus groups,
  - community groups,
  - Venn diagrams,
  - transect walks,
  - land use action plans,
  - ranking exercises,
  - history timelines,
  - semi-structured observations, and
  - daily routine diagrams;
- ◆ Map and map reading;
- ◆ Navigation aids;
- ◆ Survey and sketch maps;
- ◆ Use of communication equipment (satellite and mobile phones, hand-held and vehicle-based radios, communication schedules and procedures);
- ◆ Application of IMSMA forms or other data collection forms; and
- ◆ Recognition of disability and disability awareness.

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## Annex 1.

### Participatory data collection community liaison tools

#### Annex 1A. Introduction to the community

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The community liaison personnel introduce themselves, the mine action organisation, and their objectives for the community liaison activities to the assembled community members and/or community leaders.

#### Objective

The introduction is to create a starting point for developing relationships in the community, establishing trust and understanding and paving the way for smooth operations for both the community liaison and demining teams, in order to achieve the desired result for the mine action organisation and the community.

The process allows the community liaison personnel to clarify what the community can and cannot expect of the mine action organisation or the regional mine action centre.

#### Procedure

The community liaison personnel should:

- Introduce the team members and give a background to the mine action organisation;
- Demonstrate with photographic handbook or posters the mine action activities the mine action organisation undertakes;
- Explain why they are in the community and how the community was selected;
- Explain procedures the survey will follow;
- Discuss why the information is being gathered and how it will be used; and
- Explain the mine action stages that will follow after the survey (data analysis, prioritisation, tasking and clearance/markings), along with approximate timelines.

### Long-term benefit

A clear understanding established at the beginning of the mine action process, and the introductory stage, will lead to long-term benefits. It avoids delays in information sharing, reduces time the community liaison personnel needs to explain their survey objectives, and builds a foundation of relationships that will benefit the mine action organisation in volunteered information, assistance and cooperation with the community.

## Annex 1B. History timelines

“History timelines” is a participatory tool that enables community members to inform the mine action organisation about the history of mines and ERW in their area and the negative humanitarian impact of this.

### Objective

The objective of gathering information on the history time line is to record the local history of conflict and its humanitarian impact on the local community from the perception of the local community. This in turn allows the mine action organisation to gain understanding of community humanitarian needs based on information given. The analysis of humanitarian needs allows for the task of clearance to be prioritised accordingly.

### Procedure

Men and women may be divided into separate groups for this activity.

The community liaison personnel need a piece of a flipchart paper and marker pens for this activity.

One community liaison staff should facilitate the process. A second community liaison staff should observe and listen.

The facilitating community liaison staff should draw a line at top of flip chart page with a specific year from when the eldest participant remembers the village/town.

The history is charted along the line with dates given for when significant events took place in the village.

Significant events should include locally fought battles, political events and takeovers, social and seasonal issues, demographic and health issues, agriculture and economic issues, and refugee movements in and out of the village or town.

The community liaison staff observer should check against the checklist that any significant information has not been missed and introduce it as appropriate.

### Long-term benefit

Knowledge of the history linked to conflict events can help identify suspect areas or whether there are groups of people, such as recent returnees, who may not know about the location of unsafe areas.

## Annex 1C. Interviews

The community liaison personnel will need to conduct survey interviews. Discussion is to be encouraged and responses recorded. Interviews may be held with:

- Individual villagers living and working around the dangerous area;
- Households based around the dangerous area;
- Community leaders – local government officials, religious leaders, traditional leaders; and
- A focus group of community members – to gather social and local perspective.

### Objective

The objective of interviews is to collect specific information vital to the mine action process and prioritisation of tasks. The information may be collected in a structured or semi-structured format depending on the kind of information required and type of informant.

### Procedure

The community liaison personnel should arrange interviews in advance and gain appropriate consent to conduct them. For example, consent may be required from the husband or father of woman to be interviewed. Consent may be required of local officials or religious leaders to speak to specific groups of people.

