

ACTION FICHE - JORDAN

1. IDENTIFICATION

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| Title | Northern Border Clearance Project (NBCP) | | |
| Total cost | 7 700 000 M € EC Support: 4 500 000 M€ Other contributions: 3 200 000 M € | | |
| Aid method / Management mode | Joint management | | |
| DAC-code | 15066 | Sector | Landmine clearance |

2. RATIONALE

The Northern Border Clearance Project (NBCP) responds to pressing development needs of northern Jordan, in the area bordering up to Syria, and links up with the Government's recently announced economic expansion efforts to capitalize on Jordan's strategic geographical position linking the Red Sea port of Aqaba with Syria. Moreover, the project will address the single largest outstanding demining-task remaining in Jordan and represents the *final* phase of the National Committee for Demining and Rehabilitation's (NCDR) long-term strategy to demine Jordan.

2.1. Sector context

The mine and unexploded ordnance problem in Jordan derives from the 1948 partition of Palestine, the 1967–1969 Arab-Israeli conflict, and the confrontation with Syria in 1975. In 1993 there were approximately 60 million m² of suspected hazardous areas (SHA), containing 304,000 mines.

The minefields are located in three major areas: i) Syrian Border, ii) Jordan Valley and iii) Wadi Araba in the south. Steady progress and Government commitment has seen the amount of SHA reduced to 23 million m² and the remaining mines to 160,000. The NCDR and the Royal Engineer Corps (REC) estimates that they will clear the remaining Jordan Valley minefields by mid-2008. Thus, the Jordanian planted minefields running along the Kingdom's northern border with Syria remains the single most pressing task.

The mine-belt in the border between Jordan and Syria was planted in the early 1970s and is nowadays seen as a barrier against smuggling from Syria into Jordan. Notwithstanding Jordan's obligations under the Mine Ban Treaty, the border does not pose a great challenge to persons determined to penetrate the border area, therefore, the Government is planning to install a surrogate non-lethal system once the mines demarcating the border are removed.

2.2. Lessons learnt

Experiences of a quality control and assurance scheme (established with EC support, see below 2.3), is incorporated in the design of the proposed project, and recommendations following evaluations of the current project will be integrated as they are produced and as appropriate.

2.3. Complementary actions

The European Commission has been a strong mine action partner to Jordan. In 2006 the EC provided funding of €800.000 via UNDP to the NCDR and REC to clear the remaining mines in North Shuna. This project is ahead of schedule and under budget and there is now a revised plan to use surplus funds to clear the last 18 minefields in the Jordan Valley: leaving the northern border the only pending task before Jordan can be declared mine-free.

2.4. Donor coordination

The overall coordination of donor efforts is led by the United Nations (UN), in close cooperation with the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation and the different line Ministries. The *Donor/Lender Consultation Group* (DLCG) process initiated in Jordan ensures coordination between Member States, as well as USAID, the UN and other active donors. The DLCG has established six thematic groups: education, social development, private sector reform, environment, water, governance and public-sector reform.

Given the sheer magnitude of the clearance operations, the NCDR and the Norwegian People's Aid (NPA) have worked closely with a number of partners (Canada, Norway, Germany and Japan) and have built a consortium to clear the 108 km mine-belt along the Jordan-Syrian border. Presently, funding in the pipeline for 2007 and 2008 is calculated at approximately 3.200.000 €

3. DESCRIPTION

3.1. Objectives

The *overall objective* is to clear the 108 km mine-belt along the Jordan-Syrian border between Emrawa in the west and Tal Washash in the east, in accordance with the Jordanian National Technical Standards and Guidelines for Mine Action.

The *specific objectives* are:

- (1) Establishment and Administration of a Field Operations Office (Mafraq): Given the magnitude and duration of the NBCP there will be a requirement to establish a shared field office in the northern border town of Mafraq (approximately 95 km from Amman). The office/compound will play a key operational role by providing daily logistical support to both the NPA demining teams and NCDR quality management (QM) team who will be assigned to the project.

- (2) Recruitment, Equipping, and Training of Deminers: It is calculated that nine demining teams of 25 persons will be required. The NPA will draw upon some of its existing staff in Wadi Araba (this project will be completed by the end of 2007), however the majority of deminers will come from the local mine affected communities spread along the border zone. The recruitment of key office support staff will also be sourced locally. Funding from the EC will be used to launch the first two, twenty-five person manual demining teams.
- (3) General and Technical Survey of Suspected Hazardous Areas: The technical survey team will more accurately be able to determine the level and type of assets to be deployed in each of the 93 minefields. An assessment of potential mine migration outside the area where mines were originally laid may be made at this point. Using a combination of manual demining, mine detection dogs and mechanical tools, exploratory lanes will be breached into the known areas of contamination. The probing lanes will then confirm or rebut the presence of landmines and their pattern established and recorded. Once the perimeter of the mine field is determined, a safety margin will be added and where there are cases of mine migration this will be increased further following the evidence of water flow.
- (4) Integrated Mine Clearance of Border Zone to include Mapping and Land Release: Based on the information and outputs generated through the General and Technical Survey process, a detailed work plan and schedule designed to guide the utilization of the tool box assets (rake, metal detector, mechanical, dogs) will be put into action to remove 87,000 anti-personal mines and 40,000 anti-vehicle mines.
- (5) NCDR Quality Management: the overall independent Quality Management (QM) of the project comprises of quality control and assurance, a requisite of all demining activities in the country. In Jordan this function is performed by the NCDR's 14 member QM Team. Post clearance sampling (6 months) and certification will be undertaken by the QM team after the main clearance activities of NPA have been completed.

