



INTERNATIONAL TRUST FUND FOR DEMINING
AND MINE VICTIMS ASSISTANCE (ITF)

South Eastern Europe as a Model of Regional Mine Action Co-operation

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CONTENTS:

- 1. ITF INTRODUCTION**
- 2. REGIONAL COOPERATION IN SEE
*CASE STUDY: SEEMACC***
- 3. ROLE OF ITF IN REGIONAL COOPERATION**



1. ITF INTRODUCTION

1.1 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

- **Established on 12 March 1998** by Slovenian government as a Slovenian contribution to stabilisation of post-Dayton BiH
- ITF is **humanitarian, non-profit organisation**
- Gradually **widen geographical area** of ITF activities
- **Focus on South East Europe** with aim of strengthening it's role outside SEE
- **U.S. Matching Fund Mechanism** for South East Europe

1.2 VISION

ITF strives to free the region of South-East Europe from the impact of landmines and unexploded ordnance (UXO), and actively contribute to the eradication of the mine problem in other mine-affected parts of the world.



1.3 MISSION

To **raise funds and manage donations** made by public and private donors for the implementation of **mine action related activities**:

- Mine/UXO clearance;
- Mine victims assistance;
- Mine risk education;
- Structure support to the national mine action agencies;
- Mine action related training;
- Joint regional mine action projects and South-East Europe Mine Action Coordination Council (SEEMACC);
- Destruction of stockpiled anti-personnel mines;
- Interconnecting mine action with development projects.

***Widespread donor community** of 27 countries, European Union and UN Development Programme, over 10 local authorities and over 70 international organizations, private companies, non-governmental organizations and individuals.*



1.4 SHORT RECORD OF ITF ACHIEVEMENTS (1998 – 2006)

- \$215.324.296,34 were raised by ITF
- 75.152.250 square meters of land in SEE and in South Caucasus cleared through ITF
- 82.000 children and adults directly included in MRE projects
- 1.000 and more mine survivors included in mine victims assistance programs on yearly basis
- 927 mine survivors rehabilitated through ITF
- 441 trainings in the field of humanitarian demining
- 185 humanitarian demining trainings delivered
- 100 and more public and private donors
- 87 trainings in the field of Mine Action management
- 40 MDD teams trained
- 12 beneficiary countries
- 11 countries recieved structure support assistance
- 1 regional body - SEEMACC
- 1 country – Macedonia – became Mine Free



1.5 COUNTRIES OF ITF ACTIVITIES

Present activites:

- Albania
- Azerbaijan
- Bosnia and Herzegovina
- Croatia
- Libanon
- Macedonia
- Serbia (incl. Kosovo)
- Montenegro

Past activites:

- Afghanistan
- Armenia
- Georgia
- Cyprus





2. Regional cooperation in South East Europe

2.1 PRECONDITIONS

- **Common and/or connected origin of landmine problem** between two or more states, entities, communities within SEE;
- **Mine Action as a part of wider environment** - political stability, consolidated peace-situation requirements, humanitarian, reconstruction and development efforts;
- **Awareness of “common” problems** in the field of Mine Action;
- **Preparedness and willingness** on all sides to eliminate landmine problem;
- **Established communication** between national MAC’s in the region;
- **Neutral intermediary** to facilitate meetings, work, negotiations, etc. on the regional level (role of Slovenia and ITF);
- **Strictly technical (non-political) level** involved at the beginning of process of setting regional cooperation;
- **Sensitivity of post-conflict period requires cooperation and confidence building between stakeholders.**



2.2 ITF PAST EXPERIENCES IN SEE REGION (1)

Regional humanitarian demining projects:

- “Mine clearance and technical survey projects in the borderline area between Croatia & Serbia and Montenegro”, 2003-2006 (EU)
- “Support to Demining Activities in the Region of South-Eastern Europe – Clearance of Borderline Project”, 2003-2006 (EU)
- “General Survey on the Border Area between Montenegro and Albania”, 2006 (USA)

Regional institutional capacities:

- Mine Detection Dog Center (MDDC), 2003-2006 (USA)
- Regional Underwater Demining Center (RCUD), 2002-2006 (Slovenia, USA)
- Regional Center for Psycho-Social rehabilitation in Croatia, 2006 (USA, Czech Republic)
- “Geographical Information System for Mine Action in South-East Europe”, 2000-2003 (EU)



2.2 ITF PAST EXPERIENCES IN SEE REGION (2)

Regional trainings:

- Explosive Ordnance Disposal Training at the Training Center for Civil Protection and Disaster Relief (6) (EU, Slovenia, USA)
- Monitoring and Quality Control/Quality Assurance (3) (USA)
- UNDP Senior and Middle Management Training (2+2) (USA)
- Underwater EOD Training (2) (USA)
- GIS Training (2) (EU)
- Training courses for rehabilitation specialists at the Slovenian Institute for Rehabilitation (Slovenia, USA)
- Orthopaedic Technicians University of Ljubljana study program (France, USA)

