

EVALUATION
of
National Mine Action NGO
Rafidain Demining Organization (RDO)
in
Basra/Iraq

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Duration of assignment: 27 working days

Duration of the Evaluation visit to Basra: 16th June to 23rd June 2008

PROJECT SNAPSHOTS

Project title: Establishment of a National Mine Action NGO in Basra

Overall project period: February 15, 2005 - September 30, 2007

Phase I: February 15, 2005 - September 30, 2006

Phase II: October 1, 2006 – September 30, 2007

Funding sources: US\$ 7,716,244, plus UNDP in-kind contribution

Phase I

US \$ 3,967,730 from the European Commission and the Government of Italy

Equipment with a value of US\$ 500,000 by UNDP Iraq at the initiation of the Project (as in-kind contribution)

Phase II

US\$ 3,195,797 from the Governments of South Korea and Greece through the Iraqi Trust Fund, as well as *US\$ 552,717* from UNDP core funds

Project objective: The project aims to create enabling environment for safer livelihood and income generation activities by needs-based mine action in Basra through the establishment of a community based Iraqi Mine Action NGO based in Basra.

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Project Evaluation

Name of the project: Establishment of a National Mine Action NGO in Basra/Iraq

Mine Action Project Period: 15th February 2005 to 30th September 2007

Objective of this evaluation: The objective of this evaluation is to give UNDP Mine Action, the Danish Demining Group "DDG" (implementing partner), and the Rafidain Demining Group "RDO" (national implementing partner) guidance in regards to the effectiveness and the efficiency of the project, and to see what are the results achieved and expected lessons learned during this period.

Aim of the evaluation: The aim of this evaluation is to improve the accountability to stakeholders and further improve the performance of the established Local Mine Action NGO (Rafidain Demining Organization, RDO) in Basra, southern Iraq.

Evaluation purposes:

This evaluation will serve the following purposes:

1. Improved performance in terms of both "**efficiency**" and "**effectiveness**", when outcomes are achieved, and enhanced interest of people resulting from the project.
2. Enhance accountabilities to the stakeholders (to UNDP and Donors, Directorate of Mine Action - DMA (previously named National Mine Action Authority) and target beneficiaries).

Introduction:

This evaluation is to determine the value and significance of the mine action project implemented in Basra/Iraq, which entails the establishment and development of a Local Demining Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) under the name of Rafidain Demining Organization (RDO).

This evaluation is a collaborative effort with participation with all (possible) stakeholders and will be a benefit - not a burden or hindrance - to those being evaluated. Program or Project managers should therefore respond actively to the recommendations resulting from this evaluation.

This evaluation may look at the design, planning, and implementation phases, and may examine all aspects of the Mine Action Project, including the post implementation outcomes and sustainability of the benefits. This evaluation will form a foundation for regular revisions of the project and develop indicators for the review so as to measure progress against plans.

Executive summary

The Mine Action Local NGO, Rafidain Demining Organization (RDO), is structured in a healthy way with all national staff who conduct mine action activities in collaboration with the technical support of the international technical advisors of DDG, in terms of Battle Area Clearance (BAC) and Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) in Az-Zubayr province/Basra governorate.

RDO has a relatively good office space and facilities in a very well organized base camp in south west of Az-Zubayr district. They also have good operations equipment and demining tools.

The high impact achieved by this mine action project is an obvious sign of UNDP's success in establishing RDO, through land made clear and safe (more than 30 km² cleared and 36,000 different Explosive Remnants of War/ERW items are destroyed) for the communities' livelihood, and through the number of local staff who are employed by the project (71 persons) working directly for RDO and (102 persons) supporting the project by ensuring its security. Thus the total of (173 families) are getting direct benefit from this mine action project, in addition to direct and indirect beneficiaries who benefit from the cleared danger areas.

The impact of this project is generally recognized in the tackled areas from the clearing of grazing and agriculture lands. This is a sustainable impact achieved by RDO.

Danger areas that are tackled so far are contaminated with ERW (including the cluster bomb units and Depleted Uranium items) rather than with landmines. They are selected for tackling through a priority system with selection criteria that is based on a danger area centric system rather than a community/socio-economic needs system due to the jeopardized security circumstances that limit mine action operational areas and also due to the contamination nature of the area (i.e. danger areas contaminated by ERWs). Thus RDO has been, unwillingly, more security and resource driven than needs driven.

However, the way of identifying the beneficiaries of the cleared danger areas is more based on assumptions rather than on a practical measurement, as due to the fact that there is no hand-over of the cleared danger areas, it is not easy to carry out a cost-benefit analysis.

Mine action integrated approach (the five pillars of mine action¹), which is a holistic delivery of mine action activities and services to an identified community, is easily applicable when the task selection criteria is based on socio-economic analysis of the community that is affected by contamination. Hence the integrated approach is, in principal, taken into consideration when starting to tackle a danger area. For example DDG MRE has a community telephone hotline that reports danger incidents and areas contaminated with ERWs to DDG operations manager for further action, but there is no similar implementation of this approach by RDO. What is currently happening is that after receiving a copy of DDG MRE danger area report, RDO operations manager will task survey and clearance teams to address the problem. Therefore here the integrated approach concept is missing in RDO operations.

1 The five pillars of Mine Action are advocacy, victim assistance, mine risk education, demining (survey, marking and clearance of mines and unexploded ordnance) and stockpile destruction.

It is also worth mentioning here that communication between RDO and the Regional Mine Action Center-South (RMAC) is not up to the standard that is required in order to have the proper coordination that should take place for setting up a more effective prioritization system. Therefore there is a lack of understanding of socio-economic assessments, prioritization principles and a mine action integrated approach by RDO's operations management staff.

DDG has done good efforts in developing RDO operational and technical management staff, but has done less when it comes to developing the administration and finance management staff, organizational development, and nationalization.

On the administration and finance management side, there are issues such as lack of knowledge in preparing project proposals and fundraising, also there is no systematic personnel appraisal. Therefore, there is still an apparent need for UNDP's technical support to be provided to improve RDO operations, administration staff skills, finance management, socio-economic assessment, integrated approach, fund raising and preparation of project proposals.

