**Operationalizing the TOR:**

**Evaluation of Clearing for Results Phase II (CFRII), 2011-2015) in Cambodia**

**25th September 2015**

1. **Background and Purpose:**

**1.1 Background:**

The TOR provides a great deal of detail on the background to this evaluation (attached as Annex 2 of this Inception Report). It makes little sense to repeat this here, especially with regards to the history of the development of mine action in Cambodia, and in particular the emergence and role of the Cambodian Mine Action and Victim Assistance Authority (CMAA), and the support CMAA has received from UNDP through the two phases of UNDP’s Clearing for Results (CfR) project (2006 – 2010, 2011-2015). Nonetheless, some salient points will be made here.

Cambodia remains one of the world’s most heavily mine affected countries, despite nearly 25 years of mine action work. One of the key activities supported today by CfR II remains ongoing efforts to quantify the scope of the problem, building on the technical baseline survey Commissioned and funded by CMAA in 2009-12. The survey recorded around 1,915 km2 of land was contaminated with landmines and other ERW. However, since March 2015, 29 km2 of land on the CMAA database has been released through survey, whilst some 49 km2 more, defined in polygons, has been added in the three focal provinces of the CfR II project (Battambang, Pailin and Banteay-Meanchay)[[1]](#footnote-1). Ongoing efforts in technical survey are considered one benchmark of international mine action good practice, and although fairly obvious, is surprisingly rare in many national mine action programmes, and the CMAA is to be praised for its commitment in this regard.

In the early 1990s Cambodia was one of the first countries in which the mine action sector started (following closely behind Afghanistan in the late 1980s). Landmine contamination, predominantly in the west and north centre of the country, and an extensive problem with other Explosive Remnants of War (ERW), predominantly in the east, are legacies of the Vietnam war era, when that conflict spilled over into Cambodia, and generated from the late 1960s a civil war that culminated in the capture of Phnom Penh by Khmer Rouge forces in April 1975. Following the overthrow of the Khmer Rouge by Cambodian elements supported by the Vietnamese in 1979, 12 years of bitter civil war followed during which time many of the minefields in north western Cambodia, including the notorious K5 belt on the Thai-Cambodian border were laid. The historic Paris Peace Agreements (1991) laid the way for a comprehensive peace settlement for Cambodia, the return of refugees from the Thai border camps and the UNTAC mission in Cambodia which resulted in the holding of elections that were deemed free and fair in May 1993. Mine Action was kick-started by this peace process, with UNHCR commissioning the British NGO HALO Trust to undertake an initial survey of refugee return locations in 1991, and later the UN mission in Cambodia trained deminers, who in 1993 became the core of the national operator, that became known as Cambodian Mine Action Centre (CMAC). In 1992, HALO Trust and the Mines Advisory Group established operations in Siem Reap / Banteay-Meanchay and Battambang respectively.

Given the withdrawal of the Khmer Rouge from the UN sponsored peace process, the civil war did not end in practice until 1998, with the ultimate capitulation of the KR, and at that point as the TOR notes, *‘there was recognition of the need for Cambodia to more holistically plan and manage its national mine action programme’* [[2]](#footnote-2). In 2000, by Royal Decree No. 160, the Royal Government of Cambodia (RGC) established CMAA to oversee mine action, including victim assistance within the country.

The CMAA currently has the following structure:

* Regulation and Monitoring (R & M)
* Socio-ecnomic Planning and Database Management (SEPD)
* Victim Assistance (VA)
* Public Relations (PR)
* General Administration.

CMAA activities currently include:

* Setting up and monitoring processes and procedures, national standards and guidelines;
* Preparing national plans;
* Monitoring project proposals and mine action strategies;
* Collecting and nanaging centralized data, registering information and compiling reports;
* Coordinating with donors, implementing agencies and other relevant stakeholders;
* Following-up victims assistance activities;
* Ensuring effective mine action as per development plans;
* Developing and monitoring socio-economic guidelines (Royal Decree 160, Sub-decree 76 and 100);
* Act as the focal point of mine action coordination in Cambodia, through bodies like the Mine Action Technical Working Group, Mine Action Coordination Committee, various Technical Reference Groups, and as Chair of the Project Board for CfR II project.

