

Action Fiche for Lebanon

1. IDENTIFICATION

Title/Number	Mine action in Lebanon: clearance activities and institutional support (ENPI/2012/023-387)		
Total cost	EU contribution :EUR 10,000,000		
Aid method / Method of implementation	Project approach – Direct Centralised Management and Joint Management (United Nations Development Programme)		
DAC-code	15250	Sector	Landmine Clearance

2. RATIONALE

2.1. Sector context

After ratifying the Convention on Cluster Munitions (CCM), Lebanon hosted in September 2011 the Second Meeting of States Parties to the Convention on Cluster Munitions. On this occasion the Lebanon Mine Action Centre (LMAC), the national authority in charge of all aspects of humanitarian mine action, presented its “2011-2020 National Mine Action Strategy”. This strategy has been designed to enable Lebanon to comply with the obligations of the CCM and to be implemented in the spirit of the Ottawa Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (Ottawa Treaty) that has not been signed yet.

The strategy focuses on the following:

- Humanitarian de-mining : clearance of polluted lands is foreseen by end 2020, provided the financial means are made available both at national and international levels (over USD 200 million), in compliance with the principles of community participation and empowerment, development, equity, social justice and accountability;
- Mine risk education (MRE)/mine victim assistance (MVA) to provide information, support and integration to the population concerned;
- Advocacy, to stigmatise the use of landmines and cluster munitions, and assistance to other countries concerned by the mine problem.

Lebanon faces a severe problem of mine contamination, affecting various areas of the country. In Lebanon the problem is particularly acute as the level of contamination is high with regards to its size and population density; the land availability is crucial to face the needs for socio-economic purposes.

As of December 2011, 124.5 million square meters remain to be cleared, i.e., half of the total initial polluted areas. Amongst a total of 306 impacted communities, representing over 1 million inhabitants, hundreds of them are still at risk and have

less economic opportunities. Since 1975, landmines have killed and injured more than 3,800 people, cluster bombs more than 400 between August 2006 and December 2011.

The current clearance needs are beyond the existing level of LMAC human resources capacity, therefore, in order to ensure that the LMAC can respond to the management needs of clearance operations in compliance with international standards and implement its mine action strategy, this capacity should be complemented.

Through the proposed project the European Union (EU), as defined in the 2011-2013 National Indicative Programme (NIP), continues to support the LMAC and the clearance operations to improve the recovery conditions and reinvigoration of Lebanon in its most affected areas. This will also contribute to inclusive development reducing inequalities and increase the standards of living of the population, as foreseen in the Joint Communication of the European Commission and of the High Representative of the EU for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy of 25 May 2011 "A new response to a changing Neighbourhood"³.

The programme is coherent with the priorities set down in the Joint Communications of the European Commission and of the High Representative of the EU for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy entitled "A partnership for democracy and shared prosperity with the Southern Mediterranean"⁴ and "A new response to a changing Neighbourhood".

2.2. Lessons learnt

The EU has been involved in de-mining activities in Lebanon since 2002-2004 through 4 programmes. A fifth programme of EUR 7 million is under implementation (Programme de Déminage) and was subject to monitoring and a mid-term evaluation that underlined the relevance of EU intervention in Mine Action and the quality of its programme.

EU action should be pursued and sustained in the long run, building on the previous results and on the excellent relationship established with its main partner and Beneficiary, the LMAC who demonstrated its ownership in Mine Action. A very targeted support should now be provided to the LMAC in term of capacity building in very specific areas on top of the traditional institutional support aiming at ensuring that the essential operational clearance management capacities are in place.

Although the approach adopted for the on-going programme targeting cluster bombs and landmines proves to be adequate, there is still space for improvement of its efficiency by enforcing the competition between implementing partners. Therefore, design of the call for proposal for this proposed project will seek to be even more results-oriented and to define precise objectives defined in close collaboration with the LMAC.

