



FBD/REP/F

Update on Activities between January and August 2002

General Overview

1. The first eight months of the year 2002 were marked by the setting-up of the Implementation Support Unit, and by the creation of the first Regional Support Centre in Managua, Nicaragua. In addition, the GICHD consolidated its operational support and research activities, continued its efforts in disseminating the Information Management System for Mine Action (IMSMA), and carried out a number of evaluation and assessment missions. Furthermore, the Centre facilitated two sessions of the Standing Committees of the Mine Ban Convention (MBC) as well as for the fifth annual meeting of Mine Action Programme Directors and Advisors organised by UNMAS.

Activities in Mine Action Strategies and Procedures

2. The GICHD continued its research work aimed at providing guidance and support to mine action programmes in the field. Such research studies are carried out on demand and are funded by donors on a project by project basis.

Completed Projects and Studies in Final Review

3. The **Socio-economic “Operational Handbook”** has been developed out of the socio-economic study completed in 2001. It is designed to simplify the analysis of socio-economic factors for field-based programme managers and other practitioners in mine action programmes. The project was commissioned by UNDP and the handbook is available now (ISBN 92-1-126146-5).

4. The study **“Communication in Mine Awareness Programmes”** and the handbook **“Improving Communication in Mine Awareness Programmes”** provide practitioners with informal, practical advice on how they can improve communication in mine awareness/mine risk education (MRE) programmes. This project was commissioned by the US Department of State and both publications are available now (study: ISBN 2-88486-001-6; handbook: ISBN 2-88487-002-4).

5. The study **“Mine Action Equipment: Study of Global Operational Needs”** reviews equipment needs of mine action agencies and identifies a priority list of global operational needs that could benefit from improved equipment, processes and procedures. The study was requested by UNMAS and was funded by the UK. The publication is available now (ISBN 2-88487-004-0).

6. The study **“Explosive Remnants of War – A Threat Analysis”** assesses explosive threats in post-conflict environments in order to develop a methodology

that can identify objectively the risk to the community from generic ammunition groups. This study was prepared for the Governmental Group of Experts meeting under the CCW, and was funded by the UK (ISBN 2-88487-003-2).

7. The study “**Designer Dogs: Improving the Quality of Mine Detection Dogs**” identifies and discusses the essential and optional characteristics of mine detection dogs, and identifies an alternative breed for development and testing as a mine detection dog – the Swedish Drever.

6. The **Benefits of Military-to-Military Co-operation in Mine Action Study**, commissioned by the US Department of State, aims to assess the long-term benefit of US military-to-military training. The project has reached the final draft stage.

On-going Projects

8. The **Mechanical Equipment Study** aims to establish the efficiency and cost-effectiveness of mechanical demining equipment. So far, study missions have been conducted in Abkhazia, Afghanistan, Angola, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cambodia, Croatia, Thailand, and Vietnam. A professional economist has been contracted to complete study missions in both Bosnia and Herzegovina and Thailand with the aim of developing an easy to use software model for users to measure their own machine’s cost-effectiveness. Initial results should be available in autumn 2002. In addition to the focus on cost-effectiveness, the study is developing knowledge on the armouring of vehicles operating in mine-fields with the aim of establishing norms, and eventually standards. The study has been requested by UNMAS and is funded by Norway, Sweden and the UK.

9. The **Study on the Use of Military Organisations in Humanitarian Mine Action Projects** aims to examine the practicability of using military organisations, both international and local, for all forms of humanitarian mine action. This study has been requested by UNMAS and is funded by the UK and France. Field research on the study began in June. Initial drafts from Lebanon and Cambodia have been produced while the Nicaragua, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Ethiopia and Eritrea case study reports are being drafted. The final results of this study are scheduled for the end of this year.

10. The **Study on Symbols for Mine Action** will explore the need for symbols to represent humanitarian hazards, to amplify the information provided on threat assessment maps and overlays produced by information management software. The study will also examine the needs for other types of graphical information, such as terrain analysis. This study is financed by the UK and Belgium.

