



**GOVERNMENT OF SRI LANKA**

# **THE NATIONAL STRATEGY FOR MINE ACTION IN SRI LANKA**

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## ABBREVIATIONS

APMBC	:	Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention
CMVIS	:	Cambodia Mine Victim Information System
CBO	:	Community Based Organization
CL	:	Community Liaison
CCW	:	Convention on Conventional Weapons
CTF	:	Community Trust Fund
CHA	:	Confirmed Hazardous Area
DDG	:	Danish Demining Group
DASH	:	Devlon Assistance for Social Harmony
DHA	:	Defined Hazardous Area
DS	:	Divisional Secretariat
DSCMA	:	District Steering Committee for Mine Action
DPSG	:	Donor Support Peace Group
ERW	:	Explosive Remnants of War
FSD	:	Foundation Suisse de Deminage
GA	:	Government Agent
GN	:	Grama Niladhari
GoSL	:	Government of Sri Lanka
GICHD	:	Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining
HALO	:	Hazardous Areas Life-support Organisation
HDU	:	Humanitarian Demining Unit
IDP	:	Internally Displaced Person
IED	:	Improvised Explosive Device
IMSMA	:	Information Management System for Mine Action
INGO	:	International Non-Governmental Organisation
LTTE	:	Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam
MA	:	Mine Action
MAO	:	Mine Action Officer
MED	:	Ministry of Economic Development
MRE	:	Mine Risk Education
MoD	:	Ministry of Defence
MAG	:	Mines Advisory Group
MMIPE	:	Milinda Moragoda Institute for People's Empowerment
MED	:	Ministry of Economic Development
NGO	:	Non-Governmental Organisation
NIE	:	National Institute of Education
NMAC	:	National Mine Action Centre
NSCMA	:	National Steering Committee on Mine Action
QA	:	Quality Assurance
QM	:	Quality Management
RDF	:	Rural Development Foundation
RMAO	:	Regional Mine Action Office
SLNMAS	:	Sri Lanka National Mine Action Standards
SHA	:	Suspected Hazardous Area
SWP	:	Standard Work Procedure

SLA	:	Sri Lanka Army
SOND	:	Sarvodaya and Social Organisation for Development
UNDP	:	United Nations Development Programme
UNDSS	:	United Nations Department of Safety and Security
UNICEF	:	United Nations Children's Fund
UXO	:	Unexploded Ordnance
VA	:	Victim Assistance

## **THE NATIONAL STRATEGY FOR MINE ACTION IN SRI LANKA**

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

The National Mine Action Programme was initiated in 2002 with the assistance of UNDP, UNICEF, INGOs, local NGOs and several donor countries with the goal of creating a mine and explosive remnants of war (ERW) free environment in support of the resettlement and development programmes of the Government of Sri Lanka (GoSL).

The National Mine Action Programme operates under the leadership of the National Steering Committee on Mine Action (NSCMA), chaired by the Ministry of Economic Development (MED). Regional Mine Action Offices (RMAOs) help the Government Agents (GAs) to coordinate and manage mine and ERW clearance as well as Mine Risk Education in affected districts. A National Mine Action Centre (NMAC), which will gradually take over full responsibility for the coordination of mine action, has been set up with the support of UNDP. In July 2010 the setup of the NMAC was officially approved by Cabinet decision.

While mine action had seen significant progress since the start of the Programme in 2002, the escalation of the conflict in 2006 led to considerable fresh mine/ERW contamination. With the cessation of hostilities in May 2009, and with the Government's prioritization of resettlement of approximately 300,000 internally displaced people (IDP) in the North, mine action has seen an exponential scale up of activities. The complete level of the mine/ERW contamination is not yet known, but as at August 2010 all districts in the North have been surveyed to some extent, and it is expected that by the end of 2010 the survey process will be completed. While survey, clearance and mine risk education (MRE) operations are currently focused on the North, in support of the Government's resettlement plan, the East still faces residual contamination, which will need to be addressed in the medium term as well.

This National Mine Action Strategy has been drafted to set out the strategy in which the National Mine Action Programme plans to address the five pillars of mine action in Sri Lanka, including survey and clearance work, mine risk education, victim assistance, stockpile destruction and advocacy. The National Mine Action Strategy will provide the guidelines for the preparation of annual work plans to address national mine action needs while using existing resources in the most efficient manner.

### **2. BACKGROUND**

Following over two years of extensive military campaigns, in May 2009 the Government regained control over the entire territory of the island including the North where the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) have been driven out of their former strongholds in the Wanni and adjoining districts. With the end of the conflict, one of the critical priorities is the recovery and rehabilitation of the conflict-affected areas of Northern and Eastern Sri Lanka, among which the most urgent has been the expedient and sustainable resettlement of those displaced by the fighting, some of whom have lived in displacement for more than 20 years.

More than two decades of civil conflict have caused significant mine/ERW contamination throughout the North and East of Sri Lanka. Mine action operations are therefore a vital

precursor to the return of IDP. The significant mine/ERW contamination throughout the North and East of Sri Lanka not only presents a threat to the safety and welfare of the people living in or returning to these areas but also constrains reconstruction and recovery activities that need to be undertaken in support of these people.

Since early 2009, the (then) Ministry of Nation Building and Estate Infrastructure Development, in consultation with the Ministry of Defence, identified and assigned an increasing number of new mine/ERW survey and clearance tasks in Jaffna, Mannar and Vavuniya districts, and since early October 2009 also in Mullaitivu and Kilinochchi districts, in support of the Government's resettlements plans.

Six international demining operators, namely Danish Demining Group (DDG), Foundation Suisse de Deminage (FSD), the HALO Trust, HORIZON, Mines Advisory Group (MAG) and Sarvatra, as well as two local demining operators, namely Milinda Moragoda Institute for People's Empowerment (MMIPE) and Devlon Assistance for Social Harmony (DASH), the Sri Lanka Army- Humanitarian Demining Unit and the Humanitarian Demining Unit set up under the Ministry of Economic Development (MED) have significantly scaled up their operations in the North in order to manage the surge in mine action.

MRE activities were also considerably expanded after the conflict commencing with formal MRE in the welfare centres. Currently, there are the Ministry of Education, the SLA/Humanitarian Demining Unit (HDU), five national NGOs, namely Community Trust Fund (CTF), EHED-Caritas, Rural Development Foundation (RDF), Sarvodaya and Social Organisation for Development (SOND) and one international NGO, Internews, that are conducting MRE activities in Sri Lanka in support of the MA programme. Community Liaison (CL) activities are carried out by some of the demining operators in their areas of operations in support of their demining activities. Landmine/ERW safety briefings are carried out by UNICEF, the MRE operators, UN Department of Safety and Security (UNDSS) and by the demining operators.

UNDP has been involved in mine action in Sri Lanka since 2002, supporting the government to build national capacity to plan, coordinate and execute mine action activities. UNICEF has been involved in mine action since 1997, particularly in training local partners including the Ministry of Education in the provision of MRE. UNICEF has also promoted Victim Assistance and Advocacy for banning landmines.

### **3. SCOPE OF THE PROBLEM**

#### **3.1 LANDMINES**

In Sri Lanka, two decades of conflict left many areas in the North and East of the country significantly contaminated by mines and ERW.

The mine/ERW threat consists of landmines laid by the Sri Lankan Security Forces and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Elam (LTTE) and other ERW scattered within conflict areas. The Indian Peacekeeping Forces had also used landmines during their presence from July 1987 to January 1990.

Mines Laid by the Security Forces. The security forces of Sri Lanka did not emplace landmines indiscriminately. Anti-personnel mines were laid in protective minefields according to patterns and were recorded during the laying process. Anti-tank mines were also utilised and laid in certain areas and recorded accordingly. After ratification of Amended Protocol II of the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) on 24 September 2004, all mines laid by the security forces were in accordance with the provisions of the CCW. All minefield records were handed over to the mine action programme at the end of the conflict and are being entered into the Information Management System for Mine Action (IMSMA) for utilisation during survey, marking and clearance activities

Mines Laid by the LTTE. The mines laid by the LTTE are mostly anti-personnel mines but some anti-tank mines were also laid. The LTTE also made use of protective minefields in front of their defensive positions. While the protective minefields were laid according to patterns, there are no minefields records available. The LTTE also made use of nuisance mines where mines were laid to prevent access to facilities like wells, buildings, roads, footpaths, etc. These nuisance mines normally consist of single mines scattered over large areas and sometimes of multiple mines laid together to protect specific access routes or facilities. During the final stages of the conflict in 2009 some mines were also scattered openly on the ground during the rapid retreat of the LTTE to the east. The LTTE made use of improvised explosive devices (IEDs) in the form of mortar shells connected to tripwires to act as fragmentation mines, electrical initiated explosive devices placed at strategic locations, mines connected with detonating cord to mortar/artillery shells a distance away, etc. The LTTE manufactured most of the mines they used themselves of which some are designed with an anti-lift/anti-tilt mechanism to prevent the removal of the mine from the ground after it is being laid.