**Legal Frameworks Governing Cambodian Mine Action**

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| --- | --- |
| **Treaty** | **Status** |
| Mine Ban Treaty/Status | Ratified |
| Convention on Cluster Munitions/Status | Not joined |
| Convention on Conventional Weapons/Status | Ratified |
| Convention on Conventional Weapons/Amended Protocol II | Signed |
| Convention on Conventional Weapons/Protocol V | Not signed |
| UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities/Status | Ratified |
| 2014 UNGA Resolution 69/24 | In favor |

Source: Landmine Monitor, 2015: [www.the-monitor.org](http://www.the-monitor.org)

In 1999, the RGC ratified the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC), which committed it to eliminating *all* the landmines (total threat eradication) in the country. The initial 10 year deadline required an Article 5 extension until 2019. In 2003, the RGC recognizing the unique burden landmines and ERW plays in the country, also adopted Millenium Development Goal (MDG) 9 on *‘Demining, removing Explosive Remnants of War (ERW), and Victim Assistance’*. The current National Mine Action Strategy (NMAS), which was developed in late 2010, supports the government’s National Strategic Development Plan, and promotes the release of land for socio-economic development.

UNDP has supported mine action in Cambodia since the early 1990s, first directly to CMAC through the provision of technical advisors and the administration of a Trust Fund, and later through support to the CMAA[[3]](#footnote-3). UNDP partnered with CMAA through CfR I (2006-2010), which was structured as a DIM project[[4]](#footnote-4), and sought to build national institutional capacity[[5]](#footnote-5). CfR II, which is being implemented as a NIM project, aims to enhance national structures and institutional capacity building of CMAA to act as a national coordinator, as well as directly promoting the release of land for productive use by the poor. It seeks to support the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF), and the UNDP Country Programme Action Plan (CPAP) Outcome 1.

Under CfR II nearly 70km2 of land had been released (May 2011-December 2014), and 80% of this is being used for agriculture. As of 30th June 2015, the figure for land released had risen dramatically to 115.2km2 (921 individual minefields), in large part as a result of the land reclamation project referred to above, benefiting over 100,000 people.[[6]](#footnote-6) With the addition of 40.3km2 released by the Clearing for Results Phase One project, total land released by both UNDP Clearing for Results projects is 155.5km2.

In June 2013, a Mid-Term Review of CfR II, generated a number of recommendations, most of which were accepted in the UNDP management response, and now forms the basis of quarterly and annual progress reports. As the TOR notes, *‘out of a total of 38 recommendations: 15 are fully completed; 14 are partially complete; 9 are not applicable’*.[[7]](#footnote-7) CMAA has responsibility, under CfR II, for overseeing a competitive bidding process for mine action and baseline survey services, albeit in accordance with UNDP procurement rules.

* 1. **Purpose:**

UNDP now needs to undertake a final project evaluation. This will include a comprehensive review of the mine action sector in Cambodia. The TOR explains that with current resources, the country will not achieve its obligations towards the APMBC by December 2019. Therefore a critical purpose, *‘of this review is to assess current progress towards achievement of the National Mine Action Strategy (NMAS) 2010-19, and to assess the planning requirements for the 10 year extension request to complete the country’s APMBC obligations by 2029. This will include recommendations for further UNDP support during this period’.*[[8]](#footnote-8)

1. **Aim and Overall Objectives**

The evaluation seeks to inform stakeholders of the achievement of project results, to identify lessons learned, and also identify the potential future role of UNDP to Cambodia’s national mine action programme. To summarise from the TOR, the specific objectives are:

