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Tim Lardner

Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD)

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EXTERNAL ASSESSMENT OF DDG'S HMA PROGRAMME IN SOMALILAND

Tim Lardner | Geneva | May 2008

The Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD) strives for a world free of anti-personnel mines and from the threat of other landmines and explosive remnants of war, and where the suffering and concerns of populations living in affected areas are addressed. The Centre is active in research, provides operational assistance and supports the implementation of the Anti - Personnel Mine Ban Convention.

External Assessment of DDG's HMA Programme in Somaliland, GICHD, Geneva, June 2008

This project has been managed by Tim Lardner, Mine Action Specialist, GICHD, t.lardner@gichd.org

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FOR FURTHER INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT

Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining
Centre International de Déminage Humanitaire | Genève

7 bis, av. de la Paix | P.O. Box 1300 | 1211 Geneva 1 | Switzerland | t. + 41 (0)22 906 16 60
 f. + 41 (0)22 906 16 90 | info@gichd.org | www.gichd.org

PREFACE

The GICHD would like to express its appreciation to all those parties in Somaliland who provided advice, guidance and assistance during the development of this report. In particular, Nick Bateman and Garad Ismael Essa from DDG and Ali Maah from the SMAC.

DISCLOSURES

1. The GICHD is responsible for enhancing and maintaining the Information System for Mine Action (IMSMA), which is used for information management by the mine action programme in Somaliland. The information management function was not assessed in this evaluation and no conflict of interest arose.
2. This assessment specifically does not attempt to analyse the implementation of the Landmine Impact Survey that was undertaken in Somaliland by DDG during the period 2002-2003.

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ACRONYMS

AP	Anti-Personnel (mines)
AT	Anti-Tank (mines)
AXO	Abandoned Explosive Ordnance
BCPR	Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery (UNDP)
CSEP	Community Safety Enhancement Programme
DA	Dangerous Area
DDG	Danish Demining Group
DDR	Disarmament, Demobilisation, and Reintegration
DRC	Danish Refugee Council
DHA	Department of Humanitarian Affairs (UN)
DPKO	Department of Peacekeeping Operations (UN)
EC	European Commission
EOD	Explosive Ordnance Disposal
ERW	Explosive Remnants of War
GICHD	Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining
HI	Handicap International
HALO Trust	Hazardous Areas Life support Organisation
HMA	Humanitarian Mine Action
IDP	Internally Displaced Persons
IMATC	International Mine Action Training Centre
IMSMA	Information Management System for Mine Action
LIS	Landmine Impact Survey
MA	Mine Action
MAG	Mines Advisory Group
MRE	Mine Risk Education
MSF	Médecins Sans Frontières
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NMAA	National Mine Action Authority
NMAC	National Mine Action Centre
ROLS	Rule of Law and Security (UNDP)
SALW	Small Arms and Light Weapons
SAC	Survey Action Center
SHA	Suspected Hazardous Areas
SNM	Somali National Movement
SOP	Standing Operating Procedures
SMAC	Somaliland Mine Action Centre
STA	Senior Technical Advisor
TA	Technical Advisor
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNMAS	United Nations Mine Action Service
UNOPS	United Nations Office of Project Services
UXO	Unexploded Ordnance
VA	Victim Assistance
VBVC	Village by Village Clearance project
WFP	World Food Programme
VSDI	Village Stockpile Disposal Initiative

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Danish Demining Group began operations in Somaliland in 1999, responding to a perceived need at the time.

Over the following nine years, their operations removed significant numbers of mines and UXO and removed countless communities and individuals from the threat of mines and UXO. As time went on however, the organisation appeared to shift focus from a Danish **Demining** Group, to an organisation with a different set of objectives.

That shift was initially away from mine clearance – understandable given the ongoing removal of landmines – and subsequently away from UXO clearance/removal – again, an understandable decision.

This report considers the programme from its inception to its closure. It looks at the development of the programme, the inevitable changes any programme would pass through, but also the more significant decisions made by DDG. While a number of the changes the programme went through came under strong criticism from other stakeholders, the rationale is explored in the report and, while there is little hard evidence to clarify, the report believes that the decisions made were the correct ones for the time of the programme and given the developmental stage of Somaliland.

DDG provided a strong presence and contribution to mine action in Somaliland and to the improvement of the quality of life of many. Their focus has now shifted across to SALW where it is believed that the impact that can be achieved from the resources available will be much more significant than in the mine action sector. This is a brave move by DDG, and one that should make other mine action organisations in some environments consider their positions.

INTRODUCTION

DDGs mine action programme was established in Somaliland in 1999 and ceased mine action operations in 2008. During that period of time, DDG cleared almost 1.4 million m² of land, destroyed 91,000 items of UXO and 10,000 mines.

Of course, this is not the full story. While the impact on the communities that have been worked with has undoubtedly been significant, a true *impact evaluation* is impossible to achieve given the lack of reliable baseline data, and the number of changes in the focus of the programme. Such uncertainty makes it very unlikely to be able to establish a meaningful position and thus this assessment is based on a number of subjective views of stakeholders involved in this assessment.

Thus, this assessment aims to assess the *reasonableness* of the DDG programming and, where possible, is supported by data to consider the programme outputs.

BACKGROUND

OVERALL CONTEXT

Somalia has been racked with violence and conflict from the mid 1960s onwards. The self-declared Republic of Somaliland broke away from Somalia in 1991. Mines were primarily laid in Somaliland during the Ogaden wars of 1964 and 1977, during the 1988 – 1991 civil war and briefly during a period of internal conflict in 1994/5.

The first mine clearance operations began in 1991 where a British commercial organisation, *Rimfire*, was contracted by UNHCR & MSF to undertake clearance in and around Hargeisa. Although the operation was widely criticised at the time, the work undoubtedly resulted in significant reduction of the threat of mines and UXO around Hargeisa and in other parts of the region.

In 1997, the UNDP assisted the Government of Somaliland to establish the Somaliland Mine Action Centre (SMAC) with the intention of coordinating mine action issues in Somaliland. Although established in 1997, it is generally acknowledged that the organisation did not begin to become more effective until the last couple of years.

Danish Demining Group (DDG) began operations in Somaliland in 1999. The aim of DDGs intervention was to reduce the impact of mines and Explosive Remnants of War (ERW) to the population of Somaliland. In the same year, the HALO Trust established a programme to remove the impact of mines and UXO on the population of Somaliland.

In March 2003, a LIS funded by a multi donor group through the Survey Action Center (SAC) was completed that attempted to provide an overview of the mine and ERW problem in Somaliland. The survey identified 772 suspect hazardous areas, 357 communities affected, of which 13% (45) were considered to be highly impacted. The work on this LIS was undertaken by DDG, but the terms of reference for this study specifically exclude any analysis of the LIS.

The quality of data, then and now, however, appears to be unreliable and thus gaining a clear perspective of the *status quo*, is difficult, with conflicting views on the scale of the problem from many of the key stakeholders involved.

ORIGIN AND NATURE OF THE CONTAMINATION PROBLEM

EXTENT OF THE CONTAMINATION

The contamination from landmines and other Explosive Remnants of War (ERW)¹ in Somaliland stems from:

- the Ogaden War (1977-78), resulting in contamination along the border with Ethiopia
- civil wars against the Siad Barre regime – including the Somaliland Liberation War (1988-91), which led to extensive local contamination along roads and tracks, around military camps and other installations, and water sources used by the nomadic population;
- between 1994 and 1995 when there was fierce fighting in and around Hargeisa and other urban centres as part of a civil conflict.

An LIS conducted by DDG in 2002-3 (a follow on survey was conducted in 2006-7 in the two regions of Sool, Sanaag and several south-western districts of Togdheer, where security did not allow access in 2003. The results are not yet available) indicated that 357 communities were affected, there were 772 suspect hazardous areas and 45 highly impacted communities. The findings of the surveys are summarised in Table 1.

Table 1 – Results from LIS 2003.

Region	Recent victims (past 24 months)	Impacted communities	Highly impacted communities
Awdal	72	59	11
Galbeed	119	155	21
Saaxil	32	58	5
Togdheer	53	85	8
Sool	Not surveyed	Not surveyed	Not surveyed
Sanaag	Not surveyed	Not surveyed	Not surveyed
Total	276	357	45

In 2004 and 2005 following a certain amount of scepticism immediately after the LIS with regards to the results and indications, the two major operators undertook a more detailed process of resurveying those communities identified by the LIS as being highly impacted. This involved returning to those communities not previously surveyed and identified as being highly impacted and undertaking more detailed analysis of the SHAs and their impact on the communities. HALO & DDG called this process technical survey as a means of separating it from the extant LIS data, but there was no physical intervention into hazardous locations at this point.