Many mines and large tracts of land were cleared since 2002 but the escalation of the conflict in 2006 led to the re-contamination in particular the Wannai as the forces prepared for the final offensive in 2008 and the final use of arms in March 2009.

According to an estimation done by the Sri Lankan Army 1.6 million landmines have been laid in Sri Lanka of which 366,870 mines have been cleared until now through military demining and humanitarian demining. This leaves the country with an estimated number of 1.23 million mines still to be cleared.

While there has been tremendous progress after the conflict on mine clearance and this has paved the way for large waves of returnees including from IDP camps, much remains to be done. Non-Technical and Technical Surveys conducted so far in the Northern Province since the end of the conflict and existing data from the Eastern Province reveal that as at August 31, 2010, approximately 552 km<sup>2</sup> is contaminated by mines/ERW. However, the survey process is still ongoing and a complete and an accurate picture of the scale of mine/ERW contamination will be only known upon completion of the survey process expected towards the end of 2010.

The current practice in Northern Sri Lanka is to release land for resettlement following the completion of Non-Technical and Technical surveys, whereby Confirmed and Defined Hazardous Areas (CHAs and DHAs) are demarcated, and areas outside of this are released



for resettlement. Priority for minefield clearance is given to the residential areas of villages identified for resettlement. These practices have been adopted both on account of the limited demining capacities in the country when compared to the scope of contamination and in order to keep pace with and support the Government's resettlement plans. However, as people are returning to their homes, it is essential that areas used for livelihoods, as well as lands containing socio-economic infrastructure, are cleared in parallel. The reality is that many of the people resettled in the North are currently living near, if not directly adjacent to, mine/ERW contaminated land. Mines/ERW are blocking access to some residential areas and surrounding land, including gardens and paddy fields, hereby preventing people to effectively re-engage in livelihood activities, as well as to have access to firewood. Despite the clear demarcations of un-cleared and potentially contaminated land, and sustained MRE efforts, there is a very high and probable risk that returnees will increasingly start foraging into un-cleared lands (especially into arable lands) in order to meet their basic needs and livelihood needs. This will increase the likelihood of mine/ERW accidents. It is therefore imperative that these areas are cleared as soon as possible.

### **3.2 EXPLOSIVE REMNANTS OF WAR**

ERW contamination mostly consist of unexploded airdropped bombs, artillery delivered shells and missiles, mortar bombs, handheld anti-tank projectiles, rifle grenades and hand grenades. No cluster ammunition/bombs were used in Sri Lanka at any time during the conflict. Small amounts of discarded munitions are also found in some areas where hasty withdrawals took place. High ERW contamination is experienced in conflict areas and some contamination can also be found where small skirmishes took place and in camp areas occupied by the military forces.

ERW residual contamination is a long term problem that any country that went through an intense conflict must deal with. A very good example is the countries in Europe where ERW are still unearthed 65 years after the end of the Second World War. A national capacity needs to be maintained in the future to deal with the problem through national EOD components in the military or in the HDU. Where large construction activities are to take place in known conflict areas the construction sites need to be investigated for the presence of any ERW.

There is currently no legislation to address ERW and anti-personnel mines. The Government of Sri Lanka is using Emergency Regulations No. 34 amended in the Gazette Extraordinary No. 1651/24 dated 02 May 2010 as an interim measure to address this issue. It is important to take action to bring proper legislation as part of the General Law to address ERW and all forms of landmines.

### **3.3 TRAP-GUNS**

The use of trap-guns containing explosives by the local farmers to hunt and kill game poses a very large threat to the safety of not only the population but also to the users of trap guns. The danger of trap guns needs to be addressed through amendments to the Fire Arms Ordinance.

### 3.4 MINE RISK EDUCATION

MRE<sup>1</sup> seeks to reduce risk-taking behaviour among people living in mine/ERW infested areas. It also aims to educate those working temporarily in or travelling to or through affected areas. Community liaison activities aim to support the demining operators and to build a community capacity enabling the local population to reduce the risk from mines and ERW.

As a result of continuous MRE in the Northern and Eastern Province, general levels of understanding the mine/ERW threat and knowing what to do in case of encountering mines, UXO or abandoned ordnance are high. Many people demonstrate mine-smart behaviour by reporting suspected dangerous devices and areas and by educating their family or community members and newcomers on the existing threat and main risk-taking behaviours. However, as many communities live close to infested or not yet fully surveyed areas the threat in some divisions remains high. Continuous MRE is needed. In addition, people from the South of the Island have started visiting the North and East and need to learn how to behave mine-smart.

### 3.5 VICTIM ASSISTANCE

Victim Assistance as commonly understood in mine action refers to all care and rehabilitation activities that aim to meet the immediate and long-term needs of landmine and ERW victims, their families, and affected communities. The term 'victim' refers generally to those who have been injured or killed by a landmine or ERW explosion, to their families who suffer emotional, social and financial loss and to the communities that lose access to land and other resources due to the presence of landmines or ERW. VA in mine action should not create isolated programmes for those disabled from landmines and ERW. VA calls for ensuring that existing health care and social service systems, rehabilitation programmes and legislative and policy frameworks are adequate to meet the needs of all citizens – including landmine survivors and family members of deceased victims.

The first mine/ERW related incidents were recorded in 1982 when two incidents occurred with a casualty in each. The figures escalated to 162 incidents and 211 casualties in 2001. The numbers dramatically reduced over the years but are currently slowly rising with the return of the IDP population. The figures for 2010 until 31 August are 14 incidents and 23 casualties. Please see figure 1 below for all the recorded annual mine/ERW related incidents and casualties.

Mine action in Sri Lanka has not given great attention to VA to date. UNICEF supports VA service providers, albeit at a much lower scale than MRE, and UNDP provides socio-economic support, including to targeted vulnerable populations, to the North and East through its Transition Recovery Program. Ministries dealing with VA as part of their disability focus or in support of victims from conflict include the Ministry of Social Services, the

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<sup>1</sup> Although the discipline is called Mine Risk Education (MRE), it seeks to prevent harm to civilians from all types of victim-activated explosive devices. MRE therefore covers the dangers not only of landmines but of all ERW and in the case of Sri Lanka also of trap guns.

Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Defence (Directorate of Rehabilitation). Coordination among key-stakeholders has yet to be established.

In Sri Lanka data on people with disability are scarce; data on mine/ERW victims exist but are incomplete and inconsistent. Sri Lanka decided to set up an injury surveillance system which is now functioning but at a limited scale (Ministry of Healthcare and Nutrition, Non-Communicable Diseases with support of Trauma Secretariat). Availability and quality of medical services is good but does not reach all of the newly resettled areas yet. Physical rehabilitative services have improved over recent years but serious gaps remain to be addressed. Coordination in the sector is weak to non-existent.

