

Final Evaluation of Clearing for Results Phase II (CFRII), 2011-2015 in Cambodia



Recent mine accident site resulting in a traumatic amputation of the leg in newly settled Reak Smei Thma Romeal Village, Banteay Chhmar Commune, Thmar Pouk district. The survivor was collecting rubber for trees in the minefield and was attempting to mitigate the risks by jumping from rock to rock until he slipped, and stood on a PMN. This incident illustrates the complex interplay of the multiple issues of migration, new settlement, expansion of agricultural areas into hazardous locations, as well as the vulnerability of the poorest who supplement their income with foraging activity in high-risk locations. The minefield is designated A1 – high threat density – and contains high-risk mines, such as the PMN which remain – unlike some – fully functional 30 years after they were laid¹.

¹ One hundred and six families had moved into the area in the September-October period, and are described as living in 'abject poverty'. The village is so new that it does not appear on the official lists and therefore is not formally being included in the MAPU driven planning process, that de facto is the main means through which the CMAA coordinates mine action in Cambodia, and which considers only established and settled villages. There have been six mine accidents in the immediate area, with this being the second in this particular polygon. The upgrading of the military border road from laterite to tarmac in 2016 will act as a pull factor bringing yet more settlers from the poorer interior areas, often in the east of the country, to these 'frontier' communities that are pushing to expand Cambodia's agricultural area, and maintain its economic growth based on rapid progress in the agricultural sector in recent years.

Contents

<i>Key Terms</i>	3
<i>Foreword</i>	3
1.0 Executive Summary: Overall findings and recommendations	4
1.1. Overall assessment of CfR II	4
1.2. Outcomes and impact of mines and mine action: Key Lessons from Field Work	5
1.3. Summary results against Evaluation Questions	
2.0 Introduction	15
2.1 Evaluation background	15
2.2 Evaluation purpose	15
2.3 Evaluation methodology	15
2.4 Evaluation limitations and constraints	16
3.0 Country Background	16
3.1 Introduction	16
3.2 Conflict, remaining ERW contamination and contemporary risk-taking	17
3.3 Cambodian Political, Social and Development Context	23
3.4 The Mine Action Sector and UNDP's / CfRII's role	26
3.5 Landmines and UXO as an issue: developmental constraint; humanitarian hazard; both; neither?	31
4.0 Key Evaluation Questions and Results	35
4.1 Relevance	35
4.2 Effectiveness	42
4.3 Efficiency	59
4.4 Impact	69
4.5 Sustainability	80
4.6 Coherence / Complementarity	82
4.7 Gender	83
5.0 Conclusions	86
6.0 Findings and Detailed Recommendations	89
Annexes:	
1. Documents Reviewed	98
2. Schedule of Meetings	99
3. Focus Group Discussions Summary Impact of Mines and Mine Clearance	
4. Battambang Village Studies	
5. Pailin Village Studies	
6. Banteay-Meanchay Village Studies	
7. Annual Workplans Summarised	
8. Allocation of CfR II tasks compared with ranking of communes by impact (in terms of CMVIS recorded casualties and BLS polygon area)	
9. Unmodified Information from DataBase on CfR II operational results under KD3	
10. Summary Effectiveness Data	
11. Household Impact Study Findings Summarised	
12. Sustainability Issues	
13. TOR, Inception Report and Project Calendar	
14. Full List of Key Terms Used	
15. Unabridged first draft of the report containing extra evidence	

Key Terms: (Pages 3-5 of the unabridged draft report, and refer to Annex 14)

The list of definitions in the main report are taken from IMAS 04.10, Second Edition 01 January 2003 Amendment 7, August 2014, Glossary of mine action terms, definitions and abbreviations. Exceptions to this are Threat, Vulnerability and Threat-Reduction. The absence of reference to vulnerability in IMAS is significant, as it has a key influence on risk and since mine action – as defined below – is about risk reduction then this is a critical part of the context that professional mine action has typically not invested in understanding, and it should directly influence prioritization and planning.

Crucial even for reading of this summary are the following terms:

Mine Action

Isactivities which aim to **reduce the social, economic and environmental impact** of mines, and ERW including unexploded sub-munitions.

Note: Mine action is not just about demining; it is also about people and societies, and how they are affected by landmine and ERW contamination. The objective of mine action is to **reduce the risk from landmines and ERW** to a level where people can live safely; in which economic, social and health development can occur free from the constraints imposed by landmine and ERW contamination, and in which the victims' different needs can be addressed.

Threat-reduction:

Threat reduction is used here in reference to the work of the 'informal private' mine action sector (individual private de-miners, sometimes called village deminers, and more organized groups working commercially within a low-priced Cambodian market place for mine action services). Threat-reduction refers to the physical elimination of threat items (mines and items of ERW) from an area, but without the level of confidence that comes from clearance to national standards. Threat-reduction in mine action was the way HALO Trust referred to its mobile teams focused on reducing the risks of travel on roads in Angola and elsewhere in the mid-2000s. They did not claim their processes were road clearance as such, but rather sought to reduce the number of threat items on the roads, and therefore the overall risk, to broadly acceptable levels, whilst accepting there remains a residual risk. The advantage of this type of process is that it can make a rapid difference risk levels over a far greater amount of road network, in a relative short period of time.

Land Release

In the context of mine action, the term describes the process of applying all reasonable effort to identify, define, and remove all presence and suspicion of mines/ERW through non-technical IMAS 04.10 Second Edition (Amendment 7, August 2014) 23 survey, technical survey

Foreword to this version (Foreword in unabridged draft report Pages 6-7)

In 2013, UNDP commissioned an in depth mid-term review (MTR). Although this involved a field visit element, the MTR is seen as an evaluation that adopted a 'top down approach', and some – but not all as will be discussed below – of its observations and conclusions remain valid². This final project evaluation complements the MTR, builds on it, but approaches the issues from a 'bottom-up approach'. Under guidance from UNDP staff, the focus of the Final Evaluation has been on the outputs, outcomes and impact in the field.

The full version of the first draft ran to over 150 pages. This abridged version could be read in conjunction with the main report, or rather where an issue of particular relevance or interest to a stakeholder, the main report contained as Annex 15 can be dipped into. Some sections deemed crucial (such as the key issues emerging from the field work, or conclusions and recommendations will be reproduced in full here).

Whilst the full evaluation is longer than usual for reports of this nature, the author would encourage as many as possible to invest the time in reading it. This has been a US\$ 26 million project, operating through a quarter of the lifetime of the mine action sector in Cambodia, and therefore some investment of time in reviewing the state of mine action, the impact of mines and ERW in contemporary Cambodia, and the performance of Clearing for Results II, and a review of lessons learned and what this means for the future Mine Action for Human Development (MAHD) is surely justified.

² An attempt was made to interview the consultant who undertook the MTR but no response was forthcoming. A former consultant, Bob Keeley who undertook several evaluations in Cambodia, as well as working as a consultant on elements of CFR II, and also worked as an advisor to CMAC in the 1990s, did however give generously of his time and provided valuable insights.

1. Executive Summary: Overall findings and recommendations

1.1 Overall assessment of CfR II:

It is worth stressing at the outset that the project agreement suffers from a marked duality between Key Deliverables (KD) 1 & 2, which mandate UNDP's project team to work with the CMAA to strengthen its performance in the role as the national regulator and coordinator of the Cambodian Mine Action sector *as a whole*, and Key Deliverable 3 (KD) 3 which projectises part of that mine action sector, and puts CMAA in charge as the implementer of this project, directly responsible for overseeing and funding the release of land. **This ultimately makes CMAA – in effect – an implementer within the national mine action programme it is mandated to govern, regulate and co-ordinate. Many would argue that this is not good mine action practice**, and might even through up potential conflicts of interest. The strategy was adopted in 2005 as a way of empowering the CMAA that was at that time a very weak and ineffective organisation. To some extent that the strategy has worked, and CMAA is now a far more effective organisation, with much enhanced internal capacity and external reputation and, especially under its new and well-respected Secretary General, is developing positive external relations with a wide range of stakeholders, even those who have not formally signed up to its Partnership Principles. In this regard, the strategy has been successful, or in evaluation terms effective, but it is arguably not truly relevant (in terms of fit with international best practice), nor is it ultimately sustainable.

For UNDP, CfR I and II have served as a useful vehicle to both strengthen the CMAA and to move national operator CMAC – who rightly remain a key partner – away from what some have described as a form of dependency where it expected to receive budget support as a right, towards an understanding that its ability to generate income has to come from the delivery of results (hence the name of the two projects). The project although enhancing the CMAA, is also seen by many within the sector (and the MTR) as being something of a distraction from the true business of mine action co-ordination, and the stated **objective of developing a nationwide programme-based approach, captured in an annual work plan designed to deliver progress in terms of the NMAS and other legal obligations of the Cambodian state. Achieving this goal seems as far away at the end of CfR II, as at the start of the programme in 2011, and at the mid-term review point in 2013.** Furthermore, since the MTR, UNDP and its donors appear to have consciously focused attention on KD3, which reflects both one of the main advantages of CfR II, namely that it fits with many principles of aid effectiveness (pooling of funds, reduced transaction costs for stakeholders, and national ownership), whilst at the same time perhaps acknowledging that under the NIM modality, and after so much international support, it really is perhaps more of a Cambodian decision as to the shape CMAA, and the mine action sector takes, and whether or not the RGC itself wishes to have an such annual work plan etc.

The issue becomes problematic if and when the absence of such an annual plan, representing a programme-based approach to the country-wide sector, starts to negatively impact on resource mobilisation efforts, which may be linked to being able to demonstrate progress in achieving the NMAS, and meeting obligations under APMBT. This is especially true as many believe the humanitarian mine action (or 'formal' as it is referred to below) sector in Cambodia is now well into what might be termed its 'mature phase', with declining amounts of ODA (since 2011, a concern flagged by the RGC in its current NSDP, and also a key issue for UNDP). It was notable that one major donor of CfR II expressed its disappointment that whilst CfR II can generate positive and accurate reporting information on its own project implemented activities, it struggles to

be able to put this into the context of the sector *as a whole*. This is a very astute observation on the real limits of CMAA's reach as a co-ordinator, especially with regards to sector-wide information collection and management, including in terms of technical information in the IMSMA NG platform, that remains one of its critical weaknesses.

Under Mine Action for Human Development (MAHD), the working title given by UNDP for the next phase of the project, the strategy and basic project structural design, pursued in the previous two phases has been repeated. The project design was therefore adopted well before the results of this evaluation could be delivered, something that has been a cause of concern for some major donors. It was also striking at the start of the evaluation period that CMAA expressed concern that there had been inadequate consultation, something that ironically also in practice undermines the institution that UNDP has spent 10 years strengthening.

There is of course an element of 'if it's not broken, don't fix it' to this. Overall, both CfR I and II have been relative good and successful programmes, that have delivered efficient and relatively effective programmes, that undoubtedly have had positive outcomes and real impact at field level. That said, a review of strategic options might have been valuable. In particular perhaps it might have been worth considering separating pooled donor funding for support of CMAA as national regulator and co-ordination (as a distinct project), and the provision of funding for on-going survey and land release, to be overseen and governed by the CMAA, but not project managed by it, allowing CMAA to focus on its core business, and to retreat from what some might feel is the inappropriate distraction of being – in effect – an implementer. This might require a return to a Trust Fund mechanism, such as UNDP used to implement in Cambodia, and still uses in the Lao PDR. Overall, this evaluation suggests that at this most fundamental level of project strategy and design, some – or a complete – extraction of CMAA from direct project management within the sector it is supposed to be co-ordinating might be a positive step.

At the same time, UNDP and its donors should seek to support it more coherently to focus ruthlessly and explicitly on its core business, and to base this on a new capacity self-assessment exercise, which also considers the institutional and political factors that may serve as enabler or barriers to delivering the mission as defined in its Royal Decree. Whilst such support to CMAA for an institution strengthening project might fit within a NIM modality, provision of funds for operational matters would not. What would be required would be a UNDP administered Trust Fund for humanitarian mine action, able to disperse pooled donor funding in support of the achievement of the NMAS, governed by a steering committee that would be Cambodian owned (and therefore fitting with aid effectiveness principles), but with strong representation from a wide range of donors and other stakeholders.

1.2 Impact and Outcomes of Mines and Mine Action: Key Lessons from Field Work

"When we try to make a living, we fear accidents from stepping on the landmines. But if we don't go, it's impossible to earn enough to survive. We take these risks to bring food to our families. Just for the sake of making a living we have to take these risks."

Enforced risk-taking: Don Nuoy Village FGD Participant, Treas Commune, Svay Chek District, Banteay-Meanchay Province, 29 October 2015

On why he cleared risky land to start to farm:

"It was a long story. If we did not go out to claim the land, somebody else would. If we did not go and put our claim on it, you would have nothing, and we did not have money to buy land from anyone. We had to risk, or kind of (be prepared to exchange or trade our lives

for it. I now have 20 hectares. This year I hired a tractor to plow the land and two landmines were unearthed along with a rocket round."

On the impact of clearance:

"First, we are now able to live with a complete sense of peace, without any fear like before. We no longer have to fear when we work on the land. Secondly, we can possess land where we can really have ownership on and to farm. Thirdly, I would be very happy to see any road or water canal development coming through this area in the future. Lastly, I have a request for the mine clearers to keep searching for landmines that are still remaining in my village. We would like to see all the leftover landmines removed, and that would tremendously help boost the confidence of the people living in this area."

PREUNG YERN, Deputy Village Chief, Chaeng Village, Chay Meanchay Commune, Banan District, Battambang Province, 20th October, 2015

*"Development in Sampov Lun is now so evident³? Yes, after CMAC cleared the mines over the last couple of years **we almost completely forget that this area used to be a battlefield.**"*

Ngeav Buny Eany , Sampov Lun, Deputy District Governor, Battambang Province, 23rd October 2015



Ploughing former BLS Polygon 23360, cleared by CMAC in July 2015 with Cfr II funding (31st October 2015)

³ The district is serviced by an excellent new road Route 57b, financed by Chinese loans and construct by the RCAF engineers, has many agricultural processing plants, and fields fully under cultivation (with a great deal of Cassava for export to Thailand . In the villages, including Ou Trav Chur, Serei Mean Chey Commune, there is obvious prosperity with many households having tractors, power ploughs etc: although villagers reported an increase in indebtedness at high rates of interest (around 2.7% a month was cited .



The field being planted with Cassava by double amputee and his wife. The site is part of the Teckar Phnom Chaa 317 social concession area where housing and land has been given to military PWDs, and has been heavily prioritized by the MAPUs in Banteay-Meanchay 2013 - 2015 under CfR II (31st October 2015 ⁴.

The quotes above reveal the key outcomes in terms of field impact of CfR II, and indeed it could be argued of the Cambodian mine action sector as a whole during the evaluation period. Namely, that mine action – in the communities prioritized – has enabled development, enhanced livelihoods, and greatly increased community safety and their own sense of well-being, expressed in simple terms by participants in the 12 village based Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) as ‘happy after clearance’. Equally, even within these communities, there are substantial numbers who are still forced to take risks with mines and other ERW in order to make a living. This evaluation has focused on field level outcomes, broadly understood under the ‘impact’ criteria, whilst also setting out to build on the approved findings of the Mid-Term Review (MTR) conducted in 2013, and in so doing will of course provide an opinion on the performance of the project against the full range of criteria stipulated in the terms of reference, and as detailed in the Inception Report, contained as Annex 13 of this report. This said, the focus on the field, on the grass roots of where mine action is happening in Cambodia, has also provided detailed examples that illustrate issues relating to other key evaluation criteria such as relevance, effectiveness and efficiency.