11. The **Study on Development of Local Mine Action Organisations** is focusing on how best to create the conditions necessary for the formation of local mine action NGOs in mine-affected countries. This study was requested by UNMAS and UNDP and is funded by the Netherlands and the UK. Field research on the study began in July. Initial drafts from Bosnia and Herzegovina, Afghanistan and Mozambique are being prepared. The study results will be available at the end of this year.

12. The **Study on the Development of Guidelines for the Creation of Legislative Frameworks and National Management Structures** will assist mine-af-

affected countries to establish effective national mine action programmes. This study was requested by UNDP, and funding has been provided by the UK. Up to date, copies of relevant national legislation and analytical reports have been received from Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cambodia, Colombia, Kosovo, Laos, Lebanon, Mozambique, Nicaragua, Rwanda, and Tajikistan. The completion of the study is scheduled for the end of this year.

Planned Studies

13. The **Study on the Use of Remote Sensing in Mine Action** aims to assist programme managers in obtaining appropriate and affordable satellite and airborne data and imagery. This study has been included in the UN Portfolio of Projects. Donor funding is awaited.

14. The **Study on the Evaluation of Field Programmes** will explore the establishment of a basic framework and standard methodology for field evaluations, for use internally by the GICHD, and by other agencies. This framework will recognise that all programmes are different, but allow a more formal approach to evaluation, which will enable inter-programme comparison and follow up. Terms of reference have been drafted.

Operational Support and Assistance

15. The Centre's second core mission consists of providing specific operational support and assistance to on-going mine action activities and programmes, including those run by the UN. Since the beginning of the year, several new activities have been started.

Information Management System for Mine Action (IMSMA)

16. One of the key problems in humanitarian demining is the lack of accurate information on mined areas. Information remains a key element throughout the whole demining process. To facilitate the collection and handling of relevant information, the GICHD provides the Information Management System for Mine Action (IMSMA). Based on standard computer technology, IMSMA covers information gathering, data storage, mapping and analysis needs of Mine Action Centres in the field. In addition, it facilitates the setting of priorities for future clearance activities, for the allocation of mine risk education resources, etc. The IMSMA project is carried out by the GICHD in close co-operation with UNMAS, the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology in Zurich and users in the field.

17. During the reporting period, **new installations of IMSMA** were made by the GICHD in Colombia, the Democratic Republic of Congo, and Guatemala. Third parties installed IMSMA in Armenia (SAC/Star Mountain), Sri Lanka (UNDP/HALO), and Sudan (VVAf).

18. In addition to these new installations, IMSMA is running in Afghanistan, Albania, Azerbaijan, Cambodia, Chad, with UNFICYP in Cyprus, in Ecuador, with UNMEE in Eritrea and Ethiopia, in Estonia, Kosovo, with UNIFIL and the NDO in Lebanon, in Macedonia, Mozambique, Nicaragua, with UNICEF in Northern Ossetia (Russia), in Peru, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Somaliland, Thailand, and Yemen. In total, IMSMA has been installed in 28 field programmes world-wide.

Additional versions are running at various training sites at locations in France, Switzerland, the UK, and the US.

19. During the reporting period, **training and technical advice** was provided to IMSMA users in Afghanistan (MACA), Albania, Azerbaijan, Colombia, Ecuador, Ethiopia, Guatemala, Lebanon, Mozambique, Nicaragua, and Somaliland.

20. The Centre held four central **IMSMA training courses**, namely

- a) a “Train the Trainer” course attended by 12 participants representing seven organisation of four countries, took place in Geneva in February;
- b) the first “Regional IMSMA Workshop” in Tirana, Albania. This course saw the participation of eight trainees from four different counties;
- c) an “Advanced User Training Course” for seven participants from four different countries;
- d) the fourth IMSMA Training Course within NATO’s Partnership for Peace (PfP) framework. This course was offered by the Swiss Government and was open for PfP Member States, and for countries already using IMSMA. As a result, 14 participants from 11 countries (three non PfP nations) were successfully trained.