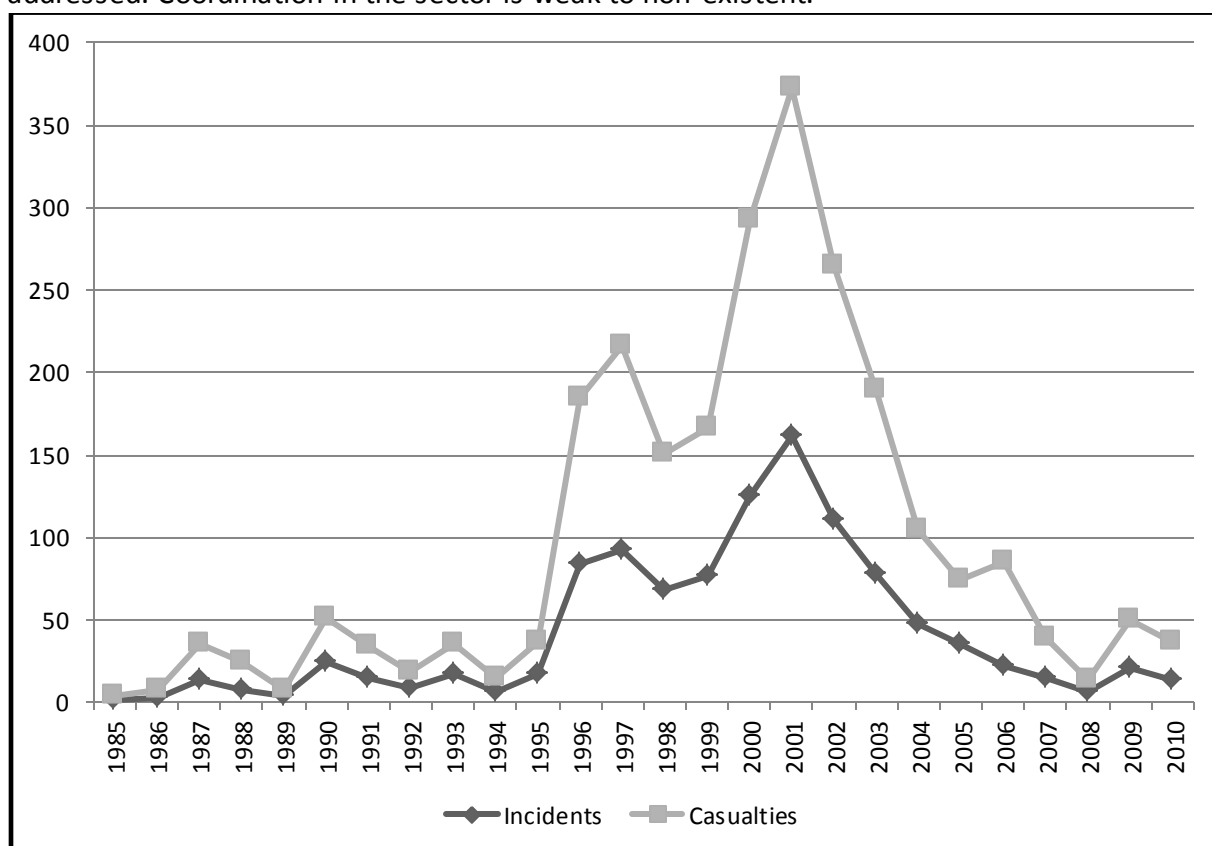


Figure 1: Mine/ERW incident and casualty history

#### 4. GENERAL ASSUMPTIONS

- a. The national responsibility for the implementation of the national mine action programme remains under the Ministry of Economic Development after the resettlement programme in the North is completed.
- b. Necessary resources are mobilized from the national budget as well as from international donors to achieve the strategic objectives of the national strategy for Mine Action in Sri Lanka.
- c. The NMAC is set up and increasingly equipped with the required skilled human resources that allow it to gradually take over complete responsibility of the management and coordination of mine action in Sri Lanka.
- d. The NMAC will take the lead in the coordination of all Mine Action activities.

## **5. VISION**

Sri Lanka is free from the threat of landmines and explosive remnants of war (ERW), where individuals and communities live in a safe environment and the needs of landmine and ERW victims are met.

## **6. MISSION**

To develop and implement a sustainable national mine action programme able to plan, coordinate, implement and monitor all aspects of Mine Action in Sri Lanka and mobilize the required resources to make Sri Lanka free from the threat of landmines/ERW through education, threat prevention and elimination in accordance with Sri Lankan National Mine Action Standards (SLNMAS).

## **7. SCOPE OF MINE ACTION ACTIVITIES**

The scope of mine action in Sri Lanka encompasses all the five components of mine action namely:

- a. Landmine and ERW clearance, including non-technical survey, technical survey, mapping, marking, clearance, community mine action liaison, completion survey, the handover of cleared land and post clearance impact survey.
- b. Mine risk education, including activities which seek to reduce the risk of injury from landmines and ERW by raising awareness and promoting behavioural change including public information dissemination, education and training and community mine action liaison.
- c. Victim assistance, including data collection on victims, victim rehabilitation and the integration of victims into their societies.
- d. Destruction of stockpiles of anti-personnel landmines.
- e. Advocacy in support of a ban on anti-personnel landmines and other relevant instruments of law that address the problems of landmines and ERW; particularly by promoting full compliance of and accession to the Anti-personnel Mine Ban Convention and by ratifying the Convention for the Rights of People with Disability.

## **8. STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES**

The following strategic objectives for the Sri Lankan mine action programme are identified:

- a. Establish and maintain institutional structures for the effective implementation, coordination and control of the mine action programme in Sri Lanka.
- b. Create, strengthen and enhance a national mine action capacity to conduct all activities of mine action.

- c. Establish and implement an annual mine action planning process.
- d. Maintain an Information Management System for Mine Action (IMSMA).
- e. Continue providing mine risk education ensuring that people show mine-safe behaviour.
- f. Continue survey operations in the contaminated areas in accordance with the priorities as defined by national and district authorities.
- g. Continue to undertake mine/ERW clearance operations in line with the priorities as defined by national and district authorities.
- h. Determine and meet the needs of landmine/ERW victims and integrate them into society.
- i. Advocate for the respect for international humanitarian law norms, particularly regarding the Antipersonnel Mine Ban Convention and the Convention on the Rights of People with Disability.
- j. Ensure the destruction of all stockpiled anti-personnel landmines own, possess or under the jurisdiction or control of the Sri Lankan Government as soon as possible.
- k. Compile, implement and enforce Sri Lankan National Mine Action Standards related to all components of mine action and in accordance with the International Mine Action Standards.
- l. Mobilize the necessary funds from national and international sources to achieve the mine action strategic objectives.
- m. Mainstream mine action into the national recovery and development plans.

#### **8.1 ESTABLISH AND MAINTAIN INSTITUTIONAL STRUCTURES FOR THE EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION, COORDINATION AND CONTROL OF THE MINE ACTION PROGRAMME IN SRI LANKA**

It is important to establish and maintain an institutional structure in Sri Lanka that will address the mine action needs of Sri Lanka and assist in future programme expansion. The institutional structure for the Sri Lanka Mine Action Programme is depicted in Figure 2 below.

The Sri Lanka Mine Action Programme is currently overseen by the Ministry of Economic Development (MED) and will fall under the Additional Secretary of Regional Development to whom the Director of the Sri Lanka National Mine Action Centre (NMAC) will report.

- a. The National Steering Committee for Mine Action (NSCMA). The NSCMA shall provide policy and oversight to the mine action programme, oversee and approve the work of the NMAC and manage linkages within the government, mine action community and donors. The NSCMA is not an institution and it does not have staff or a budget. Its members serve as a Board of Directors to oversee mine action in Sri Lanka and to manage the NMAC. The NSCMA shall be chaired by the Additional Secretary of Regional Development. A deputy chair should also be appointed. The composition of the authority should include key Government Ministries and Departments which have a stake in mine action such as Resettlement, Disaster Relief, Education, Health, Agriculture, Social Services, Foreign Affairs, etc. It is important that the authority has enough members so that it represents a variety of interests, but it should not be too large that it cannot function. The director of the NMAC should function as the secretary during NSCMA meetings.