The DDG resurvey visited 30 of the 45 communities that had been identified as highly impacted by the LIS. From these 30 communities, 92 SHA were identified, of which 6 SHA were classified as high, 24 medium and 118 low impact. In addition, a further 18 communities identified by the LIS as medium impacted were analysed to contain 10 high, 10 medium and 14 low impact SHA.

¹ ERW includes unexploded ordnance (UXO) and abandoned explosive ordnance (AXO).

HISTORY OF MINE ACTION IN SOMALILAND

The first formal mine clearance operations in Somaliland began in 1991 when a British commercial organisation, *Rimfire*, was contracted by UNHCR & MSF to undertake clearance in and around Hargeisa. Although the operation was widely criticised at the time, the work undoubtedly resulted in significant reduction of the threat from mines and UXO to the population living in and around Hargeisa.

In 1997, the UNDP assisted the Government of Somaliland to establish the Somaliland Mine Action Centre (SMAC) with the intention of coordinating mine action issues in Somaliland. Although established in 1997, it is generally acknowledged that the organisation did not begin to become effective until the last couple of years.

Two other commercial organisations – Mine Tech and Greenfields Consultants – were involved in clearance operations in the late 1990's on a very limited scale.

Danish Demining Group (DDG) began operations in Somaliland in 1999. The aim of DDG's intervention was to reduce the impact of mines and Explosive Remnants of War (ERW) to the population of Somaliland. In the same year, the HALO Trust and St Barbara foundation established programmes to remove the impact of mines and UXO on the population of Somaliland.

In mid-2001, UNDP supported the establishment of two Police Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) teams (each with 1 driver, 1 medic, and 4 EOD technicians), which have since operated from Hargeisa. In 2005, three additional teams were created and equipped, and in late 2006 these new teams received additional training at the International Mine Action Training Centre (IMATC) in Nairobi.² These new teams are based in three regions outside Hargeisa, but appear to be currently non-functional.

In March 2003, a LIS funded by a multi donor group through the Survey Action Center (SAC) was completed that attempted to provide an overview of the mine and ERW problem in Somaliland. The survey identified 772 suspect hazardous areas, 357 communities affected, of which 13% (45) were considered to be highly impacted.

St. Barbara Foundation ceased operations in 2003. DDG completed its manual mine clearance and BAC operations in March 2006, retaining only mobile EOD teams (subsequently re-roled as VBVC³ teams), who also provided MRE and collect victim data. The VBVC teams were closed down in early 2008.⁴ The HALO Trust plans to continue its operations (survey, mine clearance and EOD) over the next 3-4 years.

In 1997, Handicap International (HI) began a Mine Risk Education (MRE) programme in Somali refugee camps in Ethiopia. It undertook a Knowledge-Attitudes-Practice (KAP) survey in Somaliland in 2002 and, based on the KAP survey and the LIS, began an MRE programme in Somaliland in 2005, through which it provided training for the other mine action organisations (DDG, HALO, SMAC, and the Police EOD teams).⁵ HI also distributed MRE materials (posters,

² IMATC is supported by the Ministries of Defence of Kenya and the UK.

³ The VBVC concept is explained on page 8.

⁴ DDG VBVC teams visited over 600 communities four times each per year. They have recorded 42 casualties since July 2005. DDG estimate they are capturing about half the incidents in the accessible districts of Somaliland, which implies about 45-50 victims per year in the regions of Somaliland the DDG teams can reach.

⁵ Delivery of MRE, with the exception of large towns and via radio, was delivered mainly by operators such as HALO and DDG VBVC teams

stickers, t-shirts), supported a youth group and Radio Hargeisa to produce and air radio programmes, and (in conjunction with the SMAC regional liaison officers) provided training for 80 village MRE committees.

There is no comprehensive surveillance system for recording new victims and monitoring survivors and as such, the actual casualty rate is very difficult to discern.

IMPACT OF THE CONTAMINATION

In general, available data are sparse and unreliable. The LIS conducted in 2003 looked at four of the six regions and identified 276 casualties from mines and UXO over the previous two years. More recently, there has been a significant divergence in data as recorded by the SMAC and data recorded by other parties. There is no viable reliable central database. For example, in the year 2007, SMAC recorded that there had been total of 44 accidents, resulting in 72 victims. However, for the three year period 2005 – 2008, DDG recorded a total of 32 accidents and 72 victims.

DATA RELIABILITY

This is a matter needing some explanation. The data collection mechanism in the country is undeveloped. SMAC have regional officers in the regional towns but the mechanism does not extend to formal integration into the national database, so this data is unverifiable. Every month, the regional officers report accidents back to the SMAC, but in an informal unstructured method that is not entered in a standard manner and without any quality assurance.

Conversely, data collected by DDG is collected from the communities they visit as part of the Village By Village Clearance (VBVC) process. In the early stages of the VBVC project, DDG visited all permanent⁶ communities⁷ in four of six regions of Somaliland (Galbeed, Saaxil, Togdheer and eastern Sool) and about 60% of permanent communities in Western Sool and Sanaag). More recently, DDG has been visiting those communities they classified as high and medium impacted based on data collected during the VBVC process that were identified by the re-survey undertaken in 2006. There are undoubtedly casualties occurring that are not being recorded, but conversely, there is a certain amount of scepticism as to the level of casualties that SMAC are declaring.

Table 2 - Data collection mechanisms

Victim surveillance systems are inadequate in Somaliland. Estimates of recent victims appear to be complicated because communities give inflated figures, perhaps in the belief that they will make it more likely they will receive assistance. A quick survey of the various estimates gleaned the following:

Somaliland (accessible areas)

- SMAC recorded 97 victims in 2006 and 72 in 2007
- the DDG Village-by-Village EOD teams have recorded 72 victims from July 2005 to the end of 2007. DDG believes it is capturing about half of all victims, implying about 30-40 casualties per year

⁶ Somaliland has a significant proportion of nomadic population.

⁷ 636 were gazetted during the LIS and a number of others that were not, were also visited

- the LIS, Phase 1 documented 276 victims in the previous 24 months, implying approximately 135-140/year – it is however generally believed that the claims from some communities were inflated and the actual number of victims is lower than recorded
- In summary, the number of victims for accessible areas of Somaliland appears to be in the range of 40-60 per year, with more than 60% due to UXO

PROGRESS IN CLEARING SHA

Of the 772 SHAs identified in the LIS, 30 have been cleared by DDG using conventional methods and a larger number by the HALO Trust. This is only part of the story however. In DDGs resurvey of 48 communities with 115 SHA associated by the LIS, only 8 were identified as high impact and 17 as medium impact. These included 4 BAC tasks and 8 roads. 25 SHA (22%) were discredited by the resurvey.

National Mine Action Bodies

On paper, Somaliland has a sound institutional structure for mine action. SMAC is officially recognised by the Somaliland government as the coordinator of all mine action.⁸ It reports to the Vice-President⁹ who also chairs the Somaliland Mine Action Committee (the national authority) comprising eight ministers.¹⁰ This committee has, however, never formally met since its inception in 2003

SMAC has 32 staff (including eight regional liaison officers and 10 in QA teams), who have always been paid by UNDP. It has version 3 of the IMSMA system installed and populated with data from the LIS, but does not task operators and has not been recording the survey and clearance work done by operators, which is a serious deficiency. In the past there has been good advisory support from UNDP but at the moment the post of operational advisor is vacant, leaving a significant gap and a related decrease in momentum. In addition, the CTA has recently been given responsibility for the whole of Somalia, and is based in Nairobi. He is therefore unable to spend significant time in Somaliland.

Until 2006, the Somaliland Government had not allocated any funding to SMAC, which gave the impression that SMAC was a UNDP rather than a government agency. In 2006, the government did allocate \$15,000 (but disbursed only \$7,000), and had included the same amount in the 2007 budget.