21. The Centre created its first **Regional Support Centre** (RSC) in Managua, Nicaragua by deploying one staff member. The primary task of this RSC is the provision of first level user support, including on-site training, technical advice and maintenance, for IMSMA users in Latin America. In addition, the RSC organises regional user focus group meetings and training courses. Finally, it facilitates contacts between the relevant countries and the GICHD. The RSC in Managua co-operates closely with the Organisation of American States (OAS).

22. During the reporting period, the RSC for Latin America provided support and assistance to seven countries (Argentina, Colombia, Ecuador, Guatemala, Honduras, Panama, and Peru), the US Department of State and to OAS.

23. Work was completed on the **translation** of the IMSMA user screens, the Users Guide and the Administrators Manual during this period. The basic translations are now available in French, Portuguese, and Spanish. These documents will be updated and maintained as the system changes. Integration of the translated text has been completed for IMSMA version 2.2.

24. The development of **IMSMA version 3.0** progressed considerably. The new release will contain a new support tool for MRE operations in the field. Furthermore, both the system’s reliability and the number of users able to work with IMSMA simultaneously will be increased. Preliminary testing has been completed, and a field test will take place in September 2002.

25. The Swiss Government provides funding for the basic development and support of IMSMA.

26. Work also continued on the **XML Project**. The goal of this project is to provide a mechanism for the exchange of data within the mine action community and between interested parties and domains outside of mine action. This would include UNHCR, WHO, UNICEF and other humanitarian relief and support organisations. Work has been completed and a first version of the “maXML regis-

try document” has been delivered. The project is funded by the US Department of State.

27. The project is now heading for a pilot field test to support the activities of the on-going work toward harmonisation of mine action data in South-eastern Europe. This pilot test is funded by the International Trust Fund (ITF).

International Mine Action Standards (IMAS)

28. The International Standards of Mine Action (IMAS), prepared by the GICHD under a mandate from UNMAS, provide practitioners and donors with an updated and revised framework of technical and procedural prescriptions for safe and effective mine action. A first set of 23 IMAS were endorsed in 2001 by the UN, a second set of 15 IMAS are currently awaiting endorsement.

29. In addition, the GICHD provided assistance to European Union’s CEN Working Group 126 on mine action standards.

30. The Centre continued with the **IMAS Outreach Programme**, which consists of a series of workshops, seminars and desk exercises to ensure appropriate understanding and application of the new standards. Briefings were given in Southeast Asia, the Middle East, Europe, Central and South America and Africa. This programme is carried out on behalf of UNMAS and funded by the UK.

31. During the reporting period, briefings were given at

- a) the Cranfield Senior Mine Action Managers Course in Slovenia in February;
- b) the Global Explosive Engineering/EOD Conference (Explo 2002) in April in the UK;
- c) the Swedish EOD School Mine Action Conference in April;
- d) the Regional Southeast Asia Mine Action Conference sponsored by the Thai Mine Action Centre in May;
- e) the UK sponsored NATO PFP Briefing on Mine Action in June.

Provision of Technical Information

32. The GICHD continued to develop and disseminate the **Technical Notes for Mine Action** (TNMA). TNMAs are advisory documents designed to accompany or supplement the IMAS series, or act as an independent source of information. TNMAs provide principles, advice and information relevant to a specific IMAS or technical topic. TNMAs are advisory and are based on the best available current practises, field feedback and technical information. TNMAs can be obtained from the GICHD website (www.gichd.ch) or through the UN E-mine website (www.mineaction.org). Since 2001, the following 11 TNMAs have been published:

- a) TN 01.10/01: Guide to Technical Notes for Mine Action
- b) TN 07.30/01: Accreditation of mine action organisations – application documentation
- c) TN 08.20/01: PMN 3 anti-personnel mine – technical description
- d) TN 09.10/01: PROM 1 – Metal detector warning
- e) TN 09.30/01: EOD clearance of armoured fighting vehicles (AFV)
- f) TN 09.30/02: Clearance of depleted uranium (DU) hazards

- g) TN 09.30/03: Guidance on liquid propellant fuelled systems
- h) TN 09.30/04: Fuel air explosive (FAE) systems
- i) TN 09.50/01: Guide to mechanical mine clearance/ground preparation using commercial tractors and front loaders
- j) TN 10.10/01: Environmental management during mine and UXO clearance operations
- k) TN 10.20/01: Estimation of explosion danger areas.