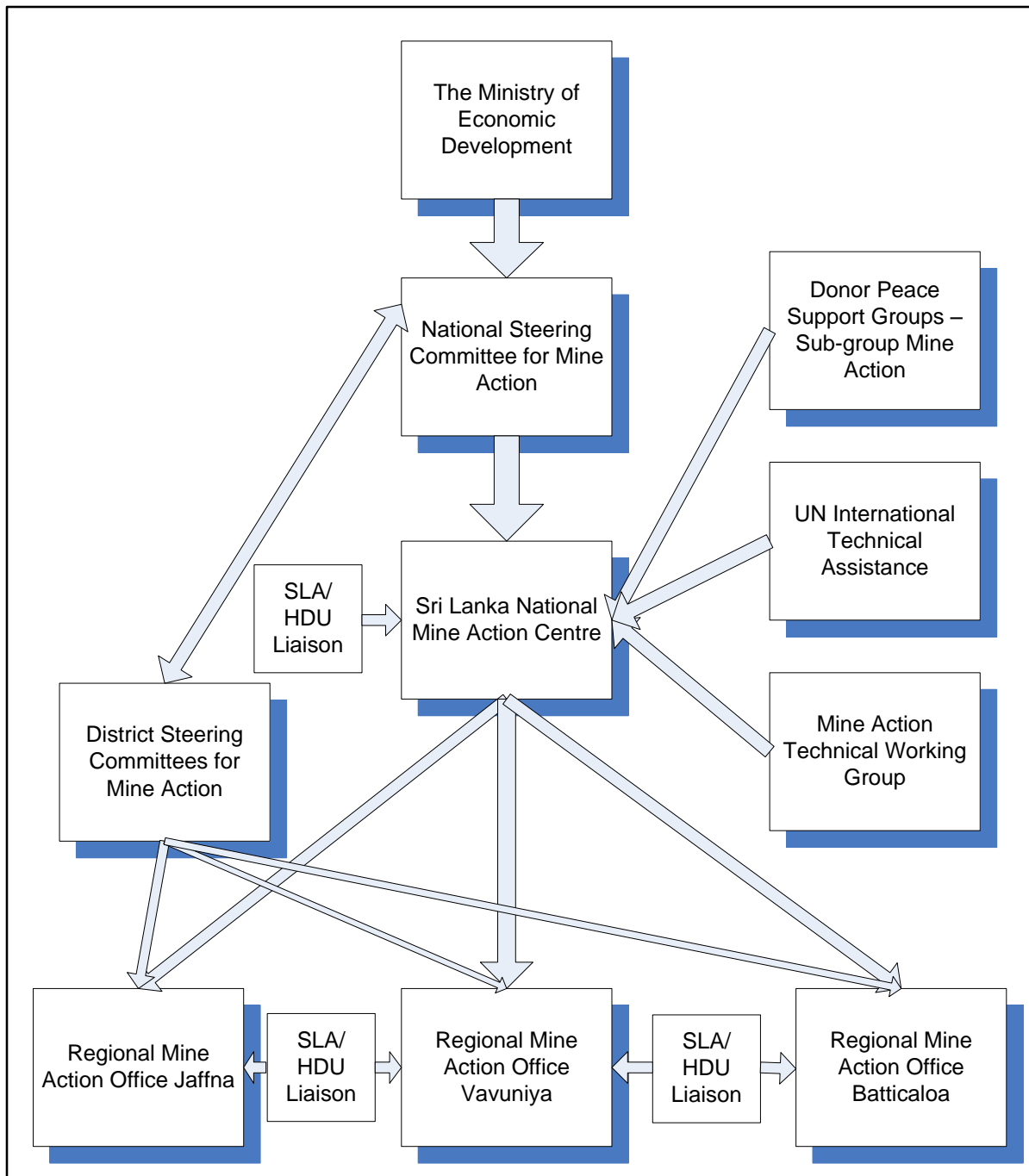


Figure 2: institutional structure for the Sri Lanka Mine Action Programme

The NSCMA shall be responsible for the following:

- Overseeing the work of the NMAC.
- Approving and endorsing national standards, regulations, guidelines or procedures that are developed in accordance with the International Mine Action Standards (IMAS) and relevant national legislation.
- Approving budgets and expenditure by the NMAC.
- Approving a national policy, strategy, priorities and annual work plan to reduce the impact of mines and explosive remnants of war (ERW).

- Reporting on the progress made on mine action to parliament, the public, donors and other relevant fora.
- Identifying and approving national mine action priorities in support of national development projects and plans.
- Establishing or recommending government policies to guide Government departments and international development agencies on the steps they should take when their programmes are affected by landmine and other ERW contamination.
- Assisting with resource mobilization from national and international sources.

The current composition of the NSCMA includes donors. However, donors should not be represented in the NSCMA but instead form a separate group so that there is a forum for formal dialogue and communication between the NSCMA and NMAC with the international community. The current NSCMA should be restructured by September 2010.

- b. The District Steering Committee for Mine Action (DSCMA). The DSCMA will provide direction to the respective Regional Mine Action Offices (RMAO) in terms of MA task priorities in support of the development projects and plans implemented by the district authorities within their district. The Government Agents of the respective districts will chair the DSCMA meetings within their districts. The Mine Action Officer (MAO) of the RMAO will act as the secretary at the DSCMA meetings within the RMAO area of responsibility. The members of the DSCMA should include the project directors of the current projects supported by MA activities or in need of MA support. The DSCMA shall be responsible for the following:

- Identifying and approving district MA priorities in support of district development projects and plans;
- Including national priorities identified by the NSCMA for the district in the district annual MA work plan; and
- Approving and overseeing the implementation of the district annual MA work plan.

Currently a DSCMA exists in the Jaffna, Vavuniya, and Mannar districts. However, DSCMAs should be structured and operational in all the relevant districts by November 2010.

- c. Donor Peace Support Group. A Donor Peace Support Group (DPSG) needs also to be instituted with the role of providing the NMAC advice on policy and funding. The DPSG should be a steering committee from donor agencies and donor countries, with representation by the Government and the NMAC. An in-country trust fund for MA under the DPSG should be initiated by September 2011.

The DPSG already exist however NMAC representation should be included at their next meeting in September 2010.



- d. Mine Action Technical Working Group. A technical working group (TWG) should be formed to develop closer linkage between the NMAC, mine action operators, UN mine action support agencies and other interested agencies. The role of the technical working group will be to act as a Technical Steering Committee for the NMAC shaping its direction in terms of tasks execution, available resources and technical policies. Sub groups relating to the various mine action components should also be formed to discuss specific technical and common aspects regarding the component. Feedback regarding sub-group meetings shall be provided at the TWG meetings. The TWG and sub-group meeting are to be initiated by the NMAC.

The technical working group is to be established by January 2011 and meetings should be held as and when required.

- e. Sri Lanka National Mine Action Centre. The NMAC is the operational body that executes the policies of the NSCMA and is the focal point for coordinating all mine action activities on the ground. While the NMAC has been established and is situated in Colombo it is currently insufficiently staffed and is unable to fulfil its role and functions. The NMAC currently consists of a main office in Colombo, located within the Ministry of Economic Development, which has 08 staff, including a Project Director, a Senior Mine Action Officer, and several support staff. The RMAOs in Jaffna and Vavuniya are still fully staffed by UNDP personnel, with the exception of a QA Officer in Vavuniya. A sub-office with UNDP staffing currently exists in Mannar and preparations are made to open a sub-office in Kilinochchi and Mullaitivu. ARMAO in the East of Sri Lanka based in Batticaloa is to be established by December 2010. A national capacity should be built in the NMAC and the RMAOs and these entities should be fully staffed by government employees within the medium term. The possibility of military personnel trained in humanitarian demining seconded to fill some of the positions in these entities should strongly be considered. The NMAC office in Colombo should have all of the different functions listed below. It should include Senior Officers to manage the larger departments, as well as have planning, quality management, MRE/VA and public information officers. It will also need an accountant and HR and procurement officers to provide administrative support. The regional offices will also need to have staff in operations, quality assurance/control, MRE/VA and administration that report to the Mine Action Officer in the district offices for day to day matters but also reports back to the Senior Officer of the respective function in the NMAC headquarters. In summary the NMAC should consist of:

- A management component.
- An operations component for planning and tasking.
- Mine risk education and victim assistance components.
- A quality management (QM) component.
- An information management and technology component.

- An administration component responsible for personnel, logistics, and finance.
- A public information component.

The NMAC is responsible for the following:

- Liaising with government authorities, humanitarian and development agencies to determine the priorities for mine action, as well as plans to address these priorities.
- Establishing an information management system, collecting and analysing data, and managing and disseminating mine action information.
- Preparing/revising the national mine actions strategic plan (vision, mission, goals and objectives) with the input of all stakeholders which is in-line with national recovery, reconstruction and development plans.
- Developing an annual work plan to support the strategic plan.
- Setting criteria for mine action priorities.
- Accrediting mine action operators, tasking and monitoring mine action activities.
- Drafting and adopting national mine action standards.
- Acting as the secretariat for the NSCMA.

In accordance with Cabinet Paper No. 10/1356/424/010 the establishment and the organogram of the NMAC was officially approved by Cabinet decision on the 14<sup>th</sup> of July 2010.