2.3. Complementary actions

The EU remains today the first donor in the field of de-mining in Lebanon.

³ COM(2011)303.

⁴ COM(2011)200 of 08.03.2011.

In the field of mine clearance, currently, the main countries to provide some support are Australia, Belgium, Germany, Italy, Norway, the United Kingdom and the USA.

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) has been involved since many years in capacity building and is planning a third phase of its current assistance programme, funded by Belgium, the EU and Italy, that ends in December 2012. The United Nations are also present in de-mining activities through the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) and the Engineers Regiments of Belgium, Cambodia, China, France, Italy and Spain.

France has decided to set up jointly a Demining Instruction Centre, with the aim of forming instructors from various Arab countries, both from the military and civilians. A twinning agreement is planned with the French Army's Academy for Demining, which will encompass the whole curriculum of the new Centre. A closed co-ordination is foreseen with this action.

The United States are also active in Mine Action in the areas of technical support, mine victims assistance and surveys in financing a national non-governmental organisation (NGO).

Lebanon assumes its share of responsibility in mine action through the Ministry of Defence, who oversees and provides the basic structure of the LMAC; the Ministry of Health who provides medical care to the survivors; the Ministry of Social Affairs who provides basic socio-economic rehabilitation services; the Ministry of Education who contributes to mine risk education through its trained health and teaching personnel.

2.4. Donor co-ordination

The co-ordination process with the Beneficiary country occurs through regular bilateral meetings that aims at ensuring the proper implementation of the current mine action programme. Meetings took place also through the Project Board Meetings organised in the framework of the UNDP Mine Action Assistance Programme to which the EU contributes an amount of EUR 650,000.

As indicated previously, several donors are active in mine action in Lebanon and in order to avoid overlaps and improve the efficiency of the various actions undertaken, the EU has been calling for the reactivation of co-ordination mechanisms, such as the donors working groups and the ones foreseen, under the responsibility of the LMAC, in the National De-mining Policy. This document foresees that an Inter-ministerial Advisory Committee shall meet semi-annually to provide guidance and priorities on government strategic plans that affect Mine Action, which should reinforce the link between clearance, rehabilitation and overall development, and that an International Support Group shall be regularly convened.

3. DESCRIPTION

3.1. Objectives

The overall objective of the project is to assist Lebanon in restoring the conditions necessary for the security of its population and its economic and social development.

The specific objective is to contribute to reinforce the country ability to reduce the mine risk so that land can be released to the population, and that people continue to be informed and benefit from better socio-economic opportunities.

3.2. Expected results and main activities

For several years now, the EU has clearly committed itself to support Lebanon in its efforts to turn the country into a safe place, to promote balanced development opportunities throughout the whole country. This commitment to accompany the Lebanese Mine Action has been reinforced with the ratification of the CCM, and the resulting obligations, and Lebanon's will to work within the spirit of the Ottawa Treaty, although it has not been signed yet.

Therefore the EU intervention will be linked to the strategy and needs identified in the "2011-2020 National Mine Action Strategy" and build on the following activities aiming at reaching linked results:

(1) Institutional support and capacity building

The LMAC needs to have its human and operational capacity strengthened in order for it to assume its role in overseeing, managing and co-ordinating all humanitarian clearance in Lebanon as it is currently staffed to face a long term residual risk.

Therefore the EU will provide the LMAC with institutional support through the very specific expertise it still requires, essentially, but not exclusively, in the areas of strategy and policy planning, communication and overall co-ordination. This support should give the LMAC the ability to fully assume the mandate entrusted to it and fulfil the obligations deriving from the CCM in terms of reporting, advocacy, international co-operation and assistance.

(2) Mine clearance activities

To ensure continuity with its past and on-going intervention the EU will finance demining teams to clear lands, and undertake the related activities, including training and equipment supply so that:

- Lebanon can meet the CCM obligations related to clearance and destruction of clusters and remnants and that land is released to the population;
- Lebanon has the technical expertise and the means to undertake mine clearance operations, and the related activities (surveys, quality control...), according to international standards, in conformity with its national strategy and the CCM obligations.

