

**Independent Final Evaluation of the Eritrean Mine  
Action Capacity Building Programme (MACBP)  
2002 –2006**

**Evaluation Report**

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**10 June 2008**

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## Executive Summary

Eritrea has a major landmine/UXO contamination problem dating from the struggle for independence with Ethiopia (1961 – 1991) with more mines laid in the later border dispute (1998-2000). UNDP in consultation with the Government and relevant stakeholders, through the mechanism of the Preparatory Assistance for Mine Action, initiated the Mine Action Capacity Building Programme (MACBP) in 2002. This two-year programme was subsequently revised and was extended to 2006 (i.e. MACBP 2002 – 2006).

The objective of the MACBP was to expand national capacity for mine action. In particular, it aimed to build capacity in the EDA for the development and implementation of a National Strategic Plan for Mine Action, including carrying out a landmine impact survey (LIS); capacity building of the EDO (now integrated with EDA) as the national NGO responsible for mine clearance and mine risk education; and strengthening the capacity of the Ministry of Labour and Human Welfare (MLHW), the Eritrean ministry responsible for all disabled people in the country, including the War-Affected and landmine victims.

Field demining activities under the Mine Action Capacity Building Programme were temporarily suspended following the impoundment (in March 2005) of the programme vehicles by the Government to rationalise the use of fuel. Some small activity continues in the form of resource provision to support clearance in support of the UN IDP programme.

This evaluation was carried out on behalf of UNDP at the request of the donor community. The Evaluation team were asked to examine documentation and interview stakeholders with a view to understanding and documenting what happened in MACBP and also to identify some lessons learned and possible ideas for re-engagement in the mine action sector in Eritrea.

Overall, the Evaluation Team finds that the intention of the MACBP was good and its direction, as expressed by the general thrust of the Strategic Plan was appropriate. However it had three significant flaws.

Firstly, the program was not as focussed and time bound as it could have been. The Evaluation Team believe that needs analysis processes could help define a more focused program and thus establish an appropriate exit strategy for international involvement.

The plan was over-ambitious and raised expectations that could not be met in terms of resource requirements. The debate over international mine action standards (IMAS) further exacerbated this problem as their application seemed to be slowing down progress. The Evaluation Team believe this is a false dichotomy and a reasoned approach should be able to produce a compromise in application of IMAS without compromising safety.

Finally, there were problems in communications on all sides of the issues. It is believed that the UNDP direct execution (DEX) modality exacerbated this problem as it led to concerns about ownership of the program amongst Eritrean officials. A nationally executed modality (NEX), supported by transparent and objective project appraisal and an effective monitoring and evaluation capacity, would be more appropriate in future.

This report includes more detail about a number of recommendations that could allow the re-engagement of the donor community with the Eritrean mine action programme which would respect the needs and desires of all stakeholders.

## PART ONE: Background and methodology

### Background

#### *Landmine situation in Eritrea*

Eritrea has a major landmine/UXO contamination problem dating from the struggle for independence with Ethiopia (1961 – 1991). Landmines were used to defend strongholds around cities and populated areas, military camps and roads; landmines are also found in rural farmlands, near water sources and along borders. The recent border conflict between Eritrea and Ethiopia (1998 – 2000) has been a source of further landmine and unexploded ordnance contamination. Some reports indicate that more than 100,000 mines have been laid during the recent conflict<sup>1</sup>. According to the Landmine Impact Survey completed in 2004<sup>2</sup>

*The Landmine Impact Survey (LIS) identified 481 communities with landmine and/or unexploded ordnance (UXO) contamination in 55 of the 58 sub-zobas of Eritrea, sub-zobas being the administrative unit directly above communities. In the surveyed area, an estimated 655,117 people live in communities having some level of mine impact, which means that approximately 20% of the estimated Eritrean population of 3.2 million people is living in mine-impacted communities. Another 113 communities had unexploded ordnance, which the LIS determined were not causing socioeconomic blockages and required only tasking for spot clearance*

*In Eritrea, mines mainly affect rural communities: villages make up 411 - or 85% - of the 481 impacted communities. The 70 impacted urban and suburban communities constitute only 15% of the total number of impacted communities. The median population of all impacted communities in Eritrea is 150; further establishing that it is small communities outside urban areas that are mainly impacted...it is generally the rural population whose livelihoods are dependent on access to mine-contaminated lands. Of the 481 mine-impacted communities surveyed, 399 had a history of mine incidents in which one or more persons had been killed and/or injured. One hundred sixteen of these communities recalled 295 victims for the two-year period 2001-2003. Furthermore, 287 communities reported victims prior to 2001 that totaled 4,639.*

#### *The institutional framework of mine action in Eritrea*

On 18 June 2000, the Governments of Eritrea and Ethiopia signed a Cessation of Hostilities Agreement followed by a Peace Agreement on 12 December 2000. In the Cessation of Hostilities Agreement both Governments requested UN assistance for mine action. In response to this request the United Nations Mission to Ethiopia and Eritrea Mine Action Co-ordination Centre (UNMEE-MACC) was established in Eritrea. A number of NGOs also established mine action operations in Eritrea in 2000 and 2001. On 27 August 2001 the Eritrean Government acceded to the Ottawa Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production, and Transfer of Anti – Personnel Mines and on their Destruction (Mine Ban Treaty).

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<sup>1</sup> Taken from the terms of reference (TOR) for this evaluation

<sup>2</sup> [http://www.sac-na.org/surveys\\_eritrea.html](http://www.sac-na.org/surveys_eritrea.html)

Following the Government's termination of the operations of the NGOs in 2002 and 2003, UNDP in consultation with the Government and relevant stakeholders, through the mechanism of the Preparatory Assistance for Mine Action, initiated the Mine Action Capacity Building Programme (MACBP) in 2002. This two-year programme was subsequently revised and was extended to 2006 (i.e. Mine Action Capacity Building Programme 2002 – 2006). Because of the specific circumstances of Eritrea at the time, in particular in the mine action sector, the programme was directly executed by UNDP (DEX) with the Eritrean Demining Authority (EDA), Eritrean Demining Operations (EDO) and the Ministry of Labour and Human Welfare (MLHW) acting as implementing agencies.

To realize the foregoing vision, the EDA was established in 2002 by a proclamation No. 123/2002 with the objective to: *a) find and remove or neutralize kind mines and return mined areas to productive use, b) educate Eritrean civilians on the dangers of land mine and ways to identify and report them; c) clear mine areas to facilitate the repatriation of internally displaced persons and refugees; and d) integrate demining action into national development strategy*<sup>3</sup>''

The mission statement of EDA is *“to be fully functional implementing agency with sufficient and diverse strength in order to address the bulk of the mine /UXO problem in Eritrea. This will entail widening the capacity of the EDO nearly fivefold, which should be sustainable for the duration of the Programme always in compliance with IMAS”*.

The proclamation also conferred on EDA the autonomy to exercise its demining action related authorities and powers to: 1) develop policies, standards, directives, procedures and guidelines for demining action; 2) prepare national plans; 3) setup a planning system; 4) manage national data base; 5) set up monitoring system; 6) play an active role in developing partnerships including the soliciting of expertise and equipment and in mobilizing financial and other resources within Eritrea and abroad, and 7) collect information on the provision of assistance to mine victims in Eritrea.

Within the authority of EDA the Eritrean Demining Operations (EDO) is responsible for training, equipping, deploying and operating mine action teams in accordance with International Mine Action Standards (IMAS). EDO also carries out MRE.

The objective of the MACBP was to expand national capacity for mine action. In particular, it aimed to build capacity in the EDA for the development and implementation of a National Strategic Plan for Mine Action, including carrying out a landmine impact survey (LIS); capacity building of the EDO (now integrated with EDA) as the national NGO responsible for mine clearance and mine risk education; and strengthening the capacity of the Ministry of Labour and Human Welfare (MLHW), the Eritrean ministry responsible for all disabled people in the country, including the War-Affected and landmine victims. The major components of mine action in Eritrea were: (a) mine risk education; (b) minefield survey, mapping, marking and clearance; (c) victim assistance, including rehabilitation and reintegration; (d) advocacy to stigmatise the use of landmines and support their total ban.

EDA is structured to comprise the General manager- Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and accountable to president, the functional departments<sup>4</sup> including *(Plan and operations,*

<sup>3</sup> Gazette of Eritrean laws published by the Government of Eritrea proclamation No. 123/2002, A proclamation to Establish the Eritrean Demining Authority, Vol. 11/2002 No.4, Asmara July 8 2002

<sup>4</sup> See National Mine action Strategic Plan o: Annex 5: Organizational Charts of Eritrean Mine action.

*Information and Mapping, Mine Risk Education, Administration and Logistics, Finance, Medical coordination and National training Centre*) and required staff members. The structure was intended to allow quicker and final decisions to take place on matters affecting EDA since the CEO directly reports to the Office of the President. It was also thought essential that the routine decision making process can be complemented by creating an additional structure to enable a full participation and involvement of stakeholders by way of creating a steering committee to which the CEO can serve as a secretary during the meetings.

The Ministry of Labour and Human Welfare (MLHW) delivers assistance to mine victims through its CBR Programme, which coordinates physical and socio-economic rehabilitation through representatives within the community. MLHW is providing opportunities to all people with disability, including landmine and UXO survivors. In an integrated approach, MLHW was intended to dispatch teams to assess the needs of mine-affected communities during the pilot visit phase and thereby establish the necessary networks and personnel to support the victims support component (See Box 1 below).

The term “**Mine Victim**” (or “landmine survivor”) is used to describe people who have been physical injured or psychologically affected by the detonations of landmines or unexploded ordnance (UXO). **Victim assistance** means all aid, relief, comfort and support provided to victims with the purpose of reducing the immediate and long-term medical and psychological implications of their trauma.