The timing of interviews should be convenient to the interviewees where possible, with little interruption to their work day and obligations.

The community liaison personnel should arrange an appropriate venue where interviews are conducted comfortably and in privacy with as little interruption as possible. This may be the interviewee's house, an official's office or a social/cultural centre.

The community liaison personnel may be assisted by a prepared mental or written checklist.

Use open-ended questions and probe for further answers: What? When? Where? Who? Why? How?

The interview should ideally be kept informal and relaxed, with community liaison personnel employing active listening skills.

Community liaison personnel should be conscious of their manners, particularly greetings, non-verbal factors, seating arrangements, and posture.

### Long-term benefit

The tool allows the community liaison personnel to record specific and detailed information required in order for dangerous areas to be prioritised and tasked. The information assists in the decision process of clearance and may be used in post-clearance evaluations, as a valuable record of impact.

## Annex 1D. Ranking exercises

In many of the communities affected by conflict, local people are likely to wish to use contaminated land/sites for the original purpose. The original use of the land may be remembered by some community members.

However, in circumstances where an area of land or site has no purpose prior to the recent war, or locals wish to use it for different purposes, the community liaison personnel may need to carry out the ranking exercise.

This tool is likely to have greater consensus in a rural community where social groups are less diverse in social scale and need.

### Objective

The ranking exercise will help the community to identify a specific humanitarian need that allows a mine action organisation to prioritise the land for clearance.

A significant representation of the community should be present for this exercise and local officials should be consulted about its outcome before any further decisions are made over clearance activity.

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### Procedure

The community liaison personnel may choose to address men and women separately for this exercise.

A piece of flipchart paper should be tacked to the wall or board. The community liaison personnel should brainstorm with participants to discover the most pressing problems facing the community. These should be written on the paper as the responses are given.

Allow participants time to debate their concerns and problems.

Participants should be asked to vote on which of the listed issues are the most important.

The five most important issues should be ranked in order of priority given by the participants.

Allow participants time to discuss local solutions to resolving the ranked problems. Possible solutions should be suggested through a brainstorming.

The participants should be asked to vote on which of the solutions is the most effective or achievable.

The five top issues should be ranked in order of priority by the participants.

The outcomes of this exercise by the male and female groups should be compared for differences.

The outcomes should be discussed with local community leaders/officials to gain agreement on the land use. The final agreement on land use should be conveyed back to the community.

### Long-term benefit

The aim of this exercise is for local people to find a solution to the major issues facing their community. Communities should suggest solutions to the problems in general discussion followed by agreement.

The goal is to persuade villagers to use the cleared land appropriately.

If lack of access to education is identified as the main problem then the solution may be to build a school on cleared land.

## Annex 1E. Observation

The community liaison personnel should use their own observation of the community to assess humanitarian needs for further mine action to proceed. It takes an experienced eye to gauge information about the village/ neighbourhood.

### Objective

The community liaison personnel may observe people's behaviour, local processes and relationships and record these observations. Observation is visual information taken in and used to probe for further answers, as well as to add substance to information already collected (e.g. through village maps, or interviews).

### Procedure

Community liaison personnel may use a checklist of pre-determined categories of issues to conduct semi-structured observation. The checklist may include the following issues:

- Population density;
- Family size;
- Wealth/status; and
- Water, sanitation and health concerns.

Observations may also be unstructured: i.e. anything that community liaison personnel pick up on a field visit may be recorded and used.

### Long-term benefit

The action of active observation by community liaison personnel allows fuller verification of data provided for the community, prompts them to raise additional questions and to triangulate the data.

## Annex 1F. Daily routine diagram

The daily routine diagram is an interview with targeted individuals (e.g. shepherds, farmers, traders in scrap metal, adolescent boys) about their general daily routine. It records the tasks and the timing of these tasks.

The tool allows for analysis of work patterns and workloads of particular groups. It can also be used to identify peak leisure times when the groups are available for other activity. It also records when and where they are most at risk from mines or ERW.