33. In addition, the Centre manages the **TRITON Reports** project, which contain information on cases where munitions (especially improvised devices and booby traps) have been used in post-conflict situations. These reports also include incidents where recovered UXO and mines are being used in association with sophisticated initiation systems. These trends present a potentially significant threat to demining organisations, which may also have to disarm them in the future. TRITON Reports are a system for warning deminers and EOD operators of potential future threats. Access to the TRITON reports can be obtained from the Mine Action Information Center at James Madison University on request. (www.hdic.jmu.edu)

Mechanical Clearance

34. With its **Mechanical Equipment Catalogue**, the Centre maintains a comprehensive catalogue on mechanical demining equipment. This programme is requested by UNMAS and funded by Germany. A first edition of a catalogue on mechanical equipment was distributed in January. A second edition will be available in early 2003, and a catalogue on hand-held mine detectors will be developed during the year 2002.

Mine Detection Dogs

35. The Mine Detection Dog Research Programme of the Centre follows a multi-faceted approach. The programme includes the framing of UN standards for the accreditation, training, evaluation and use of mine detection dogs, and a broad research programme on the use of such dogs. The GICHD has acted on its own recommendation that alternative breeds should be used for mine detection, and has purchased eight drevlers (identified as having potential in the analysis of breeds, see para. 7 above) for supply to dog training organisations. The research programme will lead to improved operational use of mine detection dogs due to increased knowledge about critical aspects of their use. The whole programme was requested by UNMAS and is funded by Germany, Norway, Sweden, the UK, the USA, and UNMAS.

36. Several studies of the MDD programme have already been completed and are currently being compiled into a **book publication**, which will include

- a) an analysis of the theory behind MDD training, based on practical experience;
- b) a presentation of successful training concepts, such as a successful socialisation programme for puppies, experimental training of dogs using the Remote Explosive Scent Tracing (REST) method, and dog training to detect tripwires;
- c) an outline of training organisation skills;

- d) a review of special programmes such as the Mechem REST concept (MEDDS) and the Belgian APOPO rat project;
- e) an analysis of the theory and practice of odour detection.

37. The **Afghanistan Mine Dog Study** aims to determine why dogs may miss mines in certain cases. To establish if dog/handler errors and/or a lack of vapour lead to mines being missed, a study was initiated lining chemical analysis of soil samples, behavioural observation of dogs searching in test minefields and detailed climatic information. The programme was suspended after 11 September 2001, but has now been restarted. During the delay, an equivalent study was initiated in Bosnia and Herzegovina, where the different soils and climate provide an excellent comparative opportunity. The study was commissioned by UNOCHA (in Afghanistan) and is supported by the governments in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The final results of both studies are expected in late 2003.

Comment: Get from Havard

38. The **Remote Explosive Scent Tracing (REST) Area Reduction Application Study** aims to establish if the REST concept, already used successfully for road verification can have application as an area reduction tool. Field tests producing over 4,000 filters have been completed in Angola, and the results from repeated sampling and filter analysis are being examined. Final results are expected in early 2003.

39. The GICHD is in close co-operation with Belgian APOPO in Tanzania, who are studying the use of rats for detecting landmines. The recently established **Rat REST Project** aims to test whether rats perform as well as or better than dogs for analysis of REST filters. Initial results indicate that rats achieve results at least as good as dogs when detecting low odour concentration. Further results are expected in late 2002.

40. The **Mine Flux Rate and Computer Modelling Study** aims to determine the leakage rate from 30 different landmine types. The results will add an important element to on-going research work on predicting the effects of environmental factors on the process of vapour transportation from landmines to the air at surface level. Work started in summer 2002.

