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Community Participation in Mine Action: A Review and Conceptual Framework

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Norwegian People's Aid

Community Participation in Mine Action

Study in Kwanza Sul Province, Angola

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Report by Ruth Bottomley

Cover photograph: Former military and civil defence in Cunjo village plot a map of landmine contamination

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Acknowledgements

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List of Abbreviations

AAR	Association for Aid and Relief (Japan)
ALIS	Angolan Landmine Impact Survey
ASBC	Samuel Brace Coles Association. Community development & rural extension activities. Financed by NPA in Cunjo district
CBMRR	Community Based Mine Risk Reduction
CBO	Community-based Organisation
CHOFA	Amboim Fruit and Vegetable Cooperative (Cooperativa Hortifruticola do Amboim)
CI	Cuidados de Infancia
CMAC	Cambodian Mine Action Centre
CNIDAH	Inter-Sectoral National Commission on Demining and Humanitarian Assistance (Comissão Nacional Inter-Sectoral de Dsminagem e Assistência Humanitaria)
DP	Development Programme (of NPA Angola)
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
DRM	Department of Military Registration (Departmento do Registro Militar)
EOD	Explosive Ordnance Disposal
FAA	Armed Forces of Angola (Forças Armadas de Angola). The government army from 1992 up till the present day. Combines both MPLA and UNITA forces.
FALA	Armed Forces for the Liberation of Angola (Forças Armadas de Libertaçáo de Angola). The armed section of UNITA.
FAPLA	Popular Armed Forces for the Liberation of Angola (Forças Armadas Populares de Libertaçáo de Angola). The MPLA army from 1977 – 1992, funded by Cuba and the Soviet Union
FAS	Social Action Fund (Fundo de Apoio Social)
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FNLA	National Front for the Liberation of Angola (Frente Nacional de Libertaçáo de Angola). Party led by Holden Roberto which became obsolete around 1977. Supported by the United States and Congo.
GLIF	Feminine Leadership Group (Grupo de Liderança Feminina)
GoA	Government of Angola
HI	Handicap International

HMA	Humanitarian Mine Action
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
IDP	Internally Displaced Person(s)
IMAS	International Mine Action Standards
INAD	National Institute for Demining
KISSOCO	Association of Residents and Friends of Kwanza Sul (Associação dos Naturais e Amigos do Kwanza Sul). Preventative health & basic sanitation in Sumbe
MAG	Mines Advisory Group
MEPA	Evangelical Pentecostal Mission of Angola (Missáo Evangêlica Pentacostal de Angola)
MPLA	Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (Movimento Popular de Libertaçáo de Angola). Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola.
MRE	Mine Risk Education
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NPA	Norwegian People's Aid
OMA	Angolan Women's Organisation (Organiaçao da Mulher Angolana).
PLA	Participatory Learning and Action
PRA	Participatory Rural Appraisal
REDS	Rake Excavation and Detection System
TIA	Task Impact Assessment
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNITA	National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (Uniad Nacional de Independência Total de Angola). Force led by Joseph Zambibi and received support variously from South Africa, Congo, United States, Ukraine and China.
UXO	Unexploded Ordnance

List of Terms

Ardvark	Mechanical Flail
Bastáo	Long staff with pointed tip. Used in the military for mine clearance purposes
Casspir	Mine protected vehicle used for ground preparation for demining
Coordinator	The representative for the party at the local level
Django	Traditional house for meetings and informal gatherings
Hydrema	Mechanical Flail
Kimbundo	The main local language in coastal Angola
Kwanza	Angolan national currency
Ngoya	The local language of Quilenda area
Soba	The traditional leader at community level
Regedor	Chief *Soba* overseeing several villages and *Soba*
Umbundo	The local language of the Planalto region. Also used in Zambia village

Executive Summary

Following on from a concept paper written for NPA in December 2005 to review existing examples of community participation in mine action, this study in Kwanza Sul province, Angola, was conducted to explore the feasibility of piloting some of the initiatives in a specific country context. Angola was considered a suitable target country for the study because NPA has had a long presence in Angola and operates both a mine action and a development programme, allowing for opportunities to combine the expertise of both programmes and to promote a more holistic approach to addressing the mine problem. The NPA Angola country strategy for 2004-2007 also emphasises the importance of developing synergies between the two programmes, and the mine action work is contained within the land and resource rights thematic of the development programme. Key aspects of the NPA approach in Angola include empowerment and participation, principles that are of great importance and relevance in the efforts to involve local communities more actively in mine action processes.

The study was undertaken by a mixed team comprising a team leader from the NPA Southeast Asia office, a representative from the NPA headquarters, the coordinator of the development programme in Sumbe and the senior survey officer from the mine action programme in Gabela. Conducted over a period of three weeks from 28th April – 13th May 2006, the study focused in three municipalities in Kwanza Sul province: Conda, Amboim and Quilenda. A total of seven villages were visited. The study was qualitative in nature and comprised the following activities:

- Document review
- Meeting with staff from NPA mine action and development programmes
- Meetings with Base Manager and Deputy at Gabela Base 3
- Meetings with key stakeholders (UNICEF, NGOs, CNIDAH, INAD)
- Meetings with NPA partners to discuss their methods and understanding of the local communities
- Village visits including focus group discussions, mapping and transect walks/observation
- Presentation to NPA staff in Luanda

While some general information was gathered on the existing work of NPA in Kwanza Sul province, the main focus of the work was to provide an analysis of community characteristics found in the villages visited and to bring together examples of existing community involvement in mine action activities, or potentials for future activities.

In the villages visited it is clear that the traditional leadership remains strong and comprises the main decision making body in the village. The leadership has the ability to mobilise and unite communities around activities and is responsible for solving conflicts. The Soba is also responsible for taking decisions about the distribution of community land, a factor that affects the selection of beneficiaries and the distribution of land following clearance. While the positive aspects of the local leadership should be encouraged and promoted, methods also need to be found to ensure that information is provided to everyone in the village as often information stops with the leadership. There is also a need to focus on the distribution of land following clearance. This requires discussion in communities prior to clearance to identify specific beneficiaries, and follow up after clearance to ensure the traditional mechanisms for land distribution are functioning.

Community-based initiatives are not immediately obvious in local villages and it is clear that cohesion and solidarity has been disrupted by the years of war, causing people to focus more on the family unit rather than on the wider community. Relief assistance during the war period has also resulted in a dependency on aid which discourages community activities. However, there are some examples of community participation and organisation, particularly in the more remote villages. Local people are used to contributing labour to undertake the building of community infrastructure, for example. NGOs working with communities recommend strategies to promote community activities such as focusing on neighbourhood groups and organising exchange visits between communities which can act as a catalyst for their own community initiatives.

An important consideration for any community-based mine action activity is the extent of landmine contamination in the locality. Landmines have to be experienced and recognised as a problem for people to want to mobilise around solving the problem. If there is no real mine problem the benefits to the local people will only be in terms of affiliation to the project and will not signal a long-lasting commitment or need to

continue the work once the organisation has withdrawn. Highly impacted communities should be targeted for local involvement and communities with lower mine impact can be supported to undertake occasional activities for risk reduction as they see the need. However, impact may also change over time as land use and population pressures change and this also needs to be taken into consideration in planning.

Women often find it difficult to participate in activities because of their household and child rearing responsibilities, their lack of confidence and literacy skills and due to the male domination in traditional leadership and decision making. There may also be other sectors of the population that are excluded from participating in decision making and activities. These marginalised sectors should be identified as they may be more vulnerable to mine risk. The need to undertake daily livelihood activities may also prevent people from participating in mine action activities, a factor to be considered when defining the levels of involvement required from people. Although this study did not look specifically at youth, their involvement in mine action activities could be a good option as they may have some reading and writing skills in addition to time, energy and enthusiasm. During focus group discussions several young people demonstrated an interest to be involved in initiatives and a good awareness of the mine action activities already happening in their community.

There are already several examples of community-based mine risk education approaches in Angola, including the CNIDAH mine teams, the HI networks and initiatives being facilitated by AAR and INTERSOS. ICRC has also been leading some complementary risk education activities that focus on local involvement through peer education and community responsibility rather than on committees and networks. Lessons can be drawn from these approaches. Tapping into existing networks often works better than setting up new committees, but there can still be problems of the local level volunteers expecting incentives. Villagers are likely to work better as MRE volunteers if the issue is relevant to their lives and recognised by their communities as important. Ongoing support and a response to clearance requests can also help to make their work more valued by the community. Supporting communities to put in place safety measures, such as marking suspect areas or developing simple reporting processes may be a more suitable option than ongoing community-based MRE in the Kwanza Sul villages.

Mapping exercises of suspect areas demonstrated that there is often a good level of community knowledge regarding mined areas, particularly among former military or civil defence. The mapping process is a useful tool for TIA because it can provide a clearer picture for clearance operations than a narrative report and it also has the potential to contribute effectively towards the development of enhanced technical survey and area reduction approaches. Involving former military in mine action activities could help to assist in reconciliation processes at community level if it were seen that their contribution was furthering the development of the community.

Discussions with local communities and with demining teams revealed that the involvement of mine affected communities in the prioritisation process is sometimes weak, as is the communication between the teams and the local people. This results in misinformation, remaining uncertainties after clearance and can contribute to a delay in land distribution and use. Prioritisation and communication processes can be improved through developing further the TIA process in terms of information collection, analysis and community liaison techniques, and through developing the competence of demining teams and supervisors to liaise and coordinate with the local population. This requires an understanding of community development as an approach to working with people and a planning approach that puts the local people in the centre of mine action activities.

The study found two villages where some informal clearance of mines has taken place since the war, although it is not always clear how the mines were cleared and by whom. Local self-help initiatives seem to be directly related to mines blocking access to resources. In areas where mines do not form a direct impediment to land and resources there appear to be no informal clearance activities. Former military were able to demonstrate the clearance techniques that they used in the military. The techniques are very basic, using a bastáo and a knife. Exposure to professional clearance means that some of the former soldiers feel they would need to use metal detectors if they were to undertake clearance again. Although groups of villagers said that they would be interested to be involved in mine clearance activities, men were concerned that they would need training, better tools and payment, and women were concerned about their lack of time, their low literacy skills and their child rearing responsibilities.

Based on an analysis of the issues outlined above, the approaches proposed for enhanced community involvement in mine action in Kwanza Sul build on the following aspects:

- A proposal for how some existing areas of the work can be improved to be more inclusive and empowering for local communities – this specifically refers to strengthening the TIA and introducing a community liaison aspect in to the work of the demining teams.
- A proposal for piloting a process of community mapping and area reduction. This would be conducted following the TIA process and particularly in areas where there are former military present. The pilot will be to test how village level maps of contamination can be used and combined with other data to better define minefield boundaries and target clearance.
- A proposal for how the development programme and its partners can become more actively involved in the mine action work through a focus on land use and access rights on mined and demined land and by supporting community involvement in mine action through empowerment and learning processes.

Local clearance initiatives have not been recommended as an appropriate pilot for the villages visited in Kwanza Sul. Although villagers expressed interest in being involved and it would be a welcome means of income generation, the levels of contamination in the area are not enough to justify a community based approach. Details for the proposed aspects for community involvement in the NPA Kwanza Sul programme and an analysis of the potential for local clearance initiatives are outlined in Section 4.

1. Introduction

1.1. Background to the Study

This study in Kwanza Sul province was conducted to explore the feasibility of carrying out a pilot project in local communities in Angola for their active participation in Norwegian People's Aid (NPA) mine action programmes. The initiative to undertake such a study comes from the NPA mine action unit in Oslo, which has shown its commitment to explore new approaches to mine action that promote the greater involvement of the local mine affected population. This commitment is very much in line with the principles of the NPA international strategy which focuses on a rights-based, partnership approach, whereby vulnerable people are empowered to work towards their advancement in developing societies.

In December 2005 a concept paper was developed for NPA to document and review existing examples of community participation in mine action, to define key principles that should guide community-inclusive approaches and to outline a concept as to how some of these approaches could best be combined and tested out in a specific community context (Bottomley, 2005). This study is the next step in the process, to put some of the theory to test in a specific country context and within an existing NPA mine action programme.

Angola was deemed a suitable target country for this study for several reasons. Firstly NPA has had a long presence in Angola, being one of the first organisations to establish a cooperation agreement with the Government of Angola (GoA) in 1989. The mine action programme was established in 1995, following a request from the United Nations in 1994 to help to demine the country after the first cessation of conflict. Secondly NPA has both mine action and development programmes working in the country. This means that as a country office NPA Angola is in a good position to promote greater community participation in mine action by combining the expertise of both programmes. Thirdly, the Angola programme has evolved over the years from a programme focused largely on emergency assistance and an isolated mine action response, to a programme that is actively trying to promote the inter-relatedness of mine action with development issues. The need to ensure that programmes are effective and cost-efficient also bodes well for a new emphasis on increased community participation in mine action.

The NPA Angola country strategy for the period 2004-2007 emphasises the importance of creating links and synergies between the mine action and development programmes. Land and resource rights and democratic rights and participation are defined as NPA's two thematic areas in Angola, with mine action being incorporated under the land and resource rights thematic. Land and resource rights focuses on people's capacity to secure their rights to the land and natural resources on which they depend and as landmines limit people's access to and control over resources, mine action is seen to be a key element to the goals of this thematic component. This strategy neatly highlights the inter-connectedness of the thematic areas of NPA, but more importantly stresses the importance of approaching the mine problem from a holistic perspective, taking in to account both the technical aspects of the problem and the broader socio-economic aspects.

In the early years of NPA assistance in Angola, the instability caused by the ongoing conflict forced the initial programmes to focus on humanitarian relief and emergency assistance, although by the late 1990s NPA was supplementing the humanitarian emergency activities with a focus on health care, rural development and empowerment and advocacy for social progress. The NPA community development activities employed a partnership oriented approach, which is being further strengthened and refined under the new country strategy. Today partnership forms a key working approach for NPA Angola, giving priority to strengthening civil society organisations and movements and the relationships between communities and local government. Two main principles of the NPA Angola work are empowerment and participation. The strategy describes empowerment as "increasing people's ability to bring about change" and to solve "their own problems through individual and/or collective efforts" and participation as being "a process whereby people's active involvement – individually or collectively, is facilitated in order for them to partake in shaping decisions which affect them." These principles are of great relevance and importance in the efforts to involve local communities more actively in mine action processes.

As a country with substantial oil and diamond revenue, there is concern that there may be a possible reduction in donor funding for mine action following the planned elections in 2006. As a relatively complex and resource demanding programme, NPA has already raised questions about how sustainable the current mine action

programme is in the light of these possible changes (NPA, February 2005:5). Moves towards exploring how communities can be better involved in mine action processes are therefore timely, in that such initiatives could both help to increase the sustainability of activities in terms of developing risk reduction strategies at the local level in addition to reducing overall programme costs.

