

# **Policy for Sida's Support for Mine Operations**



**Sida**

SWEDISH INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT  
COOPERATION AGENCY

Department for cooperation with  
Non-Governmental organisations and  
Humanitarian Assistance  
and Conflict Management



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## Background

The human suffering and the impediments to development resulting from anti-personnel mines and unexploded ammunition were first given serious attention at the end of the 1980s. A strong international movement was formed to stop the manufacture, trade and distribution of anti-personnel mines.

Some 70 countries are judged to be affected in one way or another by problems with mines, of which 15 are very seriously affected. The most severely affected are poor countries that have endured long wars and lack the capacity to deal with the problem. In the 1990s, donors allocated a large amount of resources for humanitarian mine clearance and other related activities. At the same time, successful efforts at the international level led to the prohibition of anti-personnel mines in the Ottawa Convention of 1997. The Convention prohibits the use, storage, production and distribution of antipersonnel mines and contains a decree for the destruction of existing stocks of mines. However, the Convention for Certain Conventional Weapons (CWW), Protocol II, of 1980, also contains rules that regulate the use of antipersonnel mines.

According to the "International Campaign To Ban Landmines" (ICBL), Sweden was the fourth largest donor in the world from 1991 to 2000 where support for humanitarian mine clearance is concerned. Swedish support has primarily been provided through four channels: the UN system for mine clearance and building up national capacity; NGOs for the implementation of projects; the Swedish Armed Forces for the implementation of a mine dog project in Cambodia; and the Swedish National Rescue Services Agency for quality assurance and coordination in Kosovo. Recipients of Swedish support are countries with considerable problems with mines. Several of these countries are also recipients of other types of support from Sida.

Sida's experience has recently been presented in a paper: *Preliminary report and analysis of Swedish support for different forms of mine action and a preliminary policy for future support* (SEKA, 2000-02787/10), and in an evaluation: *Sida's Contribution to Humanitarian Mine Action* (Andersson, Harpviken, Millard, Hjellman, Strand) *Sida Evaluation 01/06*. These documents, together with international studies and reviews, present a number of general conclusions drawn from ten years' experience of humanitarian mine action.

It can be stated that, during the 1990s, the mine problem developed into a new responsibility for the donor community and there were no given structures for taking action in the area. Activities were therefore implemented by a small number of specialists and had little connection with other forms of development cooperation. As a result, the technical aspects of mine activities have dominated at the expense of coordination and integration with forms of

support. Few comprehensive analyses and evaluations of needs and effects of mine clearance and other activities in the field have been made. In many ways, mine clearance was an isolated activity in development cooperation in which, in principle, the responsibility was handed over to the technical specialists.

Conditions for mine clearance have changed since the beginning of the 1990s and knowledge of the extent of the mines problem is much greater today than it was ten years ago. As programmes of mine clearance have been implemented in the countries affected, the problems have decreased and the frequency of injuries has diminished. However, the problem is far from solved and resources should be allocated to get the mine problem under control in the most severely affected countries. This can be done within a ten-year period, even if it will take many decades to finally solve the problem. Therefore, in its international work and in the networks in which it participates, Sida should ensure that the urgency of the mine problem is still given priority, not merely in Sweden but also in other countries. Naturally, extensive conflicts can change this picture, but the end of the Cold War, the Convention for Certain Conventional Weapons of 1980, and the Ottawa Convention have had the effect that less use will be made of anti-personnel mines in future conflicts.

In many countries the mines issue should no longer be defined as an acute humanitarian problem but rather as a rehabilitation and development problem after a conflict. It must be tackled with methods that have the aim of building up the capacity of the country in the mine sector, where priorities would be made and resources allocated in relation to other social needs. This broader approach should not, however, prevent rapid action in a humanitarian emergency, but makes it necessary to have specific guidelines for future Swedish support for humanitarian mine action.

The aim of this document is to define the focus of Sida's future support for programmes of humanitarian mine action. Below, a number of basic principles are laid down that are intended to provide support for Sida's administration and for Sida's partners in cooperation. The guidelines shall form the basis of Sida's dialogue with other parties and provide guidance for coordination with other donors.

## Definitions

In the field that is called humanitarian mine clearance, there is some confusion where concepts are concerned. The concept "humanitarian mine clearance" was primarily devised to separate the activity from military mine clearance. Primarily there are the following concepts and classifications:

*"Mine action"* includes *all* activities that are connected with eliminating the threat of mines and unexploded ammunition, the destruction of stockpiles of mines, international regulations such as the Ottawa Convention and the implementation of the rules of the Convention. In this document, mine action includes all the five components listed below.

