

Mine Action Support Group Meeting April 2013

Update by Australia

1. Strategic plan for the next 3 – 5 years

Australia is past the mid-point of implementing its five-year Mine Action Strategy 2010 – 2014 for the Australian aid program. The Strategy supports the achievement of Australia’s obligations under international instruments that aim to reduce the threat of landmines, cluster munitions and other explosive remnants of war and includes a \$100 million commitment.

An independent Mid-Term Review of the Mine Action Strategy (2012) found that the Strategy remained relevant and consistent with Australia’s overall aid priorities and approach. The Review concluded that the Strategy is being successfully implemented and making good progress against all four of its outcomes. The main areas for consideration and implementation arising from the Review can be categorized into those that concern Australia’s funding approach, geographic focus and future strategy. Implementation of the review recommendations is underway. Other recommendations will be used to inform a future mine action strategy.

A copy of the Mid-Term Review Report and the Review of AusAID’s Support to Mine Action in the Middle East is available on AusAID’s website (www.ausaid.gov.au).

A new strategy for mine action within the Australian aid program will likely cover the period 2015 to 2019. The strategy may also include armed violence reduction. Consultations on the draft strategy are expected to take place late 2013.

2. Funding Trends

Since signing the Mine Ban Convention in 1997, Australia has made three multi-year financial pledges which reflect a steady increase in Australia’s mine action support:

- \$100 million over ten years (from 1997 - 2007)
- \$75 million over five years (2005 - 2010)
- \$100 million over five years (2010 - 2014)

Australia achieved its \$100 million commitment to mine action late 2012 some two years ahead of schedule. Despite reaching its commitment, Australia will continue to support mine action programs until a new strategy and commitment are developed.

Australia’s mine action funding is drawn from multiple sources, including bilateral, humanitarian and disability budgets. Over 80% of Australia’s funding is drawn from bilateral (country) aid budgets (primarily Afghanistan, Cambodia, Sri Lanka and Laos).

To complement mine action supported through bilateral programs, Australia has a global mine action program drawn from its humanitarian budget. The global mine action program

supports global mine action including advocacy, research, universalization, coordination, monitoring and evaluation and victim assistance.

3. Priorities and Approach

Australia's mine action assistance focuses on the most heavily affected countries in the Asia-Pacific region, while maintaining the flexibility to respond to other emerging needs and priorities against four outcomes:

- Improved quality of life for victims and their affected families and communities
- Reduced number of deaths and injuries
- Enhanced capacity of countries to manage their mine action programs
- Effective leadership and advocacy by Australia on mine action.

Australia is working to ensure that its mine action assistance is effective and has maximum impact. We are doing this by:

- Programming the majority of mine action assistance through bilateral (country) aid programs to ensure that it supports national priorities, is linked to broader development programs and is effectively managed. P
- Supporting well targeted and effective global mine action programs. S
- Working with partners and donors to coordinate and pool resources to strengthen national mine action programs (with a focus on those with long-term mine action challenges e.g. Afghanistan, Laos and Cambodia). W
- Coordinating with partners and donors to assist more countries to complete their clearance obligations. C
- Promoting linkages between victim assistance and disability-inclusive development, including under relevant humanitarian disarmament treaties and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities to ensure that support is of benefit to victims as well as other people with a disability. P

4. Current Funding

Through country programs, Australia is currently supporting mine action in Afghanistan, Cambodia, Chad, Iraq, Jordan, Laos, Lebanon, Libya, Mozambique, Sri Lanka and Palau. In 2013, Australia's mine action funding will include Afghanistan (\$5 million), Cambodia (\$2 million), ICRC Special Fund for the Disabled (\$1 million), Iraq (\$1.2 million), Mozambique (\$1 million) and Sri Lanka (approx. \$1.5 million).

These contributions are in addition to the \$100 million, Australia has already provided during the period 2010 to 2014. A new strategy to guide future mine action programming is planned for the period 2015 to 2019. Consultations on the new strategy will commence late in 2013.