The reality that emerges from the field study is, of course, naturally complicated and nuanced. In the last few years UNDP’s senior management, and it’s mine action technical advisor have rightly become increasingly interested in understanding not just the

⁴ However, some questions remain about the multiple sites cleared in these areas, concerning the extensive use of C3 clearance, both manual and mechanical, and the necessity to apply such processes to land that largely contains low risk threats – predominantly Type 69 mines which in many areas of Cambodia are being farmed across without special measures as the mines are well known to be nearly completely inert. There are also questions around the independence of the MAPU prioritization process since these areas are outside of the normal village structures, although they are represented in the records as belonging to Kvav Lech and Chamkar Lo villages of Svay Chek Commune. Other communities in the area arguably have higher priority needs both in terms of landmine impact and class of mines and risks associated with the threat. Similar findings were found in Sre Anteak village in Salar Krau Commune, Salar Krau District where a community forest was prioritized for clearance with CfR II funding in 2012 (on request by the commune chief, with only 1 mine found in a large area, whereas minefields higher risk-threats (PMN much closer to the village centre were left until 2013, and some uncleared polygons remain in 2015, also containing high-risk mines and with a recent history of minefield accidents. These incidents have revealed the need for more in-depth and on-going programme, rather than technical, monitoring, independent of the Post Clearance Monitoring undertaken by the MAPUs.

outputs of Clearing for Results II (which have generally been on or exceeded the targets set by the project's own internal logic, essentially the 'effectiveness' of the project , but also the outcomes, and beyond that broader impact of the project, hence the shape this evaluation has taken. This focus on impact reflects a broader UNDP interest in understanding the impact of its support to mine action, and in 2015 the organization commissioned a wide-ranging study on the issue that is likely to be published in early 2016⁵. The results of this study, detailed below, broadly fit with findings from this study.

The following table summarizes some of the key lessons learned from the fieldwork:

Key Lessons Learned:
<p>1. Not all mines, including anti-personnel, are the same in terms of their risk and impact on the community: Anti-personnel mine threats in Cambodia in 2015 have wildly different levels of risk associated with them: local people know this and adjust their behaviour to them accordingly</p>
<p>2. As a result, not all minefields are the same: clearing (C3) , as opposed to 'releasing' (see below) , can mean very different things in different places. The 'devil is in the detail', and understanding the local context is immensely important to be able to make meaningful comparisons even between sites that have been released through apparently the same process⁶. This suggests that greater investment in monitoring, especially of the planning and prioritization process, will ensure ultimately more 'value for money' in terms of outcomes and impacts, than focusing on quantitative indicators of outputs (in m2) and cost-efficiency metrics related to these.</p>
<p>3. 'Releasing Land' is good, but not always: CfR II has prided itself on being a land release project, in part reflecting CMAA's responsibilities to managing Cambodia's response to its obligations under the MBT. However, releasing too much through cancellation (C1) or to a less extent technical survey (C2) means only that your survey was done badly. It delivers no <i>real</i> impact in real terms in the community. So not all land release is the same and focusing on area released is a highly misleading metric, especially when attempts are made to judge this in terms of efficiency or 'value-for-money'. The MTR tied itself up in knots trying to disaggregate and compare costs of land release by cancellation (C1), technical survey (C2) and full clearance (C3) . But even with C3, very often one is not comparing apples with apples, and therefore great care must be selected in choosing metrics against which to evaluate performance, not least – as argued below – to ensure these metrics do not become perverse incentives that detract from real value (impact) for money.</p>

⁵ *Evaluation of the Results, including Impact, of UNDP Support to Countries on Mine Action [DRAFT, 5th October 2015]*

⁶ Therefore reports that state a certain area has been released through C3 clearance will mean different things in different places, dependent on the types of mines present, including whether they are predominantly ATMs or APMs, the terrain, the access, whether the area has been 'cleared' already by informal mine action (either partly or completely, but still leaving a residual threat . What matters is rather the impact of the action, although the number of mines destroyed is a far more important indicator of the effectiveness of prioritization than has previously been acknowledged, and one possible outcome of this is that in the future UNDP supported mine action may wish to incentivize operators to deal with A1 minefields (high density minefields, especially those known to contain high risk mines that have long lived functionality , especially those in areas where a change in land use for whatever reason, including tourism, can be *anticipated* i.e. one example of this might be the A1 minefields at the foot of Phnom Banan, which contains an Angkorean era temple at the top, and the minefields around Komping Pouy reservoir, also in Banan district of Battambang.

4. Not all people, even in mine-affected villages, are the same: a rather obvious point, but one worth stressing since it affects vulnerability to mine threats, and hence differing levels of risk. It's the poor - often migrants and settlers who are most at risk 'on the frontier'⁷ - even within 'vulnerable villages'. Often richer individuals who own land in 'old villages'⁸ will only return, or at least start farming their land directly, once the mines are gone.

⁷ The term 'the frontier' is used in this report both as a literal concept, referring to new settlements or older communities (typically since the late 1990s who have settled near or immediately inside the Thai border and the associated K5 minefield (for example villages such as Bor Huy Khmer Cheung, Sangkat Bor Yakha, Pailin, or Ta Mang Village, Kouk Romiet Commune, Thmar Pouk district, or Prasant Tbaeng, Banteay Chhmar commune, also in Thmar Pouk district, Banteay-Meanchay province, or new villages which have been established further in the interior, also typically since the late 1990s, but zones which had been battlefields, and heavily mined, during the long civil war from 1979 until 1998 (such as Ou Choam Kraom, Kampong Lapov, Samlout district or Ou Trav Chur, Serei Mean Chey, Sampov Lun district, both in Battambang province). One fascinating observation was that these communities typically seemed to be led by village leaders, who were former military personnel, often minor commanders, from other provinces, who had fought in the area during the war, and realized its potential. Beyond this it can be assumed that these individuals lacked land and standing in their home communities and understood the opportunities that migration presented. In the course of this field study former KPNLF, Khmer Rouge and State of Cambodia military personnel were encountered, often now the village leaders. One remarkable outcome of the last 20 years is clear the successful integration and reconciliation that has been achieved in Cambodia during this period. Typically a few families have settled the 'frontier', and then - as revealed in a fascinating interview with Ngel Sokong, Deputy District Leader, Sala Krau District, Pailin Province, on 27th October 2015 - they leveraged their networks of friends and relatives, especially those with limited economic prospects at home, to join them and open new lands and develop the villages. In Srae Anteak, Salar Krau Commune, Salar Krau district, Pailin several residents had moved from nearby Bovel district (citing a lack of land there and had worked for several years as labourers on other people's land waiting the chance to open new land for residential and farming purposes, a process that they cited had directly been facilitated by CfR II funded land release. There was some evidence from Veal Cheang, Ou Andoung Commune, Salar Krau district, that those who arrived first later sold on land - cleared or uncleared - to the later arrivals. These processes are still going on, as revealed in the cover shot of the accident from the very new Reak Smei Thma Romeal Village, Banteay Chhmar Commune, Thmar Pouk district.

⁸ Old villages are considered in this report, villages that has existed in the Sihanouk regime of the 1960s, such as Chaeng or Bor Knols in Chay Meanchay commune of Banan district Battambang, Kilo in Treng Commune Rattanak Mondul, or Duon Nuoy, in Tres Commune or Khvav Lech in Svay Chek Commune, both in Svay Chek district. In the Chay Meanchay villages, as well as in Rattanak Mondul, insights were revealed about these dynamics, for example the way richer land owners would allow the poor to farm contaminated land as a form of social gift, referred to as 'som land'. In other cases they will hire labourers to work risky land, or rent it out. In Chay Meanchay commune of Banan, and Andao Hep commune of Rattanak Mondul, it was revealed that the richer inhabitants had left the area during the worst of the fighting (from 1988 until the final peace in the late 1990s, partly due to the general insecurity (in both cases areas south of Sang Khe river were not only heavily mined, but occupied by the Khmer Rouge, with the river forming a recognized frontline, and partly due to the widespread presence of mines in both the village centre and farming areas. The rich will routinely use hired labour once the mines have gone, depending on the size of their land, but the FGDs in these areas revealed they will not directly farm high-risk land until mine clearance has been undertaken. In both 'new' and 'old villages' a range of responses were revealed to contaminated areas, depending on the perceived level of risk associated with the landmine threats, as discussed elsewhere in the report and summarized in table 1. These responses have changed over time, in part as the perceived functionality of some mine types have changed, and range from farming the land as normal and picking off the mines as inert debris, employing informal private sector de-miners, to the community or owner leaving the land fallow as its risks are too high. This said, land observed on this mission that is class as A1 and located one polygon inside the K5 belt had been demined and recently ploughed by a tractor, indicating that even high risk land will be reclaimed if the incentives are strong enough, raising substantial problems in terms of the reporting, recording, planning and prioritization functions of the CMAA (BS/CMAA/20106 observed as recently ploughed on 31st October 2015). **However, even in old villages that are mine-affected there is a sense of 'frontier' too. Interviews revealed that villages like Chaeng and Bor Knols mines not only created land shortages and poverty, but when final peace came following the integration of the Khmer Rouge in 1998, villagers felt forced to take risk with mines, and cultivate hazardous areas, as a mean of laying claim to land that would secure their futures. Therefore, it was a case not only of cultivating risky land or remain poor in the short term, but also a sense that the peace produced an opportunity to secure a reasonable livelihood in the future through laying claim to farming land, even if it was hazardous due to mines or not.**

5. There is therefore a strong connection between migration, the establishment of new settlements, and the associated expansion of agricultural land (and loss of forests in Cambodia , risk-taking and landmines. In the past these processes also played out in and around established communities that were on former frontlines where conflict and **landmines had created a bank of unused, but hazardous land** (former battlefields that also represented some sort of 'internal frontier' . **Understanding these processes, and their future trajectory, is essential to ensure CMAA can fully manage its mandate as national co-ordinator of the mine action sector.**

6. Vulnerable individuals in both 'new' and 'old' villages have taken risks with mines to clear and cultivate new land. This expansion of risky land has contributed to the overall growth of the agricultural sector in Cambodia, and has enhanced the livelihoods of these individuals, their families and the communities of which they are a part. However, **this expansion onto hazardous land appears to have been largely facilitated by informal demining sector**, either through forms of individual mine risk mitigation⁹, actual self-clearance, or the hiring of private de-miners. In some cases private sector / commercial interests have also used the informal mine action sector to open suspect land, as was observed in Banteay-Meanchay during this evaluation. This study revealed that the formal sector as supported by UNDP under CfR II has still delivered value and had positive impact even in communities where substantial or partial clearance has been undertaken by the informal sector, but there has often been a lag – sometimes of many years - between risky land being brought into use (for both residential and agricultural purposes and the formal sector responding with scale. The importance of the informal mine action sector has been well known for many years¹⁰, but is little understood and CMAA's.

7. Villagers will stop taking risks with mines long before their communities are 'threat free', at a point when they feel the impact is marginal. In some of the communities visited, where significant risk-taking had occurred in the past, and to some extent still goes on, some areas were being left fallow due to the perceived risk of mines. For example, at least 30 hectares 200 metres from the village centre in Chaeng village, Chay Meanchay, Banan, Battambang and at least 1 hectare in Sre Anteak village, Sala Krau Commune, Sala Krau district, Pailin. In both cases these areas were well known to district authorities as being priorities for clearance, and in both cases the mine threat was known by local people to contain high-risk mines, such as PMN and PMN2s. What has happened though is that local people have reached the limits of acceptable risk-taking, and have sufficient land such that any further personal risk-taking is deemed unnecessary. The reasons as to why these areas are not being reclaimed through the informal sector are harder to understand, but ultimately must rest in some form of local investment decision where the additional costs of clearance are currently not deemed to be worth it. Ultimately, such hazards present clear priorities for the formal mine action sector, not only for the additional economic benefits they can deliver, but also because such high-risk mines represent a long-term hazard, and changing land use patterns may effect both the local risk and investment decisions associated them in the future.

⁹ This has been seen in terms of different processes: caution in cultivating areas that are suspect by using hoes to clear vegetation and gently turn the soil, and leaving fallow areas which are believed to have mines (depending on types of mines , burning the area (often repeatedly , not using power ploughs or tractors on land suspected of having ATMs etc. As noted elsewhere, especially in the recent past – the duration of CfR II – certain mines are known to be almost completely non-functional and people's responses to these areas will be entirely different to those in areas where mines are known to be high-risk and functional.

¹⁰ For example, *'Informal Village Demining in Cambodia: An Operational Study'* (2005 , a study by HI funded by AUSAID, Ireland Aid and NPA

8. Some of the most vulnerable, ‘new villages’ are not being recorded in CMVIS, skewing overall records on mine incidents and victims, and affecting current top down prioritization processes. The village known as Veal Cheang in UNDP’s project documentation, and CMAA records, but officially renamed as Boeng Trakuon¹¹ in Ou Andong commune, Sala Krau district in Pailin is one such example, but others such as Reak Smei Thma Romeal village, Banteay Chhmar commune, Thmar Pouk district, in Banteay-Meanchay (as per the cover photo are also likely to be in this category. In the case of Veal Cheang, which has existed since 2000, this means 4 mine accidents are not in CMVIS. Veal Cheang is an example of a new village community struggling in a mined environment for ten years from its establishment in 2000, and relying on the informal sector to manage its mine risks, before the arrival of the formal sector, in 2010. Three of these four unrecorded accidents occurred before the formal sector arrived in the village, and it has had substantial support under CfR II, and from other operators and donors since then (however, three major minefields remain uncleared in the village ¹². **Apart from being one metric often used to chart the progress and success of the mine action sector in Cambodia as a whole, under-recording also affects the selection of priority communes as part of the ‘top down’ instruction from the CMAA for the annual planning and prioritization process, making this a highly significant problem.**

9. CfR II has been a good project: but an **excessive focus on year on year efficiency improvements *may* have created a ‘perverse incentive’** that *may* have fed into undue operator influence on site selection (or been the motivation for influencing site selection , resulting in sub-optimal outcomes / impact.

10. Mine action funded by CfR II and other donors and agencies has made a substantial positive impact in targeted villages. This has been greatly appreciated both in the villages themselves, and at commune and district level. Its is also therefore highly relevant and has been effective, although not in the sense of targetting the poorest, since they lack land. Overall villagers are safer, happier and have ‘better living’ than 5 years ago: mine action has contributed to this. But villagers are much more indebted (investing in their farms

11. Communities state that ‘human security and well being’ and ‘livelihood and development’ are both, in roughly proportions, the impacts of mines, and also the impacts of mine action (land release . The results of the Household Impact study with beneficiaries even more strongly emphasized this safety factor as being the key outcome, and safety was seen as important in itself and as an enabler of improved livelihoods based on access to more and safer land.

12. Overall, many priorities were just that: legitimate and appropriate as priorities for mine action and land release under CfR II. However, a significant number in all three provinces appear at the very least ‘odd’ at first site, and this impression is compounded by curious recording of data in some cases¹³, and

¹¹ Based on the Ministry of Interior Cambodian National Gazetteer.

