Executive Summary

Cambodia’s mine action programme is one of the oldest\(^1\) and largest\(^2\) mine action programmes. The contamination from mines and other Explosive Remnants of War (ERW) has extensively crippled the country’s rural areas and left a reported 64,203\(^3\) casualties (19,903 deaths and 44,300 injured) from 1979 until 2012. Contamination has been found in all of Cambodia’s 24 provinces and municipalities, with three of the most affected provinces being Battambang, Banteay Meanchey and Pailin.

In view of the impact of mines in the country, the Royal Government of Cambodia (RGC) has made mine action a national priority, highlighting its importance for peace and stability, as well as for balanced economic development focused on agriculture. This commitment is demonstrated by the RGC’s unique decision to add a 9th Cambodian Millennium Development Goal (CMDG) related to mine action. The fact that the RCG has placed such a high priority on the issue, and that it is raised in the country’s key development frameworks, has led to the identification of the issue as an area of focus for the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) support to Cambodia through the Country Programme Action Plan (CPAP).

The Cambodia Mine Action and Victim Assistance Authority (CMAAA) was established as the regulatory authority for mine action by the RGC in 2000. CMAA and UNDP established a multi-year project in 2006 called Clearing for Results (2006-2010) to assist the CMAA’s coordination and regulation capacity and to help implement the RGC’s mine and ERW clearance objectives. Given the numerous challenges to be faced during the implementation of the National Mine Action Strategy (2010-2019) and Cambodia’s obligations under the AP Mine Ban Convention, a continuation of this project was requested by the CMAA. Under this new phase of the project, Clearing for Results II (2011-2015), the project’s implementation was carried out by the CMAA directly, with technical support from UNDP. It was partly due to the capacity development gains during the first phase of the project that this national implementation could be realised.

The CFR II project attempts to build on the progress of the first phase of CFR by ensuring its output that: *National structures and mechanisms ensure demining resources are effectively allocated promoting the release of land for productive use by the poor.* By achieving this output, the project aims to contribute to the CPAP outcome of *strengthening national and sub-national capacities to develop a more diversified, sustainable and equitable economy.*

CFR II has been organised around four key deliverables\(^4\) defined by the project as follows:

1. Mine action policy and strategic frameworks ensure most resources are effectively allocated onto national priorities as defined by the local planning processes and maximize the land available for local development.
2. The CMAAA is equipped with the technical and functional capacities required to manage, coordinate, regulate and monitor the sector within an evolving environment.
3. At least 35 sq km of contaminated land mapped through Baseline Survey, cleared and

---

\(^1\) Afghanistan’s mine action programme, established in 1989 is generally considered to be the first, however, humanitarian mine clearance in Cambodia began shortly afterward in 1992.

\(^2\) In 2011-12, Cambodia’s mine action programme, along with Afghanistan’s, Croatia’s and Sri Lanka’s account for 80% of recorded clearance globally according to the estimates of the International Campaign to Ban Landmines Landmine Monitor.

\(^3\) Data from CMAA’s victim database (CMVIS).

\(^4\) A 4th deliverable was added to the project as a temporary measure to support Cambodia’s decision to host the 11th Meeting of States Parties (11MSP) to the Anti-personnel Mine Ban Convention. The objectives under this deliverable were completed with the execution of the 11MSP (28 Nov to 2 Dec, 2011).
released for productive use through local planning and that promote efficiency and transparency. (Demining contracts are to be allocated by the CMAA by using competitive procurement mechanisms).

4. Cambodia successfully presides over the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC) in 2012

This last 4th Deliverable was not included in the Review, due to the fact it was introduced as a temporary element and the objectives under this deliverable were completed with the execution of the 11MSP (28 Nov to 2 Dec, 2011).

As in the case of the first phase of the CFR, a Mid-term Review (MTR) was scheduled to assess the progress of the project and highlight any risks to the full achievement of the project's outputs and overall outcome. The aim of the MTR was to provide “relevant stakeholders and members of the Project Board with an independent mid-term review on the implementation of the CFR II project.”