* **To review and assess overall progress of CfR II at 3 levels of development results** (outputs, outcomes and impact).
  + It should be noted that impact assessment without a comprehensive baseline, and in the absence of true counter-factuals can be problematic. Nonetheless, given the standard definition of ‘impact’ as Consequences of the project from a long-term perspective (positive or negative, intended or unintended), the evaluation will seek to comment on impact observed, and provide evidence of the same. As discussed below, the evaluation will benefit from integration of the results of a separately planned, UNDP organised Household Impact Assessment survey in CfR II target locations that will provide a wide range of baseline impact evidence.
* Review CfR II’s design, implementation and management against the standard DAC evaluation criteria and questions: relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability.
  + These questions are further explored in the section below on methodology, as well as in Annex 1, Evaluation Matrix
* Review the mine action sector and assess how the project contributes to, and complements, Cambodia’s overall national mine action programme, NMAS and the UNDP CPAP (2011-15);
* Identify lessons and good practices from CfR II that can be included in other national policies and programmes, together with recommendations for UNDP in Cambodia’s national mine action programme
* Conduct a stakeholder analysis, identifying potential resources, available in 2016-2020) for mine action in Cambodia.

As detailed in the TOR in section 3, the evaluation has three specific objectives, to review CfR II in terms of implementation, management, and systems and procedures. Implementation will review progress in each of the three main project deliverables:

**Deliverable 1:** Mine action policy and strategic framework ensures most resources are effectively allocated to national priorities as defined by local planning processes and maximises the land available for local development.

**Deliverable 2:** The CMAA is equipped with the technical and functional capacities required to manage, regulate, coordinate and monitor Cambodia’s national mine action programme within an evolving environment.

**Deliverable 3:** At least 35 km2 of contaminated land mapped through Baseline Survey, cleared and released for productive use[[9]](#footnote-9) through local planning that promotes efficiency and transparency.

1. **Methodology & Activities:**

**3.1 Introductory comments and overview of the approach:**

The evaluator will use years of experience[[10]](#footnote-10) in monitoring and evaluating mine action programming to make subjective, but independent and evidence-based judgments about the quality of project design, the development process, subsequent implementation, results and impact of the CfRII. Initially, this will be informed by a review of the supporting documents, as detailed below, before moving into the direct research phase. **As part of this the evaluator will make use of a mixed methods approach, and utilise a series of basic tools.**

**Examples of tools typically used in the past:**

**Key Informant interviews:** with a wide range of stakeholders and beneficiaries

**Community and Household Surveys, and Case Studies:** in heavily mine/ERW affected communities, and communities that have been targeted for mine action interventions during CfR II

**PRA techniques (as part of the Case Studies):** Focus Group Discission, Community Mapping, Timelines, Village Transect Walks, and Direct Observation (the evaluator will make use of his extensive video and photographic experience to document this, which is seen as a critical element of illustrating impact – both visually in stills and videos, and through filmed beneficiary and implementor interviews)

**Review of base line data, and post-clearance monitoring and/or impact data** (where available, from operators)

The primary tool for data collection in the field phase of the evaluation will be **semi-structured interviews**, whose logic will seek to assess and compare the logical framework, and actually outputs and outcomes of the project, against the 5 DAC evaluation criteria. The extent to which measurable indicators were achieved, and their value as indicators to ensure the delivery of outputs, and beyond that the outcomes of the project, will also be assessed in these semi-structured interviews. This will allow evaluation of the actual implementation of the project and its delivery of outputs and outcomes, both in absolute terms and relative to the state objectives and envisaged outputs of the project.