Other Mine Action Bodies

HALO Trust has the bulk of the demining capacity in the country,¹¹ with 430 local personnel and the following assets:

- 8 manual demining/Battle Area Clearance (BAC) teams
- 4 EOD/Survey teams
- 4 mechanical teams
- 1 MRE team

⁸ Presidential decree 83/2003 dated 18th February 2003

⁹ Presidential decree no: 016/2004 of 11 March 2004.

¹⁰ The draft National Policy states these might include the Ministries of Rehabilitation, Repatriation and Re-integration (MRRR), Planning, Health and Labour, Education, Information, Interior and Foreign Affairs.

¹¹ HALO Trust in Somaliland is funded by Ireland, Finland, the Netherlands, Norway, and the U.K.

HALO Trust plans to continue operations in Somaliland until all high and medium impacted areas have been completed. Their current estimate to reach this point is three to four years.

Handicap International (HI) works with their key partners, SMAC, DDG, HALO, and the police EOD teams to develop and train members of teams in MRE. In the past, DDG EOD teams received MRE training from HI in order to allow them to deliver effective MRE as part of their VBVC programme. In addition, they are working with a number of communities to develop and deliver “train the trainer” MRE programmes.

In 2001, the UNDP programme in Somalia assisted the Somaliland police with the formation of EOD teams which were to be integrated into the capacity of the police force. Two teams became operational in January 2002. These teams have expanded from the initial two, through to today’s five. The teams in theory are tasked by SMAC but in reality are primarily self tasked and respond directly to the needs of the communities. These teams are envisaged to form the national EOD capacity in years to come.

DDG completed its mine clearance operations in March 2006, reducing its staff from over 120 personnel to 54 (two of whom are expatriates), those staff being focussed on Village by Village Clearance (VBVC). It completed its VBVC project at the end of March 2008, although DDG are planning to continue this project in a very limited way in South Central Somalia. DDG are currently undergoing a process of transitioning to their new Community Safety Enhancement Programme (CSEP). This project will initially operate within Somaliland.

In 2006, DDG ran a pilot project with the local NGO *Haqsoor* aiming to collect items from private weapons stockpiles in towns and villages (the Village Stockpile Disposal Initiative – VSDI).¹² The pilot was successful and town residents turned over items from private stockpiles. However, after consideration of a number of social and cultural issues, DDG decided that this approach may not be the most effective method of reducing the humanitarian impact of SALW and thus developed a new and different approach. DDG have obtained funding from SIDA for a CSEP and this programme is currently being initiated.

This project differs from the VSDI in that the objective of the CSEP programme is **not** to reduce the numbers of weapons in Somalia. The aim of the project is to “...*promote greater community safety & reduce armed violence through the self-regulation of small arms & light weapons (SALW) within targeted communities*” and to “...*reduce such key local firearms-related problems as spontaneous killings (the source of much inter-community friction & long-term conflict), shootings, deaths & injuries, firearms theft plus accidents related to firearms in the home (all of which contribute directly to fear & uncertainty), whilst simultaneously promoting a more responsible, educated and restrained attitude towards firearms storage and use that gradually act so as to stigmatise unrestrained gun-use, & promote long-term, sustainable community safety.*”¹³ This will be achieved by attempting to shift local perspectives and work with the communities to develop a safer environment in which access to weapons will be more controlled, resulting in a reduced level of threat to the population.

¹² This built on a traditional mediation/conflict resolution project run by Danish Refugee Council (DRC) in conjunction with Haqsoor that has significantly reduced reprisal killings.

¹³ “A Project Proposal to SIDA From DRC/DDG for the establishment of a Community Safety Enhancement (Armed Violence Reduction) Programme (CSEP) In Somaliland”

TRENDS NOTED IN THE VBVC PROJECT.

Although the VBVC was only formalised in 2006, DDG had been operating EOD teams using similar principles since 2003. During the period 2003 – 2008 a total of 4,500 community visits were made and there was a very clear trend downwards in the number of items cleared per community visit. Figure 1 shows the average number of UXO recovered per community during the period 2003 – 2008 against the number of communities visited.

The trend is very clear in that the average numbers of UXO per community visited continually decrease. While this of course could be because of selective visitations, the more likely scenario is that the numbers of, and therefore the threat from, UXO within the communities is trending downwards.

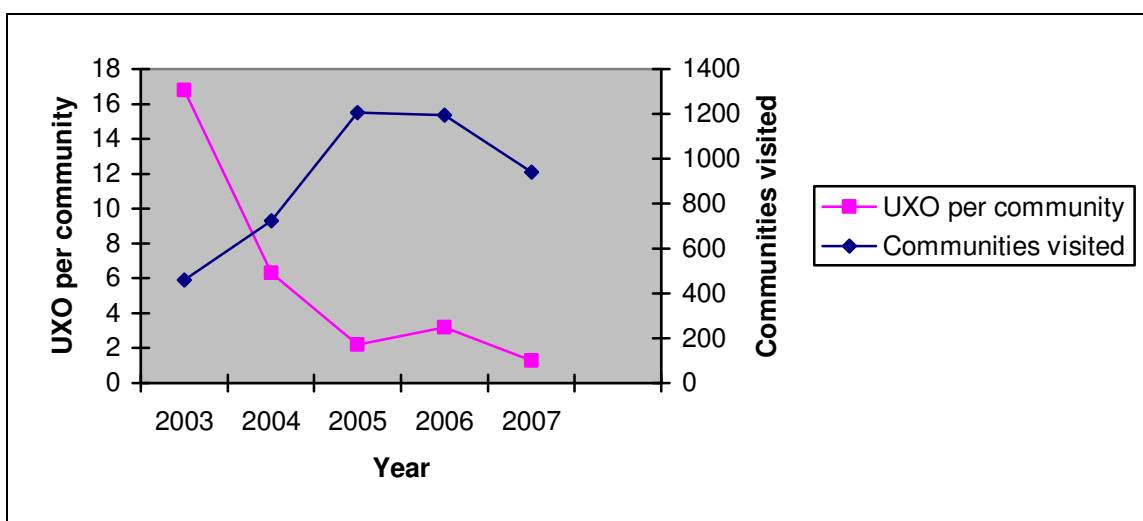


Figure 1 - UXO per community recovered 2003 - 2008

ROLES OF DDG IN DEFINING THE PROBLEM

The terms of reference specifically preclude the consideration of the Somalia Phase One LIS, of which DDG was the implementer. The LIS was, however, the first attempt to gain a strategic perspective on the problem of mines and UXO on Somaliland. Following a groundswell of feeling from a number of the key stakeholders on the ground questioning the LIS results, DDG, together with the HALO Trust, undertook a re-survey which aimed to clarify the situation. This process resulted in a significant reduction in the number of SHA – in particular high and medium impact SHA.

RATIONALE FOR DDG CHANGE IN FOCUS

Demining Operations

DDGs arrival in Somaliland in 1999 was in response to a perceived need at the time and was in the same year that the HALO Trust commenced their operations. Work was undertaken with the aim of reducing the impact of mines and ERW on the population of Somaliland. Table 3 shows the statistics from clearance operations undertaken by DDG during the time they were operational in demining in Somaliland.

Table 3 - Demining operations 1999 - 2006

Locations demined	Locations cleared by BAC	AP mines destroyed	AT mines destroyed	UXO destroyed	Area cleared (m2)
30		685	17	10,917	687,000
	90	9,083 ¹⁴		80,679	694,094

A follow-on (to the LIS) survey was undertaken in 2004-2005 by DDG and the HALO Trust with the support of SMAC, in order to attempt to clarify some of the data and conclusions presented by the LIS. The LIS data indicated a significant mines problem within Somaliland, whereas both DDG and HALO considered that the problem was limited and manageable.

The findings of the re-survey process, which looked at a number of identified high and medium impacted communities, are shown in Table 4. DDG revisited 30 communities identified as highly impacted and 18 of those identified as medium impacted¹⁵ were and an analysis of the SHA and the believed impact of those SHA were collated. The results from the survey indicate that the 48 communities presented a total of 115 SHA, but that only 8 were considered to be high impact and 17 medium impact.