The following assessment is the realisation of the MTR by an external consultant contracted by UNDP through an international tender, on behalf of the CMAA.

As a result, the various deliverables in the project will be analysed, one by one, to evaluate their contributions to the project output along the following lines:

- relevance in achieving the overall output of the project;
- effectiveness of the activities in generating the deliverable;
- efficiency of the activities carried out;
- impact of the deliverable; and
- sustainability of the deliverable in terms of its contribution to the overall output.

The results of this analysis were used to frame conclusions related to the 11 points of inquiry established by the Terms of Reference (ToR) of the MTR.

Key Findings/Conclusions

Relevance:
Both the support that CFR II provides to national structures and CMAA capacity through deliverables 1 and 2, and the provision of coordinated clearance operations, are extremely relevant to the continued effective release of land for Cambodia’s humanitarian and national development goals. The project is key to ensuring that the NMAS is implemented effectively and efficiently over the coming six to seven years. Good practice in mine action has documented the relevance of strong national structures to ensure that mine action standards for operations remain high and that mine action activities are contributing effectively and efficiently to national policy goals and objectives.

In addition, Deliverable 3 provides efficient mine clearance services to the most mine-affected provinces in Cambodia. This element of the project that provides cleared land to poor mine-affected communities goes to the heart of the project’s outcome of providing a “more diversified, sustainable and equitable economy.” According to fieldwork carried out for the MTR, clearance of land under CFR II provided the beneficiaries of the project important additional resources in the form of the ability to make use of previously unused or partially used land. In some cases beneficiaries gained the ability to grow food for the subsistence of their own family. In other cases clearance of the land promoted new or more productive income generation through the growing of cash crops or the

---

3 See Annex 1 for a description of the external consultant chosen through this competitive process.
4 See Annex 2 for the complete ToR text, with the 11 points found on p.2-3 of the ToR).
5 For a more in-depth discussion of this issue see Vanna M., Study on Enhancing Aid Effectiveness and Harmonization in Mine Action, CRDB/CDC, April 2010.
transportation of goods. In general, clearance was vital in raising the family income beyond subsistence and allowing some accumulation of goods or investment toward future income generation.

**Effectiveness:**
It is clear is that the CFRII has made considerable progress, however, there are a number of areas that need more focused work over the remaining three years of the project, if it is to deliver all the planned outputs and contribute fully to the Country Programme outcome of "National and sub national capacities strengthened to develop more diversified, sustainable and equitable economy" in the way that was planned.

Although much progress has been made in terms of fortifying national structures and contributing to CMAA capacity, the component where these two elements have not advanced is related to the "Coordination" role of a national authority. The CMAA has not yet played an effective role as the key organisation for coordination and planning at the national sector-wide level, despite making progress on a number of fronts. A number of useful coordination mechanisms have been put in place with the support of the CFRII project, such as the Technical Working Group for Mine Action and Technical Reference Groups dealing with a number of mine action activities (such as clearance, survey and MRE). However, the establishment of these structures alone has not allowed the CMAA to consolidate its influence in the sector, which has led to the fact that some operators and certain development partners do not see the CMAA as their primary interlocutor. As a result, processes like the central approval of mine action projects have not achieved the results that were expected. Significant bilateral project development and financing is taking place and the CMAA has not carved out its niche in coordinating this process and verifying that projects in the sector are meeting Cambodia's national goals and objectives for mine action – in particular those identified in the NMAS.

However, where mine clearance operations are concerned (Deliverable 3) it is clear that work being carried out in the heavily-affected provinces of Banteay Meanchey, Battambang and Pailin has effectively contributed to the outputs of the CFRII and its overall output related to the release of land through national mechanisms.

**Efficiency:**
Overall, the efficiency of the CFRII should be judged as very high. In terms of the promotion of effective Coordination and the building of capacity (CFRII Deliverables 1 and 2), the project is working through national government structures where CMAA is increasingly taking charge of the various elements of the project, including the overall management of the project through National Implementation. Cambodian civil servants on national salaries established by the RGC are executing the majority of coordination functions, with expensive international personnel serving as advisors gradually being phased out. Limitations to the efficiency of this model, however, are related to the fact that technically qualified people are not always being recruited and those highly qualified individuals carry a very heavy burden of responsibility for a broad range of activities.