¹² Sre Antak, in Sala Krau commune, Sala Krau district was highlighted by NGEL SOKONG, Deputy District Chief, Sala Krao district, Pailin, as a key priority for mine action during our meeting on 27th October 2015

¹³ In Battambang, numerous sites, released over severals under CfR II, have been recorded in UNDP records, based on clearance reports from the operators, reproduced in IMSMA, as being in Chaeng Village, Chay Meanchay, Banan when in fact they appeared to be several kilometres south, in a completely separate district (in Dong Ba commune Koas Krala district . Equally, in Banteay-Meanchay much clearance has been done on an army owned site known as Techar Phnom Chas in Savy Chek District, and attributed to nearby villages such as Khvav Lech and Chamcar Lo of Svay Chek districts. Apart from the apparent inaccuracies of

information management weaknesses in both the CMAA and the operators. This evaluation has revealed the extremely important role that the provincial MAPUs play in prioritisation, planning and co-ordination. Generally, prioritization under CfR II has worked relatively well, and both the FGDs convened by this evaluation, and the detailed beneficiary Household Impact survey commissioned by UNDP have revealed positive – and essentially similar – results of significant positive impact from clearance funded under CfR II. However, as government employees, it would be naive to suggest that the MAPUs operate with full independence from the powerful mine action operators, two of whom (CMAC and NPMEC) are also governmental bodies, and who clearly carry significant influence in the local political, social and economic context in which planning and decision-making is made. Other operators, such as MAG and HALO openly discuss the way in which they are able to ‘*finesse*’ the annual plan according to include tasking they consider greater priority. This should be seen as a good thing, rather than a weakness because mine action co-ordination should involve a dialogue between partners, rather than being a process of bureaucratic, top down, direction by one governmental body (the results of which can often result in mis-alignment between stakeholders of mine action). This said, the ability of operators to influence the annual plan, and their motivations for so doing, needs to be monitored more closely going forward as some priorities worked on under CfR II in all three provinces require further review, as at first sight they appear odd, even in terms of the planning guidelines and basic criteria established by CMAA for the MAPUs. Some of this may relate to access and safety concerns, but some may be driven by the structure of the contracts, and prices paid for mine action services that necessitate a certain percentage of task being included that *can* be released cheaply. It is clear that there is in general less community participation than might be expected from understanding the prioritization and planning process as it is *supposed* to work, and much influence is left in the hands of the village chiefs.¹⁴

13. Concerns have been raised about some of the new BLS information that is being added to the database from recent survey activity in 2015. The CfR II land reclamation survey has been an extremely important exercise, but some concerns have been raised about the scale of some new polygons, and the evidence underlying them, generated under the exercise, which has actually increased the amount of hazardous area recorded in IMSMA by the CMAA¹⁵.

14. CMAA’s information management is weak and in need of urgent support to ensure it is fit for purpose. CMAA cite the late delivery of IMSMA NG in December 2014, as the reason for the current backlog of information requiring entry into the system, as well as operator capacity problems. Nonetheless, given the centrality of information to mine action co-ordination, including planning and prioritization, this

the recording, which is misleading at best, creating the wrong impression of the work undertaken, both Chaeng and Khvav Lech have outstanding BLS polygons requiring clearance, that should be considered higher priorities than those cleared ‘in their names’. In Pailin, numerous high risk minefields in BLS polygons around the centre of Sre Anteak village, Sala Krau commune, Sala Krau district were cleared with CfR II funding in 2013 onwards, producing high yields of mines. However, a large minefield in a ‘community forest’ north of the village was prioritized ahead of these tasks, and cleared under CfR II in 2012, under instruction from the commune chief, and over the heads of the wishes of the villagers, who still have at least two high risk minefields in closer proximity to the village, at the end of 2015. Such decisions appear irrational even in the context of the current CMAA planning instructions.

¹⁴ The quality of planning and prioritization thus depends to some extent on the degree of the Village Chief’s knowledge, and his accountability in the village. This was cited as a constraint by some MAPUs in the field.

¹⁵ For example, in Chhnal Moan commune, Koas Krala district, vast areas have been added to the DB by CMAC during 2015 as part of the resurvey process under the land reclamation project.

should be considered an important priority for urgent action, especially since the DBU is supported by at least one international partner¹⁶.

15. The next UNDP project in support of mine action¹⁷, has to invest in understanding the most impacted communities and people, and making impact (risk reduction its dominant value and operators need to be incentivised around qualitative indicators that measure outcomes for people, not quantitative indicators, especially not M² released.

- This should be captured in the performance monitoring system that should validate the prioritization process, not only in terms of impact, but also that communities have been given appropriate 'voice' in the process, and that the MAPU process is working, independent of elite group interests and undue operator influence¹⁸.

1.3 Summary results against Evaluation Questions

Relevance: the project is seen as highly relevant across all three Key Deliverables (KDs). See pages 34-41 for details.

Effectiveness: the results, outcomes and impact documented by this evaluation, and particularly the field work, supported and complemented by the results of the Household Study reveal that the project has been relatively effective in terms of KD 3, and to a lesser extent in KD 1 and 2. The Mid-Term Review (MTR) questioned the effectiveness of delivery of KDs 1 and 2, and in many ways these concerns remain valid, and key recommendations to address the issues identified were not enacted in a meaningful way during the second half of the project. In particular, in its own terms, the project is assessed as having been relatively ineffective under KD2. Nonetheless *overall*, and with some qualifications, the project has been effective in enhancing the performance, capacity and institutional strength of the CMAA that was the overall intention. Finally, whilst KD3 has been highly effective in its own terms (over-delivery of land released in quantitative terms), and should still be considered relatively effective even after qualification, it is likely to have been less effective than it might have been in real terms because concerns exist about the quality of the prioritization and planning process that is taking place at sub-national level under the MAPUs. See pages 41 – 58 for details.

Efficiency: The final evaluation has the strong impression (from project reporting and comments made by the project team) that the project has taken efficiency as arguably its dominant value, but that it has confused low-priced operational contracts under KD3

¹⁶ NPA, and to some extent GICHD.

¹⁷ Currently, referred to as 'Mine Action for Human Development' (MAHD).

¹⁸ 'Undue operator influence' is considered a possible cause of some of the less than optimal site selection that arguably has occurred under CfR II, as detailed in part in footnote 3 above. Whilst it is acknowledged that the MAPUs select the tasks in an independent fashion, many operators have revealed that they have the ability to 'finesse' the task selection process, sometimes for practical reasons such as access and security, and sometimes for reasons of operational 'difficulty' (as cited in interviews in Banan as the reason why clearance has not focused on high-risk areas around Komping Pouy reservoir). In part this operator influence may have been driven by the dominance of the efficiency criteria, and the need to supply mine action services at very cheap prices (although the prices paid by UNDP / CMAA for land release services are well recognized as being less than the economic cost of providing them, which in itself is unsustainable, and only possible in the short to medium term due to economies of scope accruing to operators whose costs are partly covered by other donors). Care must be made in presenting these arguments, because planning and prioritization *should* take place in partnership with the operators, and the MAPUs should be coordinators rather than dictators of this process. This said, operator influence should be motivated by positive values i.e. to see impact of work done maximized, rather than a perverse incentive – achieving 'easy m²' – driven by the need to meet pricing structures established by the contracts.

with efficiency. The relatively limited budget attached to KDs 1 and 2, are constrained in efficiency terms by the limited effectiveness achieved, meaning that whilst they were implemented cheaply, they are still seen as relatively inefficient. With KD3, while the MTR is very enthusiastic about the ‘remarkable’ efficiency of the project, the Final Evaluation sees the low-priced contracts as having created a ‘perverse incentive’ that has undermined effectiveness, and limited outcomes and impact. Therefore, while land release under KD3 was delivered cheaply, it is seen as having been relatively inefficient due to its affect as a perverse incentive that has created an opportunity cost, primarily in the way it has influenced the tasks being chosen for release. This last is a relatively controversial point, but there is growing evidence for this, and similar observations were made by the GICHD bidding review report, and the DFID 2013 Evaluation in Cambodia. See Pages 58 to 68 for details.

Impact: This Final Evaluation concludes that there has been positive impact in terms of KDs 1 and 2 deliverables, but more could have been done if a strategic and coherent approach had been taken, in part as recommended by the MTR. The operational mine action, namely land release and survey implemented with CfR II funding under KD3 has also had a substantial and positive impact, as documented by the field work of this evaluation, and also in the UNDP House Hold Impact study. This said, a more effective and efficient project in terms of KD3, with less focus on cheap land release contracts could have had more impact, especially if outputs had been more explicitly linked to outcomes, and there had been more effective monitoring in this regard, as was originally envisaged in the original project document. See Page 68 to 78 for details.

Sustainability: UNDP’s support under CfR II to the CMAA (KD1 & 2), and beyond that the formal mine action sector, is likely to be sustainable provided – and only if - overall international ODA funding to the sector is not reduced too rapidly. It is stressed below in section 3.4 that reviews the mine action sector in Cambodia that the Royal Government of Cambodia is already providing substantial resources not only to the formal sector, and CMAA, but also to mine action support to infrastructural development that is currently *not* fully being reported. Requests from UNDP that the RGC substantially increase its contributions to the formal sector as currently instituted are likely to only see a marginal change in funding, and the sector will remain tied to international donor contributions, as suggested recently by the CMAA Secretary General. In terms of KD3, this evaluation agrees with the MTR that continued emphasis on the centrality of the MAPU prioritization and planning process is centrally related to the ultimate success of the project in sustainability terms. However, given that the technical standards of the released land are seen as high, and closely monitored from a technical point of view under existing arrangements, the sustainability aspect of the released land is not in question, and the issue cited above with regards to the MAPU-led prioritisation and planning to some extent relates to maximization of the impact of KD3, rather than its sustainability *per se*. See Page 78 – 80, and Annex 12 for details.

Coherence and Complementarity: overall CfR II’s work is seen as a coherent intervention in the sector that complements other donor funded mine action, and indeed the other parts of the mine action sector. More needs to be done by CMAA to reach out to the ‘informal private sector’ (as argued in particular in section 3.4 of this report). See Page 81 for details.

Gender: As the MTR concluded, *Gender considerations are being addressed in a comprehensive manner by the CMAA, despite some areas where improvements can be made. The issue of gender and the promotion of women’s rights has been highlighted by the RGC as a priority area for action, as has disability rights more generally. This commitment is evidenced by the development of its Gender Mainstreaming in Mine Action Plan (2013-2015) that establishes a roadmap for integrating gender*

considerations into the sector.’¹⁹ These conclusions remain equally valid at the end of the project. See Page 82-5 for details.

2. Introduction: (Page 18 in the unabridged draft report)

2.1 Evaluation background (Page 18 in the unabridged draft report)

Under CfR II nearly 70km² of land had been released (May 2011-December 2014), and 80% of this is being used for agriculture. As of 30th June 2015, the figure for land released had risen dramatically to 115.2km² (921 individual mine fields), in large part as a result of the land reclamation project referred to above, benefiting over 100,000 people.²⁰ With the addition of 40.3km² released by the Clearing for Results Phase One project, total land released by both UNDP Clearing for Results projects is 155.5km².

In June 2013, a Mid-Term Review of CfR II, generated a number of recommendations, most of which were accepted in the UNDP management response, and now forms the basis of quarterly and annual progress reports. As the TOR notes, *‘out of a total of 38 recommendations: 15 are fully completed; 14 are partially complete; 9 are not applicable’*.²¹ CMAA has responsibility, under CfR II, for overseeing a competitive bidding process for mine action and baseline survey services, albeit in accordance with UNDP procurement rules.

2.2 Evaluation purpose (Page 20 in the unabridged draft report)

As the five-year multi-donor funded project ends in 2015, UNDP therefore needed to undertake a final project evaluation. This included a review of the mine action sector in Cambodia. The TOR explains that with current resources, the country will not achieve its obligations towards the APMBC by December 2019. Therefore a critical purpose, *‘of this review is to assess current progress towards achievement of the National Mine Action Strategy (NMAS 2010-19, and to assess the planning requirements for the 10 year extension request to complete the country’s APMBC obligations by 2029. This will include recommendations for further UNDP support during this period’*.²²

2.3 Evaluation methodology (Page 22 in the main report)

The evaluation used a mixed methods approach, integrating common qualitative methods (Focus Group Discussions, semi-structured interviews with a diverse range of stakeholders to ensure a variety of perspectives, and a comprehensive desk review of the relevant available documentation pertinent to the programme 2011-2015, as well as quantitative data, not least from a household impact survey that was implemented concurrently by UNDP during this evaluation, as well as clearance and other technical and GIS data from the IMSMA DB. The evaluation directly undertook in-depth field research, using Focus Group Discussions, as well as semi-structured interviews with key informants (such as MAPUs, District and Village Leaders, Beneficiaries and Mine Incident Survivors) and has developed in-depth case studies, complemented with photographic and video documentation resources.

Crucially, the evaluation focused on the processes and criteria for prioritization, and the degree to which these can be considered actively ‘pro-poor’ since, as stated in the TOR CfR II *‘aims to enhance national structures and mechanisms that will ensure demining resources are effectively allocated, promoting the release of land for productive use by the*

¹⁹ p.44, MTR, June 2013

²⁰ Interview with David Horrocks, Mine Action Advisor, CfR II/Poverty Reduction, CMAA, 21st September 2015

²¹ p.2, TOR Clearing for Results Phase II (CfR II)

²² p.3, TOR Clearing for Results Phase II (CfR II)

poor'.²³ As discussed elsewhere in this report, prioritization and planning are crucial stages in any mine action programme, and CfR II is no exception. The evaluation revealed that further research into planning and prioritization was immediately required, as whilst the process works relatively well, there were some anomalies thrown up during the course of visiting the 12 villages in the three target provinces.

Summary of Villages Visited: (Page 23 in the unabridged draft Report – will likely go as an annex, but provides contextual detail on the overall situation of the 12 case study villages visited as well as the current impact of mines. As ever, it is essential to understand the detail in each situation, because whilst some generalities can be observed, there is a great deal of nuance surrounding the impact of both mines and mine action that can only be understood in this way).

2.4 Evaluation limitations and constraints (Page 26 in the unabridged draft report)

As often is the case in independent evaluations, clients have a great many objectives, reflected in a lengthy series of main and supporting questions that are inserted into a TOR, especially when such TORs are developed participatively with various development partners. Usually consultants will scope the TOR in the Inception Report to what they feel is actually achievable once they have arrived on the ground. This did not happen in this evaluation, largely because the principal client, UNDP's mine action advisor adopted a pragmatic approach to the evaluation, and in discussion with UNDP's senior management, focused the consultant's work on field level outcomes and impact of CfR II. The evaluation matrix and scope of the evaluation outlined above was retained as an overall framework for the evaluation, but on some issue areas the depth of analysis is necessarily more shallow than in other areas. Feedback from the initial presentation of results²⁴, which again focused on the field research was positive, and raised issues which UNDP found helpful particularly with regards to scoping the next phase of the project which at the time of writing has the working title of Mine Action for Human Development (MAHD).

- *The process of undertaking the evaluation revealed that the MAPU's understanding of gender, the importance of equal participation of women and men, and the overall levels of popular participation at community level are in reality quite limited still (despite training in the area of gender etc).*

3 Country Background²⁵ (Page 29 in the unabridged draft report)

3.1. Introduction:

Much has been achieved in Cambodian mine action and there is much to be rightly proud of, not least the degree of national ownership and commitment that has – and continues to – exist on this crucial issue. The Kingdom of Cambodia is, however, still affected to a significant degree by mines and explosive remnants of war (ERW), left by 30 years of conflict that only ended in the late 1990s, resulting in a significant burden particularly in the more peripheral rural areas of the country. The results of field-work undertaken in the course of this evaluation reveal this burden can be thought of in equal measure in terms of both 'human security and well-being' aspects, as well as 'livelihoods and development' issues. UNDP's beneficiary household impact study revealed that many of those outcomes of CfR II that can be thought of as a 'developmental' outcome

²³ p.2, TOR Clearing for Results Phase II (CfR II)

²⁴ A long presentation, and viewing of some of the initial video materials produced, was delivered at UNDP office in Phnom Penh on 4th November, and a shortened presentation, followed by a Q & A session was delivered on 5th November at the CfR II project board meeting in the CMAA.