Evaluation Mission Summary:

The evaluation team stayed at the project site (base camp) in Az-Zubayr/Basra for seven days passing through Kuwait, after having a one day brief there from the logistics manager of the Danish Demining Group (DDG), (please see the itinerary in annexes; No. 1).

The evaluators conducted a field visit in order to observe the field activities and assess the management and monitoring capability of RDO operational staff, to their satisfaction.

Criteria of the evaluation;

The criteria set for this evaluation will examine the achievement of the immediate objectives and factors such as relevance, impact and sustainability.

Project Relevancy

In order to examine relevancy it is necessary to see the extent to which the objectives of a mine action intervention are consistent with beneficiaries' requirements, country needs, global priorities, and partner and donor policies.

There is a need in the country and the community for addressing the considerable contamination problem in southern Iraq in order to make the land safe for reconstruction and development. Consistently UNDP has contributed in accordance with the country's needs by supporting the establishment of an Iraqi Mine Action NGO, named Rafidain Deming Organization (RDO), through the Danish Demining Group (DDG), with the capacity of (6) Battle Area Clearance (BAC), (4) Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) teams. To be fully equipped and qualified to undertake clearance activities and support all other Mine Action Activities. So establishing the Mine Action NGO is a part of the relevancy of the UNDP approach.

The Mine Action project in Basra that is supported by UNDP is relevant to the current priorities of southern Iraq's and this is apparent from the high level of concern and commitment already shown by the Iraqi Directorate of Mine Action (DMA), as there are

significant oil and other development projects that need to be started in that geographical area. This is very important for the government and the community.

The local Mine Action NGO (RDO) welcomes any partner that can support them in addressing priorities outlined by the Directorate of Mine Action (DMA), RMAC-S, and local authorities. This is evident when RDO had surveyed Shatt Al-Arab area, situated close to Basra city, in preparation for the next step of establishing demining in the organization. Thus relevancy is noticed here, as addressing the problem in the mentioned area is consistent with the community and beneficiaries' needs.

Project Efficiency

The project efficiency is the measure of how economically resources and input (funds, expertise, time, etc) are converted to results (outcomes and outputs).

- **Project Inputs;**

- Funding from the UNDP, Technical support (training courses, logistical support, providing equipment, and technical advice).

- **Project Outputs;**

- National Mine Action NGO (RDO) that is able to manage and provide clearance services (Battle Area Clearance), explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) with strengthened capacity.
- Staff of the national Mine Action organization are able to raise funds, but need more development training on this issue. The national staff are also able to plan and manage their activities to ensure sustainability of their operations.
- Explosive Remnants of War (ERW) obstacles are cleared and land has been made available for further reconstruction and/ or livelihood activities, but not according to the socio-economic needs of the community.

Looking into the mine action context in the project, the outputs that are achieved from converting the project inputs, shown above, prove the efficiency of the project, taking into consideration the dangerous security circumstances and the nature of contamination of the area. However, there is still room for improvement, in terms of management of the operations or in project management generally.

Within this security constraint, a good resource-use has been achieved by establishing a mutually supportive relationship, and not that of competition, between RDO and DDG and RDO has been able to accomplish good results within the existing frames set by UNDP. For example, DDG trains BAC operators from both DDG and RDO in Basic Demining courses, who would in turn and once trained and experienced in demining methodologies, be returned to RDO.

It is also anticipated that DDG's exit and handover will be much easier when assets and staff are already trained and belong to a national capacity/Mine Action NGO. Therefore, it is clearly seen that DDG is stepping back from direct project management through its staff and is delegating authority to the national staff. However, DDG is keeping an advisory role.

Project Effectiveness

The extent to which the project's objectives were achieved, or are expected to be achieved, taking into consideration their relative value.

Short term Objectives

Ensuring that the mine action NGO can be independent and fully equipped and operational with Four EOD teams, six Battle Area Clearance teams and capable of serving the country in its reconstruction efforts through mine action activities in accordance with International Mine Action Standards (IMAS) with a management structure in place to mobilize resources for its current and future needs requires the following four immediate Development Objectives that are stated in the project document, and clearly state programme outputs; capacity building outputs, operational outputs and Humanitarian and Socio-economic outputs;

- Management structure is established,
- Management capacity is developed,
- Operational capacity is confirmed and capable of functioning independently
- Conditions for socio-economic development are to be improved

The project would have been more effective if the lack of national capacity in mine clearance and demining was addressed earlier and had applied the integrated approach through socio-economic, community needs prioritisation system. The mine clearance capacity building has already been started, through training the current NGO operators, so the integrated approach and priority system based on socio-economic needs of the community can be applied for achieving a more effective mine action project.

Project Impact

Some impacts of the project are positive and/or negative, primary and/or secondary and have long term effects produced by the mine action intervention, directly or indirectly.

A long term effect of this project that has a high impact on the community is supporting the sustainable development of Iraq through eliminating threats to human security and livelihood by establishing a mine action capacity in southern Iraq/Basra (RDO) and supporting the Regional Mine Action Centre (RMAC-South). Moreover, there is another impact of this project to benefit the people of southern Iraq, through creation of employment opportunities, as Iraqis are employed by the National Mine Action NGO therefore supporting their families and contributing to the reconstruction and development of the country.

Another important impact of the project is that existing gaps in coordination with RMAC-South are addressed and the overall capacity of the organization is strengthened, through basic demining courses - already started- in order to prepare for the next stage of mine action activities after the security situation is enhanced.

Instead of duplicating what is already proven to be good within RDO, UNDP has been able to target where added values of its work can be introduced, by trying to maintain a consistent close co-operation at all levels within RMAC-South and DMA, including the UNDP technical advisors.

Project Sustainability

The continuation of benefits from a mine action intervention after major development assistance has been completed.

- ❖ **Is Post Clearance Impact assessment conducted? Beneficiaries and land anticipation.**

The planned project sustainability is partially achieved as the management and operational staff are all Iraqi people, who are trained to address the contamination problem in southern Iraq. However, they still need more technical support.