Recently two key documents have also been produced for the NPA Angola programme: the land study in Kwanza Sul (Filipe, 2005) and the mid-term review of the Angola programme (Isaksen and Samset, 2005). Both documents provide pointers for better programme planning and for the need to further develop the links between the mine action and development programmes. The recommendations and observations of both these documents served as a good reference for this study and an attempt is made to build on the recommendations relevant to this study and to provide suggestions for how they could be practically implemented in the field.

1.2. Study Objectives

The rationale for the study was to explore in a specific country context the feasibility of carrying out a pilot project in local communities for their active participation in mine action. The specific objectives for the study, as outlined in the Terms of Reference, were as follows:

- To study and document the characteristics of selected communities within the NPA mine action target areas. To assess the characteristics in relation to their favourability towards community participation in mine action activities. Such characteristics will include:
    - The social organisation of the community
    - Livelihoods
    - The size and character of the mine problem
    - The degree to which mines are experienced and recognised as a severe problem to the people
    - Their familiarity with voluntary contributions for the mutual benefit of the community
    - Existing examples of community participation/organisation
    - Local coping strategies for mine problems or other community problems
    - Gender
- To assess the immediate interest and willingness of the communities to participate in mine action projects and the underlying motivations
- To map any experiences the communities might have with voluntary/community based/informal demining activities, now or in the past, and the methods and tools that have been applied
- To map and describe any other community involvement and activities that have taken place related to mine action or other development activities
- Based on these observations, including inputs and responses from the communities, give an outline of which components could comprise elements in a pilot project and provide a draft design for a pilot project
- If the conditions and characteristics of the communities are not considered satisfactory for entering in to a "full-scale" participatory project, provide a separate assessment of the feasibility of engaging the community in more limited activities related to mine clearance, indicating possible methods to this end, including a rudimentary assessment of the possibility to use rakes.

1.3. Report Outline

Section 2 of this report outlines the methodology used during the study, including the team composition, the study locations, the tools used for data collection and an analysis of the reliability of the findings.

Section 3 presents the main findings of the study. The section is divided into three main parts. The first part (3.1) provides an overview of existing NPA work in Kwanza Sul province, including both the mine action and development programmes. The second part (3.2) provides an analysis of the community characteristics found in the visited villages. The section is divided into four key areas: traditional leadership, community mobilisation, mine impact and ability to participate, which includes an examination of gender issues. The third section, entitled Mine Action Initiatives (3.3) brings together examples of existing community involvement in mine action activities or informal clearance and presents some ideas as to areas where there could be greater involvement and participation. Case studies from the villages visited are used throughout the text to highlight particular issues.

Section 4 provides an outline as to which components could comprise elements in a pilot project, including enhancing TIA approaches and community liaison and using local mapping techniques for enhanced technical survey and area reduction. A key part of the proposal is for the mine action programme and the development programme to combine forces to address land concerns related to mine clearance and to develop literacy support for local people participating in mine action activities. The feasibility of engaging the community in activities related to mine clearance is also covered in this section.

2. Methodology

2.1. Evaluation Team

The study team comprised of a team leader from the NPA Southeast Asia office, a representative from the NPA headquarters, the coordinator for the development programme in Sumbe, and the senior survey officer from the mine action programme in Gabela. A translator/interpreter also worked with the team. The participation of staff from both the mine action and development programmes in the study has been considered fundamental to promote greater cooperation and tangible results in the future. Unfortunately two of the team members, one from the development programme and one from the head office, were only able to stay with the team for the first week of the field study. When in the municipalities a member of the local authorities sometimes accompanied the team to act as a guide and to introduce the team to the local people. While on some occasions this person initially tried to lead the village response, the team encouraged them to listen rather than contribute, as in the village the research aimed to understand the views of the community members rather than the local authorities.

2.2. Time Frame

The study was conducted over a period of three weeks from 28th April – 13th May 2006 (see schedule in Annex One). Initial preparatory work was done by the team leader before the study, including a documentation review and preparation of a question framework. The first few days of the study were spent in Luanda, meeting with the NPA staff of the mine action programme, the development programme and the Angolan Landmine Impact Survey (ALIS), with representatives from CNIDAH, INAD and UNICEF. Once in Gabela meetings were held with key staff from Base 3 and Task Impact Assessment (TIA) reports for the relevant study villages were translated from Portuguese to English. Meetings were held with the NPA development partners in Sumbe town. The field work was conducted in three municipalities with about three days spent in each municipality. The final two days of the study period were spent in Luanda and included meetings with ICRC, UNICEF, AAR and INTERSOS and a debriefing with the NPA Angola Resident Representative and Mine Action and Development Programme staff.

2.3. Study Locations

The province of Kwanza Sul was chosen for the study for various reasons. Firstly there is a permanent mine action and development programme presence there, with Base 3 situated in Gabela town and a number of the NPA development partners working in the province. These partners are valuable both in terms of their local knowledge, in providing access to communities and also in terms of possibilities for cooperation during a pilot. In 2005 a land study was also carried out by NPA in the municipalities of Conda, Amboim and Sumbe and so provided excellent documentation on the land situation within the area. The mine action Base Manager in Gabela has experience in the NPA Task Impact Assessment (TIA) processes and is keen to improve the TIA process through enhanced community participation. A further enabling factor for this study was that the Angolan Landmine Impact Survey (ALIS) data was recently made available for the province of Kwanza Sul.

The study focused in three municipalities, contiguous to each other and relatively easily accessible from Gabela town. The reason for choosing municipalities in the same area was based on the rationale that any pilot project could begin in one municipality but then could easily be expanded to the neighbouring areas. In the municipality of Conda the villages of Chiaca and Cunjo were visited, in Quilenda municipality the villages of Mbanza Quilenda and Cauango, and in Amboim municipality the villages of Zambia, Buenbue and Morro dos Machados.

Study Locations

Municipality	Village
Conda	Chiaca
	Cunjo
Quilenda	Cauango
	Mbanza Quilenda
Amboim	Morro dos Machados
	Buenbue
	Zambia

In each municipality meetings were held with the local authorities before visiting the villages and at the end of the work a briefing on the main findings would be given. The villages visited were in different situations regarding mine clearance. Two of the villages (Buenbue and Zambia) had already received demining from NPA, Morro dos Machados had received some assistance from the rapid response team, demining was ongoing in Chiaca village and no clearance had taken place in Cauango, Mbanza Quilenda or Cunjo, although survey teams had visited. This allowed the team to gauge how communities responded to the demining intervention before, during and after implementation, and to also to get some impressions of how well the demining teams interacted with the local people.

Originally it had been suggested to conduct the study in both mine affected communities and non-mine affected communities to enable the team to compare the situation between the two, but due to the time constraints of the study it was decided just to focus on known mine-impacted communities.

2.4. Data Collection

The study was qualitative in nature with the intention that this would be the best approach to gain an understanding of the motivation and perceptions of the local people towards mine action and their participation in it. Prior to the field work the team leader carried out a review of documents, reports and other materials focusing on the work of NPA in Angola, mine action and community-based initiatives. A list of the main documents reviewed can be found in the references. In fact there was a lack of literature relating to the mine/UXO situation in Angola and development work but some additional materials were collected during the study period. An interim report for the Angola Landmine Impact Survey had just been released, including data on the province of Kwanza Sul, so this was able to give some indication of the extent of mine contamination in the study areas.

A basic question framework was developed (see Annex Three), drawing on the fields of inquiry of the Community Study approach developed by the Assistance to Mine-Affected Communities (AMAC) project at the International Peace Research Institute, Oslo (PRIO).[1] The community studies approach aims to reveal the complexity of local mine contaminated communities by looking in depth at five main areas: the community background, the human field, the economic field, the social field and the mine action operations. Additional questions were added to better understand local coping strategies with the mine problem and to explore existing community-based risk reduction strategies and the potential for future involvement. The questions were used as a guideline and generally the discussions proceeded in a semi-structured way, allowing the researchers to explore issues of interest as they arose during the discussions. For this study the questions were used during focus group discussions with different groups of community people, often comprising one male group and one female group in each village.

The groups were mainly called together by the Soba as the Gabela base had organised the appointments with the municipal administration and village authorities in advance. Male groups normally comprised the village leadership and other key people such as school teachers, and some farmers. Occasionally former military and members of the civil defence were also present in the group, although they were not always forthcoming in indicating their presence. In Cunjo village the male group comprised mainly of former members of the military and civil defence who had been based in the commune, and it was in this village that the most accurate map of suspected areas was produced. Women's groups were often headed by the leaders of OMA (Organiaçao da Mulher Angolana), the Angolan Women's Organisation. While the team tried to limit the numbers of participants to approximately 10 people, often other villagers would join the discussions and come to observe and contribute their ideas.

The focus group discussions were combined with mapping exercises and transect walks and observation. During the mapping process the participants were asked to draw a sketch map of their village and to mark on main features such as roads, buildings, rivers and mountains, and then to mark on contaminated areas. The maps served to act as a catalyst to encourage discussion around the impact of mines on the local community, but also revealed the local knowledge of mined areas. The maps were mainly done with the male groups because they were more familiar in interacting with outsiders and more confident to undertake the task. Had the team had a

[1] See Millard, Ananda S. and Harpviken, Kristian Berg, 2001. Community Studies in Practice: Implementing a New Approach to Landmine Impact Assessment with Illustrations from Mozambique. Oslo: PRIO.

longer period in each village it would also have been possible to undertake mapping with the women's groups. Where possible, walks were done in the villages to observe the lay out and proximity to mined areas and to observe demining operations or cleared areas. In some areas it was not relevant to undertake these walks as the village did not have an apparent mine problem in close vicinity. Where demining was being undertaken in the villages, interviews were also held with members of the demining teams to gain an understanding of their interaction with the local communities.

Study team and villagers conduct a walk through Cunjo village with the map of mined areas.

Several meetings were held with representatives of relevant agencies both in Luanda and in Kwanza Sul province. These included national and international bodies such as UNICEF, INAD and CNIDAH, and also local partner organisations of NPA. The staff members of the NPA mine action and development programmes, both in Luanda and at provincial level, were key informants during the study process, providing guidance, information and ideas. At the end of the study a debriefing was held with the NPA team in Luanda to present the main findings and to receive their initial feedback.

In summary, the research study comprised the following activities:

- Document review
- Meeting with staff from NPA Mine action and Development Programmes
- Meetings with Base Manager and Deputy at Gabela Base 3
- Meetings with key stakeholders (UNICEF, NGOs, CNIDAH, INAD)
- Meetings with NPA partners to discuss their methods and understanding of the local communities
- Village visits
    - Focus group discussions
    - Mapping
    - Observation/transect walks
- Presentation to NPA staff in Luanda and feedback

2.5. Validity and Reliability of Findings

The employment of the different research tools helped to allow for triangulation and continuous cross-checking of data, helping to increase the validity and reliability of findings. However, the scope of the study was relatively small and so it would not be possible to extrapolate to other provinces not visited by the research team. It must also be recognised that the situation in rural Angola may continue to change in the future as the country becomes more stable and developed. Perspectives of people at village level may also change in line with greater interaction with development agencies and their own accumulated experience in a post war context. However, the information gathered from each village was able to produce relatively good case studies from which overall trends can be detected, in addition to providing some interesting personal perspectives.

During the study the time in each area was brief and so it was not possible for the study team to understand in great depth the situation in each village. The tools were able to provide a fairly detailed view of the village and the concerns of the villagers, but a longer period of time spent in each village may have revealed new data and/or contradicting ideas.

The fact that the team were travelling in an NPA car and that two of the NPA team members were well-known to some of the villagers may also have influenced some of the responses, although due to the good reputation of NPA in the area it also had the advantage of making it very easy to conduct the fieldwork in what could have otherwise been a more difficult situation. Responses may also have been influenced by other factors including

political considerations, previous experience with outside agencies, expectations for outside assistance, lack of confidence and trust, and the presence of the local authorities during some of the group discussions.

The study team was largely male with the only female being the expatriate team leader. This was largely a result of the relevant staff being male rather than through a conscious decision to have more male members on the team. Having an Angolan woman on the research team would certainly have helped to deepen interactions with the female participants met. The foreign members of the team were also working through a translator and this sometimes slowed up interactions and meant that there may have been misunderstandings in the real meaning of what was being said. Nuances and emphasis in the Portuguese may have been missed by the non-Portuguese speakers.

Generally the study team was fortunate in the choice of target areas in terms of accessibility and cooperation of the local people in the discussions. However, on occasion the planned schedule had to be changed due to the Soba being absent and therefore unable to call the people together or due to a death resulting in the majority of people leaving the village to attend the funeral.

3. Main Findings

3.1. NPA in Kwanza Sul Province

Kwanza Sul province is situated on the western coast of Angola. Divided into twelve municipalities and thirty-six communes, the majority of the population belongs to the ethnic groups of Kimbundo and Umbundo. As with the other provinces in Angola, the area has suffered from the long years of war beginning with the 1961 war of independence, followed by a sporadic civil war after independence was gained from the Portuguese in 1975. In many areas the war was relatively low key during the 1980s, but following the 1992 elections it erupted again with renewed intensity as UNITA refused to accept the MPLA victory. The war lasted until the peace agreement of April 1992, following the death of UNITA leader, Jonas Savimbi (ICBL, 2004:121). The years of war forced millions of Angolans from the rural areas to seek refuge in urban areas, resulted in the death of more than 75,000 people and led to the displacement of an additional four million (one third of the population), together with some 300,000 demobilised soldiers (NPA, January 2005:1). With a return to peace landmines have represented a major threat to civilians, initially as many thousands of displaced people returned to their area of origin and now as people are beginning to settle and undertake agriculture and supplementary livelihood activities in former conflict areas.

In Kwanza Sul province NPA has both a mine action programme and a development programme. While in terms of the country strategy the mine action programme works with the development programme under the land and resource rights thematic, in practice there is still potential for much greater integration and collaboration between the two programmes. This was also a conclusion of the mid-term review (Isaksen and Samset, 2005:6). The following sections outline the present status of both programmes in Kwanza Sul, but the recommendations developed in this report will suggest ideas as to how the two programmes can work together in a more mutually beneficial way.