*Box 1. Definitions of mine victim and victim assistance*

Field demining activities under the Mine Action Capacity Building Programme were temporarily suspended following the impoundment (in March 2005) of the programme vehicles by the Government to rationalise the use of fuel. In February 2007, the Government of Eritrea and UNDP agreed to resume implementation of the MACBP. It is understood that this resumption is currently on a far smaller scale and in the form of a NEX (nationally executed) support to the mine action program in Eritrea in return for clearance in support of the IDP return programme also supported by UNDP. The following text is extracted from the 2007 Landmine Monitor report for Eritrea<sup>5</sup>:

*The EDA structure has absorbed the Eritrean Demining Operations (EDO), previously the national implementing body for mine action. As a result, the EDA is now also responsible for all operational aspects formerly assigned to the EDO.*

*According to the UN, the UN Development Programme (UNDP) will, “after an audit is completed, explore continued support to the Eritrean Demining Authority.” In contrast, the EDA deputy general manager claimed in February 2006 that “there may have been some disruption initially in our program but we are fully capable of managing our entire mine action program independently.”*

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.icbl.org/lm/2007/eritrea.html>

## *Background to this evaluation*

There was an existing obligation to conduct an end of mission evaluation in 2005/2006, but this could not be conducted after the suspension of MACBP activities in 2005. UNDP subsequently decided to resurrect the plan for a final evaluation in order to learn the lessons from the previous activities to better inform and plan a possible extension of UNDP support to mine action in Eritrea, as well as meeting its original obligations to conduct a historical evaluation of the program between 2002 and 2005.

## **Aim**

The aim of this report is to set out the findings of the Evaluation Team; to identify lessons learned in the MACBP, particularly on the basis of relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, and sustainability, and to present recommendations for future international mine action intervention in Eritrea, particularly on the part of UNDP

## **Scope**

The Evaluation Team was asked in the TOR to:

- Assess the relevance, efficiency, and effectiveness of the Mine Action Capacity Building Programme (MACBP).
- Address sustainability of the programme from the design and implementation vantage point.
- Include an assessment of the management capacity and structure of the national mine action institutions<sup>6</sup>.
- Identify strengths and weaknesses of the MACBP seen in the light of relevant International Standards and best practice in the sector, as well as the particular circumstances of the country.

The Evaluation Team was also asked to:

- Make recommendations for improvement, future mine action support, co-ordination, implementation and policies in Eritrea.

This report is therefore prepared in three parts: the first part sets out the background to the issue and the methodology used in this evaluation: the second part deals with the historical evaluation of MACBP, whilst the third sets out some recommendations for a future re-engagement in the mine action sector in Eritrea.

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<sup>6</sup> Eritrean Demining Authority (EDA) mine action regulatory body, and Ministry of Labour and Human Welfare (MLHW) - support to people with disability including landmine victims



## Methodology

The methodology for the evaluation was suggested in the TOR, which requires the evaluation to be participatory and involve stakeholders. The two main techniques suggested to the team were:

- Comprehensive document review and analysis of all relevant mine action documents. A bibliography of key documents as drawn up by the UNDP Recovery Unit in Asmara is at Annex A
- Interviews and participatory meetings with Government, UN and donor officials; and the UNMEE-MACC staff. These interviews were set up by the UNDP office in Asmara. A list of interviews and meetings is at Annex B<sup>7</sup>. A list of attendees at a presentation of initial findings is at Annex C.

In accordance with the TOR, the Evaluation Team used the following approaches to make their observations and determine their conclusions:

- Assessment of the accomplishments of the various components of the programme by reference to the stated programme objectives and targets;
- Review of progress reports that have been prepared by the MACBP – what are the main constraints, challenges identified and proposed actions;
- Review the work planning processes: Adequacy of annual work plans to guide programme implementation; whether such work plan was being discussed and agreed among the key partners in implementation (EDA, MLHW, UNDP);
- Identify the staff recruited for the programme, their expertise, and roles pertaining to capacity building of the national mine action institutions;
- Identify major institutional, financial and operational issues that have assisted and/ or constrained effective implementation of the programme.

Many of the questions used in the TOR were phrased in terms of what are becoming the standard criteria for the evaluation of development programs and projects, namely: *Relevance, Impact, Efficiency, Effectiveness and Sustainability*. The Evaluation Team used the following definitions from the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) for these terms<sup>8</sup>. The team however notes that the TOR has omitted the use of the *Impact* criterion and included an additional term, *Accountability*. To ensure compliance with international best practice and the overall goals of the evaluation the use of *Impact* as an evaluation criterion has been retained in this evaluation, whilst also providing some notes on accountability.

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<sup>7</sup> The Norwegian Embassy was also approached but due to handover the previous Ambassador was not available.

<sup>8</sup> See the OECD introduction to Development Evaluation at [http://www.oecd.org/document/22/0,2340,en\\_2649\\_34435\\_2086550\\_1\\_1\\_1\\_1,00.html](http://www.oecd.org/document/22/0,2340,en_2649_34435_2086550_1_1_1_1,00.html) which offers definitions of all the criteria used in development project evaluation.

<b>Table 1: Development Evaluation Criteria</b>		
Ser	Criterion	Definition
(a)	(b)	(c)
1	Relevance	The extent to which the aid activity is suited to the priorities and policies of the target group, recipient and donor
2	Effectiveness	A measure of the extent to which an aid activity attains its objectives.
3	Efficiency	Efficiency measures the outputs -- qualitative and quantitative -- in relation to the inputs. It is an economic term which signifies that the aid uses the least costly resources possible to achieve the desired results. This generally requires comparing alternative approaches to achieving the same outputs, to see if the most efficient process has been adopted.
4	Impact	The positive and negative changes produced by a development intervention, directly or indirectly, intended or unintended. This involves the main impacts and effects resulting from the activity on the local social, economic, environmental and other development indicators.
5	Sustainability	Sustainability is concerned with measuring whether the benefits of an activity are likely to continue after donor funding has been withdrawn.

### *Scope of Work*

The TOR includes a section on 'Scope of Work' which requires the evaluation team to make observations on a number of questions grouped in terms of their evaluation criterion as described above. The answers to these questions are grouped together in a tabular format that links the observations to the criteria and the questions asked in the TOR and included in Annex D as a summary of observations in the context of these criteria.

The scope of work in the TOR also asks a number of questions which do not require observations on the current or historical observation, but which instead call for recommendations. The answers to these questions, again grouped in terms of the development evaluation criteria, are included in the 'Recommendations' section below.

### *Outputs*

The TOR requires that the output of the evaluation will be a report (to be provided in hard copy as well as electronic format) that provides findings, identifies lessons learned in the MACBP on the basis of relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, and sustainability, and presents recommendations. This report is submitted by the Evaluation Team in compliance with this request.

### *Limitations*

It was not possible for the Evaluation Team to visit the field; UNDP determined that the monitoring of field activities and outputs was covered by the mid term appraisal of the Program in 2004. This evaluation therefore essentially consists of a desk analysis supported by interviews and discussions. However the Team was able to pay a quick visit to the Orthopaedic workshop just south of Asmara.

Although one of the Evaluation Team is an accountant, there was not time in the mission for a detailed forensic audit of invoices, receipts etc. The team have however used the participatory and document review methods set out in the TOR to identify any complaints amongst stakeholders on issues of accountability and have reviewed any audit reports available in the literature made available to the Evaluation Team.

## PART TWO: Observations

This section concentrates on observations of the historical issues of the MACBP project between 2002 and 2005. Substantive treatment of the potential re-engagement is covered in Part Three of the report.

### Literature review

The full set of documents made available for review by UNDP are listed at Annex A. The Evaluation Team identified the following key documents as:

- Project Documents (both 2002 and 2004)
- Landmine Impact Survey (LIS)
- Strategic Plan 2004-2009
- Progress Reports
- Audit Report
- Final Report

#### *Project documents*

There were two project documents. The first was drafted for the period 2002 to 2004, and covered purely the provision of technical assistance; the second was re-written in 2004 covering the fact that the scope of the MACBP project was extensively expanded when it took on the additional roles of operational support. The project documents were largely drafted by MACBP staff, although this was an iterative process with extensive consultation with EDA personnel. However the EDA staff contend that (a) there was pressure on them to agree with the documents quickly in order to meet project funding cycles, and (b) their level of expertise was not at the stage where they could contribute substantially in the time allowed. One other thing that is observable between the two documents is how the evolution of the mine action sector in Eritrea put conceptual strain on the original proposal, which was purely for technical assistance and therefore suitable to a direct execution (DEX) modality. The second version of the project document retained this DEX modality even though there was a substantial change in the scope of the project.

#### *Landmine Impact Survey*

The MACBP project was the vector of the implementation of the landmine impact survey (LIS). The LIS was completed in 2004 and was endorsed by the quality assurance monitoring system developed within the aegis of the United Nations to ensure that the conduct and results of all LIS are fit for purpose. Although LIS are expensive and do not clear mines themselves, they are widely held to be an objective and transparent means of assessing the impact of landmines in a contaminated country and can be considered a necessary pre-cursor to significant international commitment to support of a mine action program in the target country. LIS are also a useful source of data to support a transparent and objective prioritization mechanism for resource allocation in the mine action sector. The successful completion of the LIS can be considered a positive outcome of MACBP.

### *Strategic Plan 2004-2009*

The strategic plan gives a clear statement of strategic intent for mine action in Eritrea and for that it is a useful document. It was apparently drafted in the same manner as the project documents described above, but its sustainability is notable in that, with some notable differences in budget structures, it is still in use in an updated version today. However, whilst it lists the number of mine clearance teams to be operated in the course of the plan, there are no time and motion calculations that would justify the size of the organization. To be fair, in the context of the period when this document was written it was comparable with the strategic plans of other national mine action programs.

### *Progress reports*

The documents available to the Evaluation Team, nearly four years on from the ‘collapse’ of the MACBP show that there was a series of progress reports issued by MACBP and thus UNDP was compliant with one of the main requirements of accountability to stakeholders, particularly donors. However these reports tend to ‘accentuate the positive’ and thus, when things started to break down in 2005, the developments came as a bit of a surprise to the stakeholders. It is however possible that the documentary record is not complete.

### *Final report*

There was a final report written by the UNDP program officer at the time, published at the end of 2005. The program officer has a sound reputation in Eritrea for both her judgement and objectivity, and thus the final report can be taken as a balanced historical record of events, especially *what* happened in what was to be effectively the final year of MACBP. The final report process was also not able to capture reports from the MACBP technical advisors in terms of what they had been able to complete in terms of their capacity development objectives before the technical advisors left.