Land is being freed from ERW contamination and released for the use of the local people, and this is a sustainable impact of the mine action project for the community as people will be able to use the released land for agriculture and grazing which constitute two long-term income sources.

However, the National Mine Action NGO would be a more sustainable project if it was involved in supporting more communities by using the Mine Action integrated approach of the five pillars and socio-economic analysis to prioritize the hazardous areas.

The post clearance impact assessment cannot be conducted at this stage, as a proper hand-over process after a task is completed does not exist because of the security circumstances and due to the weak role of RMAC-South who should be involved in the process. RMAC should be involved in the hand-over of the cleared lands directly and be a witness to the whole process.

An aspect of uncertainty for the local mine action NGO (RDO), is how funding for mine action will be affected by the current security/and political situation.

Safety and Quality

Whether the work was carried out safely and has achieved the required standards of quality for the activity, i.e. Technical Survey, clearance, marking, etc.

The findings, below, under operational and technical and management aspects cover the topics outlined in chapter 4 "deliverables and Main findings" – in the Terms of Reference (ToR) of the evaluation (please see the annexes; No. 4). Each finding that needs improvement includes a recommendation. The most crucial topics, where full attention is required, are outlined below.

Elements of this evaluation:

1. Is Project monitoring and determination of a work plan that is based on the Logical Framework used from the beginning?

DDG is monitoring the operations closely through their Operations Manager- who was not on the scene during the evaluation period- and through technical field advisors, who are keeping the operations on the right track through supporting the national operation/field supervisors. DDG monitoring team is supporting the operations directly so as to make the project as efficient as possible, and that the local field supervisors are keeping the safety of the operations/activities

2. Are Project staff (DDG monitors), given any feedback about the project performance.

It is noticeable that the project is efficient, as the production is quite high according to DDG field reports. The project performance evaluation is applied by the international staff of DDG, as they are still supervising the operations of the local staff. There is a need to create a feedback mechanism for project performance which depends on data

flow from all Iraqi supervisors to the operations management who are supposed to be advised by DDG.

3. Roles and responsibilities of the local staff/Iraqis.

After establishing (RDO) through UNDP support through contracting DDG, the training and development stage was started to prepare the managers and supervisors for the next self running stage.

The delegation of authorities and responsibilities to the local operations staff is already in place, for example the national Operations Manager and field Supervisors, now have local operations management and supervisory staff who are performing the main roles in running field activities, from the tasking stage, through field activities, till task completion. So DDG international staff have done their role efficiently in developing the operations management positions.

As the international administration finance and logistic managers were directly controlling all the related activities, no sign of delegation of authorities could be noticed from the beginning of the project through end of 2007. Starting this year 2008, delegating of responsibilities to the local staff has started in the administration, finance and logistic fields.

4. Project indicators review to measure progress against plans;

The project indicators review is done by DDG, thus there is a good attempt being made at measuring the progress against plans (please see the annexes; No. 5).

5. Timeline monitoring to reduce overdue issues;

Monitoring timelines to avoid issues being overdue is not implemented properly as there is no schedule set up for organizing the process; for example, this is obvious when proposing the plan for a monthly budget, as there is always delay in the response because of misreporting.

It is recommended to have a training session for the head of Administration of RDO so as to familiarize him with the project proposal preparation and submission process.

6. Budget revision in timely fashion;

There are no indications that there is a fixed time period for budget reviews for RDO.

7. Regular project revision W.R.T. contribution of UNDP Mine Action to the overall strategy;

This element is still being done by DDG, and it is noticed that there should be more UNDP direct involvement in project revision; as RDO national managers have limited knowledge about project revisions and drafting an organization strategy.

8. Corrective actions when difficulties arise;

Prompt corrective actions should be taken when difficulties occur on sites by the international supervisors, who should spend more time in the field. So far corrective actions have been made for on - site mistakes and difficulties by DDG supervisors rather than by RDO national operation management staff. This indicates that there should be more development training for RDO national operation managers to make them undertake corrective actions on the site more confidently and logically, i.e. taking the right disciplinary actions for specific mistakes and difficulties such as using common sense in interpreting SOP regulations for a safety breach.

9. Does Mine Action Integrated Approach, exist? And recommendations.

The concept of the integrated approach is present in principal, but the way of applying it should be improved. Presently, the Mine Risk Education teams owned by DDG are getting requests from local people through the Hot Line and investigating them in finding the dangerous area, this is then documented and a copy sent to DDG and RDO operations to address the problem and identify the danger area. There is no mechanism in place to arrange for further integrated activities other than the clearance.

There is no systematic integrated approach implemented for delivering the mine action services to the community, because there is no clear mechanism from MRE reports leading to the general survey and clearance activities.

It is recommended to have an independent MRE team established to be under RDO and to have the operations and MRE staff and managers go through refresher training on the integrated approach and the right way of its application, as there is no formal or systematic knowledge concerning the process.

10. Management; institute and mechanism.

a) Operational Management/technical aspects

Operational Management:

The Operations management department consists of the following staff:

1. Operations manager: manages and controls overall operational activities in the organization and reports to RDO Director.
2. Deputy Operations Manager: who is assisting the operations manager and serving as Training Supervisor.
3. Quality Assurance supervisor: Manages all internal quality control and reports to the operations manager
4. Four field Supervisors: supervising all field activities, Battle Area Clearance (BAC) and Explosive Ordinance Disposal (EOD), and reporting to the operations manager.
5. Survey Supervisor: supervises survey activities and reports to the operations manager.

The clearance and EOD capacity and structure is:

- 6 BAC teams: each team consists of (1x Team Leader, 1x Section Leader, 8x operators, 1x Medic and 2x drivers)
- 4 EOD teams: each team consists of (1x Team Leader, 3x operators, 1x Medic and 1x Driver)

The above capacity is equipped with sufficient operational equipment and tools, and has good offices and facilities.

Survey:

This part, will present the survey structure and what is required to provide sufficient information as part of a risk management process.

The survey capacity in RDO consists of one team and includes one supervisor and three surveyors; the current situation with regards to information gathering seems adequate.