### Objective

The objective is to understand the target groups' activities, the length and timing of those activities, and therefore their exposure to risk from mines or ERW.



### Procedure

See the section on interviews for individual interview process to be followed.

It takes one community liaison staff to complete this tool per interviewee. The purpose of this interview is to be explained to the interviewee.

Individuals are interviewed about the tasks that they undertake on a typical day to gather information about their movements and activities.

The information is recorded either as a list or chart in a way that is most visual and descriptive to the interviewees.

A minimum of five daily routine interviews is recommended per target group, in order to gather sufficient information on the behaviour patterns.

The community liaison personnel should analyse results of all interviews to make a list of regular behaviour patterns.

On completion of this exercise, the community liaison personnel may meet to discuss the outcome of results and facilitate discussion to draw recommendations for the delivery of MRE to the target group.

### Long-term benefit

Greater understanding of a target group at risk from mines and ERW allows a mine action organisation to tailor appropriate information and target MRE to at-risk villagers.

## Annex 1G. Seasonal calendars

Seasonal calendar analysis shows the recurring patterns in village life particularly on agricultural cycles. A seasonal calendar analysis is generally appropriate for rural rather than urban areas.

### Objective

Seasonal analysis reveals links between aspects of village life and the environment (e.g. time, resources and activities). Seasonal analysis documents such things as labour, income, expenditure, crop patterns, school attendance, river flows, rain, animal fodder, debt, disease or food availability.

### Procedure

Community liaison personnel need to select an appropriate venue and time for a meeting with local villagers.

Two participants should be asked to volunteer to draw the diagram.

Community liaison personnel should establish the type of calendar to be used for the analysis. It should be based on a calendar system familiar to the villagers. What are the common time divisions they use? Months? Seasons? A seasonal analysis covering a period of 18 months will reveal changes from one season to another.

Next, all the villagers should agree on the units of time and mark them on the ground or flipchart.

Finally, ask the participants to quantify each of the categories (e.g. rainfall, labour, disease) by using the chosen time units.

Types of issues that can be addressed in a calendar are:

- Significant events;
- Income patterns;
- Labour constraints;
- Income patterns;
- Consumption patterns;
- Agricultural calendar;
- Land use patterns;
- Seasonal rules and regulations;
- Migration patterns; and
- Attendance at school.

### **Long-term benefit**

The information produced should be used to know the seasons of significance in a rural community and therefore appropriate time(s) for clearance.

## **Annex 1H. Transect walk**

A transect walk is a walk taken by community liaison personnel with villagers during which problems and opportunities related to the physical geography and topography of a community are discussed and documented.

### **Objectives**

A transect walk adds information to the community map. It usually presents a “summary” of a larger area than a village map.

### **Procedure**

A couple of community leaders are selected to walk along a particular route with community liaison personnel. Community liaison personnel need to ensure gender representation among participants, who should live and or work directly around the contaminated area.

The chosen route should be one used by the local community to access resources/facilities but must not enter the dangerous area. Community liaison personnel should always check beforehand that the route is safe from mines and use their knowledge of mine safety to observe for signs of danger.

Community liaison personnel must gather information using direct observation, discussion with participants of what they are seeing (e.g. soils, rivers, crops, and housing) and stop to talk to people met on the route.

Community liaison personnel must record the route as they walk, noting observations. They must observe, question and listen. The aim is to discover problems and opportunities related to what they see, and note contrasts and changes.

If the affected community and contaminated area are large, community liaison personnel may decide to split and walk in different directions to ensure that more area is covered and thus further reduce spatial biases.

Community liaison personnel and participants should walk directly to the furthest point of the route and then ask questions along the more leisurely return

walk. This increases the chances of actually reaching the outermost point of the walk. The team should observe their surroundings and ask questions related to issues on the checklist.

It may be useful for the research team to divide responsibilities for documenting specific information.