## **Crux of the breakdown**

The crux of the breakdown in relations between the MACBP and the mine action program in Eritrea came with the impoundment of vehicles in 2005. The impoundment of vehicles essentially meant that mine clearance activities came to a halt. There were some explanations given at a technical level as to why these vehicles had been impounded (apparently as a government policy to control vehicle use in the circumstances of a fuel shortage) but there was some unhappiness amongst other stakeholders about the way that this issue was communicated. There were then some attempts to conduct some refresher training for deminers whilst the fuel/vehicle issue was resolved, but it became impossible for the parties (i.e. MACBP and EDA) to come to terms on how to do this. There was then a request from EDA to reduce the number of expatriate technical advisors (TA) in MACBP. Later, because of the inability to resolve the outstanding issues, the remaining expatriates left. The MACBP project essentially ended at this point, although UNDP have continued to provide funds to EDA in order to support the clearance of suspect hazard areas likely to have impact on the program to facilitate the return of internally-displaced persons (IDP) supported by the UN<sup>9</sup>.

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<sup>9</sup> This funding is provided on a nationally-executed (NEX) program modality; UNDP does not have the facility to conduct technical monitoring of this activity although it is understood there have been no casualties amongst the returning IDP.

## Other issues

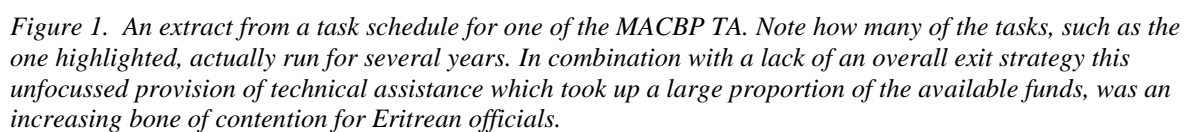
EDA and MLHW staff reported that the problems were wider than issue of vehicles. Their main complaints, as voiced to the Evaluation Team, included:

- UNDP TA “not value for money”
- Advice was “unfocused and not time bound”
- “Too great a proportion of budget spent on TA”
- Disagreements over ‘ownership’ of program (DEX)

It is difficult for the Evaluation Team to understand the full context of these problems more than three years on. One of the problems is the lack of full discussion of these issues in the available documentation. It does appear that, from discussions with the remaining witnesses and review of the remaining documentation that these issues (and indeed the issue of the vehicles) came as a surprise to many, including donors. There are some indications that problems had been made known to the UNDP via MACBP staff but there is little or nothing to reflect them in the routine reports made by MACBP, and indeed the EDA staff admit problems were discussed verbally rather than being set down in a formal report.

Nevertheless, the Evaluation Team is sympathetic to some of these comments. For example, the issue of whether the technical advice was unfocused. It is apparent from the documentation that although there were detailed work schedules for the provision of technical advice these were not time bound. For example, in the extract from one of these schedules shown in Figure 1 below, Serial 16 indicates that some 2.5 years are set aside for the provision of technical advice on the provision of training. This is rather a long time to train a trainer: presumably this was intended to be one of many subjects for which the technical advisor would give advice occasionally over the course of the MACBP, but one is felt to wonder whether such a subject would not be more suited to an external course. Indeed it is possible that general training in training methods could be outsourced from a local Eritrean institution rather than via this occasional advice from a technical advisor. Apart from increased cost (and perhaps language issues in some cases) it must have also diluted the amount of time available for focused advice on subjects *not* available in Eritrea, such as the latest international landmine clearance techniques, which should have been the core business of the expatriate advisors. The Evaluation Team also notes that the issue of an exit strategy is not covered in any depth in the project documents or strategic plan.

Likewise, the Evaluation Team can see how, especially in retrospect, the issue of ‘value for money’ can have become contentious. Expatriate technical advice is expensive, and UNDP is one of the most expensive sources of such advice. However the Team believes this is an issue which must be considered in the context of history. The TA program only began to look so expensive when UNDP was not able to raise all of the money that the project document and the strategic plan called for, and as a result the *proportion* of money being spent on TA became higher. The unfocused and non-time bound nature of the TA plan can only have exacerbated this issue. On one hand perhaps UNDP can be blamed for raising expectations in terms of resource mobilization that could not be met; on the other hand the project documents (including the TA plan) were ‘signed off’ by the Eritrean authorities.



It is also clear that the DEX modality was also a source of contention. In the words of EDA personnel and former MACBP advisors, there was some friction over how decisions were made about prioritization and also about the implementation of International Mine Action Standards. The DEX modality left the technical advisors in a project management rather than an advisory role. There are implications for the role of expatriates in any future re-engagement, as there also are for the interpretation of IMAS. These are discussed in the third section of this report. The Evaluation Team believes that the evolutionary nature of MACBP was part of the problem. In its original format MACBP was *entirely* based on the provision of technical assistance (and thus by definition *all* of the budget should originally been spent on this). Furthermore, when all the project was intended to do was provide technical advice, it was entirely reasonable for it to be a DEX project. It is only when the project expanded to include a role of operational support that these doctrinal cracks began to appear. Whilst it is reasonable for a technical assistance *project* to be provided under a DEX modality, if the international community is to encourage national ownership of a mine action *program* a NEX modality would probably be more suitable, especially for operational support elements. This does not prevent expatriate technical specialists having a monitoring role: this issue is also described in more detail in Part Three of this report.

## Achievements

Although the Evaluation Team was exposed to reports of these problems with the design and implementation of the MACBP, these must also be balanced against a number of achievements. These are described below in the context of the standard development evaluation criteria described in Table 1 above.

### Relevance

- Mine action, and particular mine clearance, was prioritised in support of IDP return in line with Government policy.

### Impact

- IDP were returned with no casualties (though this criteria in isolation is not a measure of efficiency)

### Effectiveness

- The Landmine Impact Survey was completed and this gives an objective measure of the impact of landmines in Eritrea using an internationally-recognised metric.
- Support was given to national disability survey and planning of victim support activities. It is now known that Eritrea has more than 75,000 disabled persons, many of whom are victims of landmines and UXO, and many of whom require significant ongoing care.
- A management capacity was developed within EDA and training was given.
- Funds were raised in support of mine action operations ( US\$ 395,801 to MLHW for victim support, and \$ 2,633,401 to EDA). See Annex E.
- Linkages were made with donor representatives and other institutions

### *Efficiency*

- Work is going on, particularly now, at low cost<sup>10</sup>

### *Sustainability*

- The remaining operational mine action capacity is all Eritrean
- The strategic plan drafted during the MACBP is still in use (albeit with modifications).

### *Actual contributions of MACBP*

When considering the achievements listed above one must remember the aim of this evaluation is to evaluate MACBP and not to evaluate the overall mine action program in Eritrea. There is therefore a question of causality, i.e. how much of these developments can be attributed to MACBP? For example, one must attribute some success to the existing technical skills of Eritreans in military mine clearance. Furthermore, fund raising fell short of expectations (i.e. actual fund inflow of \$ 3 million in 2004-05 against strategic plan targets of 10.33 million for 2005)

However, the Evaluation Team wishes to comment that a judgement of the exact value of the contribution from MACBP is not fully possible from the available documentation. It is clear that MACBP contributed a great deal; it is also clear that more could have been done, or at least some of the things could have been done more efficiently.

However these comments are made with the benefits of hindsight. Perhaps the key observation is that it was the structure of the project that allowed *perceptions* to develop: one stakeholder has suggested (during the presentation of the initial findings by the Evaluation Team on 5 June) that the problems were largely of *communication* and that for any re-engagement it is vital that communication modalities between the stakeholders are improved.

## **Accountability**

The proclamation that established EDA also stipulates that books of accounts are to be maintained, transactions are to be timely recorded and processed, financial reports are to be prepared and audited annually and financial reports and financial reports to be submitted to the Office of the President. The fund that has been given for victim assistance to the Ministry of Labor and Human Welfare (MLHW) has been audited for the period covering 21 months from 1 September 2003 to 31 May 2005. Of the total project funds of US\$ 395,801 that was made available from donors, US\$ 140,522 (36%) of which US\$ 100,838 was disbursed directly and US\$ 255,279 (64%) was disbursed by UNDP and other UN agencies. In the Auditor's opinion "the financial statements prepared by the implementing agency, presents fairly, in all material respects, the expenditures incurred, inventory of assets and cash position"<sup>11</sup>,

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<sup>10</sup> The Evaluation Team must caveat this comment by stressing that they were unable to observe current EDA activities nor did the TOR or the available time allow a scrutiny of national technical standards for mine action.

<sup>11</sup> Abraham Isaac & Company Authorized Auditors and Accountants, Report of and Financial Statements 31 December 2005 of UNDP project No. ERI/01/016 for the MLHW National Survey for People with Disability in Eritrea and Emergency Access to Orthopaedics Workshop, Asmara. P.5.



Similarly, the accounts of the EDA have been audited for the years 2003- to end of 2006 by the same auditor who stated in the draft report that of the total project funds of US\$ 2,633,401 that was made available from donors, \$894,304 (34%) has been directly disbursed by EDA and the remaining was disbursed through UNDP and other UN agencies.

The auditor further made observation that “signed document between EDA/EDO and UNDP was up to March 2004 and [there is] no signed document to reflect extension of agreement thereafter, demining equipment and other items transported from field to Asmara were not properly handed over to EDA and there is a discrepancy between the amount of expenditure incurred by EDA and that of UNDP’s Combined Delivery Report (CDR)<sup>12</sup>”.