The structure of the central NMAC is to be staffed by 50% by December 2011.

The structure of the central NMAC is to be fully staffed by December 2012.

The RMAOs should be staffed by government employed staff by 25% by December 2011.

The RMAOs should be fully staffed by government employed staff by December 2013.

## **8.2 CREATE, STRENGTHEN AND ENHANCE A NATIONAL MINE ACTION CAPACITY TO CONDUCT ALL ACTIVITIES OF MINE ACTION**

The Sri Lankan Government should establish and ensure a sustainable mine action programme. Most importantly it should create a well-established and qualified national mine action capacity. All MA agencies working in Sri Lanka should include an objective of building a capable national MA capacity. A national capacity building plan should be developed and implemented by June 2011.

- a. National Mine/ERW Clearance Capacity. The focus of mine/ERW clearance capacity building should be on the development of the Humanitarian Demining Unit (HDU) and other national NGOs. The current capacity of the HDU should be expanded to enable it to cover all mine/ERW affected regions. Attention should be given to equip the HDU with the required clearance equipment, vehicles, survey equipment, information technology equipment, camping equipment and other logistical requirements. Equally important, the HDU should establish a strong civilian management capacity that will enable it to function independently from the SLA. International NGOs should place priority on the capacity development of national staff with a medium term exit strategy aimed at gradually handing over responsibilities to a national NGO. The training of the HDU and other national NGOs should be properly planned and the establishment of a technical training facility in the future should be considered. Furthermore, there are many international training courses available, especially on the managerial level, which should be considered in the capacity building plan for the HDU and national NGOs.
- b. National MRE Capacity. The focus of capacity building should be on the development of the Education Sector (Teachers, In-Service Advisers, senior education officers), the Humanitarian Demining Unit (HDU) and specialised national NGOs. Community Liaison capacity should be strengthened among demining operators as well. The current MRE capacity should be maintained to be able to cover all the regions effectively. Attention should be given to regularly developing new educational materials and innovative approaches. National MRE NGOs should incorporate MRE into on-going community development and child protection programmes to ensure long-term sustainability. MRE capacity ultimately needs to be part of a community-based mine action response capacity. Training of local focal points and volunteers is crucial in this respect. The training of the education officers, the HDU and national NGOs should be properly planned.
- c. National Victim Assistance Capacity. The NMAC and its regional structures should liaise closely with key governmental and non-governmental stakeholders involved in the comprehensive rehabilitation and inclusion of war-injured and disabled and family members of the deceased with a focus on landmine/ERW victims. Capacity building for all mine action officials on victim assistance and the disability sector in general is a minimum. Particular efforts need to be made in training on a referral pathway to available service providers. Capacity building needs to include mine/ERW survivors and other people with disabilities.
- d. National Public relations/Advocacy Capacity. The NMAC should have a communications and liaison section. Its core functions are to provide professional public relations output (website, regular briefing materials, press statements, response to queries from the public); to engage in advocacy activities in close support of civil society actors; and to maintain and foster donor relations.

### 8.3 ESTABLISH AND IMPLEMENT AN ANNUAL MINE ACTION PLANNING PROCESS

To ensure that future development plans, requirements and objectives for the mine/ERW contaminated regions as set on national and district levels are achieved, it is important that a MA annual planning process is developed and implemented by October 2010.

The planning process should include planning conducted on the national as well as on district levels.

Clearance Priorities. Criteria for the identification of clearance priorities should be developed and clearly communicated to all decision makers. The criteria should be applied in a clearly defined prioritization process that should be implemented at both the national and district levels. All the identified hazardous areas shall be prioritised according to the criteria and those that are to be cleared in support of the national and district plans should then be prioritised by the NSCMA at the national level and by the DSCMA at the district level in order of urgency. Where land in districts is earmarked for clearance at the national level the task priority shall be maintained on the applicable district level. The following criteria should be taken in consideration when determining the priority of a hazardous area:

- a. Areas required for the resettlement of people– always the highest priority.
- b. Land where people conduct their livelihood activities – high priority.
- c. Land giving access to schools, hospitals, temples/churches – high priority.
- d. Land with essential infrastructure that requires repair, such as existing roads, electricity supply, water supply and irrigation systems – high priority.
- e. Hazardous areas within three kilometres from villages, main roads and access roads – high priority.
- f. Land required for development and construction of new infrastructure – medium priority.
- g. Protective minefield around existing military installations – medium priority.
- h. Hazardous areas between three and five kilometres from villages, main roads and access roads – medium priority.
- i. Hazardous areas within jungles with no direct impact on the daily activities and requirements of the population and authorities – low priority.
- j. Hazardous areas further than five kilometres from villages, main roads and access roads – low priority.

The NMAC and the RMAOs shall prioritise all the CHAs and DHAs in IMSMA in accordance with the above criteria by October 2010. As new hazardous areas are added to the system the priority should be determined according to the above criteria.

The NSCMA and the DSCMAs should compile list of future tasks earmarked for clearance in the upcoming year taking the allocated clearance priority in consideration and list them in order of urgency. Land may have a medium or low clearance priority but due to the national and/or district development plan may appear high on the list of urgency.

The NMAC and RMAOs will then be responsible to compile annual MA plans taking the complexity of the task, the time and resources available in consideration. The NMAC shall

compile an annual plan based on the national list of priorities (e.g. national development of roads, rail, power supply, etc.) and the RMAOs shall compile annual work plans for each district based on the national priorities for the district and the district priorities. Other activities in regards of planned MRE, VA, capacity building, management and project support should also be included in the annual plan.

The plans shall be submitted to the NSCMA and the DSCMA for approval. Shortfalls should be indicated to the committees and reasons for and implications resulting from these shortfalls should be clearly spelled out. The NSCMA and DSCMA should provide guidance in how these shortfalls are to be overcome.

When the annual work plans are approved it needs to be communicated to all stake holders. It is important that the Donor Peace Support Group (DPSG) is informed of the plans in order to be able to plan for necessary funding. The annual work plans are also to be communicated to the MA agencies that will be responsible for the implementation of the plan. Early communication of the plan is very essential to enable the agencies to obtain additional resources if necessary and also to prepare their clearance/survey capacity in order to be most effective.

The annual work plans need to be reviewed on a periodical basis and it is therefore important that regular operational meetings on NMAC and RMAO level and NSCMA and DSCMA meetings are held to ensure that progress is on track and to implement corrective measures in time where necessary.

National work plans shall be compiled and approved by 31 October annually for the following year.

District work plans shall be compiled and approved by 30 November annually for the following year.

#### **8.4 ESTABLISH AND MAINTAIN AN INFORMATION MANAGEMENT SYSTEM FOR MINE ACTION (IMSMA)**

With the assistance of UNDP and the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD) the NMAC shall establish and maintain an effective decentralised IMSMA starting with the following milestones:

- a. Establish an IMSMA section at the NMAC with the required equipment and trained personnel by May 2011.
- b. Setup a central IMSMA database at the NMAC by July 2011.
- c. Review the current databases and conduct a clean-up of these databases by August 2010.
- d. Approve an information policy for the dissemination of mine/ERW information for Sri Lanka by September 2010.

- e. Create and implement a data quality management process by December 2010.
- f. Complete migration from the current IMSMA version to the IMSMA NG version by December 2011.

The NMAC is already capable to produce reports, maps and to disseminate mine/ERW information on a regional level through the RMAOs, and the mine information is freely available in accordance with the information policy. The capacity still needs to be developed at the national level and the NMAC should be capable to produce IMSMA related reports, maps etc. on a national level by July 2011.

## **8.5 CONTINUE PROVIDING MINE RISK EDUCATION ENSURING THAT PEOPLE SHOW MINE-SAFE BEHAVIOUR**

Mine risk education seeks to reduce risk-taking behaviour among people living in mine/ERW infested areas. It also aims to educate those working temporarily in or travelling to or through affected areas. Community liaison activities aim to support the demining operators and to build a community capacity enabling the local population to reduce the risk from mines and ERW. Central to the success of these activities is effective communication. Communication is the process of sharing information and understanding. It is used to inform people of dangers of mines and ERW and to demonstrate safe behaviour. MRE also uses it to create support for mine-safe behaviour among communities and leaders.<sup>2</sup>

Sri Lanka's MRE programme has two main goals (MRE Communication Strategy 2009-2011)<sup>3</sup>:

- a. To minimise deaths and injuries from landmines and explosive remnants of war (ERW); and
- b. To reduce the social and economic impact from landmines and ERW.