²⁵ Content in this section has been drawn from various sources including the *Draft National Strategy Plan for Mine Action in Cambodia* (v.3, 2014, but has been re-worked based on the outcomes of this evaluation.

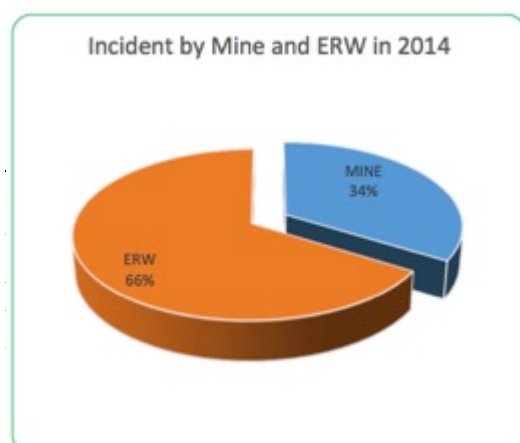
(access to more land, for example) , also retain a safety aspect (as beneficiaries usually referred to access to more *safe* land²⁶).

3.2 Conflict, remaining ERW Contamination and contemporary risk-taking (Page 30 in the unabridged draft report)

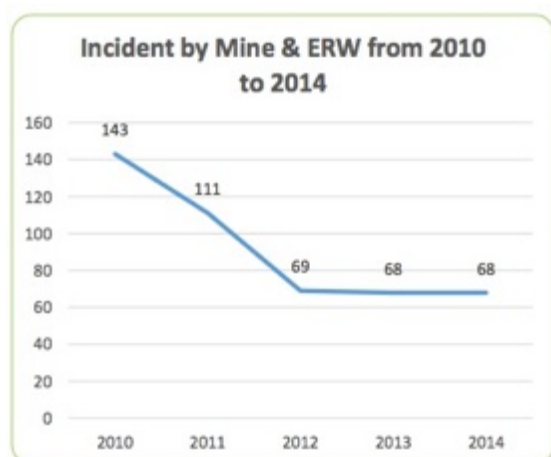
The historic Paris Peace Agreements (1991) laid the way for a comprehensive peace settlement for Cambodia, the return of refugees from the Thai border camps and the UNTAC mission in Cambodia which resulted in the holding of elections that were deemed free and fair in May 1993. Mine Action was kick-started by this peace process.

It was only at the end of the 1990s with the final integration of the last Khmer Rouge units that a genuine peace finally took hold in the countryside. Immediately, these previously lightly populated battlefield areas experienced significant inward migration because of their proximity to lucrative Thai-border trade, employment opportunities and abundant, free and fertile land that was at that time mostly forest. This situation led to a relative surge in populations surrounding the most hazardous Cambodian-Thai border area. **This final cessation of hostilities in 1998, and the successful integration of the Khmer Rouge after this time, has emerged as an understandably key event for villagers from the community research phase of this evaluation.** After 1998 richer families started to return to their old villages in former frontline areas, although they did not start to farm their land directly until after clearance (either formal or informal . Moreover, the 'integration' opened the door for a land grab not only in former battlefields adjacent to these old villages, but also allowed the opening up of a 'new frontier' in lightly populated, heavily forested areas which had been militarized and fought over for much of the previous 20 years. This process has seen a transformation of areas like Sala Krau (Pailin , Samong Lun (Battambang and Thmar Pouk districts (Banteay-Meanchay , characterized by settlement (by the landless , clearance of forests for agricultural land, informal and then formal mine action to reduce the risks, and the development of infrastructure, associated with development and expansion of livelihood opportunities. **It is very important to understand that these processes are *ongoing* today, with settlement in villages such as Reak Smei Thma Romeal Banteay Chhmar Commune, Thmar Pouk.**

The results of the Baseline Survey (BLS) clearly indicate that Cambodia still suffers from the consequences of Landmines and ERW contamination. The nature of landmine and unexploded ordnance contamination in Cambodia is highly complex. The northwest regions bordering Thailand are heavily affected, while other parts of the country are considered moderate to low. It was originally estimated that somewhere around four to six million landmines were laid during conflicts. It is equally important to note that landmines are not the only explosive hazard impacting the lives of millions of Cambodians, during the period of October 1965 to August 1973, US war planes dropped 2.75 million tons of bombs on Cambodia, mainly in the east, more than the total tonnage dropped by Allies (US, UK, Russia, France during World War II.



is the degree to which land perceived to be unsafe was that funded by CfR II has taken place. In many cases this the informal sector, process which have greatly reduced the risks of using the land, but local people freely admit risk than with land cleared and released by the formal



Source: Factsheet Quarterly Report, 30th June 2015, CMAA

Like the overall statistics on landmine incidents and casualties, it can be seen that rates of incidents have fallen during the period of CfR II, but it would be entirely wrong to jump to superficial conclusions about the casualty of this, although the consultant has seen such reductions – over the life of mine action in Cambodia - attributed to various factors including the success of MRE programming and the achievements of the formal, donor funded mine action sector. Any analysis of vulnerability will reveal that it is extremely unlikely that MRE has played a significant part in the overall reductions. Rather this evaluation has revealed, much as research undertaken by the consultant in 1992-3 in western Cambodia, that those injured and killed are doing so by knowingly engaging in risk-taking behaviour. **In the course of this research, extensive evidence was discovered to show that such calculations are still occurring, both with farmers who claim and then cultivate hazardous land, and the landless poor who engage in foraging activities in often very high risk areas to supplement their living.**

A startling 83% of beneficiaries of CfR II (who by definition are not landless) reported cultivating contaminated land before clearance²⁷. For such farmers, and for landless poor risk-takers, MRE is not addressing the root vulnerability that means they will knowingly interact – usually for livelihoods reasons - with an environment that has threat items present.

What then became far harder to understand during the course of the evaluation field work was, given the level of risk-taking that has occurred in the recent past, and reportedly in many communities is still going on, how and why rates of accidents have fallen so dramatically in recent years? As this study has revealed it is important to understand the nuance in different situations and particular locations, and between different groups of individuals based on their particular vulnerabilities, *and* as argued below between different types of mines that might be present in certain locations. The functionality of different mine types, and therefore the associated risks, varies widely in Cambodia today, and arguably for as much as the previous 10 years, due to degradation of some mine types. There is no ‘one size fits all’ theory to explain the reduction but a combination of factors is seen as driving the downward trend to levels that approach an acceptable level of residual risk. These are seen as including (and there may be more :

- **Reduced functionality** of *some mine types* (such as Type 69, POMZ, PMD6).
- **In the short – medium term, the impact of the informal sector mine clearance** physically reducing the amount of threat items present in hazardous

²⁷ Discussions with Rukhshona Rajabova on the initial outcomes of the Household Impact Study, UNDP M & E Officer, CfR II, Phnom Penh, 13th November 2015

areas that often are still shown as un-cleared in IMSMA. See comments below from the 2005 HI study on the informal sector.

- **In the longer – term, the impact of the formal mine clearance sector,** especially now the earlier focus on access and residential land, and clearance of development priorities such as schools, has been replaced by more of a focus on agricultural / livelihood land, in part driven by CfR II's prioritization of such tasks.
- **As a result of the combined effects of 1-3 above, an eventual stabilization of the 'risk and return' equation has occurred, whereby in many communities in hazardous locations, for a reasonable portion of the population there now is access to reasonable amounts of safe or reasonably safe land,** which in turn means that **high-risk threat areas will be (can afford to be left fallow until cleared by the formal sector. In short, the pressure to use risky land come what may that existed in the past is generally much reduced.** In turn, this has been achieved by the expansion into, and occupation of, a significant amount of the 'available frontier', both literally, and in the sense of the internal frontier of unoccupied, former (in the 1990s battlefield areas (such as the lands south of Sang Khe River in Banan and Rattanak Mondul districts in Battambang . This involved a claiming of the land, both in terms of staking and securing legal claims²⁸, and reducing the threats to allow it to be cultivated within reasonable levels of risk. **Colonising this available frontier was always going to be an inherently risky process, but the process is in many areas complete now. The risk-taking has stabilized and reduced.** In this way, significant fertile land is left fallow not far from the heart of Chaeng village, Chay Meanchay, and inhabitants of Khvav Lech village in Svay Chek took out of cultivation land close to the village centre, which they had used for many years because too many ATMs were turning up during ploughing. **In short, the risks of cultivating land are much reduced, and high-risk land or land where the risks and returns have become marginal for that land owner, are not being cultivated.**

In effect this also can be represented as 'learning effects' that have occurred when living in a high threat environment, which over time – regardless of physical threat reduction aspects – have worked to reduce community and individual vulnerability

NB If these observations are true, what is potentially significant for UNDP support going forward into the next phase, and for the CMAA as the national co-ordinator is to try and focus the formal sector into the remaining areas of the frontier where mines posed a high-risk threat. Or in other words have a significant impact. This said, different operators have different strengths and weaknesses and it will be important for CMAA in particular to ensure there is a good fit between the task and the operator's core value add.

- **Increased prosperity in mine-affected areas, and enhanced freedom of movement to pursue employment opportunities, sometimes on a seasonal basis, outside of the home village, has also reduced risk-taking for landless and landed families.**

Increasingly, therefore, the landed community in many locations in rural Cambodia, many of which can be referred to as former 'frontier' locations, can afford to make these

²⁸ The 2001 land law recognized occupation as the basis for a legal right to the tenure on the land, either in soft or hard title. As such, the period 1998-2001 represented a unique opportunity to secure land for the future, a calculation that seems to underlie the risk-taking actions of some individuals interviewed during the course of this evaluation.

rational choices not to take risks, *or so many* risks with mines, because in most communities 20 years of formal and informal mine action has succeeded in reducing risks by increasing the availability of safe or safer land. The contribution of the informal sector has long been known about, but not (in the lifetime of the CfR II project) been substantially reflected in the official discourse of the donor funded sector, or the activities of the CMAA. **No mention to it *at all* was found in the MTR for example.**

It is worth emphasizing the extent of the informal sector's work in reducing threats and increasing access to safer agricultural land in the first half of the mine action sector's life in Cambodia. The HI report notes, *'....according to figures cited by Bottomley from two editions of the Landmine Monitor Report, for the years 1999 and 2000, these peasant agriculturalists may well have demined very nearly as much land on their own as all of the formal demining organizations— CMAC, MAG, and the Halo Trust—put together.'*²⁹ The report proceeds to define these findings, noting that rather than being the work entirely of 'peasant agriculturalists' de-mining their own land (although the FGDs held in the course of this revealed ample evidence of this), that *'In Battambang and Banteay Meanchey provinces, and in Pailin municipality, informal demining entrepreneurs have emerged who sell their demining services, both within and outside their home villages, for money, working sometimes alone and sometimes in teams, and sometimes offering a ploughing service as an adjunct to their demining.'*³⁰ **In nearly ever village visited FGDs confirmed either self-demining or the use of private deminers or both e.g.** On Saturday 31st October 2015 one polygon, adjacent to the K5 in Thmar Pouk district was observed (BS/CMAA/20106) that is still classified as an uncleared A1 polygon on IMSMA, a HALO Trust suspended site, was observed that had clearly been newly ploughed for the first time³¹.

Finally, it should be noted – and this is an extremely important finding from this evaluation - that accident rate statistics appear to be under-recording the true degree of the problem, in large part as they do not capture data from 'new' villages that are not established in the Cambodian Gazette. Given that these villages are the ones formed in 'frontier' conditions of high risk, and some are still being formed, it is safe to suggest that these will be the most impacted communities in terms of mines and ERW. The final aspect of this is that CfR II *'aims to enhance national structures and mechanisms that will ensure demining resources are effectively allocated, promoting the release of land for productive use by the poor'*.³² Not only does this exclusion of new and vulnerable villages, leave highly impacted communities without priority in the current planning system, by so doing it is also mitigating against a pro-poor outcome since it is the landless poor who are drawn to such villages, as revealed in many examples from the FGDs throughout the three target provinces. As noted, within the villages in which FGDs took place, a significant proportion of all villagers were still landless, and these very obviously will be the poorest. The Household Impact study revealed that only 30% of CfR II beneficiaries had ID poor cards, and of these only a small minority were able to produce a card. Beyond this as noted, the most extreme risk taking – the foraging – is typically being undertaken by the landless, and the CfR II project is completely unfocused on reducing the risks to which these individuals are exposed, as it is predicated around the release of agricultural land, land which with the maturation of the frontier in almost all the CfR II target locations, is not longer available to the poor. In fact, the only place where CfR II

²⁹ p.x, *'Informal Village Demining in Cambodia: An Operational Study'* (Handicap International, 2005)

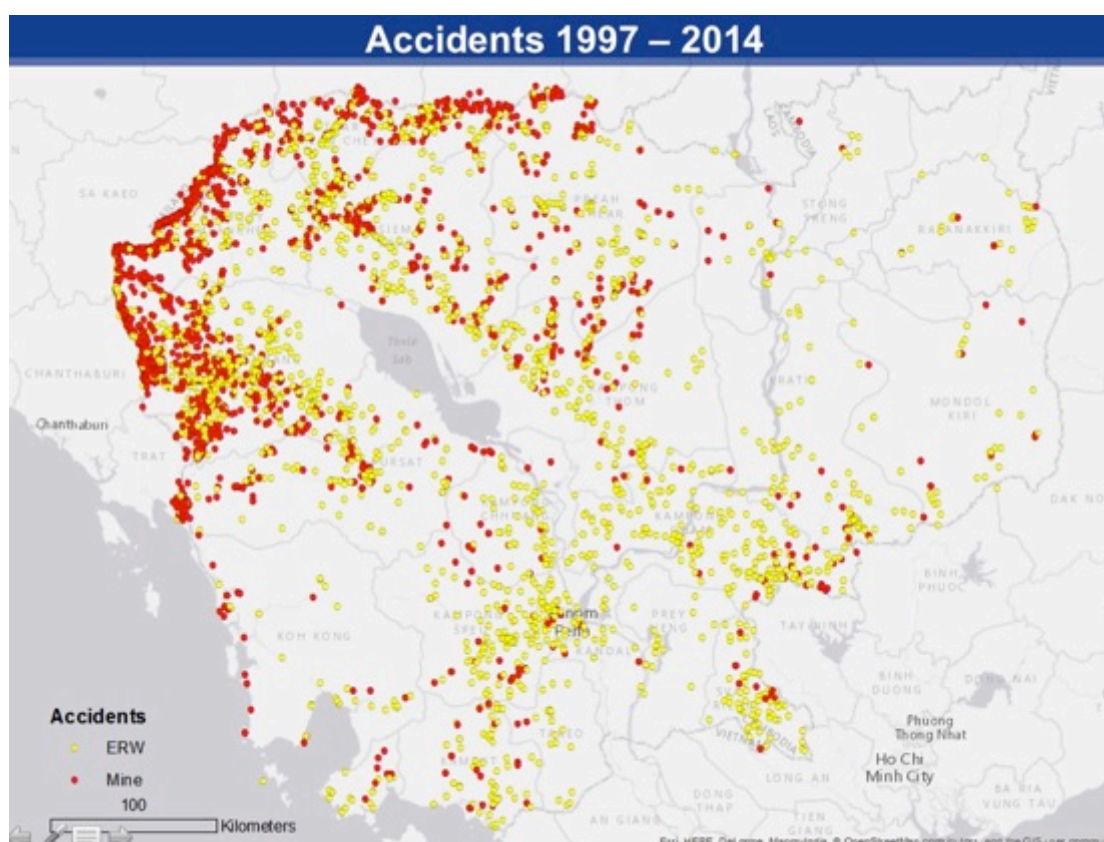
³⁰ p.xi *'Informal Village Demining in Cambodia: An Operational Study'* (Handicap International, 2005)

³¹ This is likely to be related to a land dispute reported during the FGD in Ta Mang village, involving a concession of land to a Phnom Penh based company, who had been granted land which villagers claimed – without real legal basis – was there in to the north of the village. Please refer to the village notes from the FGDs in Banteay-Meanchay, Annex 6

³² p.2, TOR Clearing for Results Phase II (CfR II)

could deliver this vision of land release ‘for the poor’ is in these new frontier villages, villages which are not recognized and entered into the formal planning process. **Focusing on clearing areas where the poorest forage for livelihood supplements would not only directly be ‘pro-poor’ in terms of mine action as risk reduction, but would mean moving away from the concentration on release of agricultural land as a prime value of CfR II.**

The following graphic reveals the extent to which accidents have clustered along and just insider the literal frontier, and also the internal frontier. In both cases former battlefields were claimed – and are *being claimed* - by landless poor migrants, and settled, a process which involves high levels of risk-taking, and takes place typically without pro-active support from the formal mine action sector, but is achieved without more extreme casualty rates largely through the work of the informal mine action sector, and increasingly in contemporary Cambodia, through the reducing functionality of some mine types.