---

8 For the purposes of this Review, the term Coordination will be defined to include the planning function.
9 Some mechanisms have been established for coordination purposes. A functioning technical working group for mine action (TWG-MA) and Technical Reference Groups (TRGs) have been meeting and addressing issues relating to the functioning of the sector.
10 This conclusion is based on interviews with operators and development partners, as well as the analysis of the various coordination structures in place and the objectives and deliverables contained in the CFRII project itself.
11 Coordination, in the context of this MTR has been defined as being the ensemble of functional responsibilities of the coordination body including: regulation, planning, information management, monitoring and resource mobilisation.
12 According to interviews conducted and previous assessments and evaluations, recruitment of technically competent personnel is sometimes limited by the fact that the recruitment is limited to a pool of existing civil servants within the
Regarding the efficiency of clearance efforts, the allocation of clearance services has turned around two key issues: 1) a tendering model that encourages competition between operators; and 2) the implementation of a comprehensive “Land Release” model. Both these elements have aimed to achieve greater efficiency within the sector. Data for land release rates show that efficiency has indeed increased, with rates as low USD 0.19 per meter of land released under the CFR II project. This is a remarkable achievement that no doubt deserves some additional investigation to document lessons learned. It is also important, however, to ensure that as costs are cut, QA/QC activities are guaranteeing the quality of clearance operations and MAPU post clearance monitoring is confirming that land release has indeed been carried out on the areas prioritised by the provincial clearance plan and that this land is being used for the intended purpose.

Impact:
What is clear is that the CFR II has made considerable progress, however, there are a few key areas that need continued work over the remaining three years of the project, if it is to deliver all the planned outputs and have the intended impact. With some key adjustments to the implementation of activities under Deliverables 1 and 2, the complete impact of the project could certainly be achieved by 2015.

A significant impact is now occurring within Deliverable 3 with the clearance of an average of 11.7 km2 during 2011 and 2012 under the CFR II project alone. According to information collected during the most recent Post-Clearance Monitoring Consolidated Report, 93% of land was being used in the aftermath of clearance. This impact will be more precisely documented with the realisation of the CMAA’s joint initiative with the National Institute of Statistics (NIS), but clearing mine-contaminated areas is without question contributing to rural incomes of the poorest groups of subsistence and small land-hold farmers is having a substantial impact. More importantly, this impact is being felt in an area where Cambodia has been having difficulty moving forward—that is, balanced growth that includes rural areas and equity between economic classes. Income gaps are trending to widen as Cambodia’s economic growth accelerates and mine clearance is one of the key areas where this trend is being offset.

In order to capitalise on the considerable investments made in national structures and capacity-building through the CFR II project, some modifications to project activities should be undertaken in areas where gaps have been found. The CMAA’s ability to play the central role it has been given as per Cambodia’s national mine action legislation, is an extremely important factor in terms guaranteeing the long-term quality of the national mine action programme—not only in the area of mine/ERW clearance but in terms of promoting quality in the overall implementation of the NMAS.

Sustainability:
The key aspect of the CFR project is related to its overall outcome, which highlights the need to ensure that “National and sub national capacities are strengthened to develop a more diversified, sustainable and equitable economy”. The intention is that the CMAA will no longer require international assistance in the future and will succeed in effectively managing the mine action sector

government bureaucracy. Equally important is the fact that civil servant salaries are so low that qualified candidates are frequently not willing to work for such salaries.

13 It should be noted that this cost is for land release and not for full clearance of land using manual, mechanical or mine detection dogs. As an efficiency measure, it is limited in terms of effectiveness by the fact that it represents a number of elements working together and not the efficiency of one process.

14 This result is taken from the Post-Clearance Monitoring Consolidated Report, 2012. However it should be noted that the figures obtained in this report are from land cleared in 2010.