These semi-structured interviews will be used with:

* Beneficiaries (represented by both groups and individuals) in three operational provinces (Battambang, Pailin and Banteay-Meanchay)
* Representatives from the CMAA, UNDP and other relevant Cambodian government authorities, especially the MAPU and PMAC (at central, provincial and district level)
* International programme staff in Cambodia (management, technical and community liaison)
* National programme staff in Cambodia (management, technical and community liaison)
* Management and support staff in CMAA in Phnom Penh
* Representatives of International Mine Action organisations and CMAA CfR II mine action partners i.e. CMAA, RCAF demining units etc
* Representatives of Donors and other stakeholders in Cambodian mine action.

In at least three – perhaps as many as six - community locations in western Cambodia, in project target areas, data collection will take place with beneficiaries. A questionnaire/survey will be developed, and participative **focus group discussion (FGD)** will take place with different key informants, representing cross sections of the beneficiary population: village leaders, women, children, farmers etc. If appropriate, Cambodian officials in various locations may also be engaged with FGD’s around key issues relevant to the project.

In addition, using problem statements and other documentation prepared by CMAA and the operators teams, and other sources, the evaluator will complete at least **three detailed and illustrated (photographs and video) community case study** (one from each of the target provinces), to illustrate the outcomes of the intervention. Such case studies were found to be particularly useful during previous evaluations, especially with regards to illustrating issues of impact.

**3.2 Methodology**

The evaluation design uses a mixed methods approach, integrating common qualitative methods (Focus Group Discussions, semi-structured interviews) with a diverse range of stakeholders to ensure a variety of perspectives, and a comprehensive desk review of the relevant available documentation pertinent to the programme 2011-2015, as well as quantitative data, not least from a household impact survey that will be implemented concurrently by UNDP with this evaluation, as well as clearance and other technical data from the IMSMA DB. The evaluation will also directly under-take in-depth field research, using FGDs and in-depth case studies, complemented with photographic and video documentation resources.

Combined, these approaches will enable the evaluation to determine the overall relevance of CfR II, the specific areas within, or qualities of, the CfR II that have been more relevant and have shown effectiveness and efficiency in achieving the project outputs and outcomes, and the extent to which the outcomes are likely to be sustained. The evaluation will pay particular attention to the extent to which the CfR II has produced the intended outcomes in the prioritised mine-affected communities in which is has worked, as well as studying the broader impact of the project, looking at long term both intended and unintended consequences of CfR II. Indeed, the evaluation will also focus on the processes and criteria for prioritization, and the degree to which these can be considered actively ‘pro-poor’ since, as stated in the TOR CfR II ‘*aims to enhance national structures and mechanisms that will ensure demining resources are effectively allocated, promoting the release of land for productive use by the poor’.*[[11]](#footnote-11)

The evaluation will also consider the extent to which the CfR II has managed risks and facilitated the inclusion of gender across the different aspects of the project, and how this is reflected in the results. The evaluation will assess the appropriateness of the objectives, planned outputs, activities and inputs as compared to cost-effective alternatives, the extent to which adaptive management strategies have been used. It will also review the quality of the M&E system and information management and use including how monitoring systems are gender sensitive.

The methodology will include but is not limited or restricted to the following:

***(A). Data Collection: Phnom Penh***

* **Key stakeholder meetings.** Semi-structured individual and/or group interviews with representatives of the Royal Government of Cambodia, particularly relevant RGC Ministries, the CMAA, and national clearance operator CMAC, the RCAF demining units (exact name??), UNDP at technical and management levels, representatives of other relevant UN actors (UN Habitat, UNIDO, UNICEF and WHO etc), UNDP Development Partners (Donors), international mine action NGOs, and other parties active in the mine action sector in Cambodia, including representatives of the United States of America, Australia, Swiss, Japan etc. The interviews will use a semi-structured guide with key questions and prompts based on the evaluation questions and adapted according to the position and relationship of the specific interlocutor with the CfR II programme.
* **Review of secondary literature and data.** This will include but not be limited to Quarterly and Annual Reports, Annual Work Plans, Financial Reports, Meeting Minutes, relevant Terms of Reference (including that of the Project Board, TWGs and Steering Committee) communications materials, agreements with development partners, audit recommendations, consultant evaluations, and records of communications between stakeholders. The country-level background will be obtained primarily from CMAA, but will also rely heavily on UNDP, CfR II contractors (CMAC, RCAF demining units, GICHD/NPA), and other stakeholders within the Cambodian mine action sector (such as MAG, HALO Trust, HI and ICRC etc) Information sought will relate to, and be structured in terms of, the core evaluation questions.
* Interviews with key non-resident donors. Interviews with key non-resident donors such as Canada, may be undertaken via Skype or telephone using a semi-structured interview guide relevant to the evaluation questions.