(3) Mine victims assistance and mine risk education

Following the MVA/MRE strategy prepared by the LMAC, which also aims at complying with the related CCM obligations, the EU will mainly contribute to:

- Communication and information campaigns so that people are informed of the mine risk and the victims informed of their rights and benefits that are entitled to receive;

- Rehabilitation and reintegration activities so that people can take part again into socio-economic life.

3.3. Risks and assumptions

The main risk is the political instability in Lebanon and the situation in the neighbouring countries and the whole region.

A continuing interest of the donor community is necessary to ensure that Lebanon will reach its objectives in terms of mine action. The activation of the inter-ministerial committee and the reactivation of the International Support Group (ISG) – a coordination mechanism of donors active in the demining sector in Lebanon – should contribute to mitigate the risks. The inter-ministerial committee should give the political direction and impetus to Mine Action whereas the ISG, a platform of donors that has not been convened since 2008, should provide a framework to discuss and give a new dynamic to the international support using the momentum created by the Second Meeting of States Parties to the Convention on Cluster Munitions".

3.4. Crosscutting Issues

Demining activities have a direct positive impact on environment and land use in the affected zones. Environmental consideration will be fully integrated into the demining operations. Gender is taken into consideration as women are either integrated into demining teams or form specific teams.

3.5. Stakeholders

The Lebanon Mine Action Centre, the main Beneficiary of this programme together with the Lebanese communities affected by the mine risk, is the official body in charge of all humanitarian mine action aspects including landmines, unexploded ordnances (UXOs), remnants of war and cluster munitions, it ensures the strategic and operational planning, manages, co-ordinates and supervises all phases of the mine action and clearance operations throughout the Lebanese Territory. Its responsibility encompasses also MRE/MVA and advocacy/public relations functions through policies, plans and resources mobilisation.

The LMAC is under the Authority of the Ministry of Defence which provides its basic planning and operational capacity designed to face a long term residual mine risk. The operational de-mining capacity specifically entrusted to it varies between 4 and 8 de-mining teams, dog teams and machines. In order to ensure all mine action related activities, the LMAC has a staff of 12 officers to fulfil its mission, plus support staff. Currently, the LMAC has to supervise a clearance capacity of 58 teams, technical and non-technical surveys, to co-ordinate MRE/MVA and provide any other support required in the field of humanitarian mine action, which requires adequate capacities.

LMAC supervises mine clearance activities and surveys undertaken by international and national NGOs/companies as well as the programmes of MVA and MRE, it benefits also from UNDP assistance in terms of capacity building.

4. IMPLEMENTATION ISSUES

4.1. Method of implementation

The project will be implemented through direct centralised management (Mine Clearance and Mine Risk Education (MRE)/Mine Victim Assistance (MVA) components) and joint management (Institutional Support component) through the signature of an agreement with an international organisation, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), in accordance with Article 53d of the Financial Regulation. UNDP has been providing technical assistance to LMAC since 2000 and is in charge of co-ordination of the external aid. This Agreement will define the project steering body to ensure involvement of all stakeholders. Funds from EU Member States, such as Belgium and Italy are also channelled through UNDP. The international organisation complies with the criteria provided for in the applicable Financial Regulation. A Standard Contribution Agreement will be concluded, in accordance with the Financial and Administrative Framework Agreement (FAFA) concluded between the European Community (now Union) and the United Nations on 29 April 2003.

For mine clearance and MRE/MVA, the option selected with the Beneficiary has been to continue through grants contract given the specificities of mine action and the existing long standing co-operation between the Lebanese Army and NGOs (both national and international) who have gone through the accreditation process required by the International Mine Action Standards.

Audit and evaluation activities will be implemented through procurement under direct decentralised management (service contracts).