## Technical issues

The comments on issues and achievements listed above apply generally to the activities associated with landmine and UXO clearance (i.e. implemented via the EDA) and those associated with victim support (i.e. implemented via MLHW). However there are three technical subjects that apply specifically to the clearance aspect that are worth specific mention, both in the historical context and the context of re-engagement. These issues are:

- Landmine impact survey (LIS)
- International mine action standards (IMAS)
- Provisions of the 1997 Ottawa Convention on Anti-Personnel Landmines

### *Landmine Impact Survey (LIS) and Information Management*

The LIS is a good process to identify impact of landmines, and because it is a process with an established methodology it has international credibility amongst the donor community. However, the LIS process is expensive and it is not without limitations. Because the LIS relies on a social science technique called participatory rural appraisal (PRA) in which it asks local populations their *opinions* on the impact of landmines on themselves and their community, it can tend to exaggerate the actual extent of the problem on an individual site as it records areas that are considered ‘suspected hazard’ rather than define the actual extent of contamination (a technical process that is beyond the scope of the PRA process). When this is aggregated over a whole nation it can make the problem look bigger than it is in terms of actual economic impact, which is defined in rather a simplistic manner<sup>13</sup> by the LIS process. However it should be emphasised that these limitations are a generic issue with the LIS process and are not unique to the way the LIS was implemented in Eritrea. Fundamentally, the LIS is a necessary pre-cursor to the development of an effective strategic plan and also as a tool for fund-raising. According to all the evidence, the LIS was implemented well in Eritrea; what matters most now is how it is used in further analysis of the mine problem in the country. This is described in more detail in Part Three of this report below.

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<sup>12</sup> Abrahm Isaac & Company, EDA/EDO Mine Clearance Operations UNDP Project No. ERI/01/016 Report and Financial Statements, 31 May 2006. P.4

<sup>13</sup> This happens in two ways: firstly the default impact calculations tend to weight historical casualty numbers very highly especially when compared with the blockage of a site that may have economic implications. Secondly the measurement of these blockages is quite simplistic and falls short of an economic cost-benefit analysis.

There is however one specific issue of data processing and information management that bears further comment in the historical context, and that is the issue of the Information Management System for Mine Action (IMSMA). For those not intimately familiar with it, IMSMA is a specialised geographic system (GIS) designed for landmine clearance programs that is promulgated by the UN and the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD). It was originally brought into Eritrea by the mine action program included in the UN Mission for Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE).

Unfortunately the IMSMA software is not as well structured as one might hope (it is certainly the subject of sustained criticism in the international mine action community). Two examples were highlighted in the course of this evaluation:

- The first example is that once data is included in one version of the database (i.e. that maintained by UNMEE) it is difficult to disaggregate the data into two national sets (i.e. one for Ethiopia and one for Eritrea).
- The second issue is that once a suspected area is included in the database it is hard to get it out again, even if the data pertaining to that area is subsequently discredited.

There is an outstanding requirement to sort out these problems and this is discussed again in the context of considering future re-engagement in Part Three of this report below.

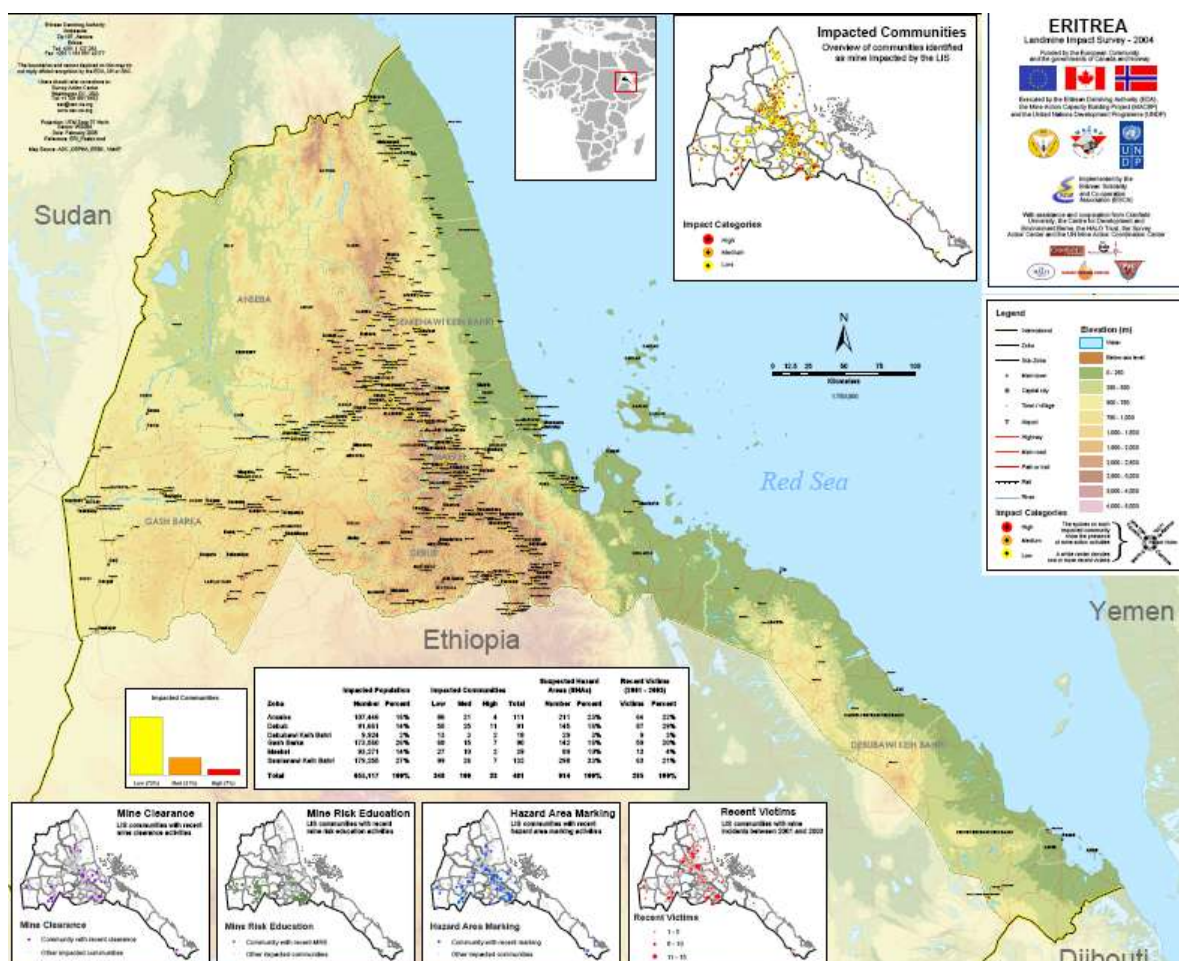


Figure 2. A map of Eritrea produced by the Landmine Impact Survey process, completed in 2004

### *International mine action standards (IMAS)*

The agreed concept of operations for landmine clearance in Eritrea was that it would abide by international mine action standards (IMAS). Again, for those not intimately familiar with the detailed history of humanitarian mine action, these standards were developed under the aegis of the United Nations after being requested to do so by an international conference in Copenhagen in 1996. The first interim version of such standards were published in 1997, and an extensive international research and outreach process led to the publication of the first complete IMAS in 2001. These IMAS have been maintained with the continued involvement of the UN and GICHD ever since.

One criticism of MACBP was that deminer output was constrained by ‘unnecessary’ limitations of IMAS through an excessively strict interpretation of MACBP advisors<sup>14</sup>. Criticism has been made of the ‘scientific approach’ of IMAS which resulted in an opportunity cost (i.e. more distress caused to an IDP population waiting to return to their homes then would have been caused by an ‘acceptable’ casualty level from faster clearance)/

No criticism can be made of any army combat engineer that has ever faced having to breach a minefield in war, and it is easy to recognise the bravery of such men in their willingness to take risks in the pursuit of a greater good for the general population. However, the principles of IMAS are that they are intended as a benchmark for humanitarian operations in peacetime where risks are measured differently and where one must consider the risks to both the deminers and the intended beneficiaries of the clearance in a different way, in the context of a sustained civilian process. It is also difficult for donors to support anything less, in terms of their own concerns for risk and liability.

However, the Evaluation Team understands a desire to achieve more with limited resources, and the Team also agrees that a slavish adherence to irrelevant standards is not helpful. Furthermore, the Evaluation Team believes that compromise is possible in two main ways:

- Firstly, the IMAS process allows for re-calibration of technical standards to meet the local context within a set of ‘National Standards’ that can maintain the key safety elements of IMAS as efficiently as possible in the unique situation posed in each country.
- Secondly, it is also possible to use risk management approaches to increase output without reduction in safety. For example, it is understood that the survey processes used in the LIS (and earlier by UNMEE) generated ‘suspect hazard areas’ that were considerably larger than other indicators (including military records) suggested. It could be possible to establish a risk management system that prioritised areas for action without necessary clearing *all* of the suspect hazard areas.

In the illustration in Figure 3 below the boxes at the bottom left represent the lanes being cleared into an SHA where the actual contamination is believed by the clearance organisation to be somewhere in the red ellipse in the top left. A risk management approach should be able to allow the teams to work in the blue box in the top left that includes the ellipse (and indeed a suitable safety margin) without making any comment on the remainder of the SHA.

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<sup>14</sup> It does appear that some of this criticism was rather generalised, and may have been applied as much to UNMEE-MAC personnel as it could have been to MACBP advisors.



*Figure 3. The strength and the weakness of the suspect hazard area (SHA) concept. Clearing all of a SHA deals well with the need to be absolutely sure that all of the area is free from explosive hazards; unfortunately it can mean that scarce demining resources can be employed for several months in areas that participants may agree have little likelihood of contamination.*

### *The 1997 Ottawa Convention on Anti-Personnel Landmines (the Ottawa Treaty)*

Eritrea is a signatory to the Ottawa Treaty, which requires states party to the treaty to dispose of their anti-personnel landmine stockpiles, forbear from manufacturing or purchasing other stocks, and to clear all of the anti-personnel landmines on their territory within 10 years of ratifying the treaty. Many donors make acceding to this treaty a pre-requisite to funding of mine action programs. Unfortunately this creates a paradox: Article Five of the treaty requires the state to clear all anti-personnel landmines but the donor community rarely provides all of the funding necessary to clear all of the mines (Article Six only makes a unquantified requirement that those states party with the capacity to do so should assist those states that needs help). At a macro level, the Strategic Plan accordingly was based on an estimate of what would be necessary to become 'mine free' (and the necessary resources were never obtained). On a micro level, the need to 'clear everything' probably exacerbated the tendency of the 'scientific' paradigm described above to clear all of a suspect area without a more surgical approach. It is suggested that a more modest target, becoming 'impact free' rather than 'mine free' could allow for a stronger case to be made for funding targets. Furthermore, an 'impact free' target will provide a paradigm by which a risk-management approach might allow the demining teams to concentrate on the areas where they will do the most good without necessarily compromising safety. These ideas are discussed in the context of re-engagement in Part Three below.