***(B). Data Collection: Field Visits***

The purpose of the field visits is to assess the extent, quality and satisfaction with, of the outputs and outcomes of the CfR II project, especially from the perspective of the end users of the land cleared, and especially to assess the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency of the current prioritization and planning processes.

* Visits to selected provinces, and selected target communities within these, in which CfR II partners conduct clearance activities (Battambang, Pailin and Banteay-Meanchay).
* Semi-structured interviews and/or focus group discussions with local- and field-level clearance operation staff and representatives of the MAPU, PMAC and other local stakeholders (such as village and district chiefs). The interviews will also examine the extent to which the prioritization and clearance process promote the rights of end-users, ‘do no harm’ approaches and are gender included.
* Case studies, based on direct observation, in field sites where area clearance is currently underway to gain evidence of outputs; this to be complemented with photographic and/or video documentation
* Case studies developed by semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions with beneficiaries of clearance, allowing for analysis ofpast clearance activities by CfR II partners (2011-13) to gain evidence of outputs and outcomes (assessed against the 5 key evaluation questions). The interviews will also examine the extent to which end-users are satisfied with the prioritization and clearance process, that these processes do no harm and are gender inclusive. This to be complemented with photographic and/or video documentation.

**Criteria for Selection of Field Sites:**

Criteria for field site selection for review of the outcomes and impact of CfR II include:

* Villages that have been cleared between 2011 – 2013 (to enable reasonable timeframe to assess medium term impact of clearance)
* Villages where both community assets and individual plots have been cleared
* Villages with completion reports readily available
* Areas where there have been resettlement of IDPs, or other forms of migration
* Areas where CMAC and RCAF Demining Units conducts clearance with funding from the CfR II project
* Areas that are accessible during the wet season
* Sites where there have been low or no mines cleared / sites with low items cleared per hectare
* Sites where there have been high numbers of mines cleared (relative to other tasks) / sites with high numbers of items per hectare.
* Mix of large, medium and small sites

All potential respondents will be 18 or over and able to give informed consent. Photographs will only be taken with permission. For a statement of evaluation ethics, please see Annex 4 below.

***(c). Data Analysis & Sense-Making – In Phnom Penh***

* Using a diverse range of stakeholders, multiple methods, including a desk review will ensure triangulation (see Annex 1 Evaluation Matrix).
* Data will be analysed with reference to the evaluation questions, looking for common themes.
* Presentation of initial analysis of initial findings to stakeholders will provide a means of checking findings and quality review.
* Review and joint analysis with the UNDP staff responsible for the Household Impact Survey of the results of the study
* Drafting of the evaluation report.
  1. **Activities:**

Refer to the project calendar included as *Annex 1: ‘Project Calendar’*

Please review also *Annex 3: ‘Evaluation Matrix Evaluation of CfR II(2011-2015) in Cambodia’*

**Annex 4: Ethics Principles for Evaluation**

The responsibility for conduct of research and evaluation in line with these principles generally rests with the principal investigator.

1. Researchers and evaluators are responsible for identifying the need for and securing any necessary ethics approval for the study they are undertaking.