The survey team receives information through DDG MRE team reports, going through the Operations Manager, and leading to the survey of the danger area for further activities, which is either battle area clearance or explosive ordinance disposal. The team then reports back to the Operations for prioritization.

In Az-Zubayr and Safwan cities there is a lot of information available that has been gathered by the Iraqi Landmine Impact Survey (ILIS), the local authority departments, accident and incidents reports, and the local population. DDG Mine Risk Education (MRE) teams are actively seeking information from those sources. But, RMAC-South does not have an internal, even an ad-hoc, general survey capacity to contribute in providing further information regarding the unidentified hazard areas to RDO.

Technical Survey;

As mentioned previously, the technical survey is applied in a deficient way, and it is possible for it to be further improved and applied in the correct way

RDO operations management staff welcomed Evaluation Team's suggestion to use new procedures by developing a technical survey team(s) to undertake this work so as to increase the speed at which new areas are prepared for clearance and for reducing danger areas in order to minimize the mined areas which require full clearance methodologies, UNDP technical survey input and advice are very essential.

Findings and recommendations;

Finding 1: SOPs and Safety

RDO Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) are produced as a result of cooperation and coordination with UNDP and DDG. These SOPs do not relate to risk assessment, but are undertaken in preparation for mine clearance. The Arabic version of SOPs is translated by staff within the NGO by non operational personnel, therefore it needs revision.

The safety procedures are maintained as best as possible and carried out according to the SOPs, and this is done through the dedicated national QA staff that keep very close attention to the safety and quality of work.

Recommendation

Rafidain Demining Organization SOPs, both English and Arabic versions, are to be adjusted to the nature of the operational activities and revised according to International Mine Action Standards (IMAS), also to reflect all the activities that will be implemented within the mine action NGO.

Finding 2: Quality of work

Quality of the clearance is satisfied, in terms of Battle Area Clearance (BAC) and Explosive Ordinance Disposal (EOD) but demining activities (mine clearance) are missing in this project, as the operators are used mainly for the battle area clearance (BAC) drills due to the contaminated nature of the areas in the south. Basic demining courses have just started for the first group of operators to qualify them for future demining activities, and this is a very good move to prepare for the next stage of mine action activities when better security circumstances and more community needs based priority system allows it.

Finding 3: Reporting of activities

The reporting forms that are used for different mine action activities are in IMSMA formats, which is really good, but the overall process of reporting activities is not up to the required level, and no figures were recorded for the current operations. Thus the operations brief and presentation were not sufficient. All the activities and field information and data are not documented or recorded in an organized way, for example, when a list of the operational areas and cleared danger areas in the vicinities and cities was requested it could not be produced because there was no documented data available.

Recommendation

Training sessions are needed for the operations management staff, so as to improve their reporting ability and systemize the documentation and reporting process of all data of mine action activities.

Finding 4: Security of data and software

There is no protection system for the software and data of the mine action project, and it is easy for hackers to interrupt and disturb e-mailing and internet networks, consequently security integrity is not guaranteed and a breach is very likely to happen. This needs urgent attention.

Recommendation

It is recommended to establish a regular protection system for the software and internet networks; changing domains and passwords systematically in addition to any other necessary precautions that is found relevant by professionals in this field.

Finding 5: Operational planning and tasking

Operational planning and tasking is conducted through survey reports. After receiving a copy of DDG MRE report of a local area request for clearance, RDO operations manager then will task a survey team to conduct a general survey of the danger area and report back to operations. Once the survey report is received, operations manager, who is directly involved in prioritizing the task through the priority system that is in place, and managing all other field activities, will task a clearance team to start the task.

The priority system is sequenced, in order as follows:

1. Where a Mine/UXO accidents has occurred in the danger area
2. In inhabited and agricultural areas
3. Development area/infrastructure
4. Abandoned living areas

All planning and tasking jobs are done and controlled by RDO operations manager, and there is no staff who can analyze the survey reports and contribute to the prioritization of the tasks, and focus on a prioritisation system. As shown above, the priority system is used to address family needs rather than the community needs, and there is no infrastructure danger area tackled so far.

Recommendation

As there will be changes in field activities and demining activities will be introduced in future tasks, it is recommended that one qualified operations staff is trained to serve as the planning officer or to be a planning associate to RDO's operations manager. This person will be the one who deals with the survey and prioritisation system. This will give more time to the operations manager to focus on other field activities. The suggested planning staff will have to look at the community needs approach in the prioritisation system for better project impact.

Finding 6: Sketching/mapping of the Danger Areas

It is noticed that all the danger areas that are surveyed and sketched are squared shapes of (100 x 100 m) area, because the survey teams are considering the 100m radius around the ERW and drawing a square out of the circle as the boundary of the danger area, then no other survey will be conducted prior to the clearance. So no danger area polygons are available in the survey reports, they are all four sided shapes, either square or rectangle shapes.

At RDO operations this survey is called a general survey, which is a deficient kind of Technical Survey, as they are identifying the danger area with the danger items (ERW) in the middle and sketch the rectangle/or the square shape, then clearance activities will commence after this survey with no other operational planning.

Recommendation;

As a part of future task planning, drawing sub-polygons within the task should be considered, as now they are making square/rectangle shapes for the danger areas. Mapping of what part of the task would be most likely to contain mine/ERW contamination, where to deploy BAC team could be better included in planning.

Refresher training for the survey capacity, so as to clarify all kinds of survey that would be utilized in the mine action activities; this will enable them to sketch and map the danger areas more properly and helps operational planning. Technical survey is to be clarified and conducted in the correct and efficient way, so as to plan for the future activities after the "general" survey activity.

Finding 7: Field Activities

Field operational activities, from clearance through conducting demolitions, are relatively good, with the entire on-site requirements in place and proper equipments and full national staff available for supervision and monitoring. International technical advisors are playing a supervisory role behind the local supervisors and advisory roles in operational sites, which is the right approach to make RDO able and independent.

Finding 8: Socio-economic analysis and role of RMAC-South

The Socio-economic analysis has not been used efficiently to identify a selection criteria for setting a prioritization system for addressing contamination as there is no policy making body involved. This is the responsibility of the Regional Mine Action Centre (RMAC-South), as they need to contribute to the identification of community needs through a socio-economic analysis and to decide on what areas to be tackled first. The jeopardized security situation was another factor to cease the use of the socio-economic analysis.