3.2. Expected results and main activities

Expected results as a result of the clearance of the mine fields include,

- Seven million square meters of highly fertile land that is presently in the buffer zone between the minefields and the local farms will be returned for agricultural use (wheat, palm oil, fruits and vegetables) and livestock herding. An additional minimum of 50 square kilometres, currently in the military security buffer zone will be freed for normal agricultural purposes.
- The construction of free trade zones around the city of Mafraq and between Jordan and Syria will be allowed to proceed unimpeded by the threat of landmines.
- The Wihda Dam project will be completed on time and without risk to the construction workers.

- The risk for a population of approximately 50,000 civilians will be removed.
- Short-term employment opportunities and income generating activities for the small border towns as a spin-off effect.
- The border between Jordan and Syria will be demilitarized, contributing symbolically and practically to the peace building climate in the region.

Once completed, the NBCP will also help to ensure that Jordan meets its Mine Ban Treaty obligation of being mine free by the year 2009. This would be a significant outcome, as Jordan would be the only country in the Middle East with landmines to have fulfilled its Mine Ban treaty completion deadline.

3.3. Stakeholders

Based on the preliminary findings of the NCDR-NPA ‘Landmine Retrofit Survey’, the socio-economic impacts are calculated as being substantial, as the border area is the locale of intensive agricultural/herding activities, serves as a major transportation node between Jordan and Syria, and is the site of a major water project that is critical to the future human security of the country.

It is estimated that the clearance of the northern border area will ensure that the risk of landmines is removed for a population of approximately 50,000 civilians. A significant segment of this population is female agricultural workers and young boys who act as herders. The threat to this specific demographic cohort will be reduced through the project.

Other stakeholders include:

- Locals eligible for short-term employment opportunities and local businesses that can benefit from local procurement of equipment and services.
- The construction workers involved in the Wihda Dam project.
- The NCDR and REC, which will be assisted in their capacity building.

3.4. Risks and assumptions

Risks include the following:

- Cleared land is not released to the land owners/farmers: this risk will be closely monitored and addressed as appropriate.
- The project is not completed on schedule: the feasibility of this risk and possible measures to mitigate it will be elaborated on once the technical survey has been carried out.

Sustainability is expected given the quality control and assurance component of the project and that the land mines will be replaced by surrogate systems.

3.5. Crosscutting Issues

- The main issue will be the socio-economic effects in the area following the mine clearance.
- Gender: See section 3.3.
- Environment: Environmental concerns will be considered in the Technical Survey.

4. IMPLEMENTATION ISSUES

4.1. Implementation method

Joint management through the signature of an agreement with an international organisation

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) will act as implementing agency (reporting and overall management) while the National Committee for Demining and Rehabilitation (NCDR) will provide oversight on the execution of demining activities (quality control, verification, and sampling). The primary mine clearance tasks will be executed by the Norwegian People's Aid (NPA) who presently works with UNDP and NCDR on other demining projects in Jordan.

The choice of these implementing agencies is based on our previous very successful support for de-mining in Jordan. The National Committee for Demining and Rehabilitation's (NCDR) is the body in charge - by Royal Decree - of overseeing the implementation of the long-term strategy to demine Jordan. The NCDR has designated UNDP as the reporting and management partner on all demining activities and the NPA as the actual clearer. The NCDR - for technical and security reasons - does not give way for other partners to come in, as UNDP and NPA are the only acceptable partners who have proven to be efficient.

4.2. Procurement and grant award procedures

All contracts implementing the action must be awarded and implemented in accordance with the procedures and standard documents laid down and published by the International Organisation concerned.

Procurement is foreseen under specific objectives a) and b). Procurement will be decentralised to UNDP. UNDP will act as the contracting and paying authority in accordance with the general conditions applicable to contribution agreements with international organisations.

4.3. Budget and calendar

The financial contribution of the European Community to the project will be EUR 4,500,000.

The duration of the project will be 30 months: 24 months for primary clearance and six additional months for sampling and verification of the cleared minefields.

4.4. Performance monitoring

Results will be monitored internally within the NPA, and externally from NCDR, and under the overall responsibility of UNDP in compliance with the EC General Conditions and in accordance with agreed indicators.

In more detail, each task will follow a generic six phase clearance methodology: survey, site preparation, clearance, verification and mapping/reporting. Concurrent with these five phases is the sixth, quality control/assurance that is done internally by the NPA management team. Quality control/assurance covers: training, equipment, methodologies, implementation of clearance and the verification process.

4.5. Evaluation and audit

Financial provisions, relating to eligible costs verification, payments, accounts and technical and financial checks, audits and evaluation will be carry out in accordance with the General conditions applicable to contribution agreements with international organisations (articles 10 and 14 through 18).

4.6. Communication and visibility

Article 6 of the General and Administrative Provisions on Visibility will be fully implemented. To this end, the EU Visibility Guidelines for External Actions and Joint Action Plan on Visibility of 2006 between the United Nations and the European Communities will be adhered to.