## Conclusions

The conclusions to this part of the report are presented in two sections: the first section includes specific conclusions answering particular questions raised in the TOR. This is followed by a general conclusions paragraph.

### *Specific conclusions*

- Question. Assess the relevance, efficiency, and effectiveness of the Mine Action Capacity Building Programme (MACBP).
- Conclusion. The program was relevant in that mine action was prioritised against the return of IDP, which was the major developmental issue facing Eritrea at the time. It was effective in that capacity was developed, funds were raised and a Landmine Impact Survey was implemented. The product (i.e. an improved Eritrean mine action capacity) is efficient in terms of its comparatively low operating costs) but there is some question as to whether MACBP was as efficient as it could have been.
- Question. Address sustainability of the programme from the design and implementation vantage point.
- Conclusion. The product of MACBP (i.e. an improved Eritrean mine action capacity) is sustainable in that it is an all-Eritrean capacity. However MACBP was not, in that it did not even make it to the end of its planned life span.
- Question. Include an assessment of the management capacity and structure of the national mine action institutions<sup>15</sup>.
- Conclusion. The national mine action institutions have themselves suggested areas where they could benefit from further technical assistance; these areas are discussed in more detail in Part Three of this report.
- Question. Identify strengths and weaknesses of the MACBP seen in the light of relevant International Standards and best practice in the sector, as well as the particular circumstances of the country.
- Conclusion. There was some debate in Eritrea about the applicability of international standards in the context of Eritrea; as mentioned above this will require further, more detailed analysis than was possible in the scope of this Evaluation. In terms of best practice in the sector, the Evaluation Team are of the opinion that the MACBP program was 'par for the course' in terms of its design and implementation; however more could have been done to focus on what was possible and perhaps the scope of MACBP was over-ambitious, leading to expectations being raised and not met.

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<sup>15</sup> Eritrean Demining Authority (EDA) mine action regulatory body, Ministry of Labour and Human Welfare (MLHW) - support to people with disability including landmine victims

### *General conclusions*

Overall, the Evaluation Team finds that the intention of the MACBP was good and its direction, as expressed by the general thrust of the Strategic plan was appropriate. However it had three significant flaws. These are discussed below and ideas for their rectification are included. These ideas are developed further in Part Three of this report.

Firstly, the program was not as focussed and time bound as it could have been; in the particular context of Eritrea this led to concerns about the motivations of the individuals concerned and a desire to cut short international involvement. The Evaluation Team believe that a more developed scoping can help define a more focused program and thus establish an appropriate exit strategy for international involvement.

The plan was over-ambitious and raised expectations that could not be met in terms of resource requirements. To be fair, this was exacerbated by the Ottawa paradigm which requires the clearance of all anti-personnel mines. The debate over international mine action standards (IMAS) further exacerbated this problem as their application seemed to be slowing down progress. As mentioned above, the Evaluation Team believe this is a false dichotomy and a reasoned approach should be able to produce a compromise in application of IMAS without compromising safety.

Finally, there were problems in communications. For their part, MACBP staff were not perhaps as good as they could have been in conveying what could realistically be expected from donor commitments, while on their part several significant issues were not explained by the Eritreans, rather being presented as a fait accompli, generating in turn dissatisfaction amongst the donor community. It is believed that the DEX modality, which whilst initially appropriate for a technical assistance project was less compatible with the later expanded operational support role of MACBP, exacerbated this problem as it led to concerns about ownership of the program amongst Eritrean officials.



## PART THREE: Ideas for re-engagement

### Overview

The first thing to note is that there remains a landmine problem in Eritrea. Furthermore, it was clear to the Evaluation Team that, providing the lessons are learned from the past, the International community is interested in re-engagement in the mine action programme in Eritrea.



*Figure 4. These two pictures of mine/UXO casualties, taken in a hospital in the Barentu in the Zoba of Gash Barka that is supported by the Italian government, graphically demonstrate the ongoing requirement to address the landmine and UXO problem in Eritrea.*





*Figure 5. This photograph, taken by the Evaluation Team during the visit to the orthopaedic centre in Adi-Guaedad to the South of Asmara, reminds us that the need for victim support is a long term requirement: this lady lost her leg in 1980 and will require assistance for the rest of her life. In this photo she is seen being fitted for a new prosthetic leg.*



## Stakeholder Analysis

The Evaluation Team consulted all available stakeholders on their perspectives on the need for re-engagement. The key points are recorded below. These points were then reprised during the presentation of initial findings on 5 June 2008.

### *EDA/MLHW Perspective*

The first and overarching need stated by both EDA and MLHW personnel was the need for external resources. The need was for a combination of cash for operating costs and for equipment. The second need was for technical assistance; however both EDA and MLHW made the following caveats for the future provision of technical advisors (TA):

- Must be focused to meet specific objectives
- Must be time bound
- Must be demand driven
- Must show value for money

It was agreed in both sets of discussions that a training needs analysis (TNA) would be useful to design the requirement for technical assistance with these points in mind. It was also suggested as a reasonable principle that technical assistance should be provided by local resources wherever possible. For example, if there is a general need for training in methods of training, this should be provided through local training schools if available rather than for paying for foreign training resources. It was also suggested that the training needs analysis should include a local specialist to provide advice about what is available locally.

There were some discussions about provision of full time technical advisors. EDA and the Evaluation Team agreed that, with an appropriate supply of short term advice on specific subjects identified by the TNA, it was likely that only one expatriate technical advisor would be required on a full time and long term basis. The other roles for TA are described below.

The third need as expressed by the Eritrean stakeholders was that the program needs to be under Eritrean ownership. The Eritreans suggested that any future program would need to be compliant with government policy and the issue of 'ownership' would be important in this regard. This is consistent with the earlier observation about the appropriateness of the UNDP's DEX/NEX modalities. Whilst it might conceivably be possible to provide TA under a DEX modality, operational support would be more appropriately supplied in a NEX structure.

The final element suggested by the Eritreans was a desire to improve the involvement with government agencies, such as the Army and the Police. The Evaluation Team suggest that whilst, in general, the provision of resources directly to military forces is a 'hard sell' to donors, there is a need to find a home for a sustainable capacity able to deal with a residual landmine/UXO problem after donor funds have dried up. The Police are a potential home for such a capacity and some such similar projects exist elsewhere in the world. As mutual confidence increases there may be increased options for military-military relations in terms of technical assistance for demining training; there is also an important coordination role for the Army, which is discussed below.

### *Donor perspective*

In general, donors are willing to support projects that have impact, and stated that they would wish to have proposals endorsed by UNDP in order to provide independent confirmation of requirements. The need for a scoping exercise to confirm a realistic scale for donor involvement was raised and this is discussed in more detail below.

The donors also stated that they would need some reasonable oversight of activities, both in the form of periodic and comprehensive reporting and, more importantly, in the form of an independent (i.e. expatriate) monitoring and evaluation regime. This was stated by all donors as a precondition for funding. However it was agreed that this monitoring and evaluation regime should be as small as possible. The role for expatriate specialists in this regard is discussed below.

The donors had no problem with the Eritrean ownership of the program, indeed this was welcomed as a necessary step to the development of a truly sustainable capacity able to deal with the long term impact of landmines and UXO in Eritrea. As a result, there is no demand for a general return to a DEX modality. However all of the donors interviewed by the Evaluation Team stated that they would prefer to use UNDP as a repository for funding, using a local trust fund/cost sharing agreement structure that involved UNDP in some element of the project management process (e.g. project appraisal and project evaluation). This does not preclude other bilateral contributions by other donors at a later date, and indeed UNDP should be able to provide similar project design and monitoring services for all donors as part of a 'value added' process.

The European Commission representative did ask for specific assurances about the current Eritrean national technical standards for landmine clearance and explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) and that these national standards are no less safe than IMAS. This was raised as a 'due diligence' requirement in order to ensure the mitigation of liability that might accrue to the donor. However, as mentioned above it is felt that a collaborative approach should be able to deal with this without returning to older confrontations over IMAS.

Again, the donors agree with the need to conform with government policy, and indeed it was seen as a part of a government 'buy in' to the re-engagement progress. Whilst it is recognised that the ability of the government of Eritrea to contribute cash to the mine action program is limited, donors suggested that government commitment to support the program in other ways, such as the endorsement of the suggestions made here and facilitating the ability of expatriate specialists engaged as monitors to visit field activities.

### **Provision of Technical Assistance**

These discussions suggested in turn that there are several different roles for expatriate technicians:

- Firstly, there is a role for the provision of general, strategic technical advice. As discussed before, this could be provided through a single advisor via UNDP.

- Secondly, there is a potential role for specific, focussed technical advice on specific subjects within the constraints described above, and identified by the TNA process. Whilst there is a role for UNDP to coordinate the sourcing of such advice, the individual advisors do not need necessarily to be on long term contracts; nor do they even necessarily have to be on UNDP contracts (as other sources may be more cost effective).
- Thirdly, there is a role for monitoring and evaluation on behalf of donors. These could be arranged on a case by case basis, depending on individual donor requirements. They need not be full time (previous work by one of the Evaluation Team members has suggested that random observation of some 5% of clearance work should be enough to provide confidence in the observations).

There is also a role for resource mobilisation. This is an important role for UNDP as an intermediary between the donors and the implementing agencies (in this case, EDA and MLHW) but it could primarily be carried out by UNDP country office personnel (probably by a nominated program officer) as part of UNDP's general project management role (and charged against UNDP's program support costs) rather than through the provision of a resource mobilise charged separately against funds raised by the project.