It is fair to say that UNDP is trying its best, through the national mine action liaison person in Basra, to strengthen the relationship and communication channels between

RDO and RMAC-South so as to pave the way for coordination of mine action activities including the hand-over of the cleared lands to the community.

As there is no way in this project to compare the cost of clearance of a minefield with the benefit to its beneficiaries, (Cost/Benefit analysis), then the cost has to be minimized so as to have an efficient project. This project does not have an easy way to measure beneficiaries or the benefit they received as there is no hand-over process after the task is completed. So, practically no post clearance impact assessment can be done and no statistics of beneficiaries can be documented or recorded before handing-over the cleared land. Thus the only way possible to identify beneficiaries is through estimations of the information that is gathered from the survey and through DDG MRE reports.

Recommendation;

It is strongly recommended to establish better communications with the RMAC-south so as to plan all mine action activities according to the community needs by using the socio-economic analysis, and start handing over of the cleared danger areas to the community to have better project impact and effectiveness, and to conduct the post clearance impact assessment. This communication enhancement and proper coordination by RMAC-South will happen when they will have a clear TOR form DMA through UNDP's support, also through assigning focal points from RDO and DDG to deal directly with RMAC.

For the near future of mine action planning, it is recommended to arrange a training session for RDO managers so as to clarify and practice the use of the socio-economic analysis in developing the right selection criteria for setting a priority system. By this the cost/benefit ratio would be minimized and the number of beneficiaries will be higher and more measurable.

Finding 9: Training capacity

The training capacity consists of Language, Computer and Technical training sections and is established by DDG for training purposes. (see annexes; No. 2).

Opening the training wing is a very smart idea in this stage of the mine action project, as it was really needed to develop the English language and computer skills of the mine action staff so as to facilitate their understanding of IMAS and to update their knowledge of the new mine action techniques. Also training the current operators on basic demining drills is vital because in the near future tasks will include minefields, unlike the current situation where all of the tasks that are tackled are Battle Area Clearance and Explosive Ordinance Disposal tasks.

Finding 10: Quality Control/Assurance:

The internal quality assurance process is good and implemented by dedicated national staff who are keeping to the safety procedures and regulations and prevent the field staff and operators from committing safety breaches and negligence of SOPs.

Recommendation:

As the Quality Assurance (QA) is a very vital component of the mine action capacity, as it is the only body that keeps the mine action activities on the right track and according to SOPs, more power and support from the decision makers in the organization is

needed. It is recommended that QA be under international direct control so as to avoid any security inconvenience.

Prompt corrective actions are to be taken when mistakes occur on sites by the international supervisors, who should spend more time in the field.

Finding 11: Communications

The current communication between RDO and other governmental departments does not lead to coordination of activities. The official governmental departments and directorates have very limited knowledge about Mine Action and RDO activities, so they need to know more in order to reach a phase where understanding and coordination of activities is possible to happen. This arrangement is the role that RMAC-South should play, which has just started and resulted in a request from the Agriculture Department of Basra to address a contamination problem in agricultural lands in Shatt Al-Arab area close to Basra city. RDO started to investigate the issue so as to address it.

The communication devices of RDO are functioning and properly for operations, except for some of the handset radio whose batteries need to be changed, and for some handsets whose batteries have been replaced recently and that need to be reprogrammed. Each vehicle is equipped with a Codan and a VHF radio base station, and every field supervisor has a mobile phone in addition to his handset radio.

Mine Risk Education (MRE), DDG:

There are four DDG MRE teams with each team consisting of three instructors and one driver, supervised by a national MRE Supervisor, who plans MRE activities, and receives requests from local people through the hot line mobile telephone number. The supervisor then tasks the MRE teams to investigate those danger areas according to the following priority system in series, then report back to DDG Operations Manager:

Priority 1: Danger areas where mine accidents have occurred in the last two years.

Priority 2: Danger areas that contain the most number of ERW items.

Priority 3: Danger areas that used to be grazing land.

Priority 4: Danger area that used to be agricultural land.

Priority 5: Hotline requests.

DDG MRE teams also gather information about mine victims, thus it is easy to notice that the number of mine accidents and victims have decreased relatively for the last three years since MRE courses have been provided to the communities at Az-Zubayr area.

After investigating the requests and danger areas, the MRE team will report to the Supervisor, who will submit the report to DDG international operations manager and forward a copy to RDO operations manager.

b) Logistics, Administrative and Financial Management Aspects;

Finding 12: Logistic Management

- DDG logistic management shows outstanding professionalism in handling logistics operation requirements, with very good ability to compensate and support during the absence of other members of the top management team. Starting from 2008 a new stage has begun where the involvements of local logistics staff in planning and decision making have increased.
- Evaluators noted the differences in recording and archive systems including format system between the internationals and the nationals.

Recommendation:

It is recommended to create a systematic and regular inventory system in one format, to be used by both national and international logistics staff.

Finding 13: Administration and Financial Management

- This department should be run by: Head of Administration And Finance Manager, Deputy Administration and Finance Manager (currently not in practice), and a Finance Officer.
- Board of Directors / steering board (last meeting held on Feb 2008 with the absence of 5th figure)
 1. RDO Director- CEO
 2. Administrations and finance manager.
 3. Walid Khalid – Legal Advisor
 4. Imad A. Khadhim- Honorary member.
 5. Nabil Albert- member at large (not attending)
- Regular Meeting of the Board of Directors (Steering Board) of RDO are very rare. Three of the members are from outside the organization and two of them are non functional; one of the two is not attending any meeting. The mechanism of setting and practicing the management institutional framework is vague.
- Deputy Admin/Finance Manager post does not function in spite of its existence in the structure.
- Internal QA/QC post is not in the structure, meanwhile an officer is practicing QA function within the operation department.
- Financial staff trained by former international Admin/Finance Manager. Under DDG monitoring with no space for capacity building toward independent function, the current DDG. Admin/Finance Manager is doing a fine job of starting up a capacity building to local financial staff of both DDG and RDO.
- Budget is controlled via an electronic cash-book.
- Currency flow to RDO recently is only through DDG because of difficulties made up by the Kuwaiti government to make it difficult for Iraqis to enter into Kuwait regardless of their titles or positions. All bank account and money transfers are made through Kuwait. This is a difficult mechanism.
- The International finance person is to simplify the tutoring techniques of the financial procedures enabling local staff to digests and implement properly.