15 These two challenges in terms of economic development have been cited explicitly in the 2013 Human Development Report for Cambodia as needing further attention.
autonomously over the medium to long term to ensure maximum impact from mine action activities in terms of economic development. Therefore in order to accomplish a sustainable solution, support to RGC structures that will coordinate mine action efforts autonomously is imperative. These structures remain in need of support, however, with some adjustments to the CFRII project, the project outcome should persist over the long term.

The largest mine clearance capacity in Cambodia is a national capacity. It currently includes both civilian and military elements.16 At the moment the standards of clearance have remained high in the national humanitarian mine action programme (where quality is monitored by CMAAA). CMAC is a professional organisation with internationally-recognised reputation, however, it is impossible to know what other organisations – commercial or NGO – could eventually find their way into the mine clearance component. Without the a strong and functioning CMAAA that ensures accreditation procedures to guarantee professionalism, quality in the sector could be in jeopardy over the long term.

Main Conclusions and Recommendations

- There is no question that the project is promoting both the efficient release of land and supporting local prioritisation mechanisms to ensure that this land has been selected in a transparent manner. However, the absence of key planning documents and policy direction has limited the effectiveness of the project and compromised a strong role for CMAAA as the national coordinating authority.

Recommendations:

a. A sector-wide mine action plan for 2014 should be prepared by the CMAAA, in conjunction with the MAPU process, and in consultation with mine action operators, and development partners. A suggested framework for this process, which works in conjunction with existing coordination mechanisms, has been included in Annexes 9 and 10.

b. An annual concept of operations and plan for the individual components of mine action (mine/ERW clearance, Mine/ERW Risk Education (MRE) and Victim Assistance) should be prepared as part of the overall sector-wide planning process. These component plans should reflect the analysis carried out by stakeholders within each component.

c. The UNDP technical advisors place a priority on support to the planning process and should orient a portion of their work plan to mentoring and facilitating the process for developing and implementing this planning process.

d. All resource mobilisation (by the CMAAA and by operators) should be linked to the sector-wide plan and the CMAAA should lobby development partners to fund projects linked to the sector-wide plan.

- The cost-effectiveness for land release as determined through the calculated price of releasing a square metre of land within the CFRII project (roughly .19/m2 for 2012) is very competitive globally.

---

16 The Cambodia Mine Action Centre (CMAC) is currently the largest civilian mine clearance organisation in Cambodia. The Royal Cambodian Armed Forces (RCAF) conducts clearance for Cambodia's development needs, but unregulated by the CMAAA, and has a Humanitarian clearance arm that does clearance for UN Peacekeeping Missions abroad and under CMAAA contracts in Cambodia.
Recommendations:

a. Data being collected on mine clearance within the mine action database should capture how much time is spent on each methodology of clearance and how much land is released under each methodology, as well as the overall statistic for "land release".

b. Subsequently, expected rates of productivity per method of clearance should be established based on experimental evidence and organisations should be monitored to ensure that they are not proceeding too slow OR too quickly as clearance advances.

c. Standardised productivity reports by method of land release should be developed in order to assist the monitoring process.

- Mine clearance in the targeted provinces of Battambang, Batteay Meanchey and Pailin is unquestionably contributing to the CFRII goal of promoting the release of land for productive use by the poor. The rural poor are, to a great extent, farmers. This direct infusion of income at the grass-roots level is working to maximise family revenues and create a stable and peaceful existence for the rural poor. Unfortunately, PCM data is very slow to be released. This fact can limit the ability to use this data for donor reporting and resource mobilisation.

Recommendations:

a. Regular post-clearance monitoring information regarding land use and the economic impact should be reported by CMAA as soon as possible after the information becomes available – on a quarterly basis if possible. This should be the case not only for clearance carried out as part of the CFRII project, but also for directly-funded clearance.

b. Data collection regarding land use should aim for more detailed information collection on the use of land. For example, if agricultural land has been cleared, what is the crop being grown and what are the yields being achieved by beneficiaries on the land could be included without additional time investments by PCM officers.

c. IMSMA forms should avoid combined categories such as "agriculture and housing" to identify land use. If more than one use is occurring on a given cleared area, PCM officers should ensure that they have estimated the area used for each type of land instead of creating aggregated categories.