## “Mine action”

- “*Mine awareness*”, measures to make people aware of and to inform people of the risks, and measures to reduce the risks of mines and unexploded ammunition.
- “*Humanitarian demining (Survey, Mapping, Marking, Mine Clearance)*”: Humanitarian mine clearance is all the measures and activities that can be associated with eliminating the mine problem and its effects in a country affected by mines.
- “*Victim assistance*”: support to victims of mines, including rehabilitation and reintegration.
- “*Advocacy*”: efforts to exert an influence in respect of limitations on the use of land mines and the total prohibition of anti-personnel mines.
- “*Stockpile destruction*”: destruction of stores of mines.

The term “mines” is often used when it is a question of unexploded ammunition. In reality the problem of unexploded ammunition is often just as great or greater than the mine problem in a way that is unique for each country or area. In this document, the term “mines” includes both mines and unexploded ammunition.

## Reasons for Swedish support for mine action

The overall goal of Swedish support for mine action is to assist people who have been affected by war and conflicts to enable them to return to their homes and create a tolerable existence under peaceful conditions. This makes the reduction of poverty possible, as well as development for both the people concerned and the nation as a whole. Initially, humanitarian mine clearance often has a more acute objective, namely to help people survive and to protect them from life-long injuries. In specific situations mine action can also be an important tool for processing and solving conflicts.

The mine programmes supported by Sida shall be integrated in all other development cooperation activities in the partner country in question. If mines are a recurrent problem in the country, this should be taken into consideration in the work on the strategy for future cooperation with the country. A country’s mine problem is always “owned” by the country itself. Consequently, the primary aim of Sida’s support should be to assist the country’s own efforts to remedy the mine problem and therefore national structures and local expertise should be given priority when mine programmes are being planned and implemented. Coordination and development of knowledge between parties involved in the country are other central functions to create sustainable structures for mine action.

## **Basic points of departure**

Future support for mine action is not guaranteed since other problems in the countries affected are often given high priority. Interest and commitment for the mine problem has had to give way to other issues among politicians, the public and donors. It is therefore important to guarantee mechanisms for a long-term perspective in the financing of programmes in consideration of the fact that greater demands will be made by donors in respect of analyses, planning, coordination and cost efficiency before funds are allocated for mine action in the future.

## **The character of the problem – the threats**

During and immediately after conflicts, mines represent a major humanitarian problem, for example in connection with the flows of refugees and the return of refugees. In places where there are mines, or where people believe there are mines, all activities are affected and this partly paralyses the community, economically and socially. It leads to a situation in which the problem must be solved before any development can take place in the areas affected. From the development perspective suspected areas without mines are just as problematic as mined areas.

## **Principles for Swedish support for mine action**

Basically each country itself is responsible for dealing with its mine problems. Swedish support for mine action shall primarily be directed towards countries with large and long-term mine problems. New partners in cooperation with Swedish support can be countries where the mine problem has been known for many years but where it has not been possible to implement programmes, for example due to ongoing conflicts.

Support to mine action should always have a long-term perspective. With few exceptions the problem requires that national capacity is created to attack and solve the problem in a sustainable way. Where methods are concerned support to mine programmes are equivalent to other long-term programmes of development cooperation. Whenever necessary the mine programmes shall be integrated as far as possible in existing national structures and development plans. Contributions shall have a well-considered strategy with specific objectives that can be used as a basis for performance analyses, evaluation and termination. An “exit” strategy shall always be built in to the programme from its start.

## **Structure**

In countries with a long-term need of support for mine action, support must be based on the creation and integration of national capacity with other development cooperation contributions. Experience has shown that so called “mine action centres” (MAC) have great problems in having the two functions

of coordinator and implementer of different contributions. It is therefore important that these functions are separated. The coordinatory MAC shall have a national structure. However, in certain cases, when it is not possible to do this in the country concerned, the international community must assume this responsibility by creating “United Nations Mine Action Centres” or similar structures. In cases of this type, the transition to a national structure must be planned from the very outset. In the long-term perspective, the implementing structure should be a part of the country’s national rescue service, civil defence, police, army etc to enable it to survive.

## **Coordination**

In order to integrate mine programmes with other activities, it is important to ensure that coordination function is secured. This includes coordination between parties active in the mine action field and coordination between mine action and other forms of development cooperation. It is of central importance that transparent systems are created from the outset, in both the coordinatory and the implementing organisation. One decisive requirement for smooth coordination is that different types of expertise are available and can interact. The predominantly technical capacity of the MAC must be supplemented, primarily with socio-economic skills. In order to analyse the consequences of mines and be able to make priorities, to coordinate and to select the right type of contribution, an in-depth survey of relevant economic, social and cultural factors is necessary. This capacity must be integrated in both the coordinatory and implementing organisation. An increase in support in these areas is extremely important. If there is no coordination, or if there are shortcomings in existing coordination, the Swedish support shall always contain a component that includes the coordination function.