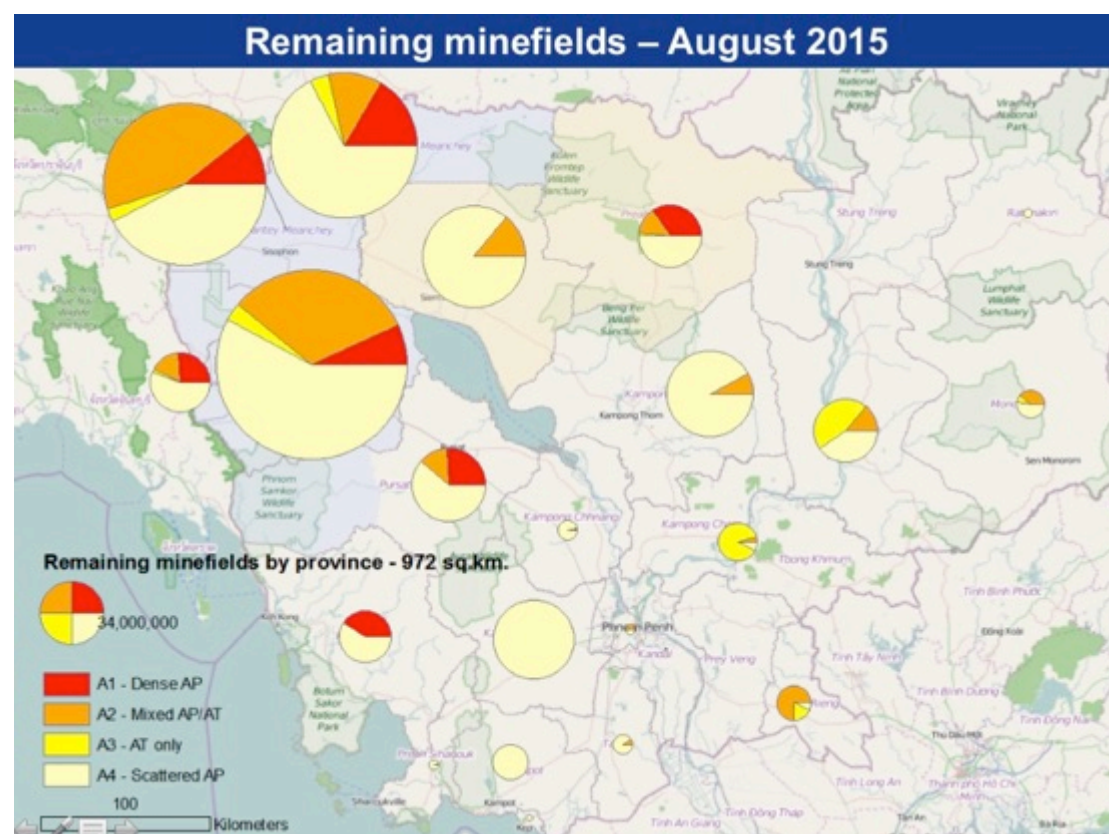


Summary casualty data received from CMVIS illustrates the total recorded casualties in the villages targeted for case study and FGD work during the course of the evaluation. It can be seen that some of these villages have been very heavily affected in the past, which validates their inclusion under CfR II, although the level of contemporary impact varies considerably. It is this criteria of casualties in the last five years which determines which communes are put into the annual planning process (top down instruction from CMAA) . **This is considered a reasonable criteria (if casualty data is accurate) since accident rates not only indicate a humanitarian priority, but usually the communities under greatest socio-economic stress (impact from landmines), resulting in vulnerability which leads to enforced risk-taking. The true figures for**

Banteay Chhmar maybe higher due to the exclusion of new settlements as discussed above³³.

During the course of the evaluation, some interlocutors have commented that raw casualty data skews the prioritization due to the fact that one Anti-Tank Mine incident can - and usually does - have multiple casualties.

1. One planning and recording anomaly detailed in the first draft of the report concerns the way in several locations multiple tasks have been attributed to one village, but are often many kilometres away, sometimes in different communes or even districts. This will be investigated further during the Planning and Prioritisation follow up study, which is now part of this evaluation.

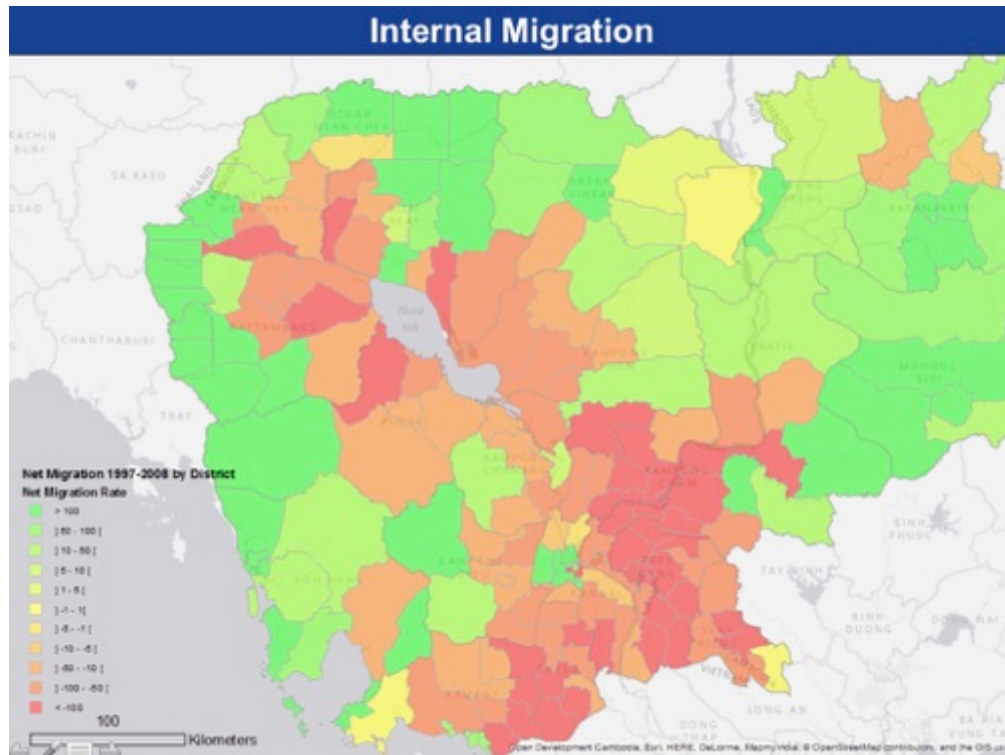


Finally, it has been discussed during the course of this evaluation that perhaps greater attention should be paid to clearing A1 minefields. The BLS survey and ongoing work to refine this has classed hazardous areas by technical criteria (A1 – A4). The draft National Mine Action plan rightly tried to initiate a more nuanced approach whereby technical categories are linked to criteria around impact in the community. The findings of this study suggest that this could go further and technical categorisations could be further disaggregated according to types of mines and their relative risk.

3.3. Cambodian Political, Social and Development Context (Page 46 in draft report)

³³ It needs to be verified if the 6 casualties in the minefields north of Reaksmei Thma Romeal in Banteay Chhmar are being recorded as occurring in the nearest village to this area, or simply not being recorded. If so then there is a chance the clearance assets will not be directed to the most impacted areas within the commune. This needs further research.

NB this is Essential to understanding the core relevance of mine action to continued agricultural – and therefore overall economic - growth in Cambodia, and the strong connection this has to migration, and the multiple pressures driving land reclamation and risk-taking with mines and ERW, and what this might mean for national mine action prioritization and strategies.



As noted above, understanding vulnerability to landmines and ERW requires an integration of political, social and economic trends, to understand how this will affect people's inter-action with the threat environment, changing vulnerability and risk. This is essential for CMAA to be able able to plan and co-ordinate the national programme.

This section in draft report reviews these issues. Noting:

- Despite political stability popular participation in public life remains low
- The mission team noted the dominant role of CPP village officials, and their unquestioned leadership and authority in the village
- It is also possible that the process of seeding the frontier with networks of loyal former soldiers, *may* have a politically organized motive as well as providing economic and social opportunities to the landless from other provinces.
- While the planning and prioritization process is *supposed* to be strongly participative and 'pro-poor', however *'Based on the information collected in the survey it appears that this process favours reclamation of land that does not belong to the most vulnerable groups of owners, who are also less well physically and politically connected. Internal power dynamics at village level for deciding which land to submit for clearance might (and does) influence the process of proposal presentation.... tends to sideline the less vocal or powerful.'*³⁴

³⁴ DFID Country Mission Report – Cambodia, part of the Global Review of DFID's Mine Action Programme, 2010-13, WYG, 2013

- The World Bank notes, *'Cambodia continues to enjoy robust growth, albeit at a slightly slower pace. Real growth in 2014 is estimated to have reached 7.1 per cent. The garment sector, together with construction and services, continues to propel growth. However, the 2015 and 2016 projection for economic growth is about 6.9% as it confronts stronger competition in garment exports, continued weak agriculture sector growth, and softer growth in the tourism sector. Poverty continues to fall in Cambodia, although the pace has declined significantly. **The poverty rate was 17.7 per cent in 2012, with almost 3 million poor people and over 8.1 million who are near-poor. About 90 per cent of them live in the countryside. World Bank estimates suggest that Cambodia achieved the Millennium Development Goal (MDG) of halving poverty in 2009. However, the vast majority of families who escaped poverty were only able to do so by a small margin, thus the significant share of the near-poor***'.³⁵
- Cambodian economic growth has been rooted in three main sectors: agriculture, garments and tourism. Agriculture, however, remains the main pillar of the economy³⁶. Since early 2000, the RGC has focused on its strategy to develop trade. Some 80% of trade product categories come from the agricultural sector, as per the current Cambodian Trade Integrated Strategy (CTIS, 2014 – 2018 ³⁷. However, as the WB report notes, *'In 2013- 2014, the agricultural growth slowed down to 1 percent from its average of 5.3 percent over 2004- 2012. Is the country in transition to a slower agricultural growth? **Cambodia can ill afford it because agricultural growth will be critical to continued poverty reduction in the country, given its large size in the economy***'.³⁸ The report goes on to note that,

*'In the last decade, Cambodia's agriculture sector has undergone significant structural transformation....The agricultural growth in Cambodia was high....The agricultural growth was also pro-poor.....Most poverty reduction took place in rural areas. More than 60 percent of the poverty reduction was attributed to the agriculture sector.....**Further poverty reduction will continue to depend on the success of agriculture for many years to come, due to its large role in the labor force, value added, and exports, as well as the fact that many farmers are among the poor and vulnerable.***'³⁹

This has been reflected in the direct observations undertaken in the course of field-work for this evaluation. Former frontier areas, former battlefields, that were thick forest and with hazardous areas full of mines and ERW, even 15 years ago, have now been transformed into agricultural areas, with the most dominant crop being cassava.

³⁵ <http://www.worldbank.org/en/country/cambodia/overview>, accessed 18th November 2015

³⁶ *CAMBODIAN AGRICULTURE IN TRANSITION: OPPORTUNITIES AND RISKS*, World Bank Group Agriculture, Economic and Sector Work, Report No. 96308-KH, May 19, 2015

³⁷ Meeting with **Ratana Norng**, Programme Analyst, United Nations Development Programme, 13th November 2015, Phnom Penh. Of the 10 potential sectors the RGC wants to enhance more for trade, 8 are from agriculture including staples such as rice, rubber, cassava, silk, marine fisheries.

³⁸ p.xii, *CAMBODIAN AGRICULTURE IN TRANSITION: OPPORTUNITIES AND RISKS*, World Bank Group Agriculture, Economic and Sector Work, Report No. 96308-KH, May 19, 2015

³⁹ Ibid.



Cassava being grown on land cleared by CMAC outside Veal Cheang village, Ou Andong Commune, Sala Krau district, Pailin, 27th October, 2015



Cassava in the village centre, Prasant Tbaeng Village, Banteay Chhmar Commune, Banteay-Meanchay province, 30th October, 2015

Understanding the importance of agriculture to the economy overall, **and the importance of farmland expansion to agricultural growth**, and the marginal improvements in poverty (whilst the poor have decreased from 6.9 to 3 million from 2004 to 2011, the number of 'near poor'⁴⁰ has increased from 4.6 million to 8.1 million over the same period), the gains in poverty reduction are thus slender, and potentially easily reversible are all essential to understanding the role of mine action, both informal and formal

in facilitating both the expansion of agricultural land, and therefore agricultural growth and its contribution to overall economic development and poverty reduction in Cambodia. As the World Bank website, Cambodia Overview section concludes, *'The key challenge going forward is to stimulate the agricultural and tourism sectors to once again become strong engines of growth supporting poverty reduction, as well as to expand and sustain growth and promote diversification in the manufacturing sector'*.

Mine action is therefore a direct facilitating factor that has underpinned progress in development and poverty reduction in rural Cambodia through its support to

⁴⁰ The poor are defined as those living below the poverty line of US 1.15 per day, whilst the near poor are living above the poverty line, but below US 2.30 per day.

the agricultural sector. CfR II's focus on releasing agricultural land can be seen to be highly relevant in this light as well. However, it can also be seen that these economic forces have also driven the process of 'claiming of the frontier', and supporting this going forward through pro-active mine action planning at the national level can be seen as highly relevant, and justifiable not just in terms of humanitarian considerations, MBT obligations and small 'd' development, but also in terms of being a significant enabler of Cambodia's core economic sector. This said, it is also clear that ultimately the expansion of the agricultural sector will be limited by availability of potentially productive land, but this also means in the medium term increasingly marginal and hazardous land will be claimed.