41. Many authorities and mine action organisations need help in their efforts to **implement MDD standards and guidelines**. Action upon request of the external Advisory Group to the MDD Research Programme, the GICHD has established a committee to provide assistance for implementing these standards in selected countries. The relevant initial assessment phase was completed in Afghanistan and Cambodia, and identified a need for future support. Additional assessment missions are planned for Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia and Eritrea.

42. Finally, the GICHD **evaluated MDD programmes** in Mozambique, Angola, and Cambodia on behalf of the national authorities or donors.

Deployments

43. The GICHD deployed one of its staff members for two missions to Jenin (on the West Bank) and the Gaza Strip in support of the Swedish Rescue Service Agency (SRSA) in late April and early May. Tasks were the immediate EOD support to the UN in Jenin, and an EOD Threat Assessment of the West Bank and Gaza for the European Union. A third mission was started in mid August.

Evaluation and Assessment

44. The Centre also offers its services to Governments, the UN and other interested organisations to evaluate and assess actual projects and programmes, or components of such programmes. The Centre follows an impartial, independent and transparent methodology, and staff involved in such missions work in an open and transparent way as allowed by the framework set by the relevant organisations and programmes.

45. During the reporting period, the GICHD

- a) evaluated the mine risk education (MRE) programmes of UNIFIL (Lebanon) and of TMAC (Thailand);
- b) evaluated the MRE programmes and national mine action strategy of the Colombian Government;
- c) evaluated the NATO PfP Stockpile Destruction Project in Albania upon request of Canada;
- d) participated in UNDP's assessment and evaluation of the Angolan mine action sector;
- e) evaluated the St. Barbara Foundation mine action programme in Somaliland on behalf of the German Government;
- f) evaluated the FFG project using mechanical clearance equipment in Bosnia and Herzegovina on behalf of the German Government;
- g) assessed the German funded programmes in Eritrea, the mine detection dog programme in Yemen, and the mine action programme in Ethiopia on behalf of the German Government.

Advisory Services

46. Staff members of the Centre, i.a.,

- a) provided analysis on the threat of explosive remnants of war to the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC);
- b) provided technical advice at the July conference of Government experts in the CCW framework;
- c) provided advice on various aspects of demining to APOPO in Belgium;
- d) participated at the advisory panel meeting of EUDEM 2;
- e) joined the NPA Angola Steering Committee aiming at improving and streamlining the local operational demining concept of NPA;
- f) supported the Angolan Government in its attempts to revise and re-establish their centralised mine action centre capacity;
- g) held a one-day seminar on dog training issues at the South African (military) dog training centre;
- h) provided advice on MRE media via participation in a MRE workshop in Sudan at the request of the Sudan Campaign to Ban Landmines and UNMAS;
- i) hosted a two-day seminar on data collection, verification, input and dissemination techniques at James Madison University.

International Meeting of Mine Action Programme Directors and Advisors

47. The fifth International Meeting of Mine Action Programme Directors and Advisors, which is organised by UNMAS, took place between 25 and 28 February 2002 at the premises of the GICHD, and was attended by representatives of 24 mine-affected countries, UN agencies, the World Bank, NGOs and observers. The 163 participants exchanged views on current mine action strategies, analysed problems in the field of mine information management, and discussed issues linked to IMAS and advocacy efforts. In addition, latest developments in technology and research were presented and lessons learned were exchanged. Finally, the participants identified topics for further research.

48. The meeting also provided donor countries with an opportunity to meet and discuss solutions directly with the programme directors responsible for mine action programmes in mine-affected countries. The 2002 version of the UN Portfolio of mine-related projects was also officially launched at the meeting.

49. Besides its technical and logistical input, the GICHD also covered travel and accommodation costs of 44 participants of 23 UN-supported national mine action programmes.

Mine Ban Convention (MBC)

Intersessional Work Programme 2001 – 2002

50. The Centre continued its traditional support to the Intersessional Work Programme established by the States Parties to the MBC by hosting meetings of the Standing Committees and related services. In addition, with the establishment in January 2002 of the Implementation Support Unit (ISU), enhanced services were provided to the Co-Chairs of the Standing Committees in the preparation of programmes for their meetings and in distributing detailed information on these meetings to participants. Over 470 participants attended the meetings of the Standing Committees in January, and over 440 in May.