The change of management mode constitutes a substantial change except where the Commission "re-centralises" or reduces the level of tasks previously delegated to the beneficiary country, international organisation or delegatee body under, respectively, decentralised, joint or indirect centralised management.

4.2. Procurement and grant award procedures

Components "Mine Clearance" and "MRE/MVA" – Centralised management

1) Contracts

All contracts implementing the action must be awarded and implemented in accordance with the procedures and standard documents laid down and published by the Commission for the implementation of external operations, in force at the time of the launch of the procedure in question.

Participation in the award of contracts for the present action shall be open to all natural and legal persons covered by ENPI Regulation. Further extensions of this participation to other natural or legal persons by the concerned authorising officer shall be subject to the conditions provided for in Article 21(7) ENPI.

2) Specific rules for grants

The essential selection and award criteria for the award of grants are laid down in the Practical Guide to contract procedures for EU external actions. They are established in accordance with the principles set out in Title VI 'Grants' of the Financial Regulation applicable to the General Budget, ENPI Regulation. When derogations to these principles are applied, they shall be justified, in particular in the following cases:

- Financing in full (derogation to the principle of co-financing): the maximum possible rate of co-financing for grants is 80% of total eligible costs. Full financing may only be applied in the cases provided for in Article 253 of the Commission Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 2342/2002 of 23 December 2002 laying down detailed rules for the implementation of the Financial Regulation applicable to the General Budget.
- Derogation to the principle of non-retroactivity: a grant may be awarded for an action which has already begun only if the applicant can demonstrate the need to start the action before the grant is awarded, in accordance with Article 112 of the Financial Regulation applicable to the General Budget.

Component Institutional Support – Joint Management

All contracts implementing the action are awarded and implemented in accordance with the procedures and standard documents laid down and published by the relevant International Organisation (UNDP).

4.3. Indicative budget and calendar

The total financial contribution of the EU to the projects amounts to EUR 10 million.. The operational implementation period of the programme is foreseen for 48 months from the adoption of the Financing Decision.

The indicative budget breakdown is as follows:

Institutional support – joint management	EUR 1,900,000*
Grants for mine clearance – direct centralised management	EUR 7,600,000
Grants for mine risk education and mine victim assistance – direct centralised management	EUR 440,000
Audit and evaluation (service – direct centralised management)	EUR 60,000

*The budget of the contribution agreement comprises the necessary provision for visibility activities as detailed under 4.6.

Grants will be awarded through the launch of standard procedures for calls for proposals.

The call for proposal is intended to be launched during the second semester of 2012.

4.4. Performance monitoring

Progress will be monitored regularly by the EU Delegation in Lebanon and through external monitoring missions (ROM). The key indicators (internationally recognised) will be the total de-mined surfaces and the specific results indicators that will be defined in the implementing contracts. Furthermore, as indicated in the latest monitoring and evaluation mission, best practices can from now on be identified, in terms of cost efficiency and effectiveness, and included in the implementation contracts.

4.5. Evaluation and audit

The project will be subject to mid term and final evaluations.

Expenditure verifications on all grant contracts will be carried out in accordance with the provisions of the General Conditions applicable to grant contracts financed by the EU General Budget.

All auditing matters related to the contribution agreement with the international organisation UNDP are governed by the Verification Clause annexed to and forming an integral part of the Financial and Administrative Agreement concluded between the European Commission and the United Nations (agreement signed on 29 April 2003).

If necessary, *ad hoc* audits or expenditure verification assignments could be contracted by the European Commission for one or several contracts.

An amount of EUR 60,000 is earmarked for audit and evaluation purposes which will be implemented through procurement under direct centralised management (service contracts).

4.6. Communication and visibility

The European Union will ensure that adequate communication and visibility is given by the contracting parties to the EU funding.

A specific provision of EUR 10,000 is foreseen to ensure the overall visibility of the EU Mine Action Programme and will be integrated into the Contribution Agreement.