Issues that might be covered in a transect:

- Food storage;
- Agriculture production and constraints;
- Land use patterns and seasonal variations;
- Community resources;
- Village/town infrastructure;
- Differences in households and their assets;
- Livestock management;
- Health assets and hazards;
- Water resources and hazards; and
- Livelihood strategies.

### **Long-term benefit**

The transect walk allows for triangulation of data already gathered, notably through community mapping. It also allows for probing for further detail.

## **Annex 11. Venn diagram**

A Venn diagram offers another way to “map” a community, focusing on social relationships. The Venn diagram looks at how a community is organised, both in terms of its internal organisation and its relationships with the larger community beyond its borders.

### **Objective**

The Venn diagram offers information on the key figures and groups in a community and peoples’ relationship with them.

The tool offers organisations vital information on relationships that have influence on resources, in particular the resources or facilities that are blocked by mines or other ordnance. With these details, community liaison personnel are able to liaise with the correct authority figures that have influence on the use of the resource/facility.

### **Procedure**

Community liaison personnel must begin with a checklist of the types of issues they wish to explore using the Venn diagram. However, the list should be kept in the background until the community members have completed the diagram.

Use a large sheet of paper with circles that are cut out of different coloured cards or paper. Or markings can be made using different coloured markers to distinguish between the different groups, associations and individuals on the diagram.

The facilitator begins by drawing a large circle on the paper or ground. This circle represents the village/ neighbourhood. Everything inside the circle is a local institution, while anything outside is an external source of power or influence.

Start by asking the group to think of all the groups, committees, individuals and associations in the village/ neighbourhood. As each one is listed, a coloured paper (oval) is placed on the diagram with the name of the group. These ovals may be cut in different sizes to reflect their influence on the life of the locality.

The Venn diagram should be copied into a more permanent diagram to be held in the village/ neighbourhood file, together with the analysis.

Types of issues that can be addressed in a Venn diagram:

- Role of organisations in local decision-making;
- Role of external forces on the community;
- Community leaders and decision-makers;
- Decision-making processes;
- Role of government and NGOs;
- Relationship with other villages;
- Conflicts and conflict resolution mechanisms;
- Social safety nets; and
- Access to land and other resources.

### **Long-term benefit**

The community liaison team should use the information from the Venn diagram to aid their consultation and liaison with the appropriate decision-makers on the development of the community.

By forming the correct alliances, there is a significantly stronger assurance of successful development of the land/ resources/ facility that is subsequently cleared.

## **Annex 1J. Community map**

This is a visual map made by local people of their village/ neighbourhood during a community meeting. It includes the main sites (e.g. schools, rivers, government buildings, and bridges) and identifies the suspect dangerous area(s).

The primary concern is not with cartographic accuracy, but with gathering useful information that sheds light on the mine/ ERW situation in the community.

### **Objective**

This procedure is a form of data collection conducted in a friendly, collaborative way with the community which is easily understood by them. The map is used ultimately to assist clearance teams conduct an initial survey of the suspect land before clearance. It takes two staff members to conduct this exercise.

It is often one of the first activities carried by community liaison personnel with community members because it is a lively “icebreaker” that helps to put both the community liaison personnel and the community in a participatory frame of mind. It also provides functional information for the community liaison personnel (especially if they are not familiar with the community).

## Procedure

The map can be drawn on the ground using sticks, stones, or string to identify roads, rivers, other water sources, bridges, important buildings, religious buildings, government buildings, schools, market squares, and so on.

Community liaison personnel should call for a community meeting. The people present should include ordinary members of the community of both sexes.

It is preferable to hold the meeting on some neutral territory (i.e. not government offices). Advance notice should be given so that people have time to congregate and organise themselves.

Community liaison personnel may address men and women in two separate groups.

Community liaison personnel must begin with a careful explanation of the mine action organisation's reason for the meeting, what the personnel intend to discuss with them and what this will lead to in future.