Implementation Support Unit (ISU)

51. Following the mandate entrusted by the States Parties to the MBC in September 2001, the ISU became operational in January. During the reporting period, this unit, i.a.,

- a) provided support to the work of the Co-ordinating Committee, particularly with respect to supporting the Co-ordinating Committee's efforts to enhance and ensure the on-going relevancy of the Intersessional Work Programme;
- b) provided professional advice and support to the current President with respect to all facets of its duties. In addition, the ISU supported the in-coming President's efforts to prepare the Fourth Meeting of States Parties (4MSP), in part by ensuring that draft documentation was distributed in a timely manner to all States Parties and other and by developing a web site on the 4MSP.
- c) began to establish itself as a means for the States Parties and others to obtain timely and comprehensive information on the MBC and the

implementation of it. The ISU responded to dozens of information requests from States Parties, States not Parties and others, enhanced the GICHD web site's MBC-related content and made presentations on the implementation of the MBC at various workshops and seminars.

52. Pursuant to its mandate, the ISU began work to establish a documentation resource facility to house and make accessible documentation on the establishment of the MBC and its implementation

53. A Voluntary Trust Fund for activities of the ISU, called for under the above mandate, was created in late 2001. So far, the Governments of Australia, Belgium, Canada, the Netherlands, Norway, Ireland, and of South Africa have contributed to the Fund.

Sponsorship Programme

54. In addition, the Centre continued to administer the Sponsorship Programme on behalf of a Group of Donors. The aim of this programme is to support widespread participation in meetings related to the MBC. This programme allowed

- a) 68 delegates and guest speakers from 39 mine-affected countries to participate at the January 2002 sessions of the Standing Committees;
- b) 72 delegates and guest speakers from 39 mine-affected countries to participate at the May 2002 session of the Standing Committees.

55. The Group of Donors includes Belgium, Canada, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom. The Group was joined by Germany in April.

Governance and Organisation

Council of Foundation

56. The Council of Foundation held its first meeting for 2002 on 6 June, during which it approved the Annual Report 2001 as well as the Centre's accounts for that year. In addition, the Council discussed the draft strategy paper 2003 – 2005 and was briefed on the Centre's guidelines for setting-up and implementing GICHD studies and projects.

Advisory Board

57. The Advisory Board met on 25 January and discussed the review of the Centre's strategy since 2000. The participants was briefed on the on-going mechanical research carried out by the Centre, and provided advice for the development of a GICHD methodology on studies. In addition, the Centre gave an update on the IMSMA programme.

Co-operation Agreements

58. In April, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed between UNDP and the Centre. This MoU provides a framework of co-operation and facilitates collaboration in areas of mutual interest.

Internal Organisation

59. On 12 July, Mr. Paddy Blagden retired from his post of Technical Director. Mr. Blagden has been with the Centre since its inception in 1998. He was replaced by Mr. Ian Mansfield, who was previously the Mine Action Team Leader for UNDP in New York.

60. During the reporting period, the Centre saw also the departure of two seconded officers, who finished their two year term with the GICHD: Lt Col Fabrice Delaître (France) and Mr. Alan Bryden (UK).

61. Both, the French as well as the UK Government agreed to continue their support by seconding new staff: Lt Col Delaître was replaced by Lt Col Jean-Paul Rychener, who started his three year term in August, and Mr. Paul Ellis (UK) joined the Centre in April for a two year assignment.

62. The Centre currently consists of 26 permanent staff members, including a total of five persons seconded by the Governments of France, Germany, Sweden, Switzerland, and the UK. In total, twelve nationalities are represented at the Centre (including staff members having more than one citizenship): Switzerland (12 persons), UK (5), Canada (2), New Zealand (2), the US (2), Australia, Colombia, France, Germany, Italy, Norway, and Sweden.

Geneva, 31 August 2002

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