Table 4 - Summary of DDG's resurvey data

SHA Surveyed	Total Number of SHA	(Roads)	(Non-Roads)	(BAC)
High Impact SHA	8	2	5	1
Medium Impact SHA	17	6	8	3
Low Impact SHA	65	57	8	0
Sites Disqualified	25	6	12	7
Original Total	115	71	33	11
Net Total of SHA	90	65	21	4

Based on this resurvey, and a more general feeling that mines were not having as significant an impact as was being suggested, DDG took the decision to stop carrying out mine clearance activities. This decision has caused a certain amount of bad blood between DDG and SMAC/UNDP. SMAC claim they were not consulted during the decision making process. DDG believe that SMAC were part of this process. Although it is very difficult to confirm a process

¹⁴ This high figure is misleading. The majority of these items were found in a number of caches dealt with by the teams and include several thousand AP & AT mines destroyed at the request of the Somaliland government as part of their move towards Ottawa (or non-states actor equivalent) compliance.

¹⁵ The 18 were selected by SMAC, DDG and HALO as those considered to be the most highly affected communities identifying by the LIS as medium impacted.

that happened several years ago, it is clear that SMAC feel that they were presented with a *fait accompli* rather than being able to form a part of the strategising process.

The decision was based on the results of the resurvey process combined with a more general feeling that mines had less of an impact than was perceived generally and a feeling that the funding received for mine clearance would be better spent on other activities. In 2006, DDG considered that the resources being applied to mine clearance would better be utilised on focussing on UXO clearance – given the success of their VBVC project.

This perspective also appears to be backed up by statistics with regards to accidents. All key stakeholders agree that most accidents happen when tampering with UXO – not mines. DDG's internal data base highlights this, and is in accordance with recent HI statistics where more than 60% of victims during 2006 and 2007 were due to UXO.

A core element of this decision making process is the assumption that the HALO Trust will remain operational and have the capacity to deal with the residual mines problem that remains in Somaliland. This appears to be a sound assumption.

The final decision was based on a fundamental feeling that all indicators in Somaliland showed that it was time for DDG to leave mine action – and mine clearance.¹⁶ This was summarised by a statement made by the DDG Regional Coordinator¹⁷. He posed the unanswered question of how a community would choose to allocate resources if they were offered the funds required to clear a SHA close by to their village. He wondered whether they would choose to clear the minefield, build a school, a health post, drill a well for clean water, or some other risk reduction strategy. The suggestion is very strongly that there are simply better ways to spend money in order to improve the lives of communities and individuals in Somaliland than by clearing minefields.

VBVC (EOD) Operations

Following the closure of the mine clearance element of the programme, the operational focus 2006 – 2008 became removal and disposal of UXO and AXO from communities, supported by MRE. This was based on the following concerns:

- reducing ERW threat in households (domestically held stockpiles);
- reducing ERW threat in the community;
- prevent explosives from the ERW being sold on the black market; and
- educating the community of the dangers of ERW.

During the period 2003 – 2008¹⁸, DDG's VBVC teams made more than 4,500 community visits and dealt with almost 20,000 items of ordnance. Figure 1 shows the clear downward trend in the average number of items recovered from each community. Once again, towards the end of the period of operation, DDG made the assessment that there were more cost effective ways of utilising the resources they had and thus made the decision to shift operations away from VBVC operations towards their CSEP operations.

¹⁶ Discussion with Nick Bateman, Hargeisa, 18th April 2008.

¹⁷ Ibid

¹⁸ Although DDG was not undertaking VBVC between 2003 & 2006, their EOD teams were essentially undertaking VBVC activities.

Table 5 - VBVC operations 2003 - 2008

Communities visited	AP mines destroyed	AT mines destroyed	UXO destroyed	Total items destroyed
4,527	216	47	19,686	19,949

A core element of this decision making process is the assumption that the extant capacity in Somaliland after they finished VBVC operations, assumed to be a combination of the HALO EOD/Survey teams and the police EOD teams, will be able to provide the required capacity to deal with the residual UXO problem in the country. This again appears to be a sound assumption based on the very limited data available.

Commencement of CSEP Operations

Although DDG have not previously been involved in SALW operations, the organisation have taken a strategic decision to branch out into this area. In Somaliland, while ERW are clearly posing a problem to the communities, small arms appear to pose as large, perhaps larger, a problem to the lives of the Somali people than mines. A significant proportion of the population own weapons¹⁹ and current indicators of casualty numbers from SALW appear to be significantly higher than those from mines and UXO.

The Community Attitudes Survey²⁰ undertaken by DDG in 2007 canvassed nine communities out of more than 600 in the accessible parts of Somaliland. The Survey recorded that there had been 46 SALW related injuries in the previous 24 months in just those nine communities. The data are not sufficient to allow a full reliable extrapolation to the whole of Somaliland, but it is not unreasonable to assume that the SALW casualties are many times higher than ERW casualties.

Residual capacity

A key element in the rationale for DDGs withdrawal is the capacity that will remain in Somaliland after their withdrawal from mine action. By far the most significant actor in this is the HALO Trust. HALO has stated that they intend to remain in Somaliland until all high and medium impacted communities (as classified by HALO) have the threat of mines removed. While this will leave some low priority sites, this will essentially leave a country where mines present a very low impact on life.

HALO has a strong, well established and capable capacity and this was a major influence on DDGs rationale. Without a strong operator to fill the shoes of DDG, there is no doubt that a different decision would have been made.

DDG also believe in the concept of the police EOD teams and believe that they will be able to deal, together with HALO, with the residual UXO threat in Somaliland.

¹⁹ DDGs Community Attitudes Survey in suggested an average ownership of at least one weapon of around 80% and a reported 43 deaths and 46 weapon injuries in nine districts over the last two years.

²⁰ DDG/DRC, A baseline survey of Community attitudes towards Small Arms & Light Weapons (SALW) in North West Somalia (Somaliland), Hargeisa, October 2007.

OTHER ISSUES

Tasking and prioritisation

In theory, all tasking and prioritisation is done by SMAC. The reality is, however, somewhat different. HALO, DDG and the Somaliland Police EOD teams are all essentially self-tasking, although all operators ensure endorsement of their tasks by the SMAC.

IMSMA

Although SMAC is equipped with IMSMA version 3 (which was installed by SRSA), and the data from the LIS was fully integrated, there appears to have been no further data entry, for clearance, survey, or victims. A number of computer operators have been trained by GICHD but have subsequently left their positions, leaving an extremely limited capacity which seems unable to keep on top of most of the issues related to data management.

The IMSMA central database in Hargeisa remains just that – a single central database bearing little or no resemblance to the reality of the situation in Somaliland. The operators have no copy of, nor access to, IMSMA, and any encouragement for operators to report is tempered by the well founded suspicion that the data simply do not get entered into IMSMA. This is reinforced by the fact that the operators have been asked for their complete data sets to be entered into IMSMA several times over the last couple of years.

The end result of this means that the national database is not a current national database and the operators have been keeping their own record since they began operating. With essentially two operators (HALO and the police EOD teams) remaining working in Somaliland, there is a huge opportunity to consolidate the data and maintain a current view of the situation without too many challenges. It is especially important that the victim data situation is resolved to ensure that a clear view of the situation is achieved. This is something that needs to be dealt with as a priority.

CURRENT PRIORITIES

Perspectives of the mine action problem in Somaliland vary. The SMAC maintain that there is a significant problem in the country that needs significant resources to be allocated to it. Both of the major operators see the problem from a different perspective and believe that the problem is entirely manageable – and indeed, DDG took this perception to the next degree by ceasing operations in the area.

SPECIFIC ISSUES TO BE ADDRESSED AS NOTED IN THE TERMS OF REFERENCE

Has DDG's approach effectively reflected Somaliland's HMA priorities?

The priorities of the Government of Somaliland in reality appear to be driven by the operators working in country. With DDG now non-operational in HMA, essentially HALO Trust is driving today's agenda.

Over the last 10 years, it is difficult to define clearly exactly what the HMA priorities were. There is an incredibly diverse range of views. The recent EU funded assessment of mine action programmes in Europe presented the case that “... *mine action in Somalia appears to have been misdiagnosed and undersold for many years*²¹” and stated that victims *per capita* in Somaliland were several orders higher than the next heavily affected country in Africa, Angola. DDG’s 10 years of operational experience in country has however very clearly steered them to make an operational decision to stop clearing mines, and subsequently, to stop dealing with UXO. They believe that the mines problem, notwithstanding the evidence of the data, is not the most pressing problem in Somaliland and that a switch to operating in the area of SALW may well be warranted. This was an organisational position based on their perspectives of the seriousness of the situation, rather than any difficulties supporting their operations.