2. Research and evaluation must be relevant and high quality with clear developmental and practical value.

3. Researchers and evaluators should avoid harm to participants in studies.

4. Participation in research and evaluation should be voluntary and free from external pressure.

5. Researchers and evaluators should ensure confidentiality of information, privacy and anonymity of study participants.

6. Researchers and evaluators should operate in accordance with international human rights conventions and covenants, regardless of local country standards.

7. Research and evaluation should respect cultural sensitivities.

8. Research and evaluation should be independent of those implementing the intervention or programme under study

10. Research/ evaluation should have particular emphasis on ensuring participation from women and socially excluded groups

1. Interview with David Horrocks, Mine Action Advisor, CfR II/Poverty Reduction, CMAA, 21st September 2015 [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. p.1, TOR Clearing for Results Phase II (CfR II) [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. UNDP's support to the mine action sector in Cambodia started in 1993. A Trust Fund for technical and financial support of demining activities carried out by the Cambodian Mine Action Centre (CMAC) was established. With UNOPS as the executing agency, an associated project document was signed between the Royal Government of Cambodia (RGC) and UNDP in the same year. This arrangement was continued under three consecutive 'phases', which started as an institution-building programme that concentrated on capacity development and greater national leadership by the start of the third phase in 1998, by which time CMAC had grown to employ 3,000 staff with over 60 technical advisers from a large number of donor partners. However, allegations of mismanagement and poor land use policies surfaced in early 1999, and following the September 1999 release of an audit report that rated CMAC's internal controls as "seriously deficient", CMAC was plunged into a long period of crisis that lasted till the end of 2000. Donor confidence in the organization was shaken, and a series of reforms were implemented in CMAC's management and structure as well as the sector with the establishment of a new Mine Action Authority in September 2000. At the request of donors, an evaluation of CMAC's reform programme, as well as an investigation into land use issues were carried out in the first half of 2000 with relatively positive results. However, as a result of low donor confidence and inadequate financial support as well as a perception by stakeholders that CMAC was over-sized, 90% of CMAC staff was laid off in October 2000. In November 2000, the Government invited all mine action partners in Cambodia to participate in a National Mine Action Symposium with a view to enhancing partnerships with all national and international stakeholders under the principle of national ownership. During the Symposium, presided over by the Prime Minister, the Government outlined Cambodia's vision for the sector, which was described as one of central importance to poverty alleviation and development planning in the country over the medium term. With a new role as a national mine action service provider, and a clear indication of support from national and international partners subject to the continuing implementation of necessary reforms, CMAC prepared and implemented a work plan for 2001 with a leaner and more effective structure. Source: submission by UNDP Focal Point Cambodia, to Global Portfolio interview questions, to UNDP Independent Evaluation Office New York, 24th September 2015 [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. UNDP terminology for a ‘directly implemented project’. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Interview with David Horrocks, Mine Action Advisor, CfR II/Poverty Reduction, CMAA, 21st September 2015 [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Interview with David Horrocks, Mine Action Advisor, CfR II/Poverty Reduction, CMAA, 21st September 2015 [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. p.2, TOR Clearing for Results Phase II (CfR II) [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. p.3, TOR Clearing for Results Phase II (CfR II) [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. It is believed that only 4% of land released is not being used, according to Post Clearance Monitoring reports, which is relatively low figure. Source: Interview with David Horrocks, Mine Action Advisor, CfR II/Poverty Reduction, CMAA, 21st September 2015 [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. The evaluator selected undertook extensive grass roots research in western Cambodia, in particular in Ratanank Mondul district, south western Battambang, which remains one of the target CfR II areas, in 1992-3, published as *‘War of the Mines: Cambodia, Landmines and the Impoverishment of a Nation’* in 1994 (Pluto Press, London). He also produced the first CMAC promotional film ‘Deadly Harvest’ in 1993, and worked for MAG as their first S E Asia Desk officer responsible for developing their mine action work, primarily in Battambang, 1993-96. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. p.2, TOR Clearing for Results Phase II (CfR II) [↑](#footnote-ref-11)