Sri Lanka is implementing a low-cost MRE approach via the national education system, via specialised national NGO staff and trained volunteers, community liaison staff among demining agencies, and MRE staff of the Humanitarian Demining Unit. The use of mass media complements these approaches. MRE should be gender and age-specific taking into account the specific local threats (village maps) and specific risk-taking behaviours and at-risk groups.

The ultimate goal is to empower communities in highly affected areas to be able to respond to the threat by educating newcomers and those most at risk on their own through local Community-Based Organizations (CBOs), schools, religious bodies and governmental entities including the Police. Governmental focal points along with volunteer community focal points supported by DS Division focal points appointed by the responsible GAs are to form

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<sup>2</sup> IMAS MRE Best Practice Guidebook, November 2005.

<sup>3</sup> Sri Lanka MRE Communication Strategy was developed in UNCEF TWG with all relevant stakeholders in March 2009 with support from GICHD. It forms part of SLNMAS 12 Mine Risk Education.

the organizational structure capable of relating reports on mines/ERW to ensure swift investigation and removal/disposal.

High- and medium level affected communities/GNs and Divisions need to be able to prepare their own village threat maps and to develop a mine action plan as part of its local development planning. A professional MRE capacity has to ensure that safety messages are correct, MRE quality standards are maintained, and that educational materials are available and revised from time to time. MRE agencies are to provide MRE especially in lowly affected communities and divisions, to aid workers, government staff and service providers working in mine/ERW infested areas and for visitors/tourists travelling through mine/EWR infested areas. The use of mass media can complement these efforts.

MRE shall be conducted via four complimentary approaches in Sri Lanka:

- School-based MRE
- Community-based MRE
- Community liaison
- Media-based MRE

MRE links with mine/ERW clearance and also supports victim assistance and advocacy efforts. Community liaison plays a crucial role in this and aims to foster community-based risk reduction mechanisms.

The Government of Sri Lanka in 2002 asked UNICEF to act as the coordinating body for MRE in Sri Lanka. A MRE standard and a policy have been developed jointly with the Government and NGO stakeholders. MRE activities are coordinated at national and at district level with the existing mine action bodies. An accreditation mechanism is planned to go into effect in 2010.

The following four MRE sub- objectives will be pursued:

- a. The national education system should impart school-based MRE as part of the national curriculum with a focus on highly-contaminated areas by January 2011.

The Ministry of Education and the National Institute of Education (NIE) in 2004 developed a set of students and teachers materials on MRE. However, MRE was focused on the North and East only. In 2009 the Secretary endorsed to incorporate MRE into the national curriculum. Ministry and NIE officials with UNICEF support have started preparing mandatory MRE-lessons for grades 5-9 under the subject Life Competency. Additional teaching materials are being designed for Primary Level and for grades 10-11. Basic lessons will also be included in the Accelerated Learning Programme.

Including MRE in the standard curriculum is aimed to achieve long-term sustainability. Focal teachers and focal students, principals and senior education staff need to be sensitized and trained. NGOs and HDU can support MRE in schools. Methods include use of the assembly, class room lessons, use of media,

drama, song and dance, preparing threat maps, murals and exhibitions as part of curricular and extra-curricular activities. Materials including time table, note books etc. with MRE messages complement these activities. Activities may also reach parents, other teachers and the community as a whole.

School-based MRE shall be imparted in all high-affected areas in the Northern and Eastern Provinces by the end of October 2010.

MRE lessons shall be finalised as integral part of the subject Life Competency by January 2011.

MRE lessons shall be an integral part of the Accelerated Learning Programme by January 2011.

The NMAC through UNICEF shall assist the Zonal Directors of Education in highly affected areas to train focal teachers and In-Service Advisors on teaching MRE. The National Institute of Education shall be in a position to train education staff on school-based MRE by March 2011.

- b. Mine/ERW affected Communities should be capable of developing their own mine action plan and to ensure regular provision of community-based MRE.

More than 1,000 Community focal points serving as volunteers supported by local MRE NGOs have been trained in MRE. In addition, local CBOs/NGO networks including Women Development Societies, Rural Development Societies, have been trained in delivering MRE on their own. Children Clubs have trained child animators providing child-to-child MRE in some districts. Identifying local focal points among government staff at GN level started in 2010 and should become government policy at village, GN for DS Division level in selected communities.

Ranking of high, medium and low mine/ERW affected communities, GN and DS Divisions should be finalized as part of the annual mine action plan preparation by end of November 2010. Maps and village lists need to be reassessed regularly.

Government agents will assign divisional focal points and GN-secretaries will assign mine action focal points in highly affected GN divisions and communities by December 2010.

UNICEF and its MRE NGO partners will provide MRE orientation seminars to government staff and selected focal points by February 2011. Refresher seminars will be provided regularly.

MRE training of trainer workshops will be provided to CBOs, religious institutions and interested NGO partners to build a local MRE-capacity.



All high and medium mine/ERW-affected villages shall produce village threat maps by June 2011 with the support of all relevant mine action stakeholders.

All high and medium mine/ERW-affected GN-secretaries shall develop local mine action plans by June 2011 under the supervision of the DS Secretaries.

- c. Trained MRE facilitators and volunteers should continue to provide localized MRE in mine/ERW affected communities.

National NGOs with specialised MRE facilitators have been providing MRE since 2003 with technical and material support from UNICEF. In 2010 HDU and the Police have been trained in MRE-provision. MRE should be provided regularly in all mine-infested areas – increasingly in support of local CBOs, etc. Operators should provide landmine safety training to international and national staff working in the North and East. Rapid response MRE shall be provided immediately following mine/ERW incidents. Methods for community-based and community-oriented MRE range from direct presentations and safety briefings to house-to-house visits; traditional media (dance, poems, storytelling etc.) are popular as well as using modern media (Video-session as part of a road show for example). The use of small media, such as posters and leaflets, is a complementary measure. Sign boards and bill boards are also used.

Some demining INGOs in the past have also provided MRE but since 2006 were requested by the Government to focus on community liaison only. An accreditation mechanism is planned to allow operators interested in MRE provision to do so when they fulfil the requirements.

National operators specialised in providing MRE should continue providing MRE in mine/ERW affected communities and focus on building local capacities in high and medium affected divisions. District plans should be authorized by the GA and submitted by end of November 2010.

Special attention should be paid to specific risk-taking groups including material collectors (war scrap), fisher men (dynamite fishing), farmer (trap guns) and tourists/pilgrims. All districts should continue/start holding focus group discussions and develop tailored programs by December 2010.

MRE operators need to become familiar with the special circumstances related to the trap-gun problem and incorporate this threat into its planning by June 2011.

MRE officers should become licensed by participating in basic and advanced MRE trainings provided by MAG/UNICEF by end of November 2010. MRE operators should prepare SOP on MRE and Community Liaison to get accredited by end of December 2010.

- d. CL should empower communities to respond to the mine/ERW threat as part of local recovery and development plans.

CL refers to creating a linkage between community members and de-miners to ensure a smooth demining process without any interruption. It is a part of MRE. MRE and CL facilitators engage with communities to assist in mine/ERW clearance - prior, during and after clearance. Some specialised CL officers are trained in non-technical survey as well.

CL also works with communities to develop specific interim safety strategies promoting individual and community behavioural change, in particular where communities are living close to contaminated areas. This is designed to reduce the impact of mines/ERW on individuals and communities until the threat is removed. Identifying opportunities for safe alternatives or mechanisms that will help reduce risks are central to these safety strategies (Safe Play Areas; income generating projects; fuel-saving stoves; control of scrap metal collection and dynamite fishing, etc.).

In Sri Lanka, the MRE programme carries out other activities that fall within the international definition of community liaison, such as support for victim assistance or advocacy, child protection issues, and broader development concerns.

All MRE operators shall get (refresher) training on CL as part of the MRE training to be provided by MAG/UNICEF in the second half of 2010.

MRE operators liaising with communities in support of victim assistance and advocacy, child protection issues, and broader development concerns shall ensure to get the best training available in the respective fields. This is to enable MRE facilitators to provide meaningful support to affected persons and communities. At least one training course shall be arranged per semester.