While the actions of DDG in ceasing HMA activities in Somaliland will not rid the country of mines or UXO, the pragmatic perspective they have taken recognises the fact that in most of the communities that they have worked with, or close by, mines have become an insignificant factor in the lives of the communities, who have developed (as yet not really understood) coping mechanisms to deal with the presence of mines and which pose a lower level of risk to those communities than the presence of small arms, or indeed the presence of a main road close by, with fast moving vehicles.

DDG do not believe that mines and UXO present a high priority at the national level, nor do they believe that mines and UXO any longer present a significant retarding factor in the development of the country.

It is the opinion of this assessment that DDG are justified in the actions they have undertaken.

Have DDG’s activities actively supported the Somaliland Mine Action Centre (SMAC) and the Police Explosive Ordnance Disposal Teams? What is the impact of DDG’s support to SMAC, SMAC’s capacity and Somaliland’s HMA programme?

DDG has worked extremely closely with the SMAC since it was formed in 1997. While the SMAC struggled in the early days, more recent events have resulted in a more useful national organisation. Over the last 10 years, DDG have worked closely and has made the majority of its major decisions in coordination with SMAC.

DDG have also provided the SMAC with training in the form of:

- Training courses for medics
- EOD training for Police EOD teams
- Deminer training for 10 deminers
- Survey & QA training (General Mine Action Assessment (GMAA))
- DDGs conducted LIS for SMAC in 2004 and 2005 (not followed up by a GMAA, nor entered into IMSMA).

21 EC-funded Mine Action in Africa: Volume 2 – Country Reports, GICHD, 2007

Has the programme strategy been implemented in a technically sound and effective manner (considering Area reduction, VBVC, information gathering methods, etc.)?

DDG have, in some areas, been extremely innovative in their approach to HMA over the last 10 years. In terms of mine clearance, operational conditions preclude the use of detectors because of the high levels of mineral content in the soil and the prevalence of relatively deep buried minimum metal mines which means that it is extremely difficult to assure clearance beyond 10cm depth. No operator has been using detectors over the last 10 years, although HALO are in the process of attempting to introduce new generation and multi-sensor detectors. This has meant that the majority of clearance work has been undertaken by prodding and excavation techniques – an extremely slow but thorough process.

DDG were quick to try “new” methodologies and were one of the first operators to undertake clearance by raking – a process initially used by them in Sri Lanka. This led to a speeding up of the process without any apparent reduction in quality. In addition, DDG were innovative in undertaking “risk reduction” processes that involved risk reduction, rather than risk removal, for communities. While this concept proved to be very effective in Somaliland, it was perhaps a little advanced for the mine action community – a somewhat conservative group.

DDG have generally been responsive and forward thinking about their programme implementation. Prior to the LIS, most of the work had been undertaken close to Hargeisa and on demand from the local communities. The LIS gave the mine action actors the opportunity to take a more strategic view (notwithstanding the ongoing debate about the validity of the LIS data) and begin the deployment of operational capacity in a more strategically effective manner. After a period of time where there was a realisation by the major players (DDG, HALO & SMAC) that the LIS data may not necessarily be representative of the extant situation in Somaliland, these players focused their work on clarification of the key elements of the impact by undertaking a resurvey of the high, and a number of the medium impact areas.

As the results from the resurvey began to indicate that the mines problem was not as significant as the LIS indicated, DDG began to shift their focus, on the basis of this, away from mine clearance, towards UXO clearance, in the form of the VBVC project.

More recently, as the trend with regard the items of UXO being dealt with by the VBVC teams continued downwards (see Figure 1), DDG began to wind their UXO capacity down in order to shift focus towards SALW operations.

Based on the available information and from the perspective of an organisation that questions the humanitarian value of its interventions from an holistic perspective, the programme development and strategy appear to have been well managed.

Have DDG’s activities been implemented in a complementary fashion with other HMA actors?

It is difficult to assess how much interaction and complementarity there was in the early days of DDG operations given the fact that only two operators remain. DDG’s relationship with the HALO Trust appears to be, and to have been, weak, with little cooperation. While this may appear to be a problem, the reality of the situation is that both organisations complemented each other despite this real lack of cooperation and there appeared to have been no significant overlaps

in operational activities. There is a monthly formal meeting hosted by the SMAC which appears to be the only formal meeting of the two organisations. In the lead-up to making the decision to cease operations in both mine clearance and the VBVC project, DDG did consult with HALO, as they provided (with maintaining an operational capacity in Somaliland) a major element of the justification for closing operations. Similarly, the relationship with HI appears distant, but both were fully aware of each other's activities.

Have DDG's activities been implemented in a complementary and/or supporting fashion with other humanitarian agencies in Somaliland?

The relationships between DDG and other key actors in Somaliland are, to some degree, well established. However, the linkages are informal and infrequent. Beyond the monthly meeting called by the SMAC and its key partners, there is no formal mechanism for complementarity and liaison between mine action partners. Broader than that, the relationship between other partners and DDG again, seems to be informal and infrequent.

Have DDG's activities added genuine value to communities in which they have been implemented, and if so, in what ways? Have the efforts reached the most vulnerable groups in Somaliland society? What impact in terms of poverty reduction for these communities have the activities had in addition to reduced injuries and death (e.g. on rural economy and agriculture, infrastructure, resettlement opportunities, etc.)?

There is no question that some of the communities visited have benefited from the work undertaken, but there is a larger question in terms of the cost benefit of the work that DDG have been undertaking in Somaliland. In a recent internal report²², it was clearly identified that the activities of the last two years appear not to have added significant value and have fallen well below the desirable cost-benefit curve.

It is not possible to conduct a meaningful cost-benefit analysis within the framework of this assessment. It is recommended that a more detailed vulnerability/sustainable livelihoods approach would be most suitable in order to gain a substantive understanding of the situation here.

Inserted comments from livelihood expert Laura Hammond: (see full report in annex 3)

It is clear that DDG's activities have added value in that those interviewed indicated that they appreciated the MA work that had been done. In livelihood terms, however, it is nearly impossible given the available data to determine *in what ways* the added value has been related to livelihoods.

Livelihoods analysis in Somaliland has been led for the past ten years by the FSAU. Baseline information for all parts of Somalia includes data that disaggregates the communities into wealth groups, defined as people who depend on the same general set of livelihood activities and who are considered by the community to be, for example, the poorest of the poor, middle poor, and better off. This information was not used in the Impact Analysis, nor was any attempt made to determine who the poorest or most vulnerable members of the community were, so it is difficult – if not impossible – to say whether the most vulnerable have been engaged.

²² DDGs Community Attitudes Survey

To examine whether there has been an impact in terms of poverty reduction where MA has taken place, or changes that affect livelihoods overall, assessment questions should ideally have considered such things as changes in the daily wage rate, changes in the overall average household income (baseline info is available from www.fsausomali.org that could be compared with data in the target communities), development of public and private infrastructure, and incidence of resettlement.

As stated above, it is difficult to determine the impact of MA on poverty reduction, but livelihoods analysis with wealth groups could help to determine whether, in areas where DDG has been working, there has been an increase in income overall and whether any of this is related to increased use of area cleared (and possibly with greater security).

A word of caution here, though. Current conditions in Somaliland are such that these variables are changing rapidly. Food prices have generally increased 40-100% in the past year. Fuel prices are also at an all-time high. Wage rates have reportedly been depressed over the last 18 months by the influx of internally displaced persons from south-central Somalia, and displacement has also increased due to the threat of the conflict spreading north. Thus, in determining cause and effect, it would be important to take into account these other processes, which may affect local dynamics but which may have little or nothing to do with MA activities having been carried out in an area. Conversely, a mine-free area may be attractive to people moving, or may help to stabilize local prices if agriculture and livestock production can be restarted.

Note: It would seem to be important with respect to livelihoods to look at what the impact has been on households who have suffered a casualty as a result of a mine-related accident. This would be difficult to do in terms of interviewing sensitivities, but in households where an injured member must be cared for, there is certainly a huge economic cost, and this should be seen as part of the cost-benefit analysis when considering the economic impact (fewer casualties = less loss of productive labour = lower health care and maintenance costs). This may be the subject of a separate study, either in Somaliland or in another country where MA activities are ongoing.