3.1.1. The Mine Action Programme

The NPA mine action programme began work in Kwanza Sul in 1998 when the Catholic mission was demined. However, due to renewed fighting the operations were forced to move back to Huila province. Following the cessation of conflict the government requested NPA to return to Kwanza Sul as no demining agencies were working there. NPA undertook an assessment to gauge the extent of mine contamination in the province and with the results of the assessment indicating that there was a need for intervention, the team moved back to the province in 2003 and set up a base in the town of Gabela in Amboim municipality.[2]

The demining operations in Kwanza Sul comprise one survey team, two manual demining platoons of 46 people each, one rapid response team and mechanical teams working with the Hydrema and the South African Casspir for ground preparation. There is a total of 165 staff in the province.

The survey team is responsible for gathering the information required to prioritise and develop operational plans for demining. The survey team has employed the Task Impact Assessment (TIA) methodology developed by NPA since 2001 and the ranking is done according to the priorities set by CNIDAH. Each task is examined in terms of resources and capabilities of the target groups, resources and capabilities of non mine action implementers, and the resources and capabilities of the mine action programme. While an NPA monitoring report states that TIA seems to be more than satisfactorily performed (NPA, 2005:7), the Gabela base team realise that there are weaknesses in the process that could be strengthened through enhanced community participation in the process.

The machines are employed for ground preparation and the land is verified through manual clearance. The team say that this makes the process quicker as the machine cuts the vegetation prior to the manual demining. Even if there are no detonations when the flail is working, the manual team will still verify the land to ensure there is no residual risk for housing and farming land. However for roads the Casspir is used for verification without the manual capacity. In agricultural areas the land is often hilly and rough and so the flail is unable to reach certain areas. The team have also found the Hydrema to be quite problematic for the conditions in Kwanza Sul province, and the team are soon to receive two Ardvarks, which are low complexity when compared to the Hydrema.

[2] Today NPA has mine action bases in the provinces of Kwanza Sul, Malanje and Moxico.

There is one rapid response team (RRT) that is responsible for gathering EOD, ERW and isolated mines. The team consists of one paramedic and 6 members, although the senior officer recently died. The mine action team mention that sometimes when the RRT go to gather UXO in the community and more are then found, the community then believe that the team is not doing its job properly, so there is a feeling that communities would benefit from more information on operations

In the past the NPA base in Kwanza Sul had one MRE coordinator and 8 MRE instructors who partnered with a local NGO, Cuidados da Infancia (CI) to provide mine risk education. This is the same arrangement that other demining organisations have in other provinces and is in line with the long-term plan of CNIDAH for all mine action capacities to be taken over by national NGOs and government institutions by 2010. However, recently CI have had to stop activities because of lack of funds. CI also had no transport of their own and so would accompany NPA survey teams or demining teams when they went to the field to provide the information. This suggests that they were only reaching those communities who were going to have clearance and therefore may have had a limited need for MRE. While this study team did not have an opportunity to observe MRE activities or meet with CI, the mid term review report (Isaksen and Samset, 2005:21) pointed to some concerns. Firstly the process to select the MRE partner had not been very systematic and no contract had been signed between NPA and the partner. The partner organisation also had so few resources to do the MRE work it was operating largely on a voluntary basis. NPA is now considering whether it should provide further support to CI. The team are also beginning to think that there could be a better impact of activities if the survey, MRE and rapid response are combined together.

According to the mid-term review of the Angola programme (Isaksen and Samset, 2005:10), partnership in the mine action programme is mainly interpreted as meaning that the affected populations should play a role in deciding where the NPA mine action resources would be used. This is achieved through the survey process whereby village leaders, villagers, local authorities and various development bodies are involved in the process to identify areas for clearance. However, the final decisions as to which projects to engage in are made by NPA according to its own strategic principles and the TIA report. The mid-term review report goes on to explain that "the semi-military style of operations and the relatively high level of technology make it nearly impossible for villagers, as NPA works today, to have a true 'two-way cooperation relationship'," (Ibid, 2005:11). Currently the villagers, who are also the ultimate beneficiaries of the mine action activities, participate by being informants for survey teams and sometimes they generate requests for NPA to undertake mine clearance. However, a review of the TIA reports for the study villages revealed that the actual number of local people who participate in the process is quite limited and usually reduced to municipal or commune authorities with one or two key representatives from the village leadership. Occasionally accident victims were also interviewed or involved in the process. The link to development activities seems to be largely limited to NPA undertaking clearance which is necessary for the NGO projects to be implemented. Potential solutions to these limitations will be addressed in more detail throughout this report.

3.1.2. The Development Programme

The development programme of NPA has been working in the province since 1999, initially providing assistance to displaced people and food security during the war. With the end of the war, NPA and its partners became involved in the resettlement of people in the municipalities of Sumbe, Conda and Gabela. In the beginning NPA was implementing the projects and there were over 20 staff working in two provinces. Since October 2005 the development programme has reduced its numbers to four staff based at the NPA office in Luanda. They deal with the administrative needs of the programme and also work as facilitators to build up partner capacity.

The development programme of NPA works within two thematic areas: land and resource rights and democratic rights and participation. In 2003 NPA strengthened its focus on land and resource rights. The Land and Resource Rights thematic is a continuation of the existing agricultural programme and the land study was conducted in Kwanza Sul province in order to provide a framework for the new focus. Within the study two key concerns were outlined. The first related to the 2004 land law and how land rights can best be promoted under the new legal framework, and the second to NPA's wish to strengthen the position of women in terms of access to land and resources. A key point that emerged from the study is that local people need more information about their rights to land and resources, and so NPA is now working with the partners to develop a community-based approach to education on land rights. Under this thematic area the development programme is supporting

several partners in the province of Kwanza Sul. Agricultural support is being provided by ASBC and CHOFA. The work of ASBC mainly involves the provision of seeds, tools, animals and other agricultural inputs to village communities and training on how to maximise output. ASBC have also created associations in villages to help community members to experiment with crops, to organise transport to market and to increase labour productivity. CHOFA is a larger national horticultural cooperative with a branch in Kwanza Sul province. It assists peasants in the area to grow fruit and vegetables, to get their produce to market and to get more surplus. The organisation provides seeds, fertilisers, pesticides and tools and micro-credit and also has a literacy programme which can help the farmers to learn how to read and write while focusing on practical issues such as the safe use of pesticides and fertilisers. Classes take place in the field and local teachers are trained and receive some monetary incentives.

Zambia village, Amboim municipality, provides a good example of cooperation between the development programme and the mine action programme. The NPA development programme was instrumental in supporting the local residents to request mine clearance and the demined land is now being cultivated with support from NPA supported partners such as CHOFA. Literacy classes are also being held in this village related to the farming work.

The second thematic area of the development programme is democratic rights and participation. In the lead up to the parliamentary and presidential elections in 2006, NPA is focusing on information campaigns, voter education, training of domestic election observers and women's participation in the electoral process. In Kwanza Sul GLIF, the Feminine Leadership Group, undertakes civic education promoting female leadership, empowerment and participation in decision-making processes. GLIF was set up by women who attended a Women Can Do It workshop run by NPA. The activities are focused in the city of Sumbe in the coastal area of the province.

Since NPA works with local Angolan organisations, a key part of the work of the NPA development programme is to work with those organisations to further develop their capacity so that they are working more effectively and will be able to operate independently in the future. This is not always easy as some of the NGOs emerged out of emergency programmes rather than from a more organic development driven by community concerns.

3.2. Community Characteristics

An important consideration for community involvement is to see what existing potential there is for community organising and self-help strategies within the local situation. In the villages in Kwanza Sul the group discussions explored issues such as social organisation and self-help strategies in addition to perceptions of the mine problem. Discussions with NPA partner organisations were also enlightening in terms of examining their experiences of getting communities involved in development activities. The findings reveal that while there is certainly potential for greater community involvement in mine action in Kwanza Sul province, there are also some barriers which should be taken in to careful consideration while planning.

3.2.1. Traditional Leadership

Despite the years of war the traditional leadership has tended to persist in rural Angolan communities. In the villages visited during the study the traditional leadership generally comprised the Soba and his secretary at village level and at a broader level the Regedor, a chief Soba who overseas several villages. Traditionally the position of the Soba is gained through inheritance, but in some areas they are also appointed by the authorities. The Soba maintains the power at village level. According to Wille (1992:56) the Soba is responsible for maintaining coherence in the community and for contacting the government if the population has any kind of problems or requests. The secretary is the person with an education who does the administrative part of the Sobas work. In addition some villages have a Coordinator, a position that is linked more directly to the government. In villages established after the war, such as the village of Morro dos Machados, the coordinator appears to be the key contact person in a village.

During the village visits it was clear that the Soba still plays an important role in the villages. The Soba is the main point of contact for all new people visiting a village and the interface between the local population and the government or other agencies. If the Soba was not present when we arrived in a village, activities would have to be delayed until he appeared and gave permission for us to work with the other villagers. When discussions took place about informing newcomers of the location of mined areas, villagers said unanimously that it would not be

a problem because all newcomers have to first contact the Soba, and he would provide them with information about the mines.[3]

Each village is organised into blocks, with one person nominated as responsible for that block. Information in the village is generally passed on in the same way: the Soba calls together the key people and they are then responsible to pass on the information to other people in each block. When there is a need to call all of the villagers together, the Soba will ring a bell or inform those responsible for the blocks to bring everyone together in the django, the traditional meeting house.

Conflicts are solved by the Soba. In villages like Cauango, where there is also a Regedor, the conflict is solved by the Soba and the Regedor. The normal procedure appears to be calling the involved parties together and sitting with them to get agreement and consensus. In one village the secretary to the Soba gave the example that if someone borrows some land and the owner of the land dies, the Soba and the Regedor would have to meet together, collect the relevant information and then decide who would have the most claim to the land – the borrower or relatives of the original owner. The belief is that the traditional leaders know the history of the village and its people and so are able to make informed decisions on such issues. Many conflicts appear to be solved at village level using the guidance of the traditional leaders.

The Soba, his secretary and the coordinator are the main decision makers in a community, although during the study it was noticed that the power sometimes shifted between them, seemingly as a result of strength of personality. Because the decisions are the prerogative of the leadership, this appears to have led to a passive acceptance by villagers that involvement in any initiative relies on the decision of the leadership. In cases where the leadership is active and forward thinking this can be a good thing, and some villagers mentioned they had come to work on community issues because the Soba had called them together. However it can also have a negative aspect in that it could prevent community members from acting on their own initiatives and ideas. In Chiaca village, during discussions about being involved in mine action activities, one participant observed that they would require orientation from the Soba first, because if they were just to start to do things then it could be dangerous. In Cunjo village the former military also referred to their dependence on decision making from higher levels by saying, "Like a child on a mother's back, the mother will decide where we will go."

Contact solely with the local leaders can also impede the spread of information to the people. There were several examples in the study villages where information about demining activities seemed to have remained with the local leadership and had not been passed on to other villagers. In addition, the Soba is often responsible for decisions that should really be community decisions, for example, the distribution of community land. This emerged as an issue following mine clearance when decisions over the distribution of land had not been clarified by the Soba or were seemingly disputed by some of the original land owners.

Buenbue Village: Land Distribution Following Clearance

The village of Buenbue used to be located on the top of a hill, an ancient area sacred to the Sobas. During the war the villagers were forced to flee from the village many times and some of the residents began to settle in safer areas at the foot of the hill or in neighbouring villages. Their former homes became a military base for the government troops during a thirteen year period, up until 2002. The troops laid mines around the hill to protect their base from UNITA troops.

The demining agency (NPA) came when there was peace, at the end of the war. They cleared the top of the hill so that the villagers could move back to their original homes. The demining was started in 2004 and finished in August 2005, but at the time of the visit of the study team the villagers had not yet moved back and built their houses. The primary reason given for this was that the rainy season had prevented them from making the bricks for their houses. They also said that they were waiting for the demining team to tell them the land was safe, despite the fact an official handover ceremony had taken place on completion of the demining. However, it also emerged that there were some concerns over the division of the cleared land. The TIA report records that approximately 239 families will benefit from the clearance, but during the discussions with the village leadership

[3] In Morro dos Machados, the villagers said the coordinator would be responsible for informing new people about the mined area, supported by the leaders of each block.

and the villagers they were unable to say how many people would benefit. During the discussion some of the villagers were voicing their anger over the delay in the distribution of land and the uncertainty about who would get land. The Soba and his secretary maintained that the land would be divided up among the original owners and that any remaining land would be split among other people. Each place has its inherited owners, but some may not use the land, and as one person commented, "to ensure the grass does not grow people have to be open and let other people occupy the land because if the grass is not cut we will continue to have these long meetings."

In Zambia village it also emerged that there was some dissatisfaction over how the demined land had been distributed to families post clearance. Before the demining took place the authorities recalled that they had tried to identify the number of family members and the possibilities for water access for the crops. There is a lot of land in Zambia, but the problem is access to water and irrigation for cultivation. There are now 28 families using the demined land.[4] The land was distributed by the local authorities and when interviewed they said the process had gone well. But the women's group mentioned that there had been some conflict over the land distribution as some of the former owners had to give up some of their land to people who had none. One woman mentioned that her land had been very large before, but now that it has been shared with others it was just enough for her family. However she diplomatically said that she was okay with the division of the land. "Although it was not my decision, we cannot work when our neighbours have no land", she explained.

Summary

- The traditional leadership comprise the main decision makers in a village. The leadership should be respected and first contact should always be made with the leaders.
- The leadership has the ability to mobilise and unite communities around activities. This should be encouraged and promoted where possible.
- Methods should be found to ensure that information is provided to everyone in a village. Passing on information to the traditional leadership would also have to be complemented by other methods.
- Issues relating to the distribution of land following clearance need to be addressed prior to clearance with the traditional leadership and community as a whole. Beneficiaries who will use the land need to be clearly identified. Follow up needs to take place after clearance to ensure that the traditional mechanisms for land distribution are functioning.

3.2.2. Community Mobilisation

When asked if local people work together to get things done, the first response is often negative. Farmers reported that they worked individually on farms, or they go and work as labourers on the farms of the wealthier villagers. If they wanted people to help them on their own farm, then they would have to pay them. The president of CHOFA also agreed that farmers could not work collectively because of their own individual needs. However, solidarity is often seen to be a traditional aspect of rural Angolan society. Before the war people recalled that rural communities often united together for food, to build houses together, to mourn together and to plough together, but the war disrupted this communal work and the villagers also lack the materials and resources to enable them to work together. Family units now tend to be stronger than the larger social network.

Another factor that is said to have contributed to the lack of initiative at community level is the relief aid that was provided during the war. Having received aid for many years villagers have sometimes lost some of their own initiative to accumulate resources and have developed a dependency on agencies, believing that outsiders will bring development to their village without any need for commitment from themselves. Organisations that were involved in emergency handouts during the war period also find it difficult to motivate people to do things for themselves because of the existing expectations.