- e. Make use of media-based MRE as a compliment of the overall MRE strategy.

Media-based MRE makes particularly use of mass media, mainly radio and print. Films are produced for TV as well as for video shows and for use in class rooms or briefings. Using mass media is costly, however it is used in Sri Lanka to cover larger population groups and larger geographical areas, especially during emergencies to reach otherwise inaccessible communities. Media-based MRE normally should not be undertaken as a stand-alone activity but rather as a complementary approach of an overall MRE communication strategy that focuses on two-way communication.

Public Service Announcements, radio shows, movies, and print media should not only be produced in the Tamil medium but also in the Sinhala medium as the numbers of tourists, pilgrims and entrepreneurs travelling from the South to and through mine/ERW-infested areas have increased dramatically with the end of

the armed conflict. Using mass media also helps reaching Tamil speaking people living in the South of the Island.

Video shows produced by the Young Asian Television (YATV) shall be available by end of October 2010.

Hoardings with key MRE messages shall be placed along the A9 and in other highly affected areas and in major cities in the South as well by October 2010.

Safety messages made available via cell-based mobile network shall be piloted by January 2011.

## **8.6 CONTINUE SURVEY OPERATIONS IN THE CONTAMINATED AREAS IN ACCORDANCE WITH PRIORITIES AND REQUIREMENTS**

Currently non-technical surveys are conducted per GN area in support of the resettlement programme of the Government of Sri Lanka. The major focus of these non-technical surveys is the identification of Confirmed Hazardous Areas (CHAs) especially in and close to residential areas where IDP are to be resettled. It is foreseen that the current non-technical surveys will be completed by October 2010.

Due to a lack of information sources in the absence of population in the areas during the surveys certain CHAs and especially the jungle areas need to be surveyed again. The areas that need to be surveyed again are to be identified by March 2011.

The non-technical survey of the identified areas is to be prioritized and conducted by January 2012.

Suspect Hazardous Areas (SHAs) identified prior to 2009 are to be identified in IMSMA and the non-technical survey of these SHAs completed by December 2012 to reduce the suspected contaminated area (m<sup>2</sup>) in Sri Lanka by approximately 10%.

Conduct Technical Survey of all medium priority recorded CHAs in order to clearly define the perimeters of the hazardous areas (Defined Hazardous Areas (DHAs)) and thereby reduce the suspected contaminated area (m<sup>2</sup>) in Sri Lanka by approximately 20% by end of 2014.

Conduct Technical Survey of all low priority recorded CHAs in order to clearly define the perimeters of the hazardous areas (DHAs) and thereby reduce the suspected contaminated area in Sri Lanka by approximately 10 to 15% by the end of 2018.

## **8.7 CONTINUE TO UNDERTAKE MINE/ERW CLEARANCE OPERATIONS IN LINE WITH THE PRIORITIES AS DEFINED BY NATIONAL AND DISTRICT AUTHORITIES**

The current priority in terms of mine/ERW clearance is in support of the resettlement programme of the Government of Sri Lanka. The priority areas to be cleared are those CHAs identified within or close to residential areas posing an immediate threat to the IDP that will be resettled to these areas. It is foreseen that the mine/ERW clearance activities in support of the resettlement programme should be completed by December 2010.

Utilising the current available resources of manual and mechanical mine/ERW clearance the programme will continue to clear high priority CHAs/DHAs with an annual rate of approximately 29 km<sup>2</sup> with the objective of releasing land for productive use.

### **8.8 DETERMINE AND MEET THE NEEDS OF LANDMINE/ERW VICTIMS AND INTEGRATE THEM INTO SOCIETY**

Victim Assistance as commonly understood in mine action refers to all care and rehabilitation activities that aim to meet the immediate and long-term needs of landmine and ERW victims, their families, and affected communities. The term 'victim' refers generally to those who have been injured or killed by a landmine or ERW explosion, to their families who suffer emotional, social and financial loss and to the communities that lose access to land and other resources due to the presence of landmines or ERW. VA in mine action should not create isolated programmes for those disabled from landmines and ERW. VA calls for ensuring that existing health care and social service systems, rehabilitation programmes and legislative and policy frameworks are adequate to meet the needs of all citizens – including landmine survivors and family members of deceased victims.

In Sri Lanka, the Ministry of Social Services is the lead ministry for disability. Other Ministries, particularly the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Defence, also address important issues relevant to people with injuries and disabilities. VA as part of Sri Lanka's mine action programme will need to ensure that landmine/ERW 'victims' as defined above are adequately reached by programmes implemented under these Ministries and other stakeholders.

In Sri Lanka data on people with disability are scarce, data on mine/ERW victims exist but are incomplete and case definitions are inconsistent. Sri Lanka decided to set up an injury surveillance system which is now functioning but at a limited scale (Ministry of Health, Non-Communicable Diseases with support of Trauma Secretariat).

Data on mine/ERW victims (casualty data) should be updated and complimented using the IMSMA format by April 2011. Data on VA provision to mine/ERW victims should be collected and data should be managed by adapting the CMVIS (Cambodia Mine Victim Information System) to Sri Lanka needs by December 2011.

VA as agreed among UN and key NGO-actors in Sri Lanka will follow a rights based approach as agreed among State Parties of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC), also known Ottawa Treaty, and the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disability.<sup>4</sup> The stakeholders in Sri Lanka embrace the definition of landmine victims as described by the States Parties to the Ottawa Treaty, ensuring that activities should benefit all people with disabilities including mine survivors and the families of the deceased.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Sri Lanka is a signatory but needs to prepare national legislation for ratification.

<sup>5</sup> UN Mine Action Team, Mine Action and Effective Coordination: The United Nations Inter-Agency Policy, New York 2005.

According to the Conventions' Guide to Victim Assistance (disseminated in 2008), VA includes six thematic areas:

- a. Understanding the challenges faced [data collection].
- b. Emergency and continuing medical care.
- c. Physical rehabilitation.
- d. Psychological support and social reintegration.
- e. Economic reintegration.
- f. Legislation and public policies.

The Government of Sri Lanka needs to take a lead role in VA. As a long term strategy, necessary resources will be mobilized and effective coordination will be sought between the various stakeholders to achieve two key goals:

- Ensure mine victims have access to quality and sustainable services related to medical, social and economic rehabilitation. To this effect new services will be set up where they are not available and existing services will be made to meet quality standards and become sustainable through their progressive integration within the governmental structures and/or the local communities;
- Empower mine victims to advocate for their rights. To this effect mine victims will be mobilized and their capacity will be built by fostering partnership with the disability actors.

Seven key sub-objectives as outlined by the State Parties to the Ottawa Treaty should be pursued:

- a. Define the scale of the VA challenge, identify needs, monitor the responses to needs and evaluate the responses.
- b. Reduce deaths by stabilising medical conditions and minimising physical impairments in emergency settings that could result from injury.
- c. Provide access to treatment to minimise physical impairment resulting from injury.
- d. Restore maximum physical functional ability for landmine survivors, including the provision of appropriate assistive devices.
- e. Assist landmine survivors, including children, to resume their role in the community by helping them to cope with psycho-social adjustment issues and assisting them to regain and maintain a healthy and positive outlook on life.
- f. Assist landmine survivors to either return to their pre-injury occupation, or prepare for and find suitable employment.
- g. Establish, implement, and enforce laws and public policies that guarantee the rights of landmines survivors [including family members of the deceased] and other persons with disabilities.

NMAC shall convene a national workshop on VA in Mine Action with the aim to draft a Victim Assistance Strategy by October 2011.

A national Victim Assistance Strategy shall be endorsed by March 2012.

The NMAC shall pursue two key activities:

- Support efforts to ensure the rights of landmine/ERW survivors within the context of national programmes and facilities for persons with disabilities;
- Advocate for increased resources and support to persons with disabilities, including landmine/ERW survivors and the families of the deceased.

MRE operators play a decisive role in identifying people in need of support and by referring them to available service providers.

#### **8.9 ENSURE THE DESTRUCTION OF ALL STOCKPILED ANTI-PERSONNEL LANDMINES OWN, IN THE POSSESSION, OR UNDER THE JURISDICTION OR CONTROL OF THE SRI LANKAN GOVERNMENT AS SOON AS POSSIBLE**

Article 4 of the APMBC requires that signatories undertake to destroy or ensure the destruction of all stockpiled anti-personnel mines it owns or possesses, or that are under its jurisdiction or control, as soon as possible but not later than four years after the entry into force of the mine ban treaty for that State Party.