Have the activities been designed and implemented in a gender-sensitive and environmentally sound manner? If not, what improvements could be suggested for potential similar activities in Somalia?

There is currently little guidance to the mine action industry on environmental issues. IMAS 07.10 (draft) is currently awaiting endorsement from the IMAS review board.

Inserted comments from livelihood expert Laura Hammond: (see full report in annex 3)

The Impact Analysis indicates a high number of female respondents to the questionnaires administered, but this does not necessarily mean that women were well targeted in the MA activities themselves. One way to see how women and men have benefited from the activities is to disaggregate work that people do by gender, and see how much of that is made more possible by MA activities. For example, we know that herding sheep and goats in fields near the house is largely done by women and children, while pastoral men tend to take the camels further away to graze. If the area cleared is close to the homes, women would benefit from this more than men. Also, women collect water. If the access routes to water sources are improved through MA, women will have to spend less time hauling water, etc. These hypotheses can be ground-truthed through follow-up interviews.

In what other ways (e.g. through the provision of short & long term employment) has DDG actively contributed to society in Somaliland?

Employment for DDG's employees over the last 10 years has undoubtedly contributed to the societal benefit in Somaliland. Part of DDG's concept of operations included what has become known in some circles as "proximity demining" – the employment of local staff to work on local tasks. This certainly contributed to communities from a financial perspective and appears to have had a positive impact to society in the parts of Somaliland where DDG have operated.

- Employment
- Staff training and development
- Transfer of work ethic
- Donor profile

Inserted comments from livelihood expert Laura Hammond: (see full report in annex 3)

DDG certainly employed a large number of staff over its ten years in Somaliland. It can be assumed that, in a country where unemployment is rampant (as many as 80% of able-bodied men are not employed, and the number is higher for women), those who worked for DDG enjoyed improved livelihoods over those who were unemployed. Additional information to quantify this impact is not available. In the future, a programme like this could usefully conduct research that compares the incomes of those staff with regular incomes with households that do not. Such a study could also examine expenditure patterns, rates of attendance in school of children in the household, whether employees share their income with other relatives who do not have an employed member, etc.

Is DDG's future strategy for Armed Violence reduction in Somaliland sound?

Based on the findings of the 2007 SALW Community Attitudes Survey of 9 Somaliland communities, there are very clear indications that the impact that will be achieved by the same investment in focussing on the SALW issues will be much more significant than if the resources remained in use in the mine action sector.

CONCLUSIONS

DDG have undoubtedly made a significant contribution to mine action since their arrival in Somaliland in 1999. 120 sites have been cleared of mines and UXO and more than 100,000 items of ERW have been destroyed. Communities which DDG have included in their VBVC project show a clear trend downwards with regards to the number of UXO being cleared per visit.

Over the last nine years, DDG have been a key stakeholder in the initiation and development of the mine action sector in Somaliland. The withdrawal of the organisation has caused a certain amount of consternation within some parts of the Somaliland mine action sector. Part of this could be ascribed to poor communications by DDG in terms of explaining to their partners the full reasons for the decision. Part of this could also be seen as a slight to some elements of the group who continue to state that Somaliland continues to need significant resources allocated to mine action.

DDG based their programming around the perceived needs (by DDG) at the time and, as these perceived needs changed, the programming direction changed. While unusual in the mine action industry, this approach has the merit of honesty and DDG should be commended for taking and maintaining such an honest stance. This perception allowed DDG to take some radical steps – the closing of the mine clearance operations and subsequently VBVC operations while others maintained that there was a need for their presence for example.

It is the opinion of the author that the actions taken by DDG have ensured best value for money for the Somaliland communities and their donors. Some of their actions have been perceived in a negative light and this may be a result of a combination of factors – poor communication with key stakeholders and the fact that the decisions were based on essentially gut feeling rather than hard data. However, in the long run, the decision to shift focus from mine action to SALW will give a much greater impact from the limited funds available.

In addition to the hard impact that DDG have had on Somaliland and the impact that mines and UXO had had, the intangible benefits are undoubtedly large. They have been a major employer for almost ten years which has percolated money back into the local economy; staff have been trained in basic skills and there has been limited infrastructure development. All in all, the presence of DDG has been a significant and beneficial one for Somaliland.

ANNEX 1 – TERMS OF REFERENCE

Terms of Reference (Draft v2.0 2-4-08) Danish Demining Group (DDG) Somaliland External Assessment Report

1. Abstract & Background

- 1.1 DDG has been active in Somaliland since 1999, and has during this time been active in the implementation of humanitarian mine action activities on behalf of the Government of Somaliland and various donors including DANIDA, SIDA, Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, EU, Rotary Denmark & Denmark Against Landmines (DML).
- 1.2 On 31st March 2008, DDG will cease its HMA activities in Somaliland and also conclude a 2-year grant from SIDA (Swedish Contribution to the Village by Village Clearance Project in Somaliland, D. Nr. Ur11 Yso/10.3DDG).
- 1.3 In accordance with DDG's contract with SIDA and the 2006-2007 annual programme review conducted in June 2007 (see attachments), DDG has agreed to facilitate an external review on behalf of SIDA & the Government of Somaliland.
- 1.4 This ToR thus outlines the requirements and timeframe for the implementation of this comprehensive review.

2. Mandate under contract

- 2.1 Under Article 7 (Planning, Review, Reporting & Evaluation) of DDG's contract with SIDA,

"an in-depth review and/or evaluation shall be carried out by 01st March 2008. The parties shall agree on the terms of reference & procedures for its implementation during the preceding annual review meeting"
- 2.2 Under the 2006-2007 Annual Review, it was agreed that,
 - DDG wished the evaluation to cover the 1999-2008 period & all programme activities
 - Funds were available within the budget to implement the project evaluation
 - SIDA wished to provide input to the ToR & would consider using the evaluation in lieu of their own
 - The evaluation should include a consideration of the contribution to poverty reduction (with an emphasis upon vulnerable groups), plus a gender analysis and consideration of environmental impact

3. Scope of Evaluation

- 3.1 With specific reference to para 2 above, the evaluation is to consider in an honest and objective fashion DDG's contribution to humanitarian mine action in Somaliland from programme inception in 1999 to closure in March 2008.

3.2 Activities to be considered include;

- a. Manual minefield clearance
- b. Explosive Ordnance Disposal (both mobile Village By Village Clearance & stockpile disposal)
- c. Mine Detection Dog (MDD) activities including road clearance
- d. Survey (GMAA & Technical)
- e. Mine Risk Education

3.3 It is suggested that DDG's implementation of the Somalia Phase One Landmine Impact Survey (LIS) should be referred to but not considered in depth due to the potential scope of study that this implies.

3.4 Specific questions to be addressed should include (but are not limited to);

- a. *Has DDG's approach effectively reflected Somaliland's HMA priorities?*
- b. *Have DDG's activities actively supported the Somaliland Mine Action centre (SMAC) and the Police Explosive Ordnance Disposal Teams ? What is the impact of DDG's support to SMAC, SMAC's capacity and Somaliland's HMA programme?*
- c. *Has the programme strategy been implemented in a technically sound and effective manner (considering Area reduction, VBVCCC, information gathering methods, etc.)?*
- d. *Have DDG's activities been implemented in a complementary fashion with other HMA actors?*
- e. *Have DDG's activities been implemented in a complementary and/or supporting fashion with other humanitarian agencies in Somaliland?*
- f. *Have DDG's activities added genuine value to communities in which they have been implemented, and if so, in what ways? Have the efforts reached the most vulnerable groups in Somaliland society? What impact in terms of poverty reduction for these communities have the activities had in addition to reduced injuries and death (e.g. on rural economy and agriculture, infrastructure, resettlement opportunities, etc.) ?*
- g. *Have the activities been designed and implemented in a gender-sensitive and environmentally sound manner? If not, what improvements could be suggested for potential similar activities in Somalia?*
- h. *In what other ways (e.g. through the provision of short & long term employment) has DDG actively contributed to society in Somaliland?*
- i. *Is DDG's future strategy for Armed Violence reduction in Somaliland sound?*

4. Methodology

4.1 In order to effectively answer the above questions, the following methodologies may be employed but are not limited to;