However, there are some indications that people are beginning to work together on community projects. Under the farming cooperations and associations the farmers often work individually, but are coordinated by

[4] The TIA phase one report states that over 3,312 people who live in Zambia would be the beneficiaries of the clearance, although presumably the reference is to indirect beneficiaries rather than the number of people who would actually be using the land. Under the priority setting section it mentions that there is an irrigation system that will benefit 30 families organised in associations. However, nowhere in the report does it make clear exactly how many families were intended to benefit directly from the clearance.

committees who help to control and support the work of the members. Institutions such as the church continued to provide support and a sense of cohesion during the war years, and still serve to unite people together for common causes. Social ceremonies, such as funerals, also bring people together in communities. This was evidenced on a couple of occasions during the field study when entire villages were seemingly abandoned as the residents had left to attend funerals. In some of the villages people had voluntarily contributed their labour to build community infrastructure such as a school (Zambia) or a church (Chiaca and Cauango). They had mixed the adobe, brought the water and cooked food for the workers. All had contributed their labour for free with only the materials being provided by the outside organisations. In Zambia villagers mentioned that under the direction of the Soba they had come together to cut the grass and clean up their village, and in Chiaca people mentioned that they had come together as a village to request the administration to get the mines cleared from the land in their old village.

In the more remote villages it appears that people are more active and willing to initiate and undertake community activities. In both Buenbue and Morro dos Machados, villages situated at the periphery of Gabela town, the willingness of people to work together on activities seemed to be less in evidence. In Buenbue the villagers recalled that they had contributed labour to build a road, a bridge and water wells with Save the Children, but when the Social Action Fund (FAS) built a school they made a contract with a company to do the labour. In contrast, in the more remote community of Mbanza Quilenda the villagers have initiated and been involved in a number of community development activities. They had got together to build their own temporary school and health post and had recently made a request to FAS in Sumbe for materials to construct a laundry place, a new school, a clinic and a water point. The request was still pending at the time of the study team visit, but the villagers said they were ready to contribute their labour to the projects. The villagers were already contributing their labour to construct a bridge on the road between their village and a neighbouring village. FAS had provided the materials and the villagers were undertaking the construction.

The war created a lack of trust between people and this still lingers today and makes it difficult for people to work together. Former soldiers often don't come forward to express their ideas or their knowledge, and different factions are often living together in the same village. In Cunjo village the former soldiers admitted that they were reluctant to pass on the information about the mines for fear it would have negative repercussions for them. There is sometimes a political element within the village leadership that can create tensions and divisions within the community, for example in Zambia the MPLA secretary seemed to be taking a leading role in much of the village decision making, over and above the Soba. In Mbanza Quilenda the population suffered a great deal at the hands of the different factions fighting in the area. Some of the residents were killed, women were raped and their houses were burnt and destroyed. It is going to take time for people to forgive and to work together effectively. However, involvement in mine action activities could be a means for improving community relations by encouraging people to work together for the benefit of the whole community.

The NPA partner organisations say that one way to combat lack of trust and cohesion in communities is to work with small neighbourhood groups who know each other. This has also been found to be a useful approach in Cambodia.[5] Groups tend to function well with relatively small numbers of members (manageability), similarity in terms of wealth (compatibility), the proximity of their houses to one another (communication) and their familiarity with each other. One of the factors to make a group strong is for them to have the initiative to meet, to be friends and to share ideas. Community motivation and initiative can also be raised by exchange visits between villagers so that they can share ideas and see the work of others. This can act as a catalyst for their own change and development.

Summary

- It appears the community initiatives were disrupted by the war, which created a lack of trust. Currently people focus more on the family unit.
- Relief assistance during the war period has resulted in dependency on aid and a lack of initiative to undertake community activities.
- There are some examples of community participation and organisation, particularly in more remote villages. Villagers are used to contributing their labour.

[5] See Simmons and Bottomley, 2001. Working with the Very Poor: Reflections on the Krom Akphiwat Phum Experience. Phnom Penh, page 70.

- NGOs working with communities recommend strategies to promote community activities, such as focusing on neighbourhood groups and organising exchange visits between communities.

3.2.3. Ability to Participate

The traditional male orientation of the leadership in Angolan villages means that the participation of women in activities is often very limited. According to NPA partner organisations, work is seen to be the prerogative of men, and for women it can be difficult to move into more "official" work or to speak out. Men tend to be the main interface with outside agencies and the main decision makers in the village. Sometimes husbands don't allow their wives to join activities, and women themselves have often been brought up to believe that they don't have the right to speak or to take decisions without the permission of their spouse.

Rural Angolan women tend to get married young and participation in activities is then also limited by an endless cycle of child bearing and rearing. Women also have many household responsibilities which limits their availability to take part in meetings or other activities. Literacy was also cited as a barrier to participation in activities. The criterion for selection of local people to participate in projects and activities often includes the condition that the participant should be able to read and write. This is the case, for example, in the network of volunteers for the mine risk education programme of Handicap International in Huambo province, and also for the locally recruited deminers in both the MAG and CMAC programmes in Cambodia. During the focus group discussions at village level women on several occasions expressed their concern about their ability to participate in activities because of their illiteracy. In Chiaca women said they were worried about their inability to read and write and the problem of participating when looking after their babies and young children. Similar concerns were raised in Zambia village. When it was pointed out that the NPA demining team resident in the village also had women deminers, the village women interviewed said that they would never dare to talk to the women deminers as they felt intimidated by their equipment and their knowledge.

Zambia Village: Women's Exclusion from MA Information

Zambia was a frontline during the war and the local residents frequently had to move from their village to avoid the conflict. When they returned to their village in 2002 they started to rebuild their houses. However, there were a lot of areas around the village that they believed to be mined. In one area close to the village the women used to go and collect firewood. It was here that they came across a mine and reported it to the village authorities. The NPA development programme was also working in the area and they suggested that the NPA deminers could clear the land.

The NPA survey team came to the village in September 2004 and in February 2005 the demining teams came to clear the land. The village leadership say that during the clearance the deminers kept them informed of the progress and the Soba coordinated with the population. However, discussions with the women's group demonstrated that the women have been largely excluded from the demining process in their village. Despite the fact that the women had been the ones to find the mines in the field when they were collecting firewood, only the men went with the traditional leaders to show the NPA survey team where the mines were. A man reports that this was because the women were too scared to go. The village leaders say that when the clearance was finished, everybody who was to be a beneficiary of the land was shown the perimeter of the minefield. The women say they were not called to see the land that had been cleared, only their husbands went. The women know that there are signs painted red and white and that it means the land is clear infront and suspect behind, but they think it would be more useful for them to have more information on the signs and the land that was cleared.

Even when the research team were arranging to meet with the women's group in the afternoon, the village leadership said that the team would not need long with the women as they know very little about the mine problem as it is always the men who deal with it.

The case study illustrates well how women are often excluded from activities that are deemed to be more of a male concern. However, as women farm in the area, collect firewood and thatch, and raise children, who also need to be informed of safe and unsafe areas in the village, it is essential that women are provided with information and informed of the processes. The NPA Survey team are all male and so tend to deal mainly with the male representatives of the village. The Phase One of the TIA report for Zambia mentions that the

participants included only one female out of a total of eleven people. The Phase Two and Phase Three reports were undertaken only with the participation of the village leadership.

While the exclusion of women from activities is apparent, it is also possible that other sections of the population may also be excluded, such as the disabled, or the poorest, or newcomers. During the short time the team had in each village and the nature of the focus group discussions, it was difficult to come to any conclusions about this, but for any activity focusing on mine risk reduction efforts should be made to identify those sectors of the population who are marginalised in the community, as sometimes these people could be the most vulnerable to mine risk.

The ability for rural people to participate in activities is often limited by the need to conduct livelihood activities on a daily basis. Agriculture is the predominant livelihood for the majority of people in the villages visited. Situated at higher altitudes than the coastal region of the province the standard agricultural land use system is based on mixed farming using manual labour and minimum inputs (Filipe, 2005:19). Farmers grow crops such as maize, cassava, sweet potatoes, beans and peanuts. Fruits such as bananas are also grown. The produce is mainly used for home consumption although some farmers manage to produce enough for the market. The different crops are grown at different times of the year, and for those who have only small areas of land they farm within the same parcel of land. The lack of draught animals and machinery means that many families tend to farm smaller plots of land which they can cultivate manually. Land is cleared and prepared during the dry season from June to October and maize is often the first crop to be sown after the rain starts. Some families manage to plant maize two times a year. During the dry season farmers say they are less busy on the farms, but they often have to go further in search of water or to collect firewood and thatch for their house. The lack of transport in many of the rural areas also means that people have to walk long distances to the nearest town, which can often take them out of the village for several days.

Although this study did not look specifically at youth, their involvement in mine action activities could be a good option as they may have some reading and writing skills in addition to time, energy and enthusiasm. During focus group discussions several young people demonstrated an interest to be involved in initiatives and a good awareness of the mine action activities already happening in their community.

Summary

- Women often find it difficult to participate in activities because of their household and child rearing responsibilities, their lack of confidence and literacy skills and due to the male domination in traditional leadership and decision making.
- There may be other sectors of the population that are excluded from participating in decision making and activities. These marginalised sectors should be identified as they may be more vulnerable to mine risk.
- The need to undertake daily livelihood activities may also prevent people from participating in mine action activities.
- Involving youth in mine action activities may be a good option as they may have some literacy skills and perhaps more time, energy and enthusiasm than other members of the community.

3.2.4. Mine Impact

During discussions with the NPA partner organisation, one of the NGOs explained some of the difficulties they were having getting rural people to mobilise around the provision of latrines. The NGO representative said that because of cultural reasons people didn't see the need to use latrines and therefore it was difficult to get people together to construct them. Although a different intervention, the lesson that can be learned from this also applies to the involvement of local people in mine action. If local people cannot see a clear benefit for themselves from the activities, then it will be difficult to get them to participate genuinely.

With landmine contamination, the mines have to be experienced and recognised as a problem by the people in order for them to want to mobilise around solving the problem. In some of the villages visited it was difficult to gauge the immediate impact of the landmines on the lives of people. This was partly because the study only involved a short visit to each community and the team were not able to spend a longer period of time to observe daily life and how this may, or may not, be impacted. However, some observations can be made. Few people could remember accidents that had occurred, and those that had occurred tended to have happened during the

war. In the majority of the villages visited the mine problem seemed to be limited to certain areas, and once people know the affected area they are able to avoid it, an indication of the currently low population densities and the relatively easy availability of land. This partly reflects the different tactics used during the war by the two main armies. The MPLA tended to lay mines to protect their bases and their infrastructure, and often hills are mined and trenched as they housed military bases. UNITA laid mines on the roads and sometimes also in agricultural areas if they were situated near to front lines. However, during the war the logistics and food supplies generally depended on the rural communities and so often the production fields were left unmined.

In Cunjo, Cauango and Mbanza Quilenda the contaminated areas were nearby hills, as landmines had primarily been laid to protect military bases. Although the villagers said that the land would be useful for farming, they had farms in other areas and so the clearance of the area was not a necessity. In Mbanza Quilenda there were also suspected contaminated areas further away from the village, one near to the new bridge the villagers were building and another near to their agricultural fields. While the contaminated areas were not impeding their activities, they did have a concern that once the bridge was completed and the road put in to use people would be more at risk from the mined area. In Buenbue and Chicaca the old village areas were suspected areas, but villagers had been living in alternative areas for several years already. As will be discussed later in this report, in Chiaca the villagers were only moving back to their old village area because the municipality authorities had plans for the area they were currently living in. In Zambia the land that had been cleared was a former cultivation area of the village and it has quickly been put back in to use by the villagers, perhaps indicating that in this area there was more of a demand for land, although some of the beneficiaries talked to also had land in other areas around the village.

During discussions with the villagers the team tried to gauge what would be their priorities in terms of development or mine clearance activities. It was sometimes difficult to get what could be seen as a true answer to this question, particularly when we were clearly affiliated to a demining agency. As one respondent truthfully pointed out, as we were from a demining organisation they would of course say that demining was a priority for their village. However, in some cases it was found that demining wasn't necessarily the first priority for the villages. In Cauango the villagers agreed that access to water and the building of a school would be higher priority than demining as they currently have enough fields to farm.

Mbanza Quilenda Village: Warning Signs

The mined areas close to the village include a mountain where a military base was stationed, an area near to the farms and one place close to a small stream where a bridge is being built. The areas were mined by both sides in the war.

In Moshish, the area with the stream, the villagers are building a bridge with materials provided by the government. Once the bridge is built it means that people will be able to travel easily between Mbanza Quilenda and the neighbouring village of Catala. At the moment people take a long detour which is only possible on foot. However the villagers are concerned that once the bridge is finished and the road is used more frequently it will put people in danger as there is an area close to the road they believe is mined. During the war years one man was killed by a mine there when he was returning home on a path he had also used the same morning. The villagers said that a demining commission had come to the area one or two years ago and had gone to look at the area near the bridge. They had detectors and said that the area was possibly mined. It was recommended that the villagers put up crossed sticks to warn people of the mined area, but the sticks have now disappeared amid the long grass. The villagers would like to find a more permanent method of marking the mined area to ensure people's safety when they start to use the road. They think if they had red paint they could make a sign or paint stones to put around the boundary of the mined area.

When questioned whether they feel it would be necessary to also put up signs around the mountain which is much closer to the village, the answer is no. The villagers explain that everyone knows the area was a military base and therefore they don't go there. If strangers come to the village then they would first report to the Soba, and he would tell them where they can and cannot go.

The above case study illustrates how villages feel they need to mobilise and take action if the mine contamination is deemed to have a direct impact. In areas where there is no immediate impact they feel less need to take action.

This case is particularly interesting as the villagers are also recognising how impact can also change over time. Although the mined area near to the stream has not caused any accidents since the war, the villagers realise that once the bridge is completed and the road is in frequent use, the suspected area is likely to become more of a hazard to them and the neighbouring villagers.

Being able to target highly impacted villages is an important consideration when planning community involvement in mine action. Accident data is a key indicator that landmine or UXO contamination is impacting negatively on the affected populations, either because of lack of knowledge and awareness about the contaminated areas or because the ordnance are impeding livelihood activities. In areas where accidents are occurring communities will probably see dealing with the mine problem a high priority and will be more motivated to undertake activities to address the problem.

Now that the data from the Angolan Landmine Impact Survey (ALIS) is being released, it will be possible to begin to target high impact communities for mine action activities involving the local people. According to the interim report of the ALIS, all twelve of the municipalities in Kwanza Sul are impacted by landmines. Ebo and Waco Kungo are said to be the most impacted municipalities with thirty impacted communities and fifty suspected hazardous areas. Of the three municipalities visited during the study, only Amboim is recorded as having two highly impacted communities. Both Quilenda and Conda have no highly impacted communities.