It should also be noted that the legal system and land rights issues seems to provide a further push to this process of clearing and claiming the frontier for agriculture. The 2013 DFID Cambodia case study, in the context of a section on 'Do No Harm: Deforestation' that, *'Although in principle possible to demine forested land without cutting down tall trees, de facto considering the land registration governmental initiatives, people are pushed to interpret that land title will only be given if land appears clear (from vegetation and cultivated. This has been an additional driver of deforestation, linked with growing population in the resettlement. Therefore, deforestation cannot be attributed to demining, which often happens in areas that have been recently 'cleared' from vegetation to secure some land. At the local level, this activity turned out to be an opportunity for some landless or with very little land to gain some or to earn some money by deforesting, reclaiming, and selling even before demining has been conducted.*⁴¹

These comments fit completely with those of one respondent from Chay Meanchay commune who, when noting his motives for claiming and clearing hazardous land south of the Sang Khe River, commented, *"It was a long story. If we did not go out to claim the land, somebody else would. If we did not go and put our claim on it, you would have nothing, and we did not have money to buy land from anyone. It is clear that the period between the 'integration' of the Khmer Rouge, and the passing of the Land Law in 2001, represented a period of unprecedented opportunity to establish such claims.* However, as a recent GICHD report has made clear, *'The Land Law states that people who occupied certain types of property before 31 August 2001, and meet a number of other conditions⁴², have exclusive rights to the property, which can be transferred to full ownership.⁴³ Such rights are known as "possession rights" and form the legal basis for the grant of titles under the land registration programme. According to mine actors interviewed, the majority of their intended beneficiaries have been using the contaminated land for residential or agricultural purposes, while attempting to avoid mines/ERW, and are presumed by mine actors to have possession/ownership rights. While such households will be eligible to receive title once the systematic registration programme reaches them, until that time - perhaps years away - they do not have a high degree of tenure security over the released land. It is possible for households claiming possession rights to independently apply for title instead of waiting for the systematic registration programme to reach them; however the high cost of*

⁴¹ DFID Country Mission Report – Cambodia, part of the Global Review of DFID's Mine Action Programme, 2010-13, WYG, 2013

⁴² These conditions include: the possession of the land must have started before the Land Law was passed on August 30, 2001; the possession must be continuous; the possession must be peaceful; the occupier must have taken possession in good faith (honestly); the possession must be unambiguous (clear); and the possession must be known to the public.

⁴³ Land Law (2001), Article 38.

sporadic titling makes it inaccessible to the vast majority of Cambodian households'.⁴⁴

3.4 The Mine Action Sector and UNDP's / CfRII's role (Page 51 in the unabridged draft report)

3.4.1 The Mine Action Sector

Cambodian Mine Action Sector 2015		
Informal Sector (Private):	Formal Sector:	Informal Formal Sector (Govt):
Not co-ordinated or planned formally by Government	CMAA Coordinated / Owned Partnerships	RGC funded support to big D infrastructure
Land owner / end user funded	Donor & RGC funded	Not coordinated under CMAA, not reported to or planned by CMAA
No reporting; Not systematic / varying standards but threat reducing		
Farming low risk land (reclaiming)	CMAC, MAG, HALO, NPA NPMEC under CfR II	NPMEC
Village De-miners / Farmer De-miners	MAPU work plans, Integrated with community priorities and development planning	RCAF Engineers
Salvage De-mining	Operator Preferences, Access and Safety also considered	Roads
Tractor & Detector teams		Bridges

As illustrated above, the sector can be thought of as having three sub-sets: the 'formal sector' that is usually what is understood as 'the sector' in its entirety; the informal (private sector that as noted above is believed to have played a very important role to date in 'threat reducing' vast areas of contaminated land; and what is referred to here as the 'informal formal sector', which consists of government funded mine action, mostly in support of 'Big D' infrastructure projects that is currently not 'visible' in discussions about mine action in Cambodia, or in the extensive grey literature that surrounds the sector.

Understanding the scale and scope of the informal private sector has been one of the key outcomes of the fieldwork undertaken in this evaluation. As noted, the extent of this sector and its past achievements was documented in various reports in the late 1990s, and in the HI study of 2005 quoted elsewhere in this report, much of this being the work of mine action specialist Ruth Bottomley who worked in Cambodia for extensive periods in the 1990s and 2000s. This evaluation has revealed substantial evidence of this type of thing, and the ongoing and substantial role of this sector in threat-reducing many hazardous areas at the request of local people hungry for livelihood land that until the mid-2000s was not being adequately cleared by the formal sector. This information has been available for many years, as in 2005 the HI study noted, *'One extremely significant finding to emerge from this study is the discovery of the*

⁴⁴ p.11, *Doing No Harm? Mine Action and Land Issues in Cambodia* GICHD Report, September 2014

*emergence on the informal demining scene of informal demining entrepreneurs, men who sell their demining services, both within and outside their home villages, for money, working sometimes alone and sometimes in teams’.*⁴⁵ **The issue then, as now, is that these efforts are not being captured by CMAA, the evidence they provide is being lost, evidence that is vital for both survey and information management reasons, including treaty compliance.** Many areas the CMAA IMSMA DB records as un-cleared have been, if not cleared, substantially threat-reduced, and this perhaps accounts for why many areas are cleared with low, and in a growing number of instances no mines, or even no items. **Analysis of CfR II records reveals that the number of sites released with no APMs rose from 8.75% in 2011 to 25.23% in 2015, whereas the number of sites released with no items at all rose to 9.44% in 2015.**

The informal ‘formal’ sector, supported by the Royal Government of Cambodia, is very substantial. The informal private sector still operates within the pricing structures of the true Cambodian economy (which typically operates on very low margins, hence the reluctance or inability of such companies to pay formal registration fees at international rates⁴⁶), and therefore in financial terms this sub-sector might not seem that significant if its activities were ever monetized and recorded. On the other hand the informal formal sector is significant, costing the RGC an estimated US 10 million a year, or roughly a third of the donor funded ‘formal sector’⁴⁷.

As the CMAA Secretary General noted, *‘There is clearance supported directly from the government especially in support of infrastructure development projects. This is because the funds from development partners are earmarked for humanitarian clearance, mostly providing supports to the poorest, and the government therefore needs to support infrastructure. These are joint projects between the government and some donor country, such as China and Japan, like the Neak Loung bridge project, and for some irrigation systems, and roads and canals. These are major projects that need contribution from the government in counter-part fund, and it costs around US 10 million a year. It is not small. But we can’t use Dev Partners fund because they have their mandate to support poorest and rural communities. The RGC recognises this and contributes funds to do these projects... This varies from year to year, and depends on project needs for infrastructure. We must not create confusion with the donors about this because these funds are not available to support humanitarian priorities, because the Government has many other priorities’.*⁴⁸ Clearance here is undertaken typically by NPMEC or the RCAF engineering units, whose work has facilitated some of the new infrastructure travelled on in the course of the evaluation such as Route 57b in Bovel district Battambang running out to the Thai border.

In total, CMAA’s Secretary General estimates that the RGC’s contribution to the sector as a whole is of the order of around US\$ 20 million a year.

⁴⁵ p.20 *‘Informal Village Demining in Cambodia: An Operational Study’* (2005)

⁴⁶ In Reksmey Sangha village—located in Sdau commune, Rattanak Mondol district, Battambang province—we were told by one source that the going rate for demining is about Thai baht 1,800 (= Riel 180,000 or 45.00 per hectare, and that the going rate for ploughing is about Thai baht 3,000 (= Riel 300,000 or 75.00 per hectare. The going rate for demining and ploughing together is thus about 120 per hectare. Another source in the same village quoted the rate for informal demining as being Riel 150,000 (37.50 per hectare, and the rate for ploughing as Riel 300,000 (75.00 per hectare. The combined cost of both demining and ploughing is therefore Riel 450,000 (112.50 per hectare. In Seila Khmaer village—located in Ou Bei Choan commune, in Ou Chrov district, in Banteay Meanchey province—we were told that a four-man team of informal demining entrepreneurs has been demining in this area since early January 2004. They charge between Thai baht 4,000 and 6,000 (= between Riel 400,000 and 600,000, or between 100 and 150 per hectare, depending on the difficulty of the terrain. p.20 *Informal Village Demining in Cambodia: An Operational Study’* (2005)

⁴⁷ Meeting with HE Prum Sophakmonkol, Secretary General, CMAA, 5th October 2015

⁴⁸ Ibid

The Landmine Monitor also seems to be unaware of the true extent of RGC support to mine action, focusing also only on the formal sector. In an update to its 'Support to Mine Action' page, updated on 3rd November 2015, the monitor notes, *'The national strategy estimated that more than 175 million would be needed for activities in 2015–2019. But while funding requirements are increasing, there are some concerns about a potential decline in international assistance in the next few years. In June 2015, Prum Sophakmonkol, Secretary-General of the Cambodian Mine Action and Victim Assistance Authority, expressed some doubts about Cambodia's ability to maintain its demining efforts if funding from international partners starts dropping, and was quoted in the media saying that "Money to support mine action from the Cambodian government needs to be balanced with funding for other priorities...We don't think Cambodia can shoulder this without other countries' support".'*

3.4.2 UNDP's role and the place of Clearing for Results I & II (Page 57 the unabridged draft report)

- Refer to this section for information on the background of UNDP's support to mine action.
- The development of the CMAA from 2000
- Background to Clearing for Results I & II

Lessons learned from CfR I:

- *A stronger role of the institution in managing a project is best way to build its capacity*
- *Capacity development should be holistic and led from the inside*
- *Government ownership of a development challenge (CMDG 9 is central to strategic and policy leadership*

Recommendations:

- *Demining contracts should focus on maximizing cost effectiveness rather than perhaps a capacity over time*
- *Alignment and harmonization of support and practices is central to strengthen the management of a sector*

UNDP's Clearing for Results Phase I project was implemented by UNDP under the Direct Implementation Modality (DIM) , with focus on working in partnership with the CMAA to develop its capacity to manage the mine action sector. Clearing for Results Phase II (CFRII) expanded upon the capacity development framework and the project has been implemented under the UNDP National Implementation Modality (NIM) , by the CMAA as lead agency, with support and oversight by UNDP. The primary donors have been Australia, Canada, Switzerland and UNDP. ⁴⁹

CfR I & II projects have clearly been successful in both developing the institutional capacity of CMAA, its authority and effectiveness within the formal sector, and have facilitated the release of large amounts of land for mine and ERW affected communities. **CfR II as a nationally implemented project has clearly been a relative success, both when compared with other UNDP nationally implemented mine action**

⁴⁹ This section has been largely taken from answers - all in italics - prepared by UNDP's Mine Action Advisor for the Independent Evaluation Office's global portfolio review in September 2015.

programmes in other countries, and when compared with some major development initiatives within Cambodia. There is much for UNDP and the CMAA to be proud of. This said a few issues can be flagged with the strategy and approach adopted.

- **Managing CfR I and II (directly) has clearly strengthened the CMAA, and its institutional respect within the formal sector, but there are questions to be asked about the appropriateness of a national co-ordinator and regulator actually contracting operations.** The MACCA in Afghanistan is considered a hallmark of good practice in terms of national co-ordination and one of the key aspects of this was the conscious stripping away of any activity that was not purely co-ordination and regulation. Managing clearance contracts is operational, and does not truly sit within an appropriate TOR for a national coordinator and regulatory body such as the CMAA
- **Some have flagged that CMAA is more engaged in managing CfR II than in overseeing the sector as a whole.** This is perhaps an intended consequence of the point above, since UNDP's strategy to enhance the CMAA's institutional authority, especially cf. CMAC that by both Royal Decree *and* National Legislation, formally also retains its original coordination and regulation mandate. CMAA, CMAC points out, has *only* been established by Royal Decree, although its position within the Cambodian governmental architecture is endorsed in practice by the Prime Minister's role as its overall President⁵⁰.
- **CMAA's oversight of the formal sector, as defined above is still far from complete, with many of the largest donors, especially the US and Japan still not signed up to the Partnership Principles, nor fully coordinating through CMAA's processes.** CMAA's oversight and regulation of both the informal (private and informal formal (government sector is negligible.
- **UNDP and donor interest is perceived as having moved away from institution strengthening and capacity building in the course of the CfR II project, and this has been reflected in budget allocations and advisory staffing support levels. Interest was much more focused on CfR II as a tool to channel funding to release land in the field, no doubt partly encouraged by the aid effectiveness arguments of using national structures to manage this.** To some extent this means that less attention has been focused on Deliverables 1 and 2 of the CfR II project, and in many ways the observations of the MTR from 2013 remain valid, although some of the analysis and sense-making about what this means will be revised in this final project evaluation.
- **The focus on extracting maximum 'cost-effectiveness' from land release contracts has become the dominant value of CfR II, and may have acted as a perverse incentive, as noted elsewhere in this report.** It is significant perhaps that the term 'demining contracts' was used in reference to recommendations that UNDP acted on at the end of CfR I, whereas CfR II's contracts have focused on contracting land release. As argued elsewhere, comparing costs for land release becomes potentially meaningless, if this is not tightly connected with measures of outcomes and impact that can be used to quality assure the value part of the 'value for money' equation. Cost-

⁵⁰ *The Cambodian Mine Action and Victim Assistance Authority (CMAA , established under Royal Decree No. 177 on 06 September 2000, is mandated to regulate, monitor and coordinate the mine action sector in Cambodia. CMAA is under the direct leadership of the Prime Minister and the CMAA Vice President while the CMAA Secretary General manages operations related to its mandate. <http://www.cmaa.gov.kh/about-cmaa/legal-framework-and-mandate>, accessed 19th November 2015*

effectiveness is not just about cost, but also about what one is getting – the effectiveness – of land release. Even comparing full (C3) clearance costs and rates can be meaningless, if not related to metrics other than metre square as the output (a useful metric is to review the number of items cleared by area as well to validate effectiveness of technical processes applied to the ground).

- See main report Page 61 for examples

Factors such as these mean that donor focus on simple area-released metrics, although understandable given the culture of the Cfr I & II projects to date in this regard, are in many ways misleading indicators. UNDP deserves credit for realising that the new project must seek to move away from a focus on outputs and quantitative indicators, to a more nuanced and qualitative understanding of outcomes and impact, both on affected communities *by* mines and ERW, and of land release and especially clearance.

3.5 Landmines and UXO as an issue: developmental constraint; humanitarian hazard; both; neither?

3.5.1. Introduction: Not all mines or minefields are the same

Level of Risk:	High Risk	Medium Risk	Low Risk
Threat Item: APM <i>Threat category (A1 – 4 etc) alone does not reflect relative levels of risk, nor levels of interaction and therefore impact observed in the field mission</i>	PMN, PMN2 – very high levels of functionality, usually in A1 fields – K5 around former bases. Pattern minefields and discernible mine lines Vietnamese or PRK minefields	T-72 – 50% functionality A4? Often used as a nuisance weapon by	T-69, PMD6, POMZ2 – very limited functionality. <i>If associated with ATMs then risk in area is heightened and cultivation methods may be adjusted and/or private de-miners employed (A2.1 or A2.2)</i>
Farming Interaction:	Avoid land – land denied to community by community	Use land cautiously? Use of risk mitigation techniques, burning area, use hoe cautiously Employ private deminers Accept level of risk	Routinely cultivate across fields with these items with all methods of cultivation. Burn and clear forests
Foraging interaction (entering high threat areas for NFTP, wood)	Yes – if believe know safe path	Yes – if believe safe path	Yes – and village demining / salvage operations, especially high metal mines
Threat Item: ATM	Old road alignments – high threat density & concentration / high risk	Medium density MF or cleared / partly cleared by tractor teams	Low density MF or cleared / partly cleared by tractor team etc
Interactions:	Do not travel; do not cultivate (cultivate around high threat areas)	Use cautiously, especially when wet. Don't use power plough and/or tractor	Use land normally – consider risks low / negligible

Table 1: Differing Levels of Risk associated with different landmine threat categories

One of the most critical outcomes of the field-work has been to understand that due to environmental degradation, not all mines and therefore minefields are the same in terms of the risk they represent. The table above represents an initial attempt to summarise these findings.