- a. Consideration of case study results from DDG's Impact Assessment Project
- b. Site visits
- c. Community interviews including appropriate focus groups such as elders and landowners & users
- d. Interviews with SMAC & UNDP Somalia mine action
- e. Interviews with relevant government officials
- f. Interviews with representatives of the UN, INGO's and national NGOs
- g. Consideration of national & DDG database information & technical reports
- h. Consideration of DDG proposals & donor reports
- i. Consideration of DDG technical SOPs

5. Timeframe

5.1 Due to restrictions in the availability of Mr Tim Lardner from GICHD, it is suggested that the following timeframe is considered;

- a. Agreement of ToR and other administrative details between DDG, SIDA & GICHD by 07th March 2008
- b. Completion of information gathering and field work by 30th April 2008
- c. Submission of draft of final evaluation report by 30th June 2008
- d. Submission of final evaluation report by 31st July 2008

6. Attachments

- a. DDG-SIDA Somaliland Village by Village EOD Project Proposal (April 2006 to March 2008)
- b. DDG-SIDA Somaliland Village by Village EOD Project Contract (Swedish Contribution to the Village by Village Clearance Project in Somaliland, D. Nr. Ur11 Yso/10.3DDG)
- c. Minutes of DDG-SIDA Annual Programme Review 05th June 2007

ANNEX 2 – ITINERARY & LIST OF PEOPLE MET

Hargeisa		
17 th Apr	Arrive Hargeisa	
	DDG	Nick Bateman (initial briefing)
Vicinity of Hargeisa		
18 th Apr	DDG	Nick Bateman and Garad Ismael Isra Visit to five sites cleared by DDG during 10 years of mine action. Meetings in afternoon
Hargeisa		
19 th Apr	UNDP	Ali Omar Ugaas – Programme Officer Mine Action
	Somaliland police	Omer Abdallah, EOD teams Commander
	HALO Trust	Armen Harutyunyan – Programme manager Stanislav Damòanović – Operations Manager Hassan Kossar – Operations Officer
20 th Apr	Somaliland Mine Action Centre (SMAC)	Dr Ahmed Ali Maah – Director
21 st Apr	DDG	Garad Ismael Isra – National programme manager
	UNDP	Ms Celeste Staley – UNDP DDR/SAC Programme manager
	DDG	Rudi Thirion – MRE project officer
22 nd Apr	HI	Dahib Mohamed Odwaa – MRE project manager
	UNDP	Eddie Boyle - ROLS
23 rd Apr	Depart Hargeisa	

ANNEX 3 – LIVELIHOOD EXPERT LAURA HAMMONDS REPORT

Comments on Final Impact Evaluation Report for DDG Somaliland

Submitted by

Laura Hammond

School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London and

Member, FEG-Consulting

Sept 2008

I have been asked by the Danish Demining Group (DDG) and Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining to comment on the ‘External Assessment of DDG’s HMA Programme in Somaliland,’ Sept 2008, prepared by Tim Lardner, as well as the ‘Final Impact Evaluation Report for DDG Somaliland,’ April 2008, prepared by Bodil Jacobsen to consider the information relating to the impact of DDG’s mine clearance activities in Somaliland on livelihoods in the programme areas.

In particular, I have been asked to consider whether the information available is adequate to answer the following three questions in the Terms of Reference for the External Assessment:

- j. *Have DDG’s activities added genuine value to communities in which they have been implemented, and if so, in what ways? Have the efforts reached the most vulnerable groups in Somaliland society? What impact in terms of poverty reduction for these communities have the activities had in addition to reduced injuries and death (e.g. on rural economy and agriculture, infrastructure, resettlement opportunities, etc.) ?*
- k. *Have the activities been designed and implemented in a gender-sensitive and environmentally sound manner? If not, what improvements could be suggested for potential similar activities in Somalia/Somaliland?*
- l. *In what other ways (e.g. through the provision of short & long term employment) has DDG actively contributed to society in Somaliland?*

The External Assessment draws from the Final Impact Evaluation Report for information pertaining to livelihoods; no additional information on livelihoods was gathered during the course of the external assessment. The External Assessment makes reference to the ‘general feeling that mines were not having as significant an impact as was being suggested and a feeling that the funding received for mine clearance would be better spent on other activities (p. 11).’ Therefore, most of my comments relate to the discussion of livelihoods contained in the Final Impact Evaluation Report.

In discussions with staff of DDG, GICHD, and the DRC, it was agreed that generally speaking there is inadequate information to answer the three questions definitively. However, I was asked to comment on the kinds of questions that would need to be asked in an assessment in order to solicit the necessary information, with the idea that this information might be useful to the implementing agency (and to others engaged in similar activities) in developing an assessment tool and training programme that would better capture the impacts of MA on livelihoods. Ideally, such a system could be developed to be run and maintained by national staff. My comments and recommendations are thus offered in this vein.

Before delving into the questions contained in the TOR, a general point should be made:

- Generally the Final Impact Evaluation Report uses a very narrowly defined and probably over-generalized definition of livelihoods. Given that 42.4% of the households interviewed were urban, the definition of livelihoods needs to be expanded to consider at least the range of activities that contributes to the overall household income rather than just to income derived from agricultural and/or pastoral activities. In urban areas this will include trading activities as well as waged labour. However, even in rural areas, we know (based on FSAU²³ baseline information) that very few households are able to meet all of their basic needs through pastoral and/or agricultural activities. For instance, in the coastal areas (the Golis-Guban Pastoral zone, according to FSAU livelihood zoning information), where people's predominant livelihood activity is derived from raising and selling goats and camels, the poorest depended for 25-35% of their total income on employment (livestock herding for others, construction, other daily labour) and self employment (harvest and sale of charcoal, gum Arabic, fodder sales, wild food sales). Only the better off could afford to survive almost entirely from agro-pastoralism. It would be useful to know whether this is definitely the case in areas where mines have been cleared, or whether agriculture and pastoralism have changed in importance (positively or negatively) – possibly as a result, at least in part, of MA activities.

Assessment TOR Questions

With regard to the three specific questions contained in the TOR for the External Assessment:

- Have DDG's activities added genuine value to communities in which they have been implemented, and if so, in what ways? Have the efforts reached the most vulnerable groups in Somaliland society? What impact in terms of poverty reduction for these communities have the activities had in addition to reduced injuries and death (e.g. on rural economy and agriculture, infrastructure, resettlement opportunities, etc.) ?*
1. It is clear that DDG's activities have added value in that those interviewed indicated that they appreciated the MA work that had been done. In livelihood terms, however, it is nearly impossible given the available data to determine *in what ways* the added value has been related to livelihoods.
 2. Livelihoods analysis in Somaliland has been led for the past ten years by the FSAU. Baseline information for all parts of Somalia includes data that disaggregates the

²³ The Somali Food Security Assessment Unit. See www.fsausomali.org

communities into wealth groups, defined as people who depend on the same general set of livelihood activities and who are considered by the community to be, for example, the poorest of the poor, middle poor, and better off. This information was not used in the Impact Analysis, nor was any attempt made to determine who the poorest or most vulnerable members of the community were, so it is difficult – if not impossible – to say whether the most vulnerable have been engaged.

3. To examine whether there has been an impact in terms of poverty reduction where MA has taken place, or changes that affect livelihoods overall, assessment questions should ideally have considered such things as changes in the daily wage rate, changes in the overall average household income (baseline info is available from www.fsausomali.org that could be compared with data in the target communities), development of public and private infrastructure, and incidence of resettlement.
4. As stated above, it is difficult to determine the impact of MA on poverty reduction, but livelihoods analysis with wealth groups could help to determine whether, in areas where DDG has been working, there has been an increase in income overall and whether any of this is related to increased use of area cleared (and possibly with greater security).

A word of caution here, though. Current conditions in Somaliland are such that these variables are changing rapidly. Food prices have generally increased 40-100% in the past year. Fuel prices are also at an all-time high. Wage rates have reportedly been depressed over the last 18 months by the influx of internally displaced persons from south-central Somalia, and displacement has also increased due to the threat of the conflict spreading north. Thus, in determining cause and effect, it would be important to take into account these other processes, which may affect local dynamics but which may have little or nothing to do with MA activities having been carried out in an area. Conversely, a mine-free area may be attractive to people moving, or may help to stabilize local prices if agriculture and livestock production can be restarted.