Left: The partially-completed bridge in Mbanza Quilenda is in close proximity to a suspected area that the villagers would like to mark.

Impacted localities by study municipality[6]

Municipality	Impacted communities				SHAs	Recent Victims
	High	Medium	Low	Total		
Qilenda	0	4	17	21	28	0
Amboim	2	1	17	20	27	6
Conda	0	3	3	6	18	0

Unfortunately the interim report of the ALIS does not yet provide enough detailed information to be able to match the study villages with the impacted communities. However, it is likely that Morro dos Machados could be one of the communities deemed highly impacted.

Morro dos Machados: Land Reclamation

The village of Morro dos Machados is perched on a hill side close to the town of Gabela. The village has been in existence since 2000, when people started to arrive in Gabela from different areas. There are now approximately 350 residents and they comprise both local people and IDPs from Ebo, Conda and Quibala. Some of the villagers are former military and civil defence, although sometimes they were based in different provinces and areas. The hill on which the village is situated was a government military base during the war. According to the informants there were a total of five government military bases on the mountains around Gabela and mines were laid to protect these bases.

The villagers living in Morro dos Machados have slowly been encroaching on the hillside above their village for cultivation. The land is fertile and the villagers want to use it. Twenty-two families have their farms on the hillside, and other villagers have farms further away from the village. The villagers explained that in 2003, people with a lot of courage, some of them former soldiers, started to extend their small land plots up the hillside. As they did so they began to find mines. The first mine found was removed by the civil defence. The informants

[6] Extracted from the Angolan Landmine Impact Survey Atlas Interim Report, 30 November 2005, page 23.

believe that the villagers have "removed" a total of 60 mines during the process of land reclamation. When they found mines they would take them up and put them in a safe place, sometimes on the roof of their house. They explained that some mines, like the POMZ, had a tripwire which was already broken and so they were easy to move, although they still had to be careful as they were not inactive and sometimes they were also used to reinforce anti-tank mines. Some of the wooden mines had been eaten and destroyed by insects and water. The black MAI 75 was the most common mine found. One villager said he found 10 mines on his land. Two other farmers found four each.

NPA arrived in Gabela in 2004 and the villagers reported their mines to them. NPA has now told them not to clear the remaining 300 metres square of land. The villagers say they are not clearing the mines, and that they are waiting for NPA to come, although certain things they say indicate that the villagers are still removing the mines from the fields when they find them. They say that they give their luck to god. There has also been an accident. On October 18th 2005 one man was cultivating his land and a mine exploded, blinding him in both eyes.

This case study demonstrates how landmines become much more of a hazard to people when they directly block their access to arable land and there are no available alternatives. The villagers, although not admitting to demining their land, have taken it upon themselves to open up fields and remove mines so that they can extend their farming plots. The land study (Filipe, 2005:45-46) also found a similar case in the village of Gangula in Sumbe, where access to arable land is severely restricted by landmines. As a result local people began to clear mines in order to open up small parcels of land for cultivation. Casualties were also reported in connection to this informal clearance.

Summary

- Landmines have to be experienced and recognised as a problem for people to want to mobilise around solving the problem. If there is no real mine problem the benefits to the local people will only be in terms of affiliation to the project and will not signal a long-lasting commitment or need to continue the work once the organisation has withdrawn.
- Highly impacted communities should be targeted for more involved local involvement.
- Communities with lower mine impact can be supported to undertake occasional activities for risk reduction as they see the need.
- Impact may change over time as land use and population pressures change. This also needs to be taken into consideration in planning.

3.3. Mine Action Initiatives

3.3.1. Community Participation in Mine Risk Education

During the field visit there was little information on villagers having received or participated in mine risk education (MRE) activities. In Chiaca a school teacher mentioned that there had been some classes at school and an NGO called Africare had come to give an MRE presentation one time. In Cunjo the deputy headmaster said the teachers had some MRE documents and had received some training by a government department. However in the most distant villages in Quilenda and Mbanza Quilenda they had received no MRE, although some of the participants mentioned they had seen some posters when they went to the town. In contrast, in Buenbue, close to Gabela, the MRE team had visited several times and one of the team members actually lived in the village. In Zambia there were also MRE presentations given during the time the survey and clearance teams visited the village. In the villages visited during the study there were no examples of community-based MRE, but the document review and interviews with some of the representatives of CNIDAH, UNICEF and other INGOs provided some information on these projects and the strengths and the problems encountered.

The establishment of Mine Committees at community level has been one of CNIDAH's objectives to enhance mine action in each province.[7] This process has been supported by UNICEF. The Mine Committees are composed of approximately 8-12 local authority figures such as teachers, midwives, religious leaders or the police. The committees were elected by the community and were to be responsible to gather information on mined areas and accidents for CNIDAH, in addition to providing MRE at the local level. The Association for Aid and Relief, Japan (AAR) is also in the process of establishing the need and interest of communities to form

[7] INAD also implements MRE although their approach appears to be mainly through manuals for teachers and mass media.

mine committees in Lunda Sul, and as part of this initiative had recently organised a community mobilisation workshop for villagers (AAR, 2006). INTERSOS also works in MRE in Cuanda Cubango, supporting a local NGO to conduct MRE and to support local volunteer MRE agents. Handicap International France (HI) has been working on a mine risk education project in the Planalto region since 2003, focusing on building the capacity of volunteer agents within local networks to provide MRE in contaminated areas.[8] The networks, including church groups, health and education networks, farmer and women's associations and music and theatre groups are able to cover quite a large area and to pass on MRE messages to a large number of people. HI hopes that by building the capacity of the local network representatives to conduct MRE, the project will be more sustainable in the future.

With all of the projects the organisation representatives mentioned that it is difficult to encourage the local people to engage in the work on a voluntary basis. UNICEF in particular mentioned that the local NGOs are having trouble motivating the mine committee volunteers and there are demands for incentives, uniforms and hats. INTERSOS also mentioned that the term "committee" can seem like a political group, and in discussion with the CNIDAH MRE representative it seems that they are now referred to as Mine Teams. During the HI evaluation the feedback from the communities on the work of the volunteers was often good. As one Soba commented, "Local people know the "house" whereas outsiders don't know. If we need to give the MRE message we know who to give it to, how to give it and when to give it" (Bottomley, 2005: 21). However at the same time volunteers require ongoing feedback on their work to ensure that initial motivation levels are maintained. It was also noted by CNIDAH that if requests for clearance submitted by the volunteers are not responded to quickly then they can also become discouraged.

ICRC has been leading some complementary mine risk education activities that focus on local involvement but through peer education rather than committees and networks. This involves local people who have been identified as undertaking high risk activities such as hunting, being trained to pass on safe behaviour information to other people doing the same activity. According to CNIDAH the message is more effective as it is practical and helps people of the same occupation to support each other. Seasonal calendars are also been developed in communities to find out when people are most at risk in terms of livelihood activities and to discuss alternatives. These activities are based on the assumption that people have a good knowledge of mine risk education but that they need to know what to do in particular situations. Communities are also being encouraged to make their villages safer for children through the demarcation of a Free from Explosives area inside each community for children to play, and by encouraging parents to provide materials for their children to make toy cars, so that they are not tempted to pick up potentially dangerous objects. In some communities they are also experimenting with local marking of suspect areas, such as using red painted stones.

During the study villagers were asked whether they would be interested to give mine risk education to their communities. Most said it would be interesting for them but they sometimes had doubts as to whether the other villagers would listen to them and change their behaviour. In Zambia village, situated on the main road from Sumbe to Gabela, the village authorities were already undertaking health sensitisation relating to the cholera epidemic. The village had already registered 14 cases and 6 deaths. This demonstrates that local people can competently take up the task of providing information and education to their community, but it has to be around an issue that is relevant to their lives and recognised by their communities as important. Community-based mine risk education activities are most effective in areas where there is high mine impact and they require long-term commitment involving regular training and follow-up. In the villages visited during the study it was clear that what was needed was not an ongoing MRE programme, but rather putting in place some community safety measures, such as marking suspect areas, as was required in Mbanza Quilenda, or easy reporting processes to call the quick response team.

Summary

- There are already some community-based mine risk education approaches in Angola and lessons that can be learned from them. Tapping in to existing networks works better than setting up new committees, but still there can be problems of volunteers wanting incentives.

[8] See Bottomley, Ruth. May 2005. Strengthening and Promoting Associations and Community Networks for Sustainable Mine Risk Education. HI: Angola

- Villagers are likely to work better as MRE volunteers if the issue is relevant to their lives and recognised by their communities as important. Ongoing support and a response to clearance requests can also help to make their work more valued by the community.
- Supporting communities to put in place safety measures, such as marking suspect areas or easy reporting processes may be a more suitable option than ongoing MRE in the Kwanza Sul study areas.

3.3.2. Mapping of Suspect Areas

In each village during the study a mapping exercise was conducted, usually with the participants of the men's group. The participants were asked to draw a sketch map of their village and to mark on main features such as roads, buildings, rivers and mountains, and then to mark on contaminated areas. The maps served as a catalyst to encourage discussion around the impact of mines on the local community, but also revealed the local knowledge of the mined areas. The maps were mainly done with the male groups because they were more familiar in interacting with outsiders and were more confident to undertake the task. Had the team had a longer period in each village it would also have been possible to undertake mapping with the women's groups. Another benefit of doing the mapping with the men's groups was that it could also tap into the knowledge of the former soldiers and civil defence. Although in some villages the demobilised soldiers had fought in other areas and so had little knowledge of the mined areas, in other areas the former soldiers could provide very detailed descriptions of where mines had been laid.

Cunjo Village: Local Knowledge

Cunjo is a remote commune centre, situated about 32 km southeast of the municipality of Conda. During the war the government army set up a military base on the hill overlooking the commune centre. In the morning the study team holds a focus group discussion with seven men: the former chief of the civil defence, former soldiers and their commander, the deputy director of the school and the local police official who has just moved to the area.

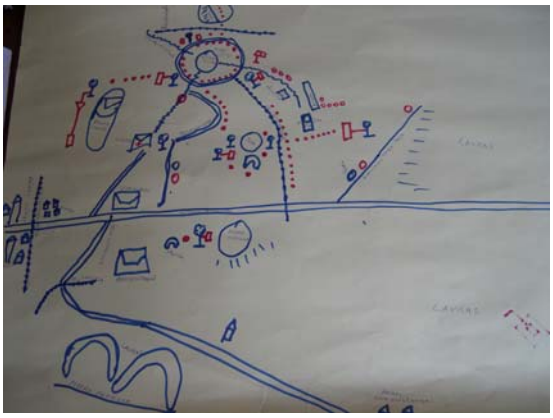
The commander and soldiers are demobilised from the engineering unit of the MPLA military. They say that they started to lay the landmines in Cunjo on 6th March 1993, as they could no longer resist the attacks by UNITA. They had a military base on the hill and so they protected it with mines – POMZ, PMD 6, MAI 75 and TM 50. They laid 3,600 mines around two mountains, Mongwa mountain and Cunjo mountain. The FAA and the civil defence and the police worked together to lay the mines. The FAA officially left the area in 2003 and the civil defence was abolished in 2005. According to the commander, the FAA did not remove the mines before they left as they said there were too many and there was still a lack of trust that the peace would hold. They also say that although the commune population knew there were mines there because the area was a military base, neither the FAA nor the civil defence had told them about the location of the mines because they thought it could have negative repercussions for them.

The soldiers recalled that during the war they had had a map of the mine field, but this was one of the things that went missing during a UNITA attack. With some encouragement from the study team the group draws a map of the mined areas showing clearly where they laid the mines around the mountains and under trees which could serve as look-out posts. They said that between each mine they would leave about five steps. The mines were laid at night and during the day the mines on the exit routes would be temporarily lifted and then replaced again in the evening.

The information provided on this sketch map is much clearer than the information given in the TIA report for Cunjo. The TIA report states that are three mountains that are mined around the centre of the commune, but the soldiers say there are only the two that were mined. The local police commander who is new to the area says that the mapping exercise was very useful for him. Although he had been told approximately where he should not go he now has a much clearer idea about the extent of the contamination.

This sort of mapping can be extremely useful for mine action operations partly because there is currently a dearth of detailed information on the landmine situation in communities. Although the Lusaka Peace Agreement in 1994 requested that all information regarding landmines should be released, there are in fact few maps available. The Deputy Director of INAD mentioned that UNITA and FAA are both releasing some information now on mined areas and are cooperating with the government, and the information from the ALIS

will provide a broader overview of contaminated areas. However, local level maps can help to provide more specific information that can generate discussion about the landmine problem and prioritisation which can be a useful tool for TIA and can provide more accurate and easily accessible information than the narrative reports for operational clearance plans. The maps can also provide important information that could contribute to enhanced technical survey and methods for area reduction.



The map of mined areas drawn by former military and civil defense in Cunjo commune centre. The red dots denote mine lines.

Currently the demining teams are working with minimal information about mined areas, and mapping processes can help them to focus more specifically on the area that is believed to be mined rather than spending time demining larger areas where no mines are found. Currently the demining process conducted by NPA in Angola employs machines for ground preparation followed by full manual clearance, even if no detonations happen during the mechanical operations. In some cases few mines are being found although the clearance process is costly and time consuming.

In Chiaca village the deminers are clearing the old village area. The mine clearance started on March 15th 2006, but by May they have still found no mines. The supervisor hopes they will finish the job by the 30th November this year, but they have already had some set backs. They started to prepare the land with the Casspir but due to rain and the slope of the land the wheels sunk in to the ground and the Casspir got stuck. They are now using only manual demining. The manual deminers are opening up the lanes to find the mine corridors, but they will still clear the whole area of land. There are many metal fragments and so the progress is very slow. When the team visited the minefield it was clear that parts of the land had been used by the local population. One plot of maize was growing in the suspected area along by the road and a path could be seen running through the land.

According to the IMAS guidelines 08.20 on technical survey, the primary aim of the process is to "collect sufficient information to enable the clearance requirement to be more accurately defined, including the area(s) to be cleared, the depth of clearance, local soil conditions and the vegetation characteristics." An enhanced technical survey process could better identify the mine problem for each highly impacted village in detail, classify levels of risk to the population and identify minefield boundaries, thus ensuring a more effective deployment of resources. The method of using village level maps to provide detailed information for technical survey teams is already being employed in Cambodia through the community-based mine risk reduction project (CBMRR). A recent evaluation report (Morete and Lardner, 2006:15) concluded that the detailed village level information provided by CBMRR is an essential component of effective technical survey as it "provides the in-depth level of information the CMAC technical survey teams require to effectively define the areas that require clearance effort." NPA is also currently developing a process for a systematic approach to determining the probability of a threat and mitigating the risk of these threats down to tolerable levels (Bjoersvik, 2006) and a key part of this approach stresses the importance of enhanced information collection.