- Performance evaluation and appraisal sequence is not adopted, neither motivation tools nor promotion incentives.
- Recruitment, interview panels, promotion/and or recommendation are not available as a procedure.
- Although procedures of RDO are copied from DDG in administrative, financial and operational aspects, still there are sort of misunderstanding in the implementation, i.e.:
- Strategic planning documentation needs to be clarified.
- Capacity Building Approach has noticeably started from the very early days in technical and operational sides, unlike administration, financial and logistic issues which seem to have started building the national capacity recently with the new DDG Admin/Finance and Log. Managers, i.e.:
 1. Development of documentation system for inventory
 2. Developed of fuel control sheet and trip tickets for all vehicles
 3. Systematic control over the usage of vehicles
 4. Purchasing through a committee by bidding process (working on identifying a purchasing committee).
 5. Concentrating on maintaining, repairing, and replacing the essential elements (power supply, water purifying station , and vehicles)
 6. Equipment and instruments, spare parts stock) quality approval for each stage and subject.

Recommendations:

- Common understanding needs to take place in reporting advanced requests.
- Specific narrative guidelines and procedures have to be followed.
- Fresh start for a systematic program budget revision is to be done.
- Purchasing policy to be specified through a purchasing committee which is preferable to be established out of the financial department and should be subject to auditing.
- Budget/project proposals need to be according to a standard format approved by the donor to avoid delay or rejection.
- Even and fair leave policy needs to be drawn and adopted.
- Adopting a merit based system regarding employment and promotion policy and practicing evaluation of performance in all leading positions in the organization.

11.Are Security measures, enabled, effective and efficient in Mine Action activities??

Security

The security of mine action NGO is managed by ARCTIC RESPONSE, a Canadian Security Company that is fully nationalized except for one single international security expert. The security team that consists of 100 personnel is doing a great job, in terms of guarding procedures and security arrangements for the field. It is a relatively good asset to enable the mine action activities to continue efficiently. The security team is

conducting overall security assessment of the danger areas that is proposed for mine action activities.

All the security staff that is recruited by the international company are from close areas, this has an advantage of having a good impact for the community's livelihood, but has a disadvantage of leaking security information to dangerous entities such as militias. This could be bad impact for the whole project performance.

12. Are DDG and RDO working to reach out to stakeholders, and coordination with RMAC-South?

The evaluation team noticed clearly that RDO are doing their best to meet the stakeholder's interests, such as taking the local clearance and aid request via the hot line to DDG phone number into consideration in clearing the agricultural/grazing areas for their livelihood.

The coordination between RDO/DDG and RMAC-South is almost missing, which caused hiccups in handing over the cleared danger areas to the communities and in socio-economic assessments for setting a priority system; the reason for this is the disinterest of RMAC-South lack of communication for coordination with RDO and DDG.

It is clear that RMAC-South does not have a clear Terms of Reference (TOR) to identify the duties and responsibilities of their staff, so the evaluation team suggests setting a clear TOR for the RMAC-South staff and RDO/DDG key staff roles that will have to communicate with RMAC for proper coordination.

Explosives handling, storing, base camp and facilities:

❖ Explosives:

Explosives are stored in the same base camp that contains RDO offices and facilities, in a proper place with good protection arrangements. The delivery of explosives to the field supervisors for demolitions is under direct control of the National Operations Manager on daily basis, and DDG International Operations Manager has access to the explosives store. The explosives transportation to the field is occurring in a very good manner; placing the TNT, Detonation Cord, Safety Fuse and Detonators inside separate wooden boxes loaded in an open truck with no VHF radio waves for the safety of the explosives. Once the demolition is conducted, the quantity of the explosives that used will be recorded and the remaining part will be returned and entered to the explosives store in the base camp same day.

❖ Base camp and facilities

The office space and all other facilities of the mine action NGO are situated in a base camp, which was previously a farm house, with some prefabricated houses put in the building place for offices and accommodation. It is located in south west of Az-Zubayr town in a flat area, and fenced with sand bags and barbed wires for security purposes with guards on each corner of the camp. Two gates are used for entrance and exit, under very firm security check. The camp compositions are the following:

- Management offices of RDO and DDG in one block,
- DDG Training wing which consists of three sections: Operational, Language and Computer Training sections.

- Accommodation for DDG international staff
- Stores blocks; two store blocks, one block for the explosives and operational equipment, and another one for support equipment (like vehicle spare parts, camp maintenance requirements, .. etc)
- Well and water purifying station
- Maintenance and car repairing block.

Debriefing the involved staff of the project in the evaluation

Evaluators have offered a de-briefing to all the mine action project staff that were involved in the evaluation at the last day in Basra for the following topics:

- Objectives of the evaluation,
- Issues addressed,
- Discussion of the recommendations,
- Assessment of key findings and what needs to be done and how it is to be carried out to be more effective.

Lessons Learnt

- There has been one mine accident since the establishment of the National Mine Action NGO, where two personnel were involved. One field supervisor has passed away and one operator got injured. The accident was investigated, but the result of the investigation has not been disseminated to the related operational staff so as to have a lesson learnt. This affects the efficiency of the project. Dissemination of information for the staff is crucial to prevent repeating the mistakes that would affect the project efficiency and effectiveness.
- Lack of coordination and communication between RDO and RMAC-South, which contributed to decreasing the project impact and effectiveness has to be taken into consideration as soon as possible.
- Lack of staff motivation and personnel appraisal caused deficient planning for development training and promotion.
- Recruitment process (family related staff) is a potential threat for the project as it causes decreasing efficiency and lack of discipline.
- Mine Action NGO needs to have resources and implement activities related to the mine action approach of the 5 pillars rather than only the demining and clearance one. Presently, RDO is implementing clearance and DDG is the one conducting MRE activities in a resource and security driven method, therefore the community needs approach is to be introduced in the forthcoming operational system.