Note: It would seem to be important with respect to livelihoods to look at what the impact has been on households who have suffered a casualty as a result of a mine-related accident. This would be difficult to do in terms of interviewing sensitivities, but in households where an injured member must be cared for, there is certainly a huge economic cost, and this should be seen as part of the cost-benefit analysis when considering the economic impact (fewer casualties = less loss of productive labour = lower health care and maintenance costs). This may be the subject of a separate study, either in Somaliland or in another country where MA activities are ongoing.

b. Have the activities been designed and implemented in a gender-sensitive and environmentally sound manner? If not, what improvements could be suggested for potential similar activities in Somalia/Somaliland?

5. The Impact Analysis indicates a high number of female respondents to the questionnaires administered, but this does not necessarily mean that women were well targeted in the MA activities themselves. One way to see how women and men have benefited from the activities is to disaggregate work that people do by gender, and see how much of that is made more possible by MA activities. For example, we know that herding sheep and goats in fields near the house is largely done by women and children, while pastoral men tend to take the camels further away to graze. If the area cleared is close to the homes, women would benefit from this more than men. Also, women collect water. If the access

routes to water sources are improved through MA, women will have to spend less time hauling water, etc. These hypotheses can be ground-truthed through follow-up interviews.

c. In what other ways (e.g. through the provision of short & long term employment) has DDG actively contributed to society in Somaliland?

6. DDG certainly employed a large number of staff over its ten years in Somaliland. It can be assumed that, in a country where unemployment is rampant (as many as 80% of able-bodied men are not employed, and the number is higher for women), those who worked for DDG enjoyed improved livelihoods over those who were unemployed. Additional information to quantify this impact is not available. In the future, a programme like this could usefully conduct research that compares the incomes of those staff with regular incomes with households that do not. Such a study could also examine expenditure patterns, rates of attendance in school of children in the household, whether employees share their income with other relatives who do not have an employed member, etc.
7. Another set of questions perhaps only tangentially related to livelihoods but relevant to the question are: what kind of lasting capacity has been built up in the SMAC by DDG collaboration? How well equipped are communities to recognize mine threats and to manage them? How able is SMAC to respond to reported risks?

The Final Impact Evaluation Report mentions, quite rightly, that it is very difficult to determine whether positive (or negative, for that matter) changes in terms of livelihoods can be directly or indirectly attributed to DDG's work. As noted here, changes will also be affected by other things, such as the livestock ban that is imposed of and on (mostly on) over the last decade by Saudi Arabia and the Gulf States on import of live Somali meat, changes in remittance flows from abroad (it is estimated that as much as \$1 billion in aid is delivered in remittances to Somaliland each year), and the degree of perceived security surrounding the potential for the conflict in south-central Somalia to spread northwards. Also, even where positive impacts can be attributed in part to the work of DDG in clearing mine-affected areas, the knock-on effect is hard to estimate. For example, if an area is cleared, and housing construction takes place on the cleared area, this will generate construction jobs and return of people which will in turn stimulate market activity. How much of this should DDG take credit for?

Questionnaires

I include here some additional observations about the questionnaires used in the Final Impact Evaluation for Somaliland, which DDG asked me to review:

1. In the questionnaire used to gather information, as a very basic starting point, I would recommend merging the Livelihood and Economy categories, or at least in the analysis recognize that the answers in these two categories both indicate a livelihoods-related answer. This would mean, for example, that in Q. 25 (Why was clearance/removal of explosive items in your village good?), the total responses would be 759 indicating that people associate the clearance with improved livelihood opportunities. In the analysis, this will then become the single most important answer to that question (rather than

housing).

1. The analysis of the Somaliland data should make the point that some of the other categories (infrastructure, housing and resettlement) are also directly related to Livelihood Outcomes (i.e. the extent to which people are able to make ends meet).
2. Questions 27-42 ('Do you feel that anything has changed...') are useful, particularly when compared to the answers to 25. The fact that people think that MA has had a significant impact on livelihoods-related sectors (Q25) but that overall the change hasn't been that significant (as with employment) might suggest that other factors not related to mine clearance have actually hampered the employment market.
3. Although not exactly livelihoods related, I was confused by why in Q45, 'Good attitude between our people' was a Security indicator, whereas 'Good people here, there is trust' was a Safety indicator. There needs to be either greater clarity between these two criteria (Safety and Security) or they should be conflated as the results may be misleading otherwise.
4. Many of the questions in the questionnaires are good and could be used again, but some (the ones about perceived improvements/deterioration in conditions) need to be stated more clearly, and the answers need to be analyzed in their detail. Just referring to 'Livelihoods' or to Physical Capital does not tell the reader what they need to know about the issues.

Conclusions and Recommendations for a Revised Assessment Process

The shortcomings of the Final Impact Evaluation and External Assessment with regard to livelihoods are not a reflection of poor work done by either assessment team. Given that the authors of these reports are Mine Action specialists and not trained in livelihoods assessment or analysis methods, there is no reason to expect that they would have automatically gathered such information. In fact, the questionnaires from both Somaliland and Sri Lanka (which I also reviewed for the DDG) are commendable in that they do seek to develop a relatively nuanced understanding of livelihoods issues in MA focus areas. The criticisms given above, and the recommendations offered below, therefore, are intended to help guide thinking about ways of integrating livelihoods information better into the work of DDG, and to create linkages between DDG's work and that of the larger DRC organization.

In such an improved system of assessment, the following steps should be taken:

1. Rather than relying entirely on individually-completed questionnaires, use a combination of focus groups (comprising different wealth groups, possibly disaggregated by gender) and questionnaires. Most livelihood information can be gathered more quickly and cheaply using focus groups with questions about 'types' of households. Another benefit of focus groups is that they look for ideal types of households, and thus do not put the respondent 'on the spot' by asking them sensitive economic questions about their own household. Instead, questions are aimed at finding out 'how do people like you make ends meet' and the answers are debated within the group so that the final response is consensus based (and can be assumed to represent an 'average' answer). This saves time in the analysis and makes the data

collection methodology and analysis more accessible to national staff with little training.²⁴

2. Analysis should begin by considering livelihood zones (geographic areas in which most people rely on the same types of livelihood activities) and within those zones, wealth groups. The chart below, taken from FSAU analysis, shows how different assets of the three wealth groups identified are. In Golis Guban Pastoral Zone (northern coastal zone of Somaliland), wealth groups are mainly defined by number of animals:

Wealth Group Characteristic:

Poor (20-30%)	Middle	Better off (5-10%)
HH size 5-8 10-70 shoats 1-2 cattle 1-3 camels Annual income: \$1100-1200 Very poor 0-5	HH size 6-12 100-150 shoats 3-7 cattle 5-15 camels Annual income: \$1400-1500	HH size 6-12 200-300 shoats 20-40 camels 10-30 cattle

3. Determine current scenarios for poorest and middle poor wealth groups in terms of what activities they rely on for their livelihoods (%s and if possible amounts)
4. Include some questions about how people used to cope with mine/UXO threats in carrying out their everyday livelihood activities and whether they still use these practices.
5. Ask some questions about basic food and livelihood security – how many meals do people typically eat in a day? What do they eat? What other essential expenses do they have? Education? Water? House costs/utilities? Transport?
6. Discuss with interviewees the extent to which they attribute positive or negative livelihood outcomes to the MA activities in the area.
7. Conduct ‘pair-wise ranking’ (a common tool taken from Participatory Rural Appraisal) to identify priorities (for cross-sectoral assessments or to identify which threats people perceive as being most important to their livelihoods (e.g. mines, UXO, SALW, Livestock Ban, rising food prices, insecurity, influx of IDPs from the South, etc.))

²⁴ For more information about how to do these kinds of interviews, see *The Practitioner's Guide to the Household Economy Approach*, Save the Children-UK and FEG-Consulting, 2007. www.feg-consulting.com

ANNEX 4 – DOCUMENTS CONSULTED

- SAC, *Landmine Impact Survey: Somaliland Phase 1*, SAC/DDG, Hargeisa 2003
- Paterson et al, *EC-funded Mine Action in Africa: Volume 2 – Country Reports*, GICHD, Geneva 2007
- Jacobsen B, *Final Impact Evaluation Report, Somaliland*, DDG, Copenhagen 2008
- Somaliland Police, *Police EOD Annual Report 2007*, Hargeisa 2007
- DDG, *Proposal for the continuation of support to The Village By Village Clearance Project in Somaliland by Danish Demining Group from 01st April 2006 to 31st March 2008*, Copenhagen 2006