## Scoping the problem

As mentioned above, there is some suggestion that the original strategy was over ambitious:

- Pressure had been put on Eritrea to be Ottawa compliant
- The paradox is that not sufficient funds were made available to achieve this

The suggested approach is to ask for donor assistance to become "impact free" rather than "mine free." There is obviously need to define what this actually means from a quantitative perspective, but the concept is already compatible with Eritrea's existing strategic plan from a qualitative point of view, as the plan includes the following mission statement:

*"An Eritrea with a physical environment that will permit free movement, uninhibited development and poverty reduction initiatives; where victims are assisted and integrated into society, and no new victims are occurring due to mines and UXO."*

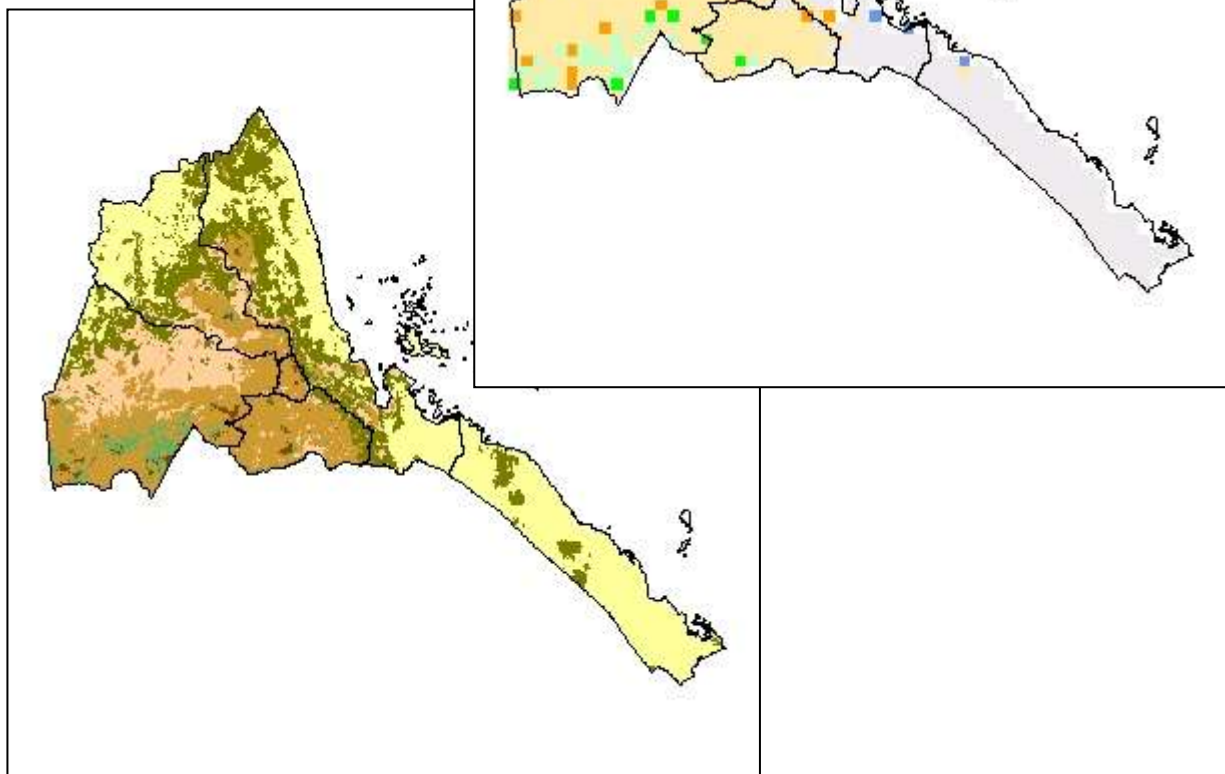
Whilst it is not possible within the resource constraints of this Evaluation to make a detailed scoping of the problem, it is possible to suggest some general principles.

Firstly, the LIS is recent enough to be used as the primary data source. The primary assumption is that the record of suspect hazard areas is exhaustive.

Secondly, there are sufficient sources of other secondary data that can be used to identify the highest value land (see Figure 6 below). Discussions with the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) revealed the existence of some comprehensive land use/land cover maps that are generated by an existing Eritrean capacity (Ministry for Land). Simple superimposition of these two maps, one over the other, will help provide a means to prioritise land into categories of land that have varying degrees of economic value. Development of this concept would allow the identification of land that is impacted in a more economically quantifiable manner than the LIS does on its own, and in turn provide a basis for a reasoned approach to international donors for medium term assistance.



Figure 6, Scoping concepts. The first of these maps is an extract of the LIS map showing the location of suspect hazard areas (SHA); the other two maps are examples of land cover maps of Eritrea. Use of these sorts of maps with the LIS data can help identify the SHA that have the greatest impact on agriculture in Eritrea.



## Sustainable capacity

The corollary of identifying high priority land for clearance with international assistance in the mid-term is the need to identify what capacity will be needed on a sustained basis to deal with the longer term, residual requirement (including compliance with Ottawa Treaty Article Five goals). Given that France and Belgium, with all of their resources, still regularly find unexploded ordnance left over from the First World War<sup>16</sup> this capacity will need to be sustained for some time, and this is likely to be beyond the willingness of international donors to fund. It will therefore need to be of a size commensurate to deal with the residual problem and with the ability of the government of Eritrea to fund it. Under such circumstances it also makes sense for this sustainable capacity to be lodged within an appropriate national institution and the Police may be a suitable choice, as it should be possible to find international support to train and equip such a capacity.

### The 'Hump' Concept

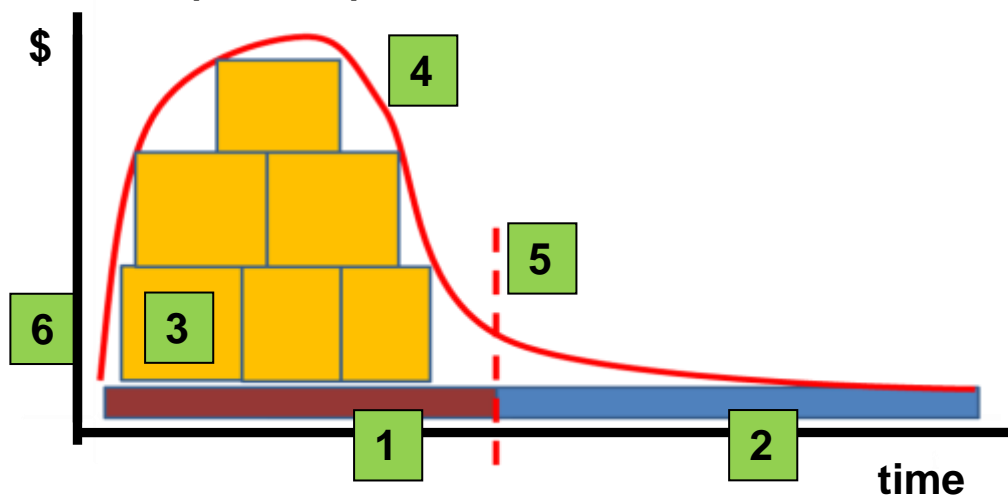


Figure 7. The 'hump' concept shows how different projects can be combined to deal with mid-term needs plus the establishment of a sustainable capacity to deal with residual contamination in the longer term.

The diagram at Figure 7 above shows how these different requirements could be combined in an overall program. The key elements are described below:

1. Training and equipping phase for a sustainable capacity to deal with residual contamination, built and operated with donor support.
2. Continued operation of the sustainable capacity using Eritrean resources
3. One of a number of different mine action projects operated in the mid term with donor support.
4. The 'hump' defines the total requirement of the program in terms of overall resources, based on an objective scoping exercise
5. The point at which donor funding ceases. This is the crux to an 'exit strategy' for international assistance. The Evaluation team believe that five years may be a suitable preliminary target in that this is the average life span for demining equipment, but this should be confirmed by a scoping exercise.
6. Pre-cursor activities necessary to establish the hump concept.

<sup>16</sup> Earlier this year there were even reports of a fatality from a UXO dating from the American Civil War!

The hump concept is flexible in that it allows different type of international support on a project by project basis. Donors can be sought on the basis of a thematic or geographic interest, and also to support different pillars of mine action, such as clearance or victim support. Different donor funding modalities can be accommodated, i.e. via UNDP or bilaterally, depending on donor requirements. Donor involvement can be time bound, and the Evaluation Team believes that an early commitment by Eritrea to take on the sustained support of the residual requirement would send a very positive signal to the donors and encourage their support in the mid term (i.e. the ‘hump’).

This approach also allows development of more focused projects, with different projects (and project documents) for:

- Victim support (with project documents signed with MLHW)
- Train and equip of residual capacity
- Provision of strategic technical advice
- Provision of different short-term technical consultancies (where necessary)
- Operational support to different mid-term clearance projects

As mentioned above, a monitoring and evaluation system should be established, perhaps even on a project by project basis, in order to sustain donor confidence.

## **Road map and precursor activities**

The implementation of such ideas would need to follow a ‘road map’, including some precursor activities that have already been highlighted in this report. The way points on a proposed road map are set out below.

- The presentation of initial findings and audience feedback (already completed)
- Production and circulation of this report
- Indication of buy-in from decision makers
- Precursor activities:
  - Scoping exercise
  - Desk review of national standards
  - Training needs assessment (TNA)
- Production of project documents on a collaborative basis
- Inclusion of projects appeals process

The European Commission has suggested that it might be able to fund the precursor activities necessary to complete this process.

## **Improved communications**

One issue that was raised during the evaluation and at the presentation of initial findings was the need to find a method to improve communications amongst stakeholders. One idea that may help achieve this would be through the establishment of an inter-ministry steering committee for mine action. This would build on the existing strategic working group for mine action that currently includes the Ministry of National Development and the Ministry of Labour and Human Welfare, and include other ministries with a stake in the landmine contamination issue. A possible list of participant ministries is included in Table 2 below

**Table 2: Possible Participant Ministries for a Mine Action Steering Committee**

Ministry of Defence Ministry of Interior Ministry of Foreign Affairs Ministry of Finance	Ministry of National Development Ministry of Labour and Human Welfare Ministry of Local Government	Ministry of Education Ministry of Information Ministry of Agriculture Ministry of Health
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Such a steering committee could meet on a quarterly basis to endorse policy proposals and priorities put forwards by EDA, which would act as a secretariat to the steering committee. UNDP could attend as an observer and interlocutor on behalf of the donors. At a separate forum, UNDP could brief a group of donors and interested representatives of the international community, with EDA perhaps acting as an observer at that meeting. Such committees have been established in a number of mine-contaminated countries, and it may be worth representatives from Eritrea visiting one of these to gain an insight into its operation. This idea is discussed again below.