The drawback of mapping in the Angolan context is that the former military are not always living in the same area where they fought. In Chiaca the villagers said that many of the former troops were moved to other areas to fight. Also these are still sensitive issues and people do not always want to talk about it or admit that they know where the mines are. When conducting the mapping exercise in Cunjo the participants were initially unsure or reluctant to draw a map, but when it was stressed how this sort of information could contribute to the development of the community, they took on the task. Being involved in such activities could help to serve as a reconciliation process, helping soldiers to be accepted back into their communities.[9]

[9] Experiences from other parts of Angola indicate that former military are often seen as a problem, particularly as they have had access to additional resources through demobilisation initiatives (pers.com H. Zefanias). This is an important consideration when planning any activities involving former military. However, the use of their military knowledge for the benefit of the broader community may contribute to their gradual acceptance within their communities.

Summary

- Village mapping exercises demonstrated that there is often a good level of community knowledge regarding mined areas.
- A mapping process is particularly valuable when it involves former military and civil defence.
- The mapping process is a useful tool for TIA because it can provide a clearer picture for clearance operations than a narrative report.
- Village level mapping also has the potential to contribute effectively towards the development of enhanced technical survey and area reduction approaches.
- Involving former military in mine action activities can help to assist in reconciliation processes at community level.

3.3.3. Communication during Demining Operations

The Mid-Term evaluation of the NPA Angola programme states that one of their concerns regarding the demining operations was that the level of communication between NPA deminers and the local communities is weak. "Community members we spoke with, even though they knew the reason why NPA people were there was that they were removing the mines, had got little, if any, information about the nature of the work being done, how long it would take, what codes of conduct should apply for the deminers and the villagers, etc" (Isaksen and Samset, 2005:22). During the study this was also an impression from several of the villages visited. In Mbanza Quilenda the local authorities mentioned that they had had several demining commissions come to their village but that no clearance had resulted. As the respondent explained, "They came at the time when the grass was not so big and we thought they had the objective to come back and clear, but they never came back. Now this is the fourth commission coming to ask about landmines. People here feel that they have given a lot of information but got no results." This was a common complaint of the villages that had not yet received clearance and it demonstrates that expectations are often raised when the survey teams visit villages, but there is a lack of clear explanation and feedback to villagers about the prioritisation and clearance process.

Despite the TIA process it also appears that there is sometimes a lack of real involvement of the local villagers, the "beneficiaries", in the task selection process, and that often this is decided at commune or municipality level rather than at village level. This points to a weakness in the TIA process which is too reliant on the plans of key decision makers within the administration rather than focusing on the real needs of the mine affected communities. Greater involvement of people from the mine affected communities is required in Phase One of the TIA process, to allow for a more detailed analysis of how tasks will benefit the actual beneficiaries.

Chiaca Village: Whose Priorities?

The current village of Chiaca is located about 800 metres to the southeast of Conda municipality. The residents of Chiaca village recall that when the war broke out some of the residents fled to Gabela and others remained in the area but lived for most of the time in the nearby bush. Two areas are reportedly mined in the vicinity, one on the mountain near to the municipality centre, the other in the old village area which was occupied by the government troops during the war.

An NPA team is currently demining the area that is the site of the old village of Bela Vista, located in the immediate proximity of Chiaca. Since the war the villagers say that the area had been used for grazing animals and also as an access route for them to collect charcoal, firewood and other products. The request for clearance came from the local administration, who says that the land is being cleared so that the villagers can rebuild their houses in the old village. The administration also says they will build a school there. The TIA phase one report quotes the Conda acting municipal administrator as saying, "The population intends to return to the place and build new houses because they don't feel secure in the neighbourhoods where they are currently distributed."

The villagers agree that they want their old village land cleared as it is their land and it will give them more space, but it seems that the underlying reason for the clearance is that the municipality administration has plans to develop the area where the villagers are currently living. As the Soba explained, "I went to the government and I was given a document saying that the government needs this land to build proper houses. So the villagers lost the desire to build proper houses as they were worried the government would destroy them – nobody knows when the government will do it. We don't know when we will move, but the government says we must move.

But the people want to stay here as there is a small spring, but when we move we shall be further away from this."

The villagers say they would like more decision making in terms of the mine action process, but at the same time also say they are happy their village is being cleared. The majority of villagers claim that they didn't know about the request for demining before the demining started. They have had no contact with the deminers since they arrived in the village to start clearance. As one participant explained, "When we see them we feel happy that they are doing a good job, but we feel a bit suspect as we can't follow them. When they finish the service we will thank them as we can go there then. We are not sure that the land will be given to us, but at least we are happy the land will be cleared of mines." Today is the first day they have met to talk about the demining operation the villagers say.

In the villages that had already received clearance, Buenbue and Zambia, it was also clear that the communities had not received regular information on the demining process and there were still some questions remaining post-clearance.

Buenbue and Zambia: Communication Issues

In Buenbue village the request for clearance was made by the Soba together with the local government. The people just heard the land would be cleared once it had been decided. While the deminers were in the village the people recall they had sometimes spoken to them informally, telling them not to touch and remove the mine signs. They also informed the villagers when they were going to detonate mines. But they provided no information about how long the demining operations would last. The villagers said that the deminers had also stopped work sometimes and then had to come back as they found they had not cleared everything. However, according to the TIA completion report the reason the deminers had to stop work on occasion was because of the weather conditions. The people say it would be useful to have more information about the demining operations, but at the same time they say demining is not easy and so it is difficult for the deminers to provide all the information.

However, more worryingly, when the study team visited Buenbue village some of the villagers still had questions as to what land had actually been cleared. The participants spoke of a place on the hill near a baobab tree where some of their ancestors were buried. During the war the soldiers put mines around the tree and a resident of a neighbouring village had informed them that the mines may still be there. This information was provided after the land had been handed over by NPA and it placed some doubt in their mind. Not everyone had walked around the circumference of the minefield and while the administration at municipal level receives maps of the cleared areas, at village level they had no map of the cleared area to check.

In Zambia village the authorities say that the land was not cleared according to the TIA recommendations. The request had been for the land to be cleared up to the river, but the actual size of land cleared was less. The Secretary of the Soba said that they were astonished when they saw that the whole area had not been cleared and the demining team had not told them that this would be the case. The village leaders suspect that there are still areas with more mines that the clearance did not reach. However, they are not clear why the demining wasn't completed as requested.

These case studies show that there are weaknesses in the prioritisation process when it comes to involving the mine affected communities, that there is limited communication about operations and even misinformation on clearance, and handover and boundary information does not always reach everyone in the village that needs to know.

As recommended by the mid-term review, mechanisms do need to be put in place to make sure that the communities get information about the demining operations on a regular basis, starting with the initial survey visits, and that they get opportunities to give their feedback before, during and after the operations. Some of this can be achieved by improving the TIA process in terms of information collection, analysis and community liaison techniques, and through developing the competence of the demining teams and the supervisors to liaise and coordinate with the local populations. Formalised procedures for contact with the community should be developed through the process of demining.

Summary

- The involvement of local mine affected communities in the prioritisation process is sometimes weak
- Communication between demining teams and the mine affected communities could also be improved
- Prioritisation and communication processes can be improved through developing further the TIA process in terms of information collection, analysis and community liaison techniques, and through developing the competence of demining teams and supervisors to liaise and coordinate with the local population

3.3.4. Informal Demining

The extent of mine clearance conducted by local people in Angola has not been documented, although a table produced by the Survey Action Centre (2006) states that 19% of the total land surveyed by the ALIS to date was cleared informally.[10] During the study none of the villages visited appeared to have had any local clearance since the end of the war, with the exception of Zambia and Morro dos Machados (see case study in section 3.2.3). In Zambia the survey team found that some devices had already been cleared in the village and had been deactivated. According to the villagers interviewed the people had found the mines when they were rebuilding their houses and they called a FAA soldier to come and deactivate them. Thirteen mines were found and eight were neutralised by the FAA soldier. The villagers stored the mines with thorn bushes on top and then handed them over to the NPA Rapid Response team.

Morro dos Machados was not included on the original schedule for the study, but in discussion with the Base 3 Manager it was discovered that local villagers had been extending their cultivation fields and "finding" mines. The team met with the villagers but it was difficult to get a sense as to whether they were clearing mines in a reasonably technical and comprehensive way, drawing on existing military knowledge, or whether they were simply moving mines out of the way when they see them. The fact that NPA had visited the village several times and warned them to stop expanding their fields until there had been professional mine clearance in the area probably influenced the way the respondents related to the study team. In the land study (Filipe, 2005:46) local initiatives to clear mine fields in Gangula village were also documented, but the methods and techniques used by the farmers were not. In both Gangula and Morro dos Machados it seems that local people undertook these informal "clearance" activities because their cultivation land was mined and they felt they had few alternative options. In the other villages visited by the study team the fact that the mine problem is often not a direct impediment to livelihood activities has perhaps meant there is little incentive to undertake local clearance activities.

While the team did not find direct evidence of informal demining activities in the study villages, former soldiers were often able to explain the tools and techniques for mine clearance that they had used during their time in the military. The engineering unit was the unit where soldiers were trained to lay and clear mines, but some of the other units also learned basic techniques out of necessity or with training from the engineers.

The method used for demining was demonstrated in each village where former soldiers volunteered that they had demined during the war. In each case the method was the same. The tools used for demining include a bastáo (a long staff with a pointed tip) and a knife. The process involves scratching and tapping the surface of the earth at an angle with the bastáo until a mine is located through a change in sound or observation of disturbed soil. Once the mine is located, the knife is used to prod for the exact location of the mine and then to excavate the soil around the mine. Some of the respondents said that they would disarm the mine by removing the fuse or the detonator. They would keep the fuse or detonator but throw away the body of the mine. Others mentioned that they would neutralise the mine with pins to prevent the fuse or detonator from functioning. This method of tapping gently on the surface of the soil was a method that a few of the village deminers in Cambodia also claimed to use. It was explained that if the sound is hard and compacted then there would be no mine, but a softer touch and hollow sound could indicate a mine (Bottomley, 2003:36). However, more commonly Cambodian local deminers would employ a crouching position and prod for mines using a hoe or stick. The Angolan soldiers were often removing and relaying mines on a daily basis on the access paths to military bases.

[10] The origin of this table is unclear and the accuracy of the figures is questionable. For example, Cambodia is not listed as a country with informal demining prevalence, despite the fact the LIS has been completed in Cambodia and informal demining is known to be relatively widespread in the contaminated areas of the northwest.

Left: Former soldier in Cauango village demonstrates his technique for locating a mine.

Right: The Bastáo and knife used for demining in the military.

The study team spent some time discussing with former soldiers and some of the village groups their interest in undertaking demining activities for the benefit of their communities. The discussions were largely speculative but provide some indication of the concerns of the villagers regarding being involved in clearance activities. In both Chiaca and Cunjo village the former military and civil defence said that they would need to undertake a training course if they were to start clearing mines again as they hadn't done it for a long time. Both these groups also mentioned that they wouldn't be willing to undertake any clearance unless they received orders from the government to do so. In Cauango village and Mbanza Quilenda village both the male and female groups showed a lot of resistance to the idea of being involved in mine clearance activities because of the risk involved.[11]

The concept of demining with low tech tools such as rakes was difficult to explore without the tools to demonstrate the techniques. However, discussions with villagers did indicate that they were aware there were more sophisticated tools available for mine clearance which they would be interested to use. In Chiaca the villagers said that now they had seen the tools used by NPA, they would want to use similar tools to do the work. They explained that the NPA deminers used a machine to go over the mines so that they wouldn't explode, and then they were able to remove the mines easily. The Cunjo respondents also expressed concern that the mines may have moved in the course of time and they would find it difficult to relocate them with their simple tools. They think they could find some of the mines, but some would be left in the ground. In Cauango village some of the respondents were also aware of the tools used by the professional deminers. They explained that in the FAPLA and FAA they had only used the bastáo and knife, but now they would want to use the machines.[12]

The men's groups in Zambia village and in Morro dos Machados said that the demining would keep them too busy to do other work and so they would be unable to undertake this sort of job on a voluntary basis. As one respondent explained, "We would die from starvation as we have fields to attend to." However, if they were paid they felt they could do the demining very quickly. They would like to earn between $200 and $300 a month. In Cunjo the former soldiers agreed that they would be interested to do the demining if they received training and equipment and some guarantee of money. They estimated they would need about 10,000 kwanza ($125) a

[11] It is interesting to note that in areas where mines are more of a direct impediment to livelihood activities the level of tolerable risk is much higher than in areas where mines are less of an impediment. It is possible that this is partially a result of necessity (more risk is taken when it is deemed to be a necessity) and also an element of familiarity (people become more complacent to mine risk when it is an everyday factor in their lives).

[12] The Base 3 Manager also expressed some concerns about demining with low-tech tools such as rakes. He said he thought the soil was too compacted and that it would be sure to leave some mines in the ground. Their experience with magnetic rakes to extract metal apparently had not been successful. Any initiative to introduce the RAKE method of demining would have to be technically tested according to suitability of use with the terrain, soil condition and mine type, and also based on people's confidence in the rake as a demining tool.

month, but that in the end it would be the government who would decide the price. In Buenbue some of the group participants said they would be involved in demining activities if they had some instruction, and they would certainly accept if money was offered, but even without money they may do it if it was their own land. In Mbanza Quilenda the male respondents said they would need a salary because of the risks involved in the work. As one man commented, "A dog that hunts for monkeys is killed by monkeys. It is very dangerous." The general feeling in this village was that the soldiers responsible for laying the mines should be the ones who are tasked with clearing the mines. In Zambia the respondents recognised that there was risk involved, but if they were trained like the professionals they felt they could do it.

While it was mainly the male groups who dominated the discussions about undertaking demining activities, women in Zambia, Chiaca and Morro dos Machados did show an interest in undertaking such work but that they would need training. Their main concerns were about the time they would have available to learn and to do the work, their ability to learn because of their lack of schooling and literacy skills, and how they could take on the work when they have young children.