To begin the map, clear a large area (which may be outdoors) so that plenty of space is available to expand the map as necessary. The community liaison personnel should explain the exercise and start the activity by drawing in one or two landmarks (usually those that are immediately evident).

Community members should then be invited to create a rough map of their village/neighbourhood, either on the ground using sticks, stones, or string, or on a blackboard or flipchart paper (with different coloured chalks/pens). They may use symbols that the community agree on. Whenever a landmark or specific location is mentioned, a marker should be put down (e.g. stone, shell, leaf) to indicate its location.

Begin by asking the community members to indicate the important landmarks. It is important to begin with the people's own priorities since these will be revealing of their perspectives and priorities.

This exercise should involve as many people as possible. Those who have not contributed to the creation of the map may be invited for verbal responses and confirmation. Once the village map is complete, community members should highlight the location of the suspect dangerous areas.

As the activity gets under way, community liaison personnel should stand back and leave the drawing and placement of markers to the community members. The personnel may ask: *"Is there anything else?"* or: *"Has anything been forgotten?"*

When the community members have completed the map, community liaison personnel may ask other questions, or refer to their checklist.

A checklist helps to ensure that all local resources are covered in the map (water sources, roads, schools, clinics, or religious buildings) – and the areas known to be contaminated with mines/ERW. The map should highlight where people live – and, if possible, identify where someone has been killed or injured by mines/ERW.

Community liaison personnel should note those households on or near contaminated land. They should note how the land currently is being used (if at all).

Great care must be taken to ensure that all present agree with the map created and that any mistakes are corrected.

Community liaison personnel must ask who owns the affected land and how

they would like it to be used. Community liaison personnel should facilitate discussion of the map and the resources identified. Group discussion of a map or model can help identify trends, e.g.: *“How did this place look a year ago?”*. It can also reveal what community members think will happen in the future. *“What are your plans for this land?”*, *“What obstacles are there to your plans?”*.

Later, community liaison personnel should transfer the ground map onto a flipchart for more permanent use, using an agreed legend for the symbols used and a direction sign. The map should indicate the date, name of the village or town, and name of the community liaison personnel.

Community liaison personnel should confirm details and distances for the map during the transect walk.

A copy of the map should be left with the community (perhaps a local official with an office wall) for use at any stage in their future planning process.

### **Long-term benefit**

The village map should form part of the file on all mine action activities in the village. It can be kept by the demining manager as a record of progress made in specific areas.

## **Annex 1K. Resource cards**

Resource cards are used to facilitate discussions about who uses and controls resources. In a light and non-threatening way, they show very clearly the resource base of both men and women. This can lead to discussions about differences between men and women’s priorities and their needs for resources.

### **Objective**

Resource cards help us to learn about differences between men and women in use and control over resources, thereby introducing a balance in prioritising clearance of resources that serve both sexes in the community, or in a way that promotes gender equity.

### **Procedure**

Community liaison teams arrange community members in a mixed gender group (preferably those who participated in the community mapping). Explain to the group that you want to learn about resource use and control.

Place three large drawings, one of a man, one of a woman, and one of both, on the ground or wall in a row with adequate space in between them.

Ask the participants to think about the resources blocked by mines/ERW that they named while creating the community map.

Select volunteers and give them two cards to draw a symbol for these resources, each volunteer drawing a different resource (or you can use pre-made resource cards). The cards should each have a symbol/picture of a local resource (school, health clinic, or religious building). Have extra blank cards ready to draw in resources that you have not made pictures for.

Ask participants to discuss and then place the cards under the symbol of the man, woman or both, depending on who uses the resource. Only the resources used/controlled half by men and half by women should be placed under the “both” column. They should place the symbols or pictures under either the woman or man to indicate who uses/controls them most.

This exercise may be done on the floor or the wall.

Ask participants to explain why they made the choices they did.

Make another row of the three large drawings, the man, the woman, and both, on the ground or wall underneath the other picture.

Repeat the exercise, but this time focus on who has control, ownership or decision-making power over each resource.