Stockpiled anti-personnel mines will rarely pose an immediate risk to human life, but they do provide the capability for the deployment of new minefields. The removal of this capability is therefore an important factor for the continuing success of the APMBC, and the reduction of the potential risk posed by landmines world-wide.

Although Sri Lanka is not yet a State Party to the APMBC it doesn't mean that the country cannot commence with the destruction of any stockpiled anti-personnel mines in its possession in preparation of signing the mine ban treaty.

As and when the GoSL decides on the destruction of any anti-personnel mine stockpiles the NMAC will assist in the planning, coordination and control thereof to ensure the effective reporting thereof to the other State Parties when required.

#### **8.10 ADVOCATE FOR THE RESPECT FOR INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN LAW NORMS, PARTICULARLY REGARDING THE ANTIPERSONNEL MINE BAN CONVENTION AND THE CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF PEOPLE WITH DISABILITY**

Sri Lanka is neither a States Party to the APMBC nor a signatory of Convention on Conventional Weapons (CCW) Protocol V.<sup>6</sup> Sri Lanka is also not Party to the Cluster Munitions Convention. By disseminating public information on the risks of explosive devices it is aimed to reach the general public of Sri Lanka and in this context to advocate for a ban

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<sup>6</sup> Sri Lanka is signatory of the Convention on Conventional Weapons (CCW) and has signed Amended Protocol II on landmines and booby-traps but not Protocol V on ERW. Sri Lanka has never submitted an annual Article 13 report to the Annual Conference of State Parties to the protocol.

of landmines and cluster munitions; additionally, the importance of CCW Protocol V on ERW will be highlighted as part of advocacy initiatives. The Sri Lankan Security Forces and relevant Government Authorities will be specifically targeted. Advocacy will also focus on the need to hand over and destroy any mines that remain in the control of any Para-military group, as well as on the ban to the use of trap-guns causing indiscriminate harm to civilians and wildlife.

An advocacy forum was in place and produced considerable results from 2003 to 2006. Attempts to launch a new Sri Lanka Campaign to Ban Landmines have resulted in some impressive events. However, a Campaign as such has not been launched by mid-2010.

Victim Assistance is one of the key-pillars in mine action but it is the weakest of the five, not only in Sri Lanka. Advocacy needs to highlight the need for increased victim assistance and should be linked to the Convention of the Rights of People with Disability. Sri Lanka has signed the Convention in 2007 but to date did not ratify it. Disability is under the purview of the Ministry of Social Services while the Ministry of Healthcare and Nutrition as well as the Ministry of Education play important complimentary roles.

The NMAC shall pursue the following objectives:

- a. Establish a public information capacity to ensure that information on the risks of explosive devices has reached the general public of Sri Lanka and to continue to help to advocate for a ban of landmines and cluster munitions as well as a domestic ban of trap guns.

The general public should know about the mine/ERW situation and the mine action programme in Sri Lanka. This information and a risk education campaign should be linked to advocating for the respect for international humanitarian law norms, particularly regarding the Anti-personnel Mine Ban Convention and the Convention on the Rights of People with Disability.

With regard to the advocacy for the ban of landmines a coordinated approach on various levels from grassroots to senior decision makers including Government bodies, the Security Forces and Civil Society Groups needs to be revived.

Activities on and around 4 April, the International Day for Mine Awareness and Assistance in Mine Action, should be used to raise national and international attention to the landmine related issues in Sri Lanka. A media campaign should be planned to raise awareness on the landmine threat in Sri Lanka, the response undertaken through mine action, the needs of people with disability including landmine victims and on advocacy for adopting the Ottawa Convention and other related legal instruments.

- b. Advocate to the relevant bodies in the Government of Sri Lanka to provide reports to show full transparency.

Sri Lanka is part of the CCW and its Protocol II but is yet to produce its first transparency report (Art. 13).

Sri Lanka produced a voluntary transparency report for the Anti-personnel Mine Ban Convention state parties in 2005 sharing available information on anti-personnel mines and known contamination and numbers of casualties. However, at the time data on stockpiles was not revealed.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and its relevant UN division should be fully supported to produce relevant reports in a timely manner, and a permanent mechanism emplaced to fulfil reporting requirements.

#### **8.11 COMPILE, IMPLEMENT AND ENFORCE SRI LANKAN NATIONAL MINE ACTION STANDARDS (SLNMAS) RELATED TO ALL COMPONENTS OF MINE ACTION AND IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE INTERNATIONAL MINE ACTION STANDARDS**

Compile SLNMAS related to the mine/ERW clearance and MRE component and get it endorsed by the Government of Sri Lanka by November 2010.

Implement the SLNMAS starting with compiling and implementing an accreditation process of all MA operators in Sri Lanka starting in September 2010.

Complete accreditation of all MA operators annually by November for the next year.

Although Quality Assurance (QA) is currently conducted on mine/ERW clearance and MRE operations, a comprehensive quality management national standard is to be compiled and implemented by December 2010.

With the assistance of UNDP conduct QA of all Mine/ERW clearance and MRE activities on a daily basis in accordance with regional QA programs and plans based on the quality management national standard by January 2011. RMAOs should compile regional weekly QA programs describing the QA activities that will take place in the upcoming week.

Compile Standard Work Procedures (SWP) for all functions and activities on the NMAC level by December 2012 and on the RMAO level by December 2011.

#### **8.12 MOBILIZE THE NECESSARY FUNDS FROM NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL SOURCES TO ACHIEVE THE MINE ACTION STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES**

With the support of UNDP and UNICEF the NMAC shall develop a resource mobilization strategy to ensure that necessary funds are mobilized for achieving the goals of the National Mine Action Strategy.

The NMAC and NSCMA shall ensure that MA is included in the national budget of 2011 and continue to form part thereof and shall seek increase in the allocation of national resources where possible.



All MA operators in Sri Lanka shall provide inputs to the NMAC MA portfolio, UN plans in support of the MA programme and other resource mobilisation mechanisms when required.

All MA operators in Sri Lanka shall provide estimates of their annual budgets and estimated resources by November of each year for the following calendar year.

All MA stakeholders shall continue to promote awareness at national and international level about Sri Lanka's mine/ERW problem to assist in the resource mobilization process.

An in-country trust fund for MA under the DPSG should be initiated by September 2011.

### **8.13 MAINSTREAM MINE ACTION INTO NATIONAL RECOVERY AND DEVELOPMENT PLANS**

Mine action is a prerequisite to allow for the safe return of displaced people and subsequent recovery and development activities. Furthermore, mine action needs to continue after resettlement has taken place in order to ensure the reestablishment of safe livelihoods and to maintain a response capacity for residual contamination.

National and regional recovery and development plans need to take mine action into account and decision makers need to fully understand mine action and its particular constraints. Clearance is a slow process and MRE can only work as far as it does not impede people from seeking to provide for their livelihoods. Safe livelihood alternatives need to be identified that enable individuals, families and communities as a whole to reduce risk in close collaboration with recovery and development agencies outside the mine action sector.

Recovery and development plans identified on national and regional level will be included in the annual mine action planning process as described in 8.3. But it is important that emphasis is also placed on risk reduction through implementing risk reduction solutions.

The NMAC is to link with recovery and development agencies to come up with risk reduction mechanisms/solutions by the February 2011. A risk reduction methodology is to be compiled and implementation to commence by June 2011.

## **9. CONCLUSION**

The effective implementation of the National Strategy for Mine Action in Sri Lanka shall ensure that the problem of landmines and the effect thereof are addressed in a planned and timely matter. It is very important that the components of mine action and the objectives as described in this Strategy document are not seen in isolation but should be integrated to achieve success.

The Strategy document shall be reviewed annually in accordance with the NMAC planning process and shall form the basis of all Mine Action planning and activities within Sri Lanka.

## **10. ENDORSEMENT**

This document titled “The National Strategy for Mine Action in Sri Lanka” updates and supersedes all previous Sri Lankan mine action strategy documents.

This document is hereby endorsed by the Government of Sri Lanka through the authorised signatory below.

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Additional Secretary, Regional Development  
For Secretary, Ministry of Economic Development

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Date