Summary

- The study found two villages where some clearance of mines has taken place since the war, although it is not always clear how the mines were cleared and by whom. Local self-help initiatives seem to be directly related to mines blocking access to resources. In areas where mines do not form a direct impediment to land and resources there appear to be no informal clearance activities.
- Military clearance techniques are very basic, using a bastáo and knife. Exposure to professional clearance means that some former soldiers feel they would need metal detectors if they were to undertake clearance again.
- Although groups of villagers said they would be interested to become involved in mine clearance they had particular concerns.
    - Men's groups mentioned that they would need training, better tools and payment
    - Women's groups were concerned about their lack of time, their low literacy skills and their child rearing responsibilities
- Any initiative to introduce the RAKE method of demining would have to be technically tested according to suitability of use with the terrain, soil condition and mine type, and also based on people's confidence in the rake as a demining tool.

4. Piloting Enhanced Community Participation in Kwanza Sul

4.1. Introduction and Rationale

Despite being conducted in a relatively short time, the study provided quite a depth of information regarding villagers perspectives of their mine problem and their willingness to be involved more actively in addressing the problem. While there is no blueprint or package for community involvement in mine action in Kwanza Sul province, there are certainly key issues that can point the way to appropriate interventions and models. These are as follows:

- Mine impact is important. In areas where the impact of landmines is greater at local level, the more motivation and need there will be for mine action activities with community involvement. In areas where the mine impact is less, activities can be fewer and sporadic, depending on the perceived needs of the local people. However, it is also important to realise that impact can change and a community which requires little input one year may require more activities a following year.
- In the context of Kwanza Sul it appears that communities are still fragmented and a lack of trust pervades as a result of the years of war. In this context, low-key community activities that can help to build trust, show good results and that fit with other livelihood activities are the most appropriate interventions. This indicates that larger community-based mine risk education approaches are perhaps not appropriate at this time in the province, but that smaller initiatives to develop community safety strategies could be more effective.
- Increasing communication and information sharing between mine action teams and the local community and among the different sectors of the community is also a key consideration and can be addressed through improving TIA processes, nominating liaison people at local level and building the competencies of demining teams to pass on information to the local people.
- A strong focus throughout all activities should be the inclusion of women and other marginalised sectors of the population in mine action processes. By ensuring that these sectors are receiving information, they are provided with a wider range of options and possibilities for involvement and action. The involvement of youth may also be a good option to explore.
- In many communities in Kwanza Sul there are resource people with a good level of knowledge about mined areas. Often these people are former soldiers and civil defence. Tapping in to this knowledge can help to improve the TIA process and provide information that can contribute to the development of enhanced technical survey and area reduction approaches. It can also help to involve former military actively in community development projects and thus could promote local level reconciliation.
- There are clear opportunities for the mine action programme and the development programme to work more closely together in terms of two key issues: the distribution of land prior to and after clearance and through building literacy components into community-based mine action initiatives.
- There are no obvious initiatives to tap in to in terms of community-based demining initiatives. The pros and cons of initiating a community-based demining project are discussed in more detail in section 4.7.

Based on these key issues outlined above, the approaches proposed for enhanced community involvement in mine action in Kwanza Sul build on the following aspects:

- A proposal for how some existing areas of the work can be improved to be more inclusive and empowering for local communities – this specifically refers to strengthening the TIA and introducing a community liaison aspect in to the work of the demining teams.
- A proposal for piloting a process of community mapping and area reduction. This would be conducted following the TIA process and particularly in areas where there are former military present. The pilot will be to test how village level contamination data can be used and combined with other data to better define minefield boundaries and target clearance.
- A proposal for how the development programme and its partners can become more actively involved in the mine action work through a focus on land use and access rights on mined and demined land and by supporting community involvement in mine action through empowerment and learning processes.

4.2. Strengthening TIA

Task Impact Assessment (TIA) is a methodology developed and used by NPA to make accurate identification of demining priorities. It was first used in Angola by the NPA Survey department, although was initially applied only before undertaking a clearance task. Now TIA is applied in three phases: when a demining task is being considered by NPA, during a demining task and after the demining task is completed. As an ongoing process before, during and after clearance the TIA can function much more as a process for getting local people more actively involved in the mine action process in addition to its more regular function of collecting information for clearance operations.

TIA is employed in other countries where NPA is working, and most recently the process has been refined within the Sri Lankan context. As a result of this work a new TIA handbook has been produced (NPA, 2005) along with SOPs. These developments have not yet reached the Angola field programme, although the TIA handbook had just been received by the Luanda office. In line with the new approaches outlined in the TIA handbook and also the recommendations in the NPA mid-term review (Isaksen & Samset, 2005:13-15), there are some key ways in which the TIA work can be strengthened and improved to develop community participation in the process and, as a result, to collect more accurate information.

The TIA conducted by the survey team currently produces narrative reports for phase one, two and three of the process. They establish good relationships with key people in the village, and this was evidenced during the welcome the study team received from communities where the survey team had already worked. As the mid-term review states, "TIA has developed over time into a way of thinking that guides the decision-making process towards the set objectives – including the objective of linking mine action with post-demining social and economic development" (Isaksen & Samset, 2005:14). However, the TIA is essentially a planning and prioritisation process that requires good analytical skills and reliable information from the local level. It is perhaps in both these points that the current TIA process is lacking.

While the TIA narrative reports provide an overview of the situation in a mine affected community and the basic reasons for why clearance is required, often the reports seem to rely on the information of one or two key informants and they fail to cross-check the information or go deep enough into analysing the complexities of the situation. For this reason, the Chiaca village clearance report did not pick up on the fact that the villagers were actually quite content living where they were, but the real reason for clearance was because the municipal authorities had plans for the land on which they were currently living. The Cunjo report mentioned three possible mined areas whereas the mapping exercise with the former military and civil defence clearly pinpointed only two areas with contamination. The narrative reports also seem to be problematic to translate into clear operational plans, and in both the case of Zambia and Buenbue it appears that the original clearance as defined by the survey team was not fully achieved, but information about this alteration in area cleared was not communicated clearly to the local population. To address these issues the following recommendations are put forward:

- The survey team should review the current process of TIA in Angola compared to that outlined in the new TIA handbook and SOP. They can then improve aspects of their work based on recommendations in the handbook and SOP. In particular focus should be on the following actions:

Phase One

  - Improving Phase One of the TIA process by following the handbook procedures for community interviews, household visits and community meetings. Using this process will help to gather and cross-check the information required to fully understand differing opinions on the mine problem, the needs and impacts and the right choice for prioritisation.
  - The questionnaire for TIA has also been refined and should be reviewed by the Angola team. Their own questionnaire should be updated as a result. The questionnaire can be trialled and amendments made to improve it for use in the Angolan context.
  - In the updated TIA process a community meeting is held and a sketch map is drawn of the community. The handbook mentions that this can be done on a whiteboard. It is recommended that the NPA survey team continue to do mapping in the way conducted in the study – using initially a map drawn on the ground (as this is what the villagers appear to feel most comfortable to do), and then transferring the map to a large piece of card or paper. Where possible the mapping

should be done involving former military and civil defence in the village. The map should remain in the village as a village resource. A digital photograph can be taken of the map for the TIA report purposes. Technical assessment and clearance teams visiting the village later can consult the village map in situ (see also 4.4. on mapping and area reduction).
  - A physical tour of the site should be conducted with the villagers involved in drawing the map and GPS references taken and landmarks noted.
  - The current TIA information is not stored on a database for easy retrieval and analysis. It is recommended the survey team are trained to use the TIA database for data processing and analysis.

Phase Two
  - In phase two the TIA team needs to follow up and document the following issues: that the clearance team are following the defined boundaries for clearance and the clearance plan; that the community are fully aware of information about the clearance tasks (including estimated finish date, procedures, problems with climate or terrain that may affect operations etc); and that any concerns the community have are addressed. The reporting format for phase two could be improved to cover these points.
  - The steps for handover outlined in the TIA handbook will help to ensure that handover processes in Kwanza Sul are clear and transparent.
  - Copies of documents should be left at village level. Village drawn maps can be updated by the communities to show completed clearance.

Phase Three
  - The TIA questionnaire for Phase 3 should be reviewed by the Angola team and updated and adapted to suit the Angolan situation. Particular concern should be placed on land distribution and use following clearance. Interviews with beneficiaries and people in the village who did not benefit directly in the clearance may help to reveal problems or issues.
  - The involvement of the NPA development programme and partners will be crucial in some cases in terms of ensuring good land use after clearance (see section 4.5)
  - If problems are identified, the Survey team should play a role to help facilitate solutions to the problems. Further visits after Phase 3 of the TIA may be required to a community to check on progress and the state of land use.

- The TIA process needs to be improved in terms of ensuring the process is inclusive of women.
  - The Survey team needs to recruit women staff who will be more effective in working with female community members.
  - When working in communities, separate meetings and mapping can be done with women to highlight different priorities and needs.
  - Female survey staff can ensure that information during demining processes is also being passed on to women in communities.

- More time needs to be allocated for Phase one of the TIA to take place. At least one week per community is recommended. The survey team should make use of the ALIS data to target villages with high mine/UXO contamination and high accident figures in addition to the receipt of requests from authorities. Technical assessment teams and clearance should be tasked as soon as possible following the TIA phase one.

Inputs Required
- The Survey team in Kwanza Sul already have a lot of experience in implementing TIA, but may benefit from some training or on-the-job support to implement some of these new techniques into their existing work. Skill areas that may need to be further developed include interviewing and community facilitation techniques, GPS, database processing and analysis skills.
- Recruitment and training of female survey team members. NPA already has females working within their clearance platoons. Some of these women may be interested to improve and expand on their skills by joining the survey team.

4.3. Introducing Community Liaison

One of the points made by the NPA mid-term review was that communication between the deminers in the field and the local communities was quite weak and could be improved (Isaksen & Samset, 2005: 21-22). The recommendation was that there are "greater efforts in the 2006-2007 period to make sure that the communities concerned by the demining operation are being well informed, both before, during and after the operation is being conducted, about the essentials of the work – such as the content, scope, duration and expected results."

This study also found that communication was lacking and villagers were often unaware of key issues such as who had requested the clearance, how long the process would take and who would benefit from the cleared land. Problems in communication seem to arise because of the reliance on contact with the local leadership, which often results in information not being passed on to other members in the community, and a lack of training and time on the part of the TIA teams and demining teams to ensure that information is passed on in a systematic way to local people. Section 4.2 provides recommendations for how the TIA process can be improved so that it will ensure better community participation in the planning and prioritisation process and in the dissemination of information during clearance operations. However, communication could also be improved through providing some training and guidelines for the demining teams on how to pass on information to the villagers during operations, and also to allow them to respond to any feedback or concerns generated by the community. This requires an understanding of community development as an approach to work with communities together with a planning process that puts the local mine affected communities at the centre of the activities.

- Some training should be provided to key people within demining teams (for example, supervisors, medics or deminers showing interest) to improve their skills to communicate with the local communities.
- Procedures or guidelines should be developed to ensure routine information is passed on to local people at regular intervals and that feedback from the communities can inform the demining process.
- Greater collaboration should be built between the TIA teams and the clearance teams to ensure that information from village level is documented and acted upon.
- NPA development programme staff can work with the survey teams to integrate better community liaison skills into demining operations.

At the same time, in heavily contaminated areas it may be useful for local community members, outside of the leadership, to become local liaison people, with the role to ensure information dissemination to all sections of the population and to be a channel for feedback from the population to the demining teams. These liaison people should be outside of the local leadership but work in close contact with them. Preferably one liaison person would be female, with the specific role to pass on information to the female members of the community.

The idea of local liaison people should be piloted in a village with high mine impact. Preferably the liaison people should be volunteers and perhaps a member of an existing association or organisation (for example, the Angolan Women's Organisation, OMA, or the farmers association, UNACA). The role would not be full time but would begin during the TIA process. The survey teams can play a role in working with the communities to develop a process to select two or three volunteers. They would then be involved in the survey process and their names would be provided to the technical and clearance teams. These teams would then be responsible for passing on information about the demining operations to the village leadership and the liaison people. The liaison people would have the responsibility to pass on the information to the other villagers and for feeding up any concerns or issues to the demining teams.

Local liaison people could also take the lead in undertaking any local level initiatives to promote community safety. This could include organising the placing of marking signs. The survey team would be responsible for discussing the need for such initiatives with the village leadership and liaison people, and then materials would be provided to help them to complete the tasks.

- In heavily contaminated areas where there is likely to be a lot of mine action intervention, NPA should pilot an approach to work with local liaison people, who would be responsible for passing on information and raising community concerns or questions, and also for leading initiatives to promote community safety.

4.4. Mapping and Area Reduction

The challenge for mine action programmes around the world is how to utilise scarce demining resources to release land quickly and efficiently and with the greatest impact. However, in many programmes demining resources are deployed in areas that are subsequently found to be free from mines, thus providing a poor use of the resources available. NPA is currently working to develop approaches that can help to target mine action clearance resources to the areas of greatest need while releasing formerly suspected land through processes of cancellation and area reduction.

Village mapping exercises conducted during the field study in Kwanza Sul demonstrated that there is often a good level of community knowledge regarding mined areas, particularly in areas where former military and civil defence are still living. While the mapping process is a useful tool for the TIA because it can act as a catalyst for discussion and analysis and can also provide a clearer picture for clearance operations than a narrative report, it is also possible that village level mapping can be an extremely useful tool for enhanced technical survey and area reduction processes.

Currently the NPA demining teams are working with minimal information about mined areas, and mapping processes can help them to focus more specifically on the area that is believed to be mined rather than spending time demining larger areas where no mines are found. According to the IMAS guidelines 08.20 on technical survey, the primary aim of the process is to "collect sufficient information to enable the clearance requirement to be more accurately defined, including the area(s) to be cleared, the depth of clearance, local soil conditions and the vegetation characteristics." An enhanced technical survey process could better identify the mine problem for each highly impacted village in detail, classify levels of risk to the population and identify minefield boundaries, thus ensuring a more effective deployment of resources. The method of using village level maps to provide detailed information for technical survey teams is already being employed in Cambodia through the community-based mine risk reduction project (CBMRR). A recent evaluation report (Morete and Lardner, 2006:15) concluded that the detailed village level information provided by CBMRR is an essential component of effective technical survey as it "provides the in-depth level of information the CMAC technical survey teams require to effectively define the areas that require clearance effort." NPA is also currently developing a process for a systematic approach to determining the probability of a threat and mitigating the risk of these threats down to tolerable levels (Bjoersvik, 2006) and a key part of this approach stresses the importance of enhanced information collection. It is therefore recommended that NPA pilot a process for enhanced technical survey in Angola, using village mapping processes with former military and civil defence. This could help to integrate more closely the work of the survey teams with the technical assessment and clearance teams and also demonstrate the value of local knowledge.[13]

- NPA should pilot a process for enhanced technical survey in Angola, using village mapping processes with former military and civil defence. This can link closely to the work of the TIA survey team and be part of the process to trial and implement the NPA policy on risk management and technical survey.