Regional workshops, conferences and other:

- 1st and 2nd World Wide Mine Detection Dog Conference in Slovenia, 1999, and in the United States of America, 2002 (organized together with James Madison University) (USA)
- Symposium on Humanitarian Demining Quality, Bosnia and Herzegovina, 2006 (USA);
- SEEMACC, 2000-2006 (USA)
- Mechanical Equipment For Mine-Clearance in The Region Of South-East Europe, 2002 (USA)
- *Regional workshop "Confidence building through mine action", Georgia, 2005*



2.3 PRESENT INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY IN THE FIELD OF MINE ACTION FOR REGIONAL ACTIVITIES IN SEE





2.4 CASE STUDY: South-Eastern Europe Mine Action Coordination Council (SEEMACC) (1)

- Established in 2000
- Members of SEEMACC:
 - **8 fully entitled members:** AMAE (Albania), BHMAL (Bosnia and Herzegovina), CROMAC (Croatia), MAC Serbia (Serbia), RCUD (Montenegro), Protection and Rescue Directorate (Macedonia), ANAMA (Azerbaijan), and ITF (Slovenia)
 - **3 members with observer status:** MDDC (Konjic, BiH), CTDT (Croatia), UNMIK/KPC (Kosovo)
- SEEMACC GOALS:
 - Exchange of experience, expertise and knowledge in the field of mine action in the region of South East Europe;
 - Promote the regional approach in the planning of demining programs;
 - Promote the regional approach in the fund raising for mine action;
 - Exchange experience, expertise and knowledge in the field of training of the deminers and managing personnel in the field of mine action;
 - Exchange information on testing of the new technologies in demining;
 - Promote the achievement of common standards and accreditation procedures in the field of demining in the region of South East Europe.



2.4 CASE STUDY: South-Eastern Europe Mine Action Coordination Council (SEEMACC) (2)

- Results:
 - **Regular SEEMACC meetings** to harmonize regional activities and exchange information, knowledge and experience on mutual basis;
 - **Acknowledgement of the accreditation of the mechanical equipment** for mine clearance by Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina and other countries in the region;
 - **Acknowledgment of the testing procedures;**
 - **SEEMACC pool of experts (directory);**
 - Regional pool basis – **sharing of resources (physical, material and human);**
 - **Establishment of regional institutions:** Regional Center for Underwater Demining in Bijela, Montenegro and Mine Detection Dog Center for SEE in Konjic (BiH), Regional Center for Psycho-Social Rehabilitation in Croatia;
 - **Adoption of the SEEMACC Strategy 2003-2010.**

www.see-demining.org



3. ITF ROLE IN REGIONAL COOPERATION

3.1 ITF PERCEPTION OF IT'S ROLE

- mobilize funding and providing financial resources for regional projects, programs (i.e., **acting as a trust fund mechanism**);
- raising awareness, creating, consolidating, and disseminating knowledge and information on regional cooperation in SEE and lessons learned (i.e., **acting as a knowledge bank**);
- helping national and regional bodies to build their institutional capacity (i.e., **building capacity in the region**);
- acting as catalyst and coordinator of regional mine action activities for the interested stakeholders (i.e., **servicing as an mediator**).

ITF perceives these roles as mutually supportive and reinforcing, enabling ITF to serve as an effective facilitator in supporting and promoting regional approach and mine action activities.



3.2 ITF LESSONS LEARNED IN REGIONAL APPROACH (1)

- **Measure against duplication of resources and efforts** – financial, physical, material and human;
- **Optimum use of resources** (derived from the first one);
- Sharing of expertise and experience in **solving unique mine problems** in the field of Mine Action in whole region;
- Exchange of staff and joint projects **foster experience through working in various environments**;
- Regional cooperation through joint projects (training, demining etc.) enables **building a social network** in the region;
- **Necessity to build on existing capacity** in the region and that the **strong institutions help the weak ones**;



3.2 ITF LESSONS LEARNED IN REGIONAL APPROACH (2)

- **Regional pooling of resources pays out** – such as sharing of expensive technologies in region, which can reduce the cost of programs;
- The **younger programs can benefit** from the lessons learned and use the existing knowledge;
- **Identification of Mine Action priorities**, which can only be solved effectively with regional cooperation;
- **Close link-up of Mine Action regional activities with other regional issues** such as poverty, border control, management of environment, development etc.;
- **Mine action activities on regional level contribute to confidence building.**



**Thank you for your
attention!**



May every mine-affected region become green!

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