Conclusion

UNDP has built RDO in Basra-Southern Iraq and structured it in a successful way by having all the necessary capacities; in terms of management and field operations staff for implementing the clearance activities (please see annexes/No. 3).

RDO is fully nationalized and capable of functioning by itself, and implementing clearance activities in collaboration with DDG mine risk education teams. However it is advised for the future independence and sustainability of RDO to have their own MRE teams.

International support for development and field supervision is provided to RDO by DDG, through technical advisors, in a proper way as they have been providing advice that have led to maintaining work confidence of the operational staff of RDO by monitoring and keeping continuous quality check/internal Quality Assurance. A Basic Demining course is on going for RDO operators conducted by DDG, which is good development training for RDO operational field staff so as to be ready for mine clearance activity in addition to the current battle area clearance and explosive ordinance disposal activities.

There are some minor concerns about the way of carrying out the work, but they do not affect the independency of the national mine action NGO. The following development training is needed to improve the operations department's efficiency and will contribute to better project impact:

- Full training session on the mine action integrated approach and the way to apply it in the area.
- Development training for enhancing the Technical Survey application and reporting mine action activities.

How to hand over the reduced or cleared danger areas to the community is a key challenge and should be a major point for further attention from both UNDP and DDG technical advisors in their future assistance to RDO.

Although the field performance witnessed by the Evaluation Team was good, comments were made about mapping, conducting the survey and lack of permanent marking activity. RDO operations manager and field supervisors were briefed about the comments at the de-briefing meeting of the last day of the evaluation.

The selection criteria for setting the priority system are based on the minefield/danger area centric system, and the self-tasking principle is applied to use the mine action assets as efficiently as possible.

Recommendations are made to support and further strengthen the national mine action capacities in mine action planning, by management development training and technical advisory sessions.

It is vital to establish better and stronger communication and coordination with the RMAC-South, by clarifying the roles and responsibilities for RMAC and RDO from prioritization, through clearance, and handing-over process to the communities. Thus the project will have a better impact to the community and post clearance impact assessment will be possible to conduct.

For the administration and finance sections; both of them are managed by the administration and finance manager. This section does not have a proper administrative mechanism for personnel evaluation and promotion, and also the fund-raising here was found to be an issue i.e. "who should manage the fund raising aspect of the project in RDO?" This needs to be addressed.

So it is recommended to have further action for this section in the following fields:

- Creation of a mechanism for staff/personnel appraisals and personnel evaluation as to be a basis and criteria for staff development, motivation and promotion credibility.
- Full training session on fund raising and preparation of project proposals.

The family member recruitment could become a threat for the NGO if not avoided in future recruitments, as it does exist in the current organization set up and has created some incidents when promotions and nominating unsuitable training candidates took place. Another factor that contributes to this issue is the lack of any periodic staff appraisal and/or personnel evaluation process in the management system of the organization, so there are no clear criteria for promotion and development.

Also close monitoring is required when starting implementation of new changes resulting from a provided training course or session, so as to ensure proper creation of the recommended mechanisms in both operations and administrative managements.

The way forward

The national implementing partner (RDO) needs UNDP's technical and managerial support and advice so as to be more effective and ready for future challenges, in terms of fundraising and running the organization on their own. The operations manager does not have enough knowledge about mine action Integrated Approach and socio-economic analysis for identifying the selection criteria

RDO staying as an NGO is the future scenario that is desired by RDO national staff, as this will retain donors' interest to support their organization and the national staff will have an international cover, in the form of Technical Advisors, to take disciplinary actions and decisions without feeling threatened. Previously incidents have happened where operators have made some threats against the RDO operations manager when he attempted to discipline them with fines.

Remaining as an NGO but with MRE capacity added to it, is desired by the evaluators for the next 2 years as this will give enough time to RDO to feel safer under the international cover of (UNDP or DDG presence) and become totally mature.

Adding MRE teams to RDO clearance capacity is very important to plan for, thus RDO will be a more proper mine action NGO and can apply the mine action integrated approach easier, and also will have a more effective priority system for assessing community needs before addressing the mine impact problem.