## **Ideas for possible short-term technical assistance projects**

In the course of this evaluation, the Evaluation Team identified a number of projects that seemed to be suitable for short-term technical assistance. The TNA referred to above would help to define the actual requirement for such assistance (and may even identify more areas for assistance). Where possible sources of support may be available these are also noted.

- Development of the Eritrean version of the IMSMA database. UNMEE have offered the provision of an Eritrean GIS specialist for at least three months, and it is understood that GICHD will help with the ‘migration’ of the database to the new IMSMA 5 format. The TNA should identify whether the requirement is met by these resources or whether additional assistance is required.
- Development of a geographic information system (GIS) within MLHW to map the 75,000+ disabled people identified by the recent disability survey. This will allow more effective planning of interventions. It is possible that the technical assistance for a GIS project may be available within Eritrea.
- Provision of technical assistance to help with the development of a Technical Survey capacity. The development of a means to accurately define and plan clearance within suspect hazard areas was identified as a key requirement in the strategic plan, and will be vital as part of a risk management approach as described above.
- Conduct of a fact-finding mission in mine affected countries by Eritrean representatives. Discussions with the Head of Mission for the Netherlands Embassy led to the offer to support a fact-finding mission to the mine action programs in Yemen and Laos. The aim would be to compare and contrast the institutional framework and implementation of mine action programmes in both countries with the intent to draw useful lessons for the programme in Eritrea. These visits would of course need to be agreed by the host programmes but UNDP is involved in the mine action programs in both of these countries so should be able to coordinate and develop a visit program.

## Recommendations

The recommendations made by the Evaluation Team in this report are presented in two parts: the first are responses to specific questions raised in the TOR; for ease of reference the original questions are set out below before each recommendation. The second part is a summary of general recommendations made by the Evaluation Team in this report.

### *Relevance*

- Question: Considering the country context what needs to be done and/or changed to ensure continued relevance of mine action support within the country?
- Recommendation: Mine action support should continue to support the settlement of IDP; other activities should focus on the clearance of highest priority agricultural land in the medium term.
- Recommendation. An expanded strategic working group, including ‘customers’ of mine action services such as the Ministry of Agriculture, will help improve the relevance of mine action in Eritrea and improve communications between stakeholders.

### *Efficiency*

- Question: What actions should be taken by all parties to ensure that national capacity is developed?
- Recommendation: A scoping exercise should be undertaken to establish how much work should be done in support of priority tasks in the medium term, and a needs assessment should be undertaken to determine what is needed in terms of capacity development. Some tasks have already been identified and are set out in this report, but the strength of feeling about previous technical assistance and capacity development means that this will need a more detailed analysis than was possible by this Evaluation Team.

### *Sustainability*

- Question: What steps should be taken by all partners to ensure management and financial sustainability?
- Recommendation: The use of a NEX modality, with UNDP assisting in project design, appraisal and evaluation, is seen as more appropriate for sustained funding in the medium term and will underwrite Eritrean ownership of the program.
- Recommendation: The establishment of an appropriate monitoring and evaluation regime on behalf of the donors, facilitated by the government of Eritrea, will help in confidence building and encourage donor support in the medium term.
- Recommendation. Eventually, the Government of Eritrea will need to take on the support of a sustainable capacity able to deal with residual contamination. An early commitment by the Government of Eritrea to this long term duty will doubtless encourage donor support in the medium term.



### *Summary of recommendations*

The following bullet points are intended to act as a summary of recommendations made in this report for ease of reference.

1. There is a continued need for mine action in Eritrea and stakeholders are encouraged to re-engage to support this process.
2. Any new mine action program should be conducted under a NEX modality; UNDP can be a intermediary for funds but bilateral support may also be possible
3. The size of the requirement should be developed in a transparent and objective manner using a scoping exercise to identify which categories of land should be cleared to make Eritrea 'impact free'. Appeals for donor funding should be focussed on support for these more important areas. An exit strategy for donor funding can also be agreed based on the findings of this scoping study.
4. At the same time, it is appropriate to develop a more sustainable capacity with a size commensurate to the likely size of the residual contamination problem and the ability of the Government of Eritrea to fund it.
5. The existing strategic working group should be expanded to facilitate oversight and national ownership of the mine action program, as well as improving communication between stakeholders
6. The original use of a single project document for UNDP support was unwieldy. Separate project documents should be designed for the different elements of assistance, such as capacity development of the residual capacity, operational support to mine clearance in the mid term, and for victim support. Other project documents can be added as the need arises, and separate project documents can capture specific donor procedural needs.
7. Technical assistance should be focussed and time bound. Whilst there is agreement on the need for a single long-term strategic technical advisor, the provision of other technical assistance for specific capability gaps should be carefully designed using a training needs analysis process to ensure the assistance is demand driven and provides value for money.
8. There is a procedural need to compare the current national technical standards with IMAS to satisfy donor sensibilities about risk and liability. A common-sense, collaborative approach including suitable risk-management approaches should be able to accomplish this without a return to the past confrontations on this issue.
9. Donors will need access to an effective monitoring and evaluation process in order to provide them with a reasonable level of oversight on how their funds are being expended. This monitoring and evaluation process can be done on a periodic basis but the monitors will need the support of the government to allow them to access the work sites.
10. Early 'buy-in' to this re-engagement process by Eritrean officials at the highest level will greatly improve stakeholder confidence and facilitate the development of appeals for new funding by the end of 2008.

## Annex A: Bibliography of Key Documents

Document Name (as provided by UNDP Recovery Unit Asmara)	
1	Monthly MACBP reports
2	Norway Reports 2003 and 2004 & Dutch Reports
3	MACBP 2002 - 2004 document with annexes
4	MACBP staff TOR
5	Proclamation 123/2002 - A Proclamation to Establish the Eritrean Demining Authority
6	National Mine Action Strategic Plan
7	Proclamation 145/2005 - a Proclamation to Determine
8	the administration of Non-Government Organisations
9	EU appraisal of LIS
10	LIS operational closure report to EU
11	Landmine Impact Survey Reports (LIS)
12	Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Eritrean Demining authority (EDA); Eritrean Demining Operations (EDO) and Ministry of Labour Welfare (MLHW)
13	PWC (Price Waterhouse Coopers) report 2004 Dev't of Impact based National Mine Action strategic plan - PWC Mission & for 9C The Socio-economic impact, prioritization & integration
14	MACBP Appraisal 2004
15	Revised MACBP 2002 - 2006 with annexes
16	Equipment inventory
17	Capacity Building Tasks and Schedules
18	Quality Assurance Report of LIS
19	Technical Advisors reply to Quality Assurance Report
20	Right of use documents for equipment
21	Financial Reports
22	MACBP audit report
23	MACBP CD
24	Summary background of the MACBP
25	MACBP Final Report

## Annex B: List of interviewees

Ser	Name	Position	Address	Date
(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)
1	Rita Mazzochi	Ex National program officer in UNDP	UNDP	21/05/08
2	Prof. Techeste Ahderom	Head of Recovery Unit( UNDP)	UNDP	23/05/08
3	Macloed Nyrengo	U N Resident Representative	UNDP	26/05/08
4	Bartholemew Nyariko	Deputy Resident Representative	UNDP	26/05/08
5	Habtom Segid	Deputy General Manager	EDA	27/05/08
6	Arefaine Fessehaye	Head Administration and Finance	EDA	27/05/08
7	Musel tesfatsion	Head/information	EDA	27/05/08
8	Yohennes Embaye	Head of Operations	EDA	27/05/08
9	Ghirmay Teclesenbet	Head mine risk Education	EDA	27/05/08
10	Paul Collinson	Former CTA-EDA	UK	28/05/08
11	Joe Wenkoff	Former senior Technical Advisor-EDA	Canada	28/05/08
12	Moektsi F. Mokati	FAO, Respresntative	FAO	29/05/08
13	Efrem Tecleab	FAO, national program officer	FAO	29/05/08
14	Dr. Wodai futur	Minister, MND	MND	30/05/08
15	Steve McCluskey	Responsible	EC Delegation	2/06/08
16	Mehretab Fessehayes	DG, MLHW	MLHW	3/06/08
17	Goitom Alem	Director, CBR Division	MLHW	3/06/08
18	Kidane Habte	Director, Research & HRD	MLHW	3/06/08
19	Dr. Emma Gori	Director, Italian Cooperation	Asmara	3/06/08
20	Jaber Humed	Director, National Orthopedics Workshop	Adi-Guadad	3/06/08
21	Mr.Bert Ronhaar	Charge d’Affaire, The Netherlands Embassy	Asmara	3/06/08
22	Steve robinson	Head of UNMEE MAC	Addis Ababa	6/06/08

## Annex C. Attendees at presentation of initial findings, 5 June 2008

### Debriefing:

Independent Final Evaluation of the Mine Action Capacity Building Programme  
(2002 – 2005)

Date & time: 05/06/2008 03:00 PM

Venue: UNCT conference room

### List of participants

No	Name	Organization	Signature
1	Rahel H. Slassie	UNDP	Rahel
2	Tibet Araya	UNDP	Tibet
3	Techeste ANDEROM (Prof.)	UNDP/Ressources	Techeste
4	André Fenechaye	EDA / Administration	André
5	YOHANNES EMPAYE	EDA / Operations	Yohannes
6	MUSAEL TEBEZION	EDA / Enforcement	Musael
7	Bartho Nyatso-mamuka	UNDP	Bartho
8	Bartho G. Yeasu	MINU	Bartho
9	Mohamed Tassew	MINU	Mohamed
10	STEPHEN McCLOSKEY	E. COMMISSION	Stephen
11	Machew Nymrogo	UNR	Machew
12	Sports Club	UNDP/Kenya	Sports Club
13	Rita Mamuka		Rita Mamuka
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## Annex D: Collated findings

This section of the report is specifically intended to set out observations relevant to the number of specific questions raised in the TOR.