- Considerable capacity development has taken place within CMAA. Certain limitations to the effectiveness of the CMAA Capacity Development Plan exist as a result of a lack of focus on institutional or sector-wide capacity issues that were raised in the Capacity Assessment of CMAA and a decrease in motivation on the part of staff whose remuneration was reduced through an end to additional payments through the Priority Operating Cost (POC) system.

Recommendations:

a. Issues of motivation need to be addressed with CMAA staff members that are less engaged since the loss of the Priority Operating Cost (POC) salary incentives formerly paid by the CFRII project (and other UN projects). A system of non-monetary incentives should be explored in an effort to motivate CMAA staff.

b. Staff evaluations should endeavour to document the progress of motivated staff and to address shortfalls in performance with those staff members whose motivation has dropped in the aftermath of POC.

17 The CMAA has made the management decision to transition to the current version of the New Generation of the Information Management System for Mine Action (IMSMA) software. The CMAA has been supported in the set-up and management of this new database by Norwegian Peoples Aid.
c. The Capacity Development Plan should be reviewed and re-focused on developing “coordination” skills for the sector (including planning, leadership and facilitation skills) for CMAA Senior Staff. This focus on coordination and planning should be supported through mentoring by the UNDP Technical Advisory Team.

- The expenditures planned for 2013 to 2015 are significantly in excess of those envisaged in the original CFRRII project document. Some excesses can be justified as a result of the need to carry out CMAA capacity development initiatives and enhancements of the regulation and monitoring structures that prepare the way for their effective and transparent coordination of sector. However, this situation risks alienating future donors to the project and compromising the sustainability of the project over the long term, according to interviews with donors.

**Recommendations:**

a. Spending excesses for Deliverables 1 and 2 within the CFR project should be brought back into line as close as possible for 2014 and 2015.

b. An integrated budget document for the operation of the CMAA should be developed jointly with UNDP and other contributors, such as NPA, so that donors have transparency regarding funding gaps, and a clear picture of the funding levels necessary to ensure sustainability over the long term. This overall budget should include a transparent presentation of spending carried out by UNDP within the framework of the project.

c. Given its growing level of national income, the RGC should increasingly move towards taking charge of the complete budget for costs related to the running of the CMAA.

d. Efforts should be made by CMAA and UNDP project staff to highlight to donors the gains in productivity and in terms of the project's sustainability and impact as a result of investments in Deliverables 1 and 2.

As per the conclusions and recommendations developed in this MTR, a change of direction is needed in terms of fostering a more prominent role for the CMAA in the coordination of the sector. A more pro-active role with regards to leading the existing coordination structures is required for the CMAA to be seen as the key coordination body for mine action in Cambodia. A “Team Approach” to mine action is currently missing in the programme, with several organisations working more individually than as part of an established national vision or joint concept of operations for the country, as well as the authority of a coordination body that ensures that mine action projects are in-keeping with national policies and strategies. In order to reach the full effectiveness, impact and sustainability of the project, the CMAA must take on this enhanced leadership role and succeed in attracting stakeholders to its overall vision.

**Recommendations:**

a. The terms of reference for each type coordination framework should be examined by CMAA/UNDP to ensure that coordination meetings are achieving the desired outcomes.

b. A consultation should be initiated with operators and other stakeholders regarding their expectations from coordination structures, so that meetings can increasingly target the needs of stakeholders from coordination mechanisms.

c. Strategic analysis the current approach to mine action operations should be carried out by CMAA, supported by UNDP, for each component of mine action, with a view to initiating the coordinated planning process with operators and other stakeholders under each component (see suggested structure of planning meetings in Annex 9).

d. Leadership of the planning process should include a request for the key elements of operator projects. These project outlines should be approved by the CMAA as a component of the planning framework (an example of a project outline form is included in