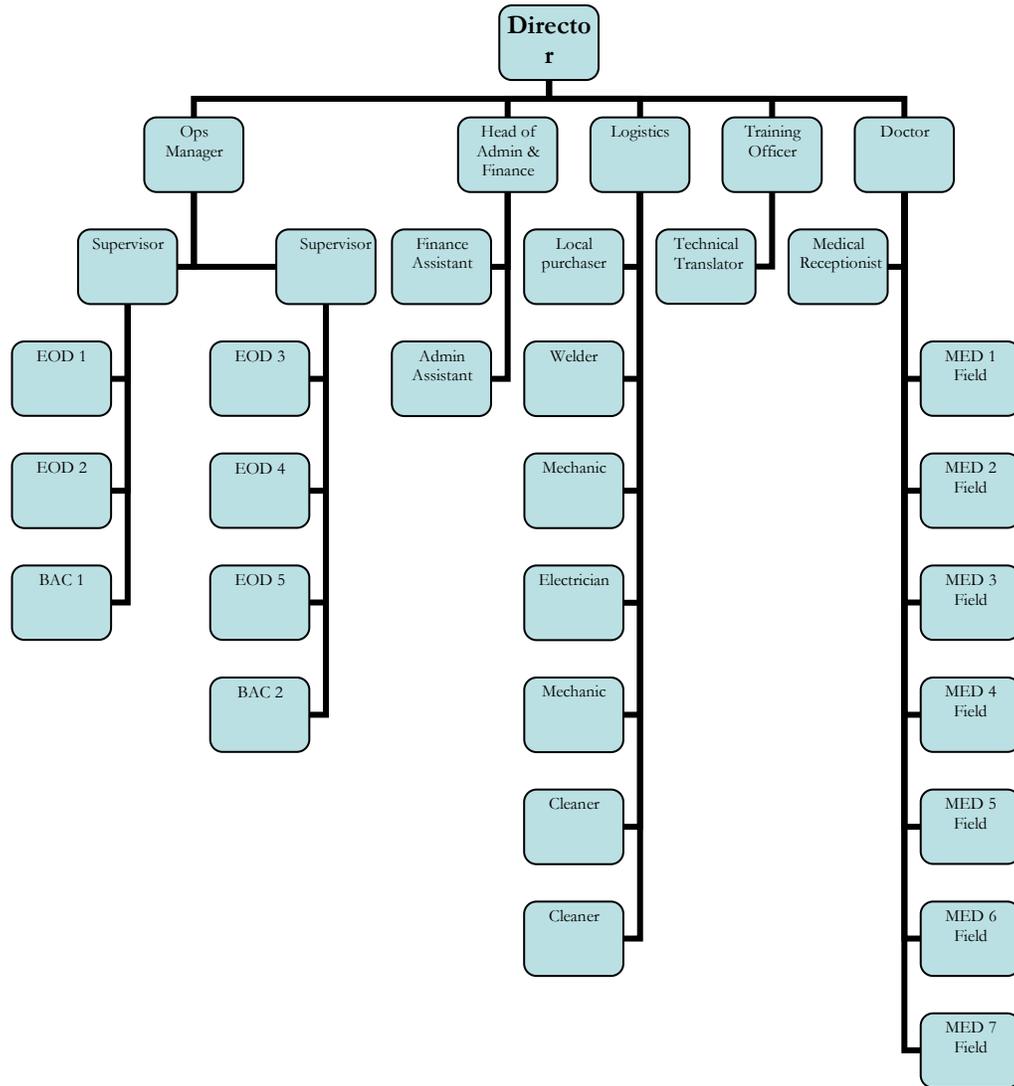
Annexes

1. ITINERARY FOR THE EVALUATION TEAM

| Date | Location | Activity | Time | Remarks |
|-----------------------|-----------------|---|--|---|
| 16 th June | Kuwait | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Check in Corniche Hotel meeting with DDG Logistics Manager | 1545 1800 - 1930 | Patrick Noonan, DDG Logistics Manager |
| 17 th June | Az-Zubayr/Basra | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Left Kuwait for Basra Arrived in Az-Zubayr Meeting with RDO Director Lunch and Break Meeting with DDG Log. Manager and Technical Advisor (TA) | 0930 1230 1230 - 1330 1330 - 1600 1600 - 1845 | Alaa A. Majeed, RDO Director Magnus Bandholtz, DDG TA |
| 18 th June | Az-Zubayr/Basra | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meeting with DDG Admin/Finance manager Meeting with the security Manager Lunch Meeting with RDO Operations Manager | 0900 - 1015 1100 - 1230 1300 - 1400 1430 - 1745 | James William, Canadian Security Co. Shaker Khalil, RDO Ops Manager |
| 19 th June | Az-Zubayr/Basra | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Site visit Meeting with RDO logistic officers Meeting with DDG MRE Supervisor Lunch Meeting with RDO Training Officer Meeting with RDO Admin/Finance Manager | 0645 - 0915 0930 - 1100 1100 - 1315 1315 - 1345 1345 - 1445 1500 - 1730 | Baha'a and A.Atheem, RDO log. Officers Hussam Fallah, DDG MRE Supervisor Muhammed Qasm, RDO Trg. Officer Adnan, RDO admin/Fin. Manager |
| 20 th June | Az-Zubayr/Basra | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mission review Lunch Field camp tour | 0900 - 1300 1300 - 1400 1430 - 1730 | Field camp tour with Patrick/DDG Log. Manager |
| 21 st June | Az-Zubayr/Basra | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meeting with RDO QA Supervisor Continue meeting with RDO Admin/Fin. Manager Lunch QA documents review | 0900 - 1215 1215 - 1300 1300 - 1400 1400 - 1630 | Haitham Fattah, RDO QA Supervisor |

| | | | | |
|-----------------------|------------------------------|--|--|---|
| 22 nd June | Az-Zubayr/Basra | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting with RDO Language Training Officer and DDG Computer lab officer • Training wing tour • Lunch • General/debrief meeting and interview with Survey Supervisor | 0900 – 1210 1210 – 1300 1300 – 1400 1400 - 1730 | Tha'air Abdul-Khaliq, DDG Computer lab Officer Nidhal Hadi, RDO Language Trg. Officer Met the basic deminers course students General meeting with everybody. |
| 23 rd June | Az-Zubayr/Basra Amman | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue meeting with RDO Admin/Fin Manager • Leaving Az-Zubayr for the Basra International Airport • Leaving Basra for Amman and arrived in Amman | 0900 – 1000 1020 – 1115 1230 - 1730 | |

2. RDO Organization Diagram



3. List of staff involved in the Evaluation

| Ser. | Name | Department/ Sec. | Organization |
|-------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1 | Patrick Noonan | Logistics manager | DDG |
| 2 | Magnus Bandholtz | Technical Advisor | DDG |
| 3 | Lune Sondergaard | Finance Manager | DDG |
| 4 | James Hodson | Security Advisor | ARCITIC RESPONSE,Canada |
| 5 | Ala'a Abdul-Majeed Muhammad | Director | RDO |
| 6 | Adnan Abdullah Najim | Admin and Finance Manager | RDO |
| 7 | Shaker Khalil Ibrahim | Operations Manager | RDO |
| 8 | Haithem Fatah Lafta | QA Supervisor | RDO |
| 9 | Hussam Falah Atia | MRE Supervisor | DDG |
| 10 | Tha'air Abdul-Khaliq | Computer Training Teacher | DDG |
| 11 | Nidhal Hadi | English Language Training Teacher | RDO |
| 12 | Naeem Hussain Ali | Survey Supervisor | RDO |
| 13 | Baha Abdul-Majeed Muhammad | Logistic Officer | RDO |
| 14 | Abdul-Adheem Hussain Alwan | Logistic Officer | RDO |
| 15 | Qais Abood | Field Supervisor | RDO |
| 16 | Hameed Abdul-Samad | Field Supervisor | RDO |

END