4.5. A Focus on Land Issues

In many areas mine action programmes are freeing up a scarce resource – safe land. The NPA strategy for Angola 2004-2007 recognises this by placing mine action under the thematic area of land and resource rights. As landmines limit people's access to and control over land and resources, mine action is therefore seen to be a key component to achieving the goals under the land and resource rights thematic. However, while land can be cleared of mines and people can theoretically improve their access to this land, it does not always follow that land will be effectively utilised following clearance. People may lack the tools, the seeds, the labour capacity or the know-how to cultivate the land. Unclear land ownership or land conflicts can also prevent land being used productively following clearance. In a country like Angola there still appears to be abundant land for the rural people, but social groups do have different degrees of access and rights to land and there are possibilities to lose land through institutional, social or economic processes.

[13] Involving former military in mine action processes can make good use of their knowledge and skills in addition to involving them productively in work that is of benefit to their community, thus also helping them to gain greater acceptance. Currently it seems that the former fighters feel relatively alienated from their communities and let down by the authorities in that promised support has never materialized.

Communal land is the land held under the jurisdiction of the local leaders and includes land for housing, cultivation, grazing, water and forest resources (Filipe, 2005:24). It is the land outside of commercial farm land. Land in communal areas is normally inherited following traditional practices, which ensure that men are the key beneficiaries of this inheritance. Women are not excluded, but this is the exception rather than the rule. While families are able to sell or lease their land, the soba normally has to be present for land transactions so as to keep the communal memory which is important for resolving land conflicts (Ibid, 2005:24). For new arrivals or recently married couples the soba is responsible for allocating land in the communal areas. The same appears to apply to land that has been cleared of landmines. In the cases of Buenbue and Zambia, the soba was said to be responsible for distributing the land to people following clearance. In Zambia the land had been distributed to families who had originally farmed land in the mined areas but the plots had been reduced in size so that new people could also take some land. Partners of the NPA development programme were following up with credit programmes and agricultural support meaning that the land had quickly been cultivated. In Buenbue the land had still not been distributed several months after the clearance and it was clear that there was some concern among the villagers about who would get some of the land in the cleared area. In both villages it appears that the beneficiaries were not precisely identified before clearance took place, thus also leaving a space for leaders to abuse their power and for poorer households to be alienated from the land distribution process.

While the study team was not able to explore the land issues in any depth during the study, it is clear that the link between mine action and the land and resource rights thematic has to be taken beyond the clearance of land to ensure that land is put into productive use following clearance. Efforts also need to be made to ensure that vulnerable groups, such as female headed households, displaced people and newly settled populations, also receive a decent share of cleared land.

A focus on land issues presents a clear opportunity for the development programme and the mine action programme to work together. Filipe (2005:48) states that while there needs to be advocacy at the central level to influence the framework that regulates the land law, effort is also required at the local level to ensure that changes in tenure arrangements are understood at the local level. Villages undergoing mine clearance should have information about the land law and their access rights before clearance takes place. The process of selecting beneficiaries and distributing land should be clarified before clearance takes place. This will help to mitigate land conflict and ensure that the land is put in to productive use as soon as possible after clearance. The NPA development programme and its partners could perhaps work together with the TIA survey team in selected locations to facilitate community forums to discuss these issues. Documentation of any problems occurring in terms of land use post clearance will also help to better understand the issues and develop strategies for problem solving. This should become part of the TIA process and the development programme could assist with developing a form to record these land distribution problems. Within the NPA mine action programme, specific provisions could be attached to certain clearance tasks ensuring that women are entitled to a share of the land cleared. This could also be one step towards helping the development programme in their efforts to secure land rights for women.

- The NPA development programme and mine action programme should work together to focus on land issues related to clearance. An initial step can be the development of a form for use by the TIA survey team to record land conflicts and problems prior to and after clearance processes and then to develop strategies to address the issues that emerge. Other initiatives could include:
    - Providing education on the land law and land rights for mine affected communities
    - Hosting community forums to allow for discussion on land distribution and use following clearance
    - Developing provisions for clearance tasks to ensure that female headed households are entitled to a share of the land cleared.

4.6. Learning and Empowerment

An issue raised by several of the respondents during the study was that they doubted their capacity to participate in mine action activities because of their low literacy skills. This was particularly a concern for women. One way to deal with such barriers to participation include providing practical learning opportunities combined with the mine action activities. Again the development programme and the mine action programme can combine forces with mine affected communities to ensure that their participation in mine action processes is also an opportunity for empowerment and learning.

NPA development partners are already working on projects whereby a literacy element is attached to project activities. The literacy approach, REFLECT, is based on the thinking of the influential Brazilian educationalist, Paulo Freire, who among other things promoted situating educational activities in lived experience. The horticultural cooperation CHOFA works with associations to run literacy classes for the farmers with the intention that it will help them with practical tasks such as being able to read labels on pesticide bottles. GLIF employs the Women Can Do It programme which encourages women to enter public life and politics through increasing their confidence and skills such as public speaking and literacy. These methods could also be applied to community participation in mine action and can provide the double benefit for local people of working to solve a community problem while developing their own personal skills, a factor that can provide good motivation and will contribute to the development of local level capacity for future development work.

- For any pilot project involving local people in mine action, efforts can be made to link the practical work to basic literacy skills with the support of the NPA development programme and its partners.

4.7. Local Clearance Initiatives

The study revealed no local informal clearance initiatives that could be built on in terms of developing a community-based mine clearance project. While there are obviously former military with experience of working with landmines, there did not appear to be an immediate need for them to use their skills within their communities, with the exception of the villages of Zambia and Morro dos Machados. Although some villagers said that they would not be interested to be involved in mine clearance activities, either because of the risk involved or because they felt it should be the responsibility of former military, others clearly saw that it could be a welcome form of employment. The tools currently available for clearance in the local context are basic military equipment, the bastáo and a knife.

If NPA is interested to follow further the idea of piloting local based demining activities in the Angolan context, it is recommended that careful consideration is made in terms of recruitment practices, work hours, payment and the overall time frame of the work, in addition to technical concerns such as the type of equipment to be used. Another key point to consider is the levels of contamination in affected communities. In Cambodia the CMAC and MAG programmes recruit local villagers for a period of about two years to clear in their locality within a 10km range. The programmes can cut back on costs in terms of accommodation and transport as the community-based deminers travel to work on a bicycle and live at home. Salaries are also lower based on the justification that they are on a level with local wages and the deminers don't live away from home, therefore their outgoing expenses are less. The programmes work well where there is a high degree of mine contamination in a particular locality that can keep the deminers employed for a reasonable length of time to make it cost effective. In the villages visited in Kwanza Sul the mine contamination appears to be less concentrated. This means that teams organised at a community level would either be employed only for short periods of time or they would have to be taken outside of their community to clear within a wider area. In both cases this would require an analysis of the overall cost effectiveness to see if it would justify the time spent on training and equipping the local deminers. If community teams had to be taken outside of their community to clear, this would not only lose the "community" aspect of the project, but it would also raise costs for transport and accommodation.

Based on this analysis of the villages visited in Kwanza Sul province it appears that a community-based demining programme would not be an appropriate or cost effective solution. However, this does not rule out the possibility for a programme to be piloted in another area of Angola where there are higher and more concentrated levels of contamination, for example in Moxico province.

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Annex One: Schedule

Date	Activity	Location
24th April	Departure from Cambodia	
25th April	Arrival in Luanda. Initial meeting with the deputy programme manager for mine action	NPA office, Luanda
26th April	Meeting with representatives of MA, DP and ALIS	NPA office, Luanda
	Writing up notes from meeting and adapting question guidelines.	
27th April	Meeting with CNIDAH MRE Advisor	Luanda
	Meeting with General Director of INAD	Luanda
	Meeting with UNICEF MRE Project Officer	Luanda
28th April	Travel from Luanda to Gabela	
29th April	Meeting with DPM, Jonito & Tony	Base 3, Gabela
30th April	Free day	
1st May	Translating TIA reports	Base 3, Gabela
2nd May	Meeting with provincial CNIDAH and NPA NGO partners	Sumbe
3rd May	Travel to Conda municipality Meeting with Deputy Administrator	Conda Municipality
	FGD with village leaders & local men	Chiaca village, Conda
	FGD with local people	Chiaca village, Conda
4th May	FGD with former military & civil defence Mapping Transect walk	Cunjo village, Conda
5th May	Debriefing with Deputy Administrator	Conda Municipality
	Visiting demining operations and interview with deminers	Chiaca village, Conda
	Travel back to Gabela	
6th May	Translating TIA reports	Base 3, Gabela
7th May	Translating TIA reports & buying equipment for field trip	Base 3, Gabela
8th May	Travel to Quilenda municipality. Meeting with authorities & arranging meetings with villages	Quilenda
	FGD & mapping with village coordinator & villagers with land in mined areas	Morro dos Machados village, Gabela
9th May	Travel to Quilenda municipality	
	FGD & mapping with village leaders & men's group	Cauango village, Quilenda municipality
	FGD with women's group	Cauango village, Quilenda municipality
10th May	Travel to Mbanza Quilenda village	
	FGD, mapping & walk to view mined areas with group of men & village leaders	Mbanza Quilenda, Quienda municipality
11th May	Travel to Buenbue village	
	FGD with leaders & villagers in Buenbue village. Walk through cleared area.	Buenbue village, Gabela
	Meeting with Base 3 Manager	Base 3, Gabela
	Meeting with CHOFA president	Gabela
12th May	Travel to Zambia	
	FGD & mapping with group of village leaders & men	Zambia village
	FGD with women's group	Zambia village
13th May	Travel back to Luanda	

	Meeting with Becky Thompson from ICRC	Luanda
14th May	Preparing presentation for debriefing session	Luanda
15th May	Meeting to debrief NPA RR, DPM and MAPM on study process and findings	NPA office, Luanda
	Meeting with UNICEF, AAR and INTERSOS	UNICEF office, Luanda
16th May	Depart for Cambodia	

Annex Two: List of People Met/Interviewed

Name	Organisation	Position	Location
Mr. Mario Nunes	NPA	Deputy Mine Action Programme Manager	Luanda
Mr. Leonardo Severino Sapalo	INAD	General Director	Luanda
Ms. Miki Fukuhara	UNICEF	Project Officer Mine Risk Education	Luanda
Mr. Nelson	CNIDAH	MRE Advisor	Luanda
Ms. Helena Zefanias	NPA	Development Programme Manager	Luanda
Mr. Pedro Santa Maria	NPA		Luanda
Mr. J. A. Tonga	CNIDAH	Vice Governor of Kwanza Sul and Provincial Head of CNIDAH	Sumbe
Mr. Gregoria Travasso	KISSOCO	Executive Director	Sumbe
Ms. Matilde Joaquin	KISSOCO	Staff	Sumbe
Ms. Albertine de Marcos	KISSOCO	Staff	Sumbe
Ms. Maria Manuella Bargos	GLIF	Coordinator	Sumbe
Mr. Kintas Katzulini	ASBC	Provincial Coordinator	Sumbe
Ms. Henrietta Antonio	ASBC	Staff	
Mr. Germano Armondo	Conda Municipality	Deputy Administrator	Conda
Ms. Becky Thompson	ICRC	Mine Action Representative	Luanda
Mr. John Barbosa	CHOFA	President	Gabela
Mr. Oddvar Bjorknes	NPA	Resident Representative	Luanda
Mr. Katsuya Yoshida	AAR	Director	Luanda
Mr. Quartim Carlos Marongueiro	NPA	Base 3 Manager	Gabela
Ms. Kjersti Tokle Fjellhaug	NPA	ALIS Team Leader	Luanda
Mr. Nito Chivinda	NPA	Base 3 Deputy Manager	Gabela
Mr. Christian Provoost	NPA	Mine Action Programme Manager	Luanda

Annex Three: Question Guidelines

Field of Inquiry	Questions	Tools & additional notes
Village Background	• Name and location of village • Number of people/families • Ethnic group (if relevant) • War history • Contamination/landmine history • Minefield size and location • Local knowledge on minefields • Population movement during and after war/displacement • HMA operation	• Map of village showing location of mines & minefields, principle buildings, living areas, resource areas, locations of accidents
Economic Field	• Land – rights/ownership, use, how much by each family, what sort of cultivation, use of mined areas before • Crops – type of plants & trees grown, sale or personal consumption, irrigation etc • Fishing & hunting • Forest products • Household animals • Household water • Markets • Transport & road networks • Other employment – formal/day labour	• Observation of fields and crops grown, market location • Consider gender with all questions • Hindrance by landmines • Times of year for different activities
Social Field	• Local leadership – organization, roles, responsibilities (traditional &/or formal) • Religion and role of church • Decision making and conflict resolution • Collective mobilization – examples of local people working together (common resources, private benefit, recreational) • Local solidarity – how people respond to social needs, who do they rely on? (social capital) Social & economic support • Information & communication – how do they gain information on particular topics, e.g. landmines • Displacement of different people in community – old residents, new residents, migration, demobilised soldiers	• Cross check with reports from other agencies re social development • Strong points of leadership and weak points • Are there sections of the community outside the decision making processes • Gender

Human Field	• Perceptions of security – general security and also in relation to landmines • How landmines are a problem/who is affected • Problem of landmines in relation to other problems • Local involvement with landmines – how do people contact with mines – how do they deal with mines? (village deminers, local information sharing, assisting with HMA operations?) Local capacities. • Mine accidents – how many people have had accidents and when? Activities at time of accident? Time of year for accidents? Location of accidents. • Health – what health facilities are there in the area (local capacities for responding to mine accidents) • Education – what education facilities are there? What are the levels of attendance? Literacy rates	• Male & female viewpoints • Cross check with map
HMA Operation	• Information on operation – purpose & prioritization, personnel, time frame, type • Information and analysis – process before the operation started? What information & how was it gathered? • Information on the organization in terms of mandate, mode of operation, etc • Staff background and origin • Staff perceptions of community • Community perceptions of operation – knowledge, confidence, economic importance, value not related to mines • Existing community involvement in the operation • HMA components – MRE, survey, victim assistance etc • Other forms of post war assistance required • Interest of communities to participate in HMA activities • Motivations for participation	• Check with NPA mine action unit
Development work	• Existing development work in village – what and who? • Coordination with HMA or other development activities? • Methods of working and community involvement & participation - who, what and how? • Information sharing about the activities – how is this done?	• Check with other development organisations

	• Community perceptions about the development work – are they engaged, is it what they want/need? • Who is benefiting? • Strengths and weaknesses of processes involving local communities	