- See main report Page 61/2 for more details

3.5.2. Humanitarian Mine Action or Mine Action for Human Development? (Page 63 main report, this version edited)

The new UNDP working title for the next phase of the project is being referred to as Mine Action for Human Development (MAHD), and therefore it is worth exploring a little some of the assumptions that exist around the different ‘types’ of mine action that are perceived, primarily mine action for ‘humanitarian’ (security and safety reasons and ‘development’ (including livelihoods, service delivery and infrastructure).

It should be noted that a major finding of this evaluation, endorsed possibly even more strongly by the UNDP commissioned CfR II Household Study is that what are referred to here as ‘human security and well-being’ impacts are *as important as* ‘livelihoods and development’ impacts.

What this arguably reveals is that distinctions made by the mine action sector about itself, and reflected to donors (in part to allow them to provide funding from longer term development pools of funding, rather than shorter-term humanitarian funds , are to a large extent artificial. Mine action is always about responding to a security and safety issue, that naturally has an impact on development and livelihood issues. Undoubtedly mines make people poorer in Cambodia, but they are predominantly a threat to human security, which is also, in another way, firmly part of development. These finds were also reflected in the far more wide reaching study undertaken in 2015 by the UNDP’s Independent Evaluation Office in New York, which was commissioned to review UNDP’s global contribution to mine action over the last 20 years. Key findings for the results of UNDP supported mine action were that

1. Reduced Risk from Landmines:

The clearest finding of this evaluation is the increased sense of security resulting from mine action, as reported by community members.

2. Increased productivity of previously contaminated lands and improved livelihoods.⁵¹

However, much of the documentation around mine action in Cambodia still perpetuates what is seen as the myth of separating mine action *for security and for development*. To some extent this is reflected in the structure of the NMAS itself. Mine action in Cambodia is guided by the National Mine Action Strategy 2010- 2019, which has four main goals, goals 1 and 2 reflecting the supposed dichotomy between mine action for security and mine action for development:

1. **Reduce mine/ERW casualties** and other negative impacts by allocating demining assets to the most affected communities and promoting risk education.
2. **Contribute to economic growth and poverty reduction by supporting local, subnational, and national development priorities**, supporting access to care for survivors and *securing the land rights of intended beneficiaries of clearance*; (emphasis added).

Equally, the now shelved CMAA’s draft National Strategy Plan for Mine Action in Cambodia (v.3, 2014) states, at Page 17 that, *‘The mine action programme in Cambodia has moved from an ‘emergency’ paradigm to a ‘development’ one, and while saving lives*

⁵¹ Outcomes to Impact, p.45/6, *Evaluation of the Results, including Impact, of UNDP Support to Countries on Mine Action* (DRAFT , Independent Evaluation Office of the UNDP, 5th October 2015

and preventing further injury is correctly the first priority for mine action (and is addressed in Goal One, **nevertheless it is appropriate for Goal Two, and particularly Sub-Goal 2.1, to receive the majority of resources under this NSP**. The assumption then is not only that mine action for security and for development are some how separate, and will involve responding to different priorities, but that mine action for development is now the priority. It goes on to state at p.18, 'Sub-Goal 2.1: Support local development priorities in communities affected by mine/ERW' that,

Definitions

For the purposes of this NSP, 'Impact Free' is defined as a situation where:

*"There is **no economic demand** for the land left un-cleared, and where **all reasonable and practicable steps have also been taken to prevent casualties** in the areas that remain contaminated". Work undertaken under this Sub-Goal will primarily be focused on achieving an 'Impact Free' situation. In line with the general principles of environmental economics, the 'impact free' point will be reached when the economic benefits of land cleared under this Sub-Goal is equal to the cost of clearance.*

There is much that could be said about the assumptions buried underneath such statements, as revealed by the field work from this report i.e. that the notion of 'un-cleared' land is only un-cleared in the sense of the formal sector and what it records, and that much 'un-cleared land' is actually in use. But more that this, such a definition of 'impact free' seems to ignore the humanitarian (security and rights-based) 'value' in clearance not merely the economic value or projected NPV flows from a piece of land.

The other issue with this statement is that it seems to refer only to 'current' – and not future – social and economic demand, and completely ignores changing conditions in this regard – such as the advent of mass eco-tourism in Komping Pour reservoir in Banan district, Battambang, as referenced as a concern by the deputy district leader. IMAS directly refers to this point, *'In most cases, "impact free" should be considered in a static sense (i.e. impact free at this point in time) because changes in socio-economic patterns may bring people into contact with mines/ERW that previously had no impact'*.⁵² However, as this study has revealed it is precisely these changing social and economic conditions, such as migration and the demand to open more of the frontier to continue to feed growth in the agricultural sector, which is driving vulnerability, risk and impact of mines and mine action. There are also the real legal obligations established by the MBT.

Finally, this evaluation discovered – as summarised in the village listings above – that local people have their own, rule of thumb and very honest assessment of when the village is impact free. This is not the same as threat-free, but does reflect an underlying sense of safety, and that mines are not blocking local resources for whatever reason. As argued by Horwood below, increasing community participation is a far more reliable barometer in these matters.

Alternatively, it should be considered that, **"While human development focuses on widening the choices available to individuals, human security permits the possibility to exercise those choices"** (Disarmament Forum, 2003, p.7 This same concept is referred to more succinctly by Amartya Sen as "Development as Freedom". **Many mine action and development stakeholders, including donors, now agree therefore that mine action does indeed cut across both humanitarian and development activity and indeed all stages in between, as countries emerge from**

⁵² p.20 IMAS 04.10, Second Edition 01 January 2003 Amendment 7, August 2014, *Glossary of mine action terms, definitions and abbreviations*

conflict, through to a post conflict stage and then into a development phase (with considerable overlap and blurring of edges).⁵³

The current UNMAS Strategy, also seems to promote a more holistic understanding of mine action, stating: *The UN's continuous engagement in all aspects of mine action is essential for **facilitating immediate humanitarian efforts, improving peace and security, promoting stabilization, ensuring respect for human rights, and enabling development goals**.....*⁵⁴ One of the key findings of a recent DFID Meta Evaluation (2012) was: *The linkage between Mine Action and Development is not well articulated nor understood nor agreed. **There is no overarching theory of change in this arena, which restricts ability to coordinate between actors. Mine clearance is necessary but not sufficient for development to take place.***

As this evaluation and the concurrent Household Study have reveal, mine-action is therefore clearly defined as being fundamentally about **both** risk reduction at specific community level, and also as **an enabler of development**, again in a *relatively limited* number of mine-affected communities, even within the most heavily contaminated societies. Although no satisfactory ToC linking mine action and development exists, the GICHD has recently undertaken extensive research and produced practical guidelines on *Linking Mine Action & Development (LMAD)*. One of the GICHD's staff commented that GICHD's LMAD work has sometimes been misunderstood as an attempt to reframe mine action as purely a developmental activity, much to the concern of many actively involved in the MBT process. *"GICHD's initiative in the areas of mine action and development sought to enhance links between the two, as part of a broader process of enhancing the impact of mine action in general. Its purpose was not to reconstruct the mine action paradigm as being solely about developmental outcomes. It is about enhancing the impact of mine action - in general - in terms of both humanitarian and developmental outcomes. Its not a zero sum game, humanitarian vs developmental outcomes, but a small part of an overall process seeking to achieve better outcomes and impact overall".*⁵⁵

Some believe that the process of drift whereby mine action started to be framed as a developmental, and not a rights-based activity started with the Landmine Impact Surveys in the late 1990s, which sought to provide better understanding of where the most significant 'blockages' posed by landmines to socio-economic development were occurring. Again this was never really the intent of impact surveys, and efforts to understand impact in human terms (in accident rates was always part of the original motivation. What is clear, however, is that this is not a new debate. In 2003, Chris Horwood⁵⁶ wrote a seminal paper in Third World Quarterly, entitled '*Ideological and analytical foundations of mine action: human rights and community impact*'. The abstract states the article, '*...provides a review of the **current drifting ideological basis of mine action and will present the argument for the incorporation and adoption of a rights-based approach. It will also discuss the urgent and continuing need to prioritise mine action through an increased level of community participation and more rigorous impact measurement.....the designers of the socio-economic approach mine action are poor executing their ambitions while, at the same time omitting to include the***

⁵³ p.11 *MINE ACTION AND DEVELOPMENT: CHALLENGES OF INTER-ORGANISATIONAL RELATIONSHIPS*, Brian da Cal, OU Msc Thesis, 2012

⁵⁴ p. 25, Conclusion, UNMAS Strategy, 2013-18

⁵⁵ Interview with Sharmala Naidoo, Advisor Mine Action, Security and Development, GICHD, Juba, South Sudan, 23rd March 2013.

⁵⁶ Horwood was the first MAG Country Director in Cambodia, establishing the programme in 1992, and for a brief time was MAG's Overseas Director (1996-7). He then undertook a series of high level mine action consultancies for the UN, donors and other clients. The paper reflects his growing concern for the sector as a result of these experiences.

criteria inherent in a rights-based approach. A RBA could and should form part of the socio-economic mechanism of measurement and assessment’.

This last is very relevant, and provides a clear conceptual justification for the direction in which UNDP wishes now to take the MAHD project in Cambodia. Equally, over-emphasis on VfM – or ‘cost-efficiency’ such as has become a dominate value in CfR II – might also have perverse outcomes, as noted by Horwood more than 10 years ago.⁵⁷ These risk have also been documented by Dr Jo Durham, in her 2012 PhD⁵⁸ thesis. She notes that in the Lao PDR, donor pre-occupation with economic returns, influenced implementing partner priority setting, focusing on middle income communities with the capital to invest in land that had been cleared, rather than the poorest, most marginalized communities, or indeed those communities with the greatest humanitarian and developmental impact from contamination. Whilst altering prioritization of mine action in such ways might maximize NPVs resulting from funded interventions, they would arguably not represent the most effective and efficient mine action, if impact is determined / defined in a RBA fashion.

4.0 Key Evaluation Questions and Results (Page 68 in main report)

As noted above, this Final Evaluation will reference the Mid Term Review (MTR Evaluation that was only finalized in June 2013. Many of the observations on the key evaluation questions in the MTR are still applicable today, although in several areas the analysis drawn from the data, and the interpretation of the issues varies between that evaluation and this. In part this is due to the different focus of the evaluation work, with the Final evaluation being rooted much more firmly in the field, and adopting a bottom up approach, which has generated a very different set of data and understandings of the CfR II project.

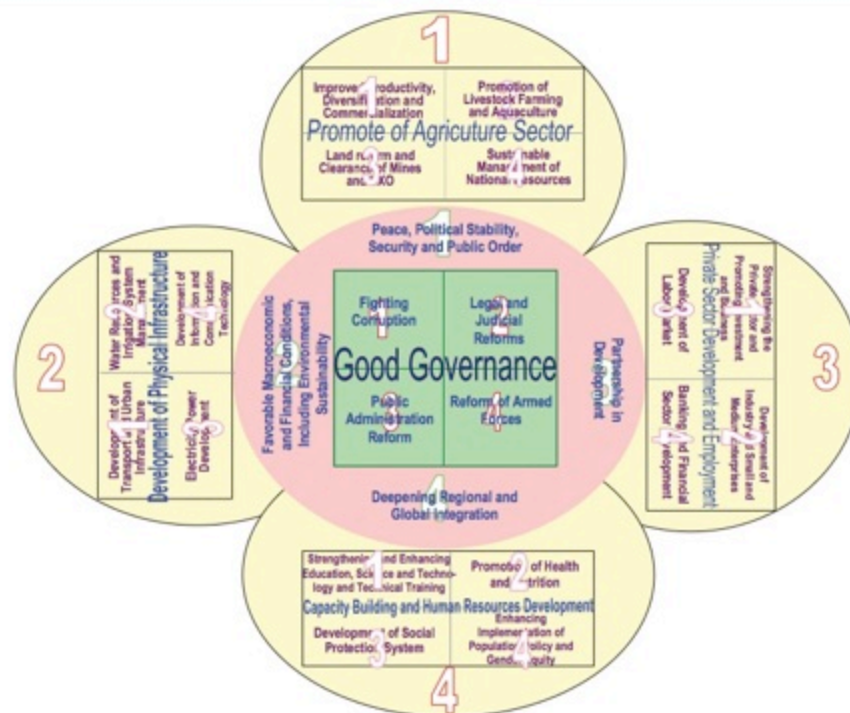
Overall, this evaluation finds at CfR II has been *generally* a good project in terms of all the key evaluation questions of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability. As with any project of this nature there will always be areas where there is room for improvement, and in some areas questions have been raised which warrant further investigation, and it is suggested that more attention needs to be focused on monitoring work undertaken under Deliverable 3, and this is seen from a programme management, rather than technical, point of view. **Overall though, the project has made positive contributions to the CMAA, the mine action sector and mine-affected people living in areas of risk from mines and ERW.** As such it can directly be seen to be fulfilling the core project outcome of supporting a ‘more diversified, sustainable and equitable economy’. Part of this outcome is of course achieved by enhancing the safety of the remote rural communities with whom the project works, since human security is an important aspect of the sustainable development implied in this statement.

4.1 Relevance (Page 69 in the unabridged draft report) Relevance is defined as: *The extent that the intervention is suited to the needs and priorities of the beneficiaries and the country context.*

Summary:

⁵⁷ *Ideological and analytical foundations of mine action: human rights and community impact’*

⁵⁸ *Examining who benefits, in what ways, and in what contexts, from Mine Action in the Lao People’s Democratic Republic, and in Kurdish Iraq*, Jo Durham, PhD Thesis, March 2012



Mine Action is highly relevant, and firmly rooted within a core block of the RGC's 'Rectangular Strategy'. It is situated within measures designed to promote the agricultural sector, significantly in light of the outcomes of this field research alongside land reform (titling), and also is seen correctly as contributing to peace and security objectives. Mine Action and within that Clearing for Results is thus genuinely owned by and relevant to the Royal Government of Cambodia. In some countries evaluations can come away with a sense that local officials are merely paying rhetorical lip-service to mine action and it is shoe horned into official documents by foreign advisors and mine action specialists. There is no sense of this being the case in Cambodia and this should carry an important message for donors.

Like the MTR the Final Evaluation finds the support given by CfR II to the CMAA and national frameworks for mine action through Deliverables 1 & 2 is extremely relevant. Equally, the release of land facilitated under Deliverable 3, and the support this provides to both CMAC and NPMEC as national mine action contractors, is also highly relevant in terms of the implementation of the NMAS, the contribution this makes to Cambodia meeting its obligations under the APMBT, as well as producing significant contributions to both the human security and well-being, and the livelihoods and development situation, of many rural Cambodian communities. As the MTR notes, *'Good practice in mine action has documented the relevance of strong national structures to ensure that mine action standards for operations remain high and that mine action activities are contributing effectively and efficiently to national policy goals and objectives'*.⁵⁹

The project is seen as relevant within, and contributing strongly to, the context of the Cambodian Development Frameworks namely:

- UNDAF: 2011-2015
- National Strategic Development Plan (NSDP : 2009-2013, 2014-2018)
- Government's Rectangular Strategy Phase II

⁵⁹ Vanna M., *Study on Enhancing Aid Effectiveness and Harmonization in Mine Action*, CRDB/CDC, April 2010.