Ask participants to compare how they have arranged the cards in both of the drawings. Ask participants: “*What are the resources that women use?*”, “*What are the resources that men use?*”, “*What resource do both use?*”, “*Who controls the use of these resources?*”, “*Who makes decisions about how resources are used?*”.

### Long-term benefits

The exercise helps the mine action organisation to concentrate resources on clearing resources that have wide benefit for the majority in the community or those most in need.

Knowledge of the gender-biased use and control of local resources will contribute significantly to the mine action organisation’s assessment of humanitarian impact. Concentration of the mine action organisation’s resources towards those most in need will promote gender equity.

## Annex 1L. Land use plan

This is an agreement about the use of the land. This exercise asks a community to plan how they intend to use cleared land, and thus avoid wastage and misuse of resources. Clearance activities are costly and time-consuming, therefore a community needs to be sure that they intend to use the cleared land for a specific reason, and that it will not be neglected or taken over by local leaders for personal use.

### Objective

Through general discussion, with community liaison staff acting as facilitators, information gathered should include the purpose of cleared land, number and type of beneficiaries, land tenure situation.

Villagers should list the types of NGOs working in their village and what they are doing. Plans for cleared land need approval from local officials. The development plan should be based on the ranking exercises conducted at an earlier stage.

### Procedure

Community liaison personnel should organise a community meeting to discuss the land use plan.



Ensure that local leaders, community members, NGOs representatives, and religious leaders are present. Effort should be made to ensure a gender balance. A separate meeting may be required for women.

Participants should identify the main problems facing the community and their solutions to the problems. Community liaison personnel should not influence decisions, but simply be facilitators for conversation. The information from the ranking exercises carried out in a previous community meeting should be presented and interpreted for agreement.

One community liaison team member needs to facilitate the discussion while a second records decisions on a flipchart.

Participants should be encouraged to discuss how the cleared land can be used to help resolve some of the community's problems. For example, if there is a lack of educational facilities, the land could be used to build a school and participants should identify how this will be resourced.

An agreement on the land use plan should be issued in writing and signed. Copies are given to all community leaders and displayed for the public in an appropriate place near to the land being cleared.

During clearance, community liaison personnel should continue to hold short meetings with local leaders to ensure that development plans are still ongoing (e.g. if the community have agreed to collect sand and pay for cement to construct a safe play area then community liaison personnel can enquire whether these activities are taking place).

The land use plan is sealed with the handover of cleared land.

The initial and final post-clearance assessments are a data collection exercise to assess how far development activities have gone. Information from the post-assessment data includes resettlement plans, development of any buildings, land ownership, who benefits from the land, likelihood of seasonal flooding/rainfall, number of families on the land, how land is being used for economic purpose, and the use of land for access purposes.

### **Long-term benefit**

With the Land Use Plan, both the mine action organisation and the community have an advanced planning tool for achieving a sustainable humanitarian impact from the cleared land/resource/facility. It allows the mine action organisation to identify the beneficiaries and measure impact in the post-clearance stages of the project.



## Annex 2.

### The roles of community mine action liaison personnel

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The following are some of the main roles of community mine action liaison personnel:

- Implement relevant community data-gathering tools to gather information for the dangerous area report forms;
- Implement relevant community data-gathering tools to gather information for impact survey forms;
- Implement relevant community data-gathering tools to gather information for post-clearance surveys;
- Contribute their experience and knowledge of local religious and social customs and sensitivities that influence the data or the way data would be gathered, and use these to their benefit in field work and liaison;
- Advise the mine action organisation on how these should influence the design and implementation of all community liaison activities, so that the organisation can make informed decisions;
- Demonstrate respect to community members and representatives at all times in order to avoid creating conflict in sometimes tense environments;
- Follow any requests from demining managers for community liaison assistance during the clearance process in communicating with the community;
- Inform the mine action organisation of any issues/concerns raised by community members or representatives during the clearance procedures; and
- Keep community members and community leaders informed at all stages of the mine action process.



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