Ser	Question	Finding	Remarks
<b>Relevance</b> (The extent to which the aid activity is suited to the priorities and policies of the target group, recipient and donor)			
1	<p>Are the stated outcomes and outputs of the Mine Action Capacity Building Programme (MACBP) as developed, revised and implemented during the period 2002 to 2005:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Appropriate considering the particular needs and priorities of Eritrea;</li> <li>• In keeping with international standards, trends, and guidelines including relevant UN and Government policies?</li> </ul>	<p>Partly.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Operational support was prioritised to return of IDP in line with government priorities. However, little or no liaison with other development sectors</li> <li>• Yes, however there is some suggestion that international standards could have been applied more flexibly taking into account the Eritrean context</li> </ul>	For example, no liaison with Ministry of Agriculture or FAO. Agricultural land is a key sector in Eritrea and should have been consulted.
<b>Efficiency</b> (A measure of the outputs - qualitative and quantitative - in relation to the inputs)			
2	Given the circumstances in which the Programme was developed and implemented, were there better options for achieving the stated outcomes and outputs?	Yes. The program could have been split, with separate project documents for the capacity development, operational support and victim support elements. This would have helped managed the risks to the program as a whole	
	To what degree have the stated outcomes and outputs of the Mine Action Capacity Building Programme (MACBP) been realised?	Partially. Some capacity development was achieved and the Landmine impact survey completed. However the program fell short in the expectations of funds it would raise for operational support	
	To what extent have the International and National Technical Advisors been able to develop the capacity of their counterparts in accordance with the agreed Capacity Building Tasks and Schedules?	Partially. Recognition from EDA of a contribution to their management capacity. However some capacity was pre-existing (especially in sense of familiarity with landmines). Information management is apparently still in need of assistance. Similarly, detailed advice on Technical Survey was not provided. The tasks and schedules were vague and not time bound.	
	Where capacity was not developed what were the reasons?	The main reason was that the program ended ahead of schedule, in 2005	
	What structures have been put in place within the executing agency (UNDP), implementing agencies (EDA and MLHW) to support the direct execution modality of the MACBP?	There was a UNDP program officer and the administrative support of UNDP country office was available through the UNDP Recovery Unit.	

	What are the lessons learnt for future direct execution programmes?	The main lesson learned is that the DEX modality was not suitable for operational support, as it implied a UNDP ownership of what was supposed to be a national mine action programme	
	Have the resources of the MACBP been managed in such a way as to meet the requirements of the National mine action institutions?	Not totally in a managerial sense. The expectations of EDA were different to those of the expatriate technical advisors in MACBP. This was exacerbated by the DEX issue described above.	
<b>Effectiveness</b> (A measure of the extent to which an aid activity attains its objectives)			
3	To what extent was the Mine Action Capacity Building Programme (MACBP) considered to be part of the Eritrean Government response to recovery, reconstruction and development needs in the country?	It was not seen in this way. This was largely due to the use of a DEX modality which made it very clear this was a UNDP rather than an Eritrean programme. However EDA was seen as part of the Eritrean government response to these needs	
	Where the structures established by the Government appropriate, in the circumstances, to support the programme? Include lessons learned.	The structures are appropriate in an Eritrean context. However a more detailed scoping exercise would allow confirmation of the optimum size of the implementing capacity.	
	To what extents have the planned outputs of the MACBP been delivered? What contributed to/ inhibited delivery?	The LIS was achieved and some capacity was developed. The two key obstacles were the limited success to mobilise resources and also the early end of the MACBP	
	To what extent was capacity building for mine action considered part of the UNDP CO response to recovery, reconstruction, and development in the country? Where appropriate structures put in place by UNDP CO to support MACBP?	It is not sure that it was seen in this way by all personnel in the UNDP CO. Mine action tended to be seen at this time as an end in itself and was not mainstreamed. A detailed scoping exercise should make the relevance of mine action more apparent. The UNDP CO did provide a program officer to support MACBP	
	In considering the above two questions, consider whether the structures were: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Appropriate;</li> <li>• Adequate - sufficiently supported (i.e. resourced and staffed) by the Government to implement their mandates;</li> <li>• Effective.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• UNDP provision of a program officer was appropriate.</li> <li>• Considering the eventual fate of MACBP it is hard to say that the UNDP support was adequate, but in the heated circumstances of 2005 it is hard to see what else could have been done</li> <li>• The use of a program officer within UNDP CO was effective whilst MACBP was active.</li> </ul>	
	What major policy changes and discussions, relating to mine action, have been taken at the National level and how have these affected the MACBP; how has the MACBP responded?	There were two major changes: the first was the removal of the independent NGO and the formation of a monopoly in EDO. MACBP responded to this by expanding their mandate to include operational support. The second change was an amalgamation of EDA/EDO; MACBP did not have time to react to this before the project was suspended.	

	Have the responses of the MACBP to the events, in the mine action sector in Eritrea, been timely, appropriate? What could have been done differently?	The expansion of the MACBP mandate, whilst agreed by all stakeholders was probably not a good idea as it involved a DEX modality which was appropriate for technical assistance but not for operational support. A NEX modality, supported by an effective monitoring and evaluation capacity, would have been more appropriate. Also, the project should have had different project documents for its different components, such as victim support.	
<b>Impact</b> (the positive and negative changes produced by a development intervention)			
4	What impact did the MACBP program have on the development of the Eritrean mine action program and the landmine/UXO problem in Eritrea (this question was not included in original TOR for this evaluation but included here for completeness in the context of the standard development evaluation criteria)	MACBP did raise funds for operational support, facilitating mine clearance. The LIS also contributed to this process Technical advice was provided though there are suggestions that TA was generic and unfocussed	Most TA tasking was not time bound eg "Advise on the planning preparation and conduct of training" is set down for 2.5 years
<b>Sustainability</b> (whether the benefits of an activity are likely to continue after donor funding has been withdrawn)			
5	<p>Has the MACBP been designed in such a way as to facilitate sustainability? Has implementation been attentive to sustainability considerations?</p> <p>Do the National mine action institutions<sup>17</sup> have the required skills to continue with mine action activities in accordance with accepted international mine action norms and standards?</p> <p>Is there a National strategy in place to ensure long-term sustainability of mine action in Eritrea including budget support out of national resources?</p> <p>What steps should be taken by all partners to ensure management and financial sustainability?</p>	<p>A Eritrean capacity has been developed.</p> <p>Some skill gaps identified by EDA themselves</p> <p>There is a strategic plan however it is ambitious in light of actual resources available</p> <p>Need scoping exercise to make expectations realistic Should divide between long term requirement (to be funded by Eritreans) and a larger medium term effort to deal with acute, high priority requirements</p>	However need to distinguish between capacity development of management and coordination (to which MACBP made greatest contribution) and actual demining, to which MACBP contributed to a certain pre-existing level of skill

<sup>17</sup> 1 above

<b>Accountability</b>				
6		<p>Have the resources of the MACBP been managed in accordance with UNDP financial regulations, rules, policies and procedures that apply to such programmes including such things as ensuring that appropriate processes are in place for such matters as: logistical management of equipment and other assets?</p> <p>Have MACBP resources been managed by concerned<sup>18</sup> parties in accordance with relevant agreements and procedures?</p> <p>Have the resources of the MACBP been managed in compliance with UNDP and donor agreements? And have relevant reports been presented to donors and national partners consistently?</p>	<p>No indication that UNDP contravened its standard procedures for project implementation</p> <p>Progress reports were made to donors (although these seem to have accentuated the positive and not communicated some of the problems)</p> <p>An audit was undertaken at request of Government of Eritrea</p> <p>UNDP continue to monitor the financial management of funds now provided to EDA.</p>	<p>See notes on limitations above in the section on 'Limitations' in Part One of this report</p> <p>There is however no technical monitoring of current mine action activities</p>

<sup>18</sup> UNDP; Eritrean Demining Authority (EDA) and Ministry of Labour and Human Welfare (MLHW)



## Annex E: Financial summary of MACBP

**Table 3: UNDP- MACBP: Summary of project Fund receipts and expenditures**

Ser	Fund flow/Yr	2003	2004	2005	2006	Total-Nkf	Total US\$
(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)	(f)	(g)	(h)
<b>EDA</b>							
1	Funds received	1,877,642	7,145,639	3,147,661	373,994	12,544,936	894,876
2	Total Expenditure	1,403,632	7,399,393	3,347,378	307,141	12,457,544	893,304
3	% Use funds	11%	59%	27%	2%	100%	
<b>MLHW-VA</b>							
4	Funds received	1,327,643	183,565	434,903	-	1,946,111	140,522
5	Total Expenditure	-	522,329	934,358	-	1,456,687	100,838
6	% Use	0%	27%	48%	0%	75%	

**Table 4: Combined Disbursement Report Project fund Disbursement for EDA and VA projects (2003-2006)**

Ser	Project Support/Disburser	Government	UNDP Other UN agencies	Total	% of National
(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)	(f)
1	EDA project	900,702	1,732,699	2,633,401	34%
2	MLHW (Victim assistance project)	100,838	294,963	395,801	25%
3	Total	1,001,540	2,027,662	3,029,202	33%
4	%	33%	67%	100%	

**Table 5: Comparison of Strategic budget and actual fund receipts for Mine action ( in 000 dollars) (based on strategic plan)**

Ser	Fund flow/Yr	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	Total US\$
(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)	(f)	(g)	(h)
1	Strategic Plan Budget	10330	13160	13190	13120	13550	63350
2	Actual Funds received For EDA (2003-05)	2,633	0	0	0		
3	Actual Funds received 2003-05)	396					
4	Total actual fund received	3,029					3,029
5	Financing gap	7,301	13,160	13,190	13,120	13,550	60,321
6	% receipts of strategic budget	29%	NA	NA	NA	NA	29%