## **Parties involved and types of support**

Mine action will come into question in different situations in respect of conflicts, the time factors, the capacity of the country affected to handle its mine problems, the interest and commitment of the world community, and so on. One decisive factor for support to mine action where the selection of parties and the type of support are concerned, are the prevailing possibilities in each area.

In the future, the main parties will also consist of NGOs, commercial companies and the UN system (usually UNDP). The EU is also playing an increasingly active role in mine action and is a very important actor, both financially and in respect of policy.

For the foreseeable future, forms of support will probably be those included in the concept of mine action, i.e. increasing awareness and knowledge of mines, humanitarian mine clearance, support to victims, working to influence the actions of governments and other decision-makers, and the destruction of stockpiles of mines. However, the last-mentioned should primarily be seen as

a military action rather than a development cooperation action. These activities are regarded as an integral operation whose focus will vary in different situations. This also applies to Swedish support. However, in order to be able eventually to use mined land, a great deal of mine clearance is required.

## Financing

Mine action is a long-term task, with very high initial costs for purchases of material and for build-up. The activity is, and will be, dependent on donors for its survival. Sida, like many other donors, often uses a one-year financing system. This has led to a very unstable funding situation that has limited the programmes. Often this has been a reaction from the donors to uncertainties in respect of what is happening to the funds allocated and the lack of transparency. It is probably also due to the fact that the contributions are regarded as humanitarian contributions and are assumed to have a shorter duration than development programmes.

Swedish support in the future should be permeated by continuity and flexibility, and have the main aim of capacity development in the long-term. In each individual programme an assessment shall be made of whether the financing of the coordinatory and the operative structure should be provided separately or should be integrated.

## Sida's policy for support to mine action

Future action must be permeated by flexibility and the understanding of specific contexts. Each situation has unique features and therefore flexibility is required in respect of methods, parties, activities and so on. The consequences of implemented activities must be continually followed up and the lessons learned must be passed on to new programmes. To enable this to be done, it is necessary that an extensive analysis is performed of both technical and socio-economic conditions before a decision is made to support a contribution.

Sida's support shall focus on:

### *Retaining its interest in present programmes*

Today Sida is supporting programmes in a number of countries and regions that are most seriously affected by mines. This shall continue, but the possibility of reappraisal and phasing out shall be kept under continuous consideration.

### *Integrating mine action with other development cooperation programmes*

Sida shall integrate mine action in strategies in partner countries affected by the consequences of mines. Mine action shall be regarded as a method to eliminate a serious obstacle to development.

#### *Contributing to building up national structures and capacity*

Sida shall contribute to building up and maintaining national structures and local capacity in the countries affected whenever possible. The support shall have the aim of contributing to the achievement of sustainable national capacity. The need of separating the coordinating and implementing organisations shall always be taken into consideration.

#### *Supporting short-term programmes with a humanitarian aim*

In certain humanitarian situations where the need of long-term support is unclear or it is not possible to create national structures, NGOs or commercial companies should be used until national structures have been created or the need of support is no longer immediate.

#### *Humanitarian demining*

Sida's support shall focus on:

- Support for analyses of problems (surveys) in order to ensure that the best conceivable information is available, both on the mines problem in the situation in question, and for the selection of organisation and structures to solve the problem. Greater expertise in the mine action field for implementing socio-economic evaluations and follow-up will be sought.
- Support with advisors and expertise in areas where Sweden has good comparative advantages, for example in dog capacity, mechanical clearance, quality assurance (QA) and IT in mine action.
- Support for mine clearance, which will be the most extensive activity for a long time to come and which requires the most extensive financing.

#### *Victim assistance*

Sida will provide victim assistance within the framework of its regular health contributions and through its support to organisations such as the Red Cross, and others.

#### *Mine awareness*

Mine awareness will be supported with the framework of support for mine clearance or as a separate activity.

#### *Stockpile destruction*

Stockpile destruction is not normally supported by Sida since it should be seen as a military action rather than a development cooperation contribution.

#### *Support the international community by building up coordinating functions for mine action in UN programmes*

One decisive factor for efficient mine clearance in humanitarian situations in connection with conflicts is the coordination and integration of programmes. At present, support for this through the UN system is most appropriate. In the long term, other organisations, mainly the EU, can be regarded in certain

situations as an alternative to the UN where responsibility for the coordinating mechanism is concerned.

*Consider long-term financing of support to mine action, principally for the building up of national structures*

In view of the fact that mine action, by its very nature, is a long-term activity, the forms of financing should be suitably adapted.

*Support for transfer of know-how to the countries affected*

The participation by representatives of the countries affected is often limited in international cooperation in mine action for financial reasons. Greater participation by these countries shall be supported.





SWEDISH INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION AGENCY

S-105 25 Stockholm, Sweden

Tel: +46 (0)8-698 50 00. Fax: +46 (0)8-20 88 64

Homepage: <http://www.sida.se>