- National Social Protection Strategy

There is no doubt then that in policy and development frameworks, mine action is genuinely owned by the RGC, and is viewed as highly relevant. This is also reflected in real terms by the relatively high levels of financial contribution already provided both to the formal, and what has been called here the 'informal formal' (government), sector, as detailed above, and estimated as approaching US 20 million a year.

The project – and mine action as a whole – is therefore seen as highly relevant by Cambodian officials at many levels both centrally and within the provinces: within the CMAA, at MAPU level within the target provinces, and amongst all of the Cambodian officials spoken to at District, Commune and Village level. It has also been warmly endorsed in focus group discussions and individual interviews with beneficiaries, and this is also reflected in comments made by individuals interviewed in the course of the Household Impact study, also commissioned and implemented by UNDP in the third quarter of 2015. Such assessments of relevance have found support at the highest levels, and it was notable that in his speech to the UN General Assembly on 26th September 2015 on the new 'Sustainable Development Goals', the Prime Minister, Samdech Hun Sen, President of the CMAA (also an indicator of the relevance accorded mine action) , went out of his way to stress the importance of de-mining, and to mention the RGC's focus on this issue, and that in Cambodia mine action would likely be represented as an additional SDG, in the same way as Cambodia adopted MDG 9.

The support provided by UNDP to CMAA over the years to develop the current annual planning and prioritization process, is perhaps the most tangible way in which project activities under deliverables 1 & 2 will have made themselves known to both officials at the sub-national level, and mine-affected communities. The planning and prioritization process is fundamental in contributing to one of the core business areas of the national coordinator, namely to ensure the most rational, effective and efficient allocation of mine action resources to mine-affected communities. This relates very closely to the core project outcome, described as: *'National structures and mechanisms ensure demining resources are effectively allocated, promoting the release of land for productive use by the poor'*.⁶⁰ In this regard too then it is possible to see CfR II as highly relevant, given its intention of working with and strengthening CMAA. Generally, the planning process, especially the top-down element of this in terms of commune selection, is seen as being relevant to the needs of mine affected communities and people, and the use of accident data is a simple and relevant proxy for impact. However, the most visible element of CfR II in mine-affected areas has been under deliverable 3, and the funding of mine action operators to release land, in part through clearance of suspected hazardous areas. This has been highly relevant, and has had substantial positive impact as documented throughout this evaluation.

The MTR's assertion that the project is relevant because it gave beneficiaries the ability to make use of previously unused or partially used land is not quite as straightforward as suggested, but the Final Evaluation and the Household Study confirm that clearance *'was vital in raising the family income'*, although not in most cases above subsistence as asserted by the MTR, bearing in mind that only one third of the beneficiaries identified by the Household study were ID poor, and the vast majority were using some or all of the land cleared under CfR II, again a function of the informal private sector, and self-help village demining.

The relevance of focusing a land release mine action project on the poor, on attempting to make it 'pro-poor' is questionable since the evidence revealed by

⁶⁰ p.6, Project Output, UNDP Cambodia, Clearing for Results II Project Document, 2011.

both this evaluation and the UNDP household study is that almost by definition the real 'poor' are landless, or have only very small subsistence plots, and with only one possible exception⁶¹ at no time did any evidence occur to suggest that land release was 'for the poor'⁶². In fact to the contrary, most beneficiaries were seen to be either 'middle class' or 'rich', findings that have also been observed by other recent donor evaluations⁶³. This does not make CfR II any less relevant, but rather suggests **the conceptual assumptions underpinning the project's central output is unrealistic, and not relevant given the actual conditions existing in mine-affected villages**. CfR II, and no mine action in Cambodia, exists as a form of land / income re-distribution to the poor (who would likely either not to use sell their land anyway once cleared as they lack the capital to exploit it in an economically efficient way⁶⁴), and high levels of retention of land by CfR II beneficiaries shows they have the capital to benefit from clearance. This would require some form of agreed land distribution mechanism, which with the exception of the SLC procedure⁶⁵, that is rarely enacted⁶⁶. This also implies that

⁶¹ In Chaeng Village, Chay Meanchay, Banan, a local official suggested that land was given 'to the handicapped, the rich and the poor with no discrimination' which was taken to be evidence of some form of distribution of cleared land for the poor, but in fact appears possible to read as another statement of the fact that clearance tasks are typically selected on technical, and not socio-economic factors, and that even in mine-affected areas there is no free land, apart from at extremities of what remains of the 'frontier'.

⁶² The poorest typically constitute 5-10% of village populations in the target areas of the project, and these were the proportions observed during the course of field work, although in some villages – such as Tamang, in Thmar Pouk district, Banteay-Meanchay – as many as 45-50% of families were described as having no or not enough land, and having to make a living by foraging in risky areas.

⁶³ *Mostly cash crops (corn and cassava) are being cultivated in decontaminated and released land and most of the produce is being sold into the Thai market through local traders. The increase in available land is also said to be providing higher profit to traders and to agri-shops who are local retailers of agribusiness products. The people surveyed believed that the "middle class" and "rich families" are the ones who are benefitting most from this development. Poor households are seen to be receiving indirect benefit through increased opportunities for agricultural labour, closer to their homes. Labourers were also said to have benefitted from the demining of the land of "middle class" families because they see their exposure to risk of mine accidents diminish', 3. Community Impact of MA Programme, 3.1 Key Findings, Cambodia DFID Country Mission Report, 2013.*

⁶⁴ *'There are instances where land is released but remains unused despite handover to poor and/or landless beneficiaries. In some cases, beneficiaries engage in seasonal labour migration, leaving the land temporarily due to, for example, a lack of irrigation or developmental support, and then return when weather conditions are more conducive to cultivation. In other cases, households opt to move permanently due to the lack of infrastructure or other agricultural support in place, post-land release. These households are simply too poor to cultivate or otherwise use the released land to sustain their livelihoods. The vacated land is left vulnerable to seizure or competing claims by the State or third parties'. p. 14, Doing No Harm? Mine Action and Land Issues in Cambodia GICHD Report, September 2014*

⁶⁵ It is possible that the Phnom Teckar Phnom Chaa 317 site in Svay Chek District, Banteay-Meanchay province, that has consumed so many CfR II resources, is such a SLC, although it appears to be still under the control of the military. See discussion of this in Annex 6

⁶⁶ *There are cases where landless families have settled on State property that is contaminated. They reside on and/or cultivate the land despite knowing the risk of mine/ERW contamination, in order to meet their socio-economic needs. People who have settled on State private property after the legislative cut-off date (i.e. August 2001) cannot claim possession/ownership rights. In other cases, people have settled on contaminated land that is classified under the Land Law as State public property, such as forests or riverbanks, which means it cannot be privately owned. Mine actors continue to encounter problems in releasing this type of land only to find it cannot be officially allocated to intended beneficiaries during the handover process. The beneficiaries thus remain highly insecure and vulnerable to forced eviction despite the considerable survey/clearance assets used to provide them with safe land for their housing and/or livelihood needs. In rare instances, State property has been allocated to landless households through a Social Land Concession (SLC). For State public property, it is necessary to first reclassify the land as State private property – an additional slow administrative step. While CMAA has intervened in a small number of cases to have State property reclassified and allocated as an SLC to intended beneficiaries of clearance, this mechanism has been used only in exceptional circumstances and is not standard practice. Indeed, few SLCs have been granted in Cambodia to date due to lack of political will and the high cost of supporting poor families to productively use newly allocated land. SLCs could, however, be granted more systematically to provide tenure security post clearance for households already using the land in question, as it is unlikely to require the same level of developmental support as would be necessary for families newly resettled on allocated land. p. 12, Doing No Harm? Mine Action and Land Issues in Cambodia GICHD Report, September 2014*

there is free land, not being used because of its contaminated state. **Neither of these conditions exist in reality, and as has been seen the need to claim, clear and cultivate land to gain title is a motive for risk-taking informal clearance at village level.** Furthermore, as discussed below in the effectiveness section, the bottom-up prioritization and planning, especially the task selection processes within the commune and village, are driven more by technical considerations⁶⁷ than any reference to social situation of the beneficiaries

Finally, UNDP's core competence in supporting the RGC in these matters is also considered highly relevant, and this is reflected in the findings of the UNDP's IEO study on the organisation's global support to mine action..⁶⁸

Key Deliverable 1: Mine action policy and strategic framework **ensures most resources are effectively allocated to national priorities** as defined by local planning processes and maximises the land available for local development⁶⁹.

As noted in the MTR, CfR II's strategy and design, seeking to integrate considerations related to policy and strategic frameworks to ensure that mine action co-ordination is done effectively and according to national priorities, but defined by local planning processes, is highly relevant in a country like Cambodia. The key policies and frameworks referred to here include the NMAS, the APMBT, the MDG9, the RGC's Rectangular Strategy of Growth, Employment, Equity and Efficiency, as the UNDP CPAP and overall UNDAF. Activities to promote this deliverable are summarised in the 2015 Annual Work Plan⁷⁰ as:

- **Activity 1:** Promote Alignment of Programme⁷¹ by TWG-MA
- **Activity 2:** Coordinate Implementation of NMAS
- **Activity 3:** Strengthen Planning, Monitoring and Outcome Assessment

Government ownership of clear and well-structured policies and strategies is essential for achieving the RGC's goals in mine action. Such strategies should be the basis for resource mobilisation, donor engagement and advocacy. CfR II has since the MTR prioritised the development of a draft National Strategy Plan for Mine Action in Cambodia, with a view to implementing the NMAS, and commissioned a bespoke consultancy to deliver it in the second half of 2013. However, whilst this can be seen as relevant, it has become less so perhaps because the process of development was possibly not participative enough with some of the key Cambodian institutional stakeholders, and as of the time of writing this plan in which a great deal of resource was invested has been shelved, and therefore can be seen as ineffective. **Whilst accepting the relevance of the project's focus on deliverable one, there are more questions as to the effectiveness of implementation in this area, and the utility in**

⁶⁷ Distance of SHA from the residential area was the most important criteria mentioned, although as the DFID study reveals as well, issues of operator access, safety and site suitability for technical assets seemed to be more important than community need in determining actual allocation of tasks.

⁶⁸ p.26, Evaluation of the Results, including Impact, of UNDP Support to Countries on Mine Action [DRAFT, 5th October 2015]

⁶⁹ Emphasis added.

⁷⁰ Refer to Annex 7 that contains the summarized activities associated with the Key Deliverables of the project for the years 2012 – 2015.

⁷¹ Programme here refers to the notion of a 'programme-based approach for the whole mine action sector in Cambodia, defined in Activity 1 of all CfR II Annual Work Plans. Whilst relevant, and arguably good practice (certainly this was the strong position presented in the MTR), it has not been achieved during the lifetime of CfR II and it seems unlikely that this will change unless there is substantial political commitment by the RGC to enhancing the authority of CMAA, certainly cf. CMAC and a willingness to enforce the Partnership Principles on all donors, including the US and Japan who are the sector's largest donors.

real terms of the CMAA's ownership of these policies and frameworks, even within the implementation of CfR II funded activities.

Key Deliverable 2: The CMAA is equipped with the technical and functional capacities required to manage, regulate, coordinate and monitor Cambodia's national mine action programme within an evolving environment.

As with Deliverable 1 the implementation strategy under Deliverable 2 is to support the development of suitable capacity to *'enable the CMAA to fulfil its role and mandate and to provide technical support to the implementation of NMAS specific activities'* which is considered highly relevant. As noted by the MTR, *'Three key areas are cited by the CFRII project as cornerstones of future CMAA capacity 1 socio economic management; 2 regulation and monitoring; and, 3 project management. These areas are CFRII's focus in terms of capacity development'*.⁷² With some slight variation in wording, these capacity development objectives are rolled out in Activities 4 – 7 in the various Annual Work Plans for the project 2012-15, summarized most succinctly in the 2015 version as:

- **Activity 4:** Increase visibility of the CMAA and improve its capacity
- **Activity 5:** Implementation of the Capacity Development Plan
- **Activity 6:** Enhance Finance, Procurement and HR Capacities
- **Activity 7:** Support the Implementation of Planning Guidelines by MAPU

The strategy focuses fundamentally on enhancing the CMAA's capacity to implement the CfRII, but also reaching out to enhance its capacity to oversee the sector, most notably through Activity 7 at the sub-national level. Whilst these are all worthy and relevant objectives and activities, it should be noted that the relevance of these capacity objective activities is lessened by the on-going ambiguity and ambivalence, certainly in practice, by which donors and some operators do not appear to respect the CMAA's mandate, issues which should have been lessened by the three activity sets associated with Deliverable 1.

As argued in the MTR, *'...national capacity to manage the sector is ... an important piece of the mine action puzzle in order to instill effectiveness and efficiency within the sector over the long-term. For this reason the CMAA's capacity at this stage is both relevant and important. This capacity will set the stage for maintaining long-term effectiveness in the sector'*.⁷³ In practice, as argued below, UNDP and its donors appear to have de-prioritised capacity development (and indeed work undertaken under Deliverable 1), in part due to financial pressures, and a clear sense within the project's management that both 10 years of capacity development 'is enough' and secondly that the most relevant aspect of the project at this stage is to support Deliverable 3. These arguments seem rooted to some extent about the CfR II offering a relevant mechanism, in line with principles of Aid Effectiveness and national ownership, for both supporting the national regulator and efficiently channeling funds through pooled processes, to release land in the community. They also perhaps reflect an assessment that CMAA's ability to fully function as the national regulator and co-ordinator is not constrained only by limitations of human resource capacity, but also by the political and institutional setting within which it and the mine action sector in Cambodia sits. In other words, whilst capacity development as foreseen under Deliverable 2 maybe in theory still required in order to allow CMAA to fulfill its role, and achieve the outcomes envisaged under Deliverable 1, which reaches beyond the limits of CfR II, and out to encompass the sector as a whole, **some might assess the need now to be for an institutional review to**

⁷² p.21, Mid-Term Review (MTR CFRII, June 2013)

⁷³ p.21, Mid-Term Review (MTR CFRII, June 2013)

assess all barriers or challenges that may impede the CMAA in fulfilling its mandate to the fullest extent possible. Capacity Development might be one part of this, but not the whole.

Equally, there is a sense in which the current system does work relatively well, especially at the sub-national level, through the annual co-ordination, prioritisation and planning work of the MAPUs, and therefore the on-going relevance of capacity development – certainly at the central - could be openly questioned at this stage⁷⁴. **Certainly, in the context of a NIM project, ownership of the CMAA's capacity development assessments and requests for support in this regard, has to come from CMAA's capable Cambodian leadership, and not be an initiative driven by UNDP.**

Key Deliverable 3: At least 35 km² of contaminated land mapped through Baseline Survey, cleared and released for productive use⁷⁵ through local planning that promotes efficiency and transparency.

As noted in the MTR, Deliverable 3 is designed *'around the premise that returning land to the rural poor is a key component of RGC policy and the UNDP's partnership with the RGC (in support of the NMAS, CPAP, MDG9, and the Rectangular Strategy)*.⁷⁶ While the statement is generally correct in situating this deliverable firmly within the context of multiple government frameworks, policies and plans, the explicit link with the rural poor (described as landless) is only made in the Rectangular Strategy from 2008, as quoted at Para 52.⁷⁷ This statement of policy also reflects the migration to the frontier observed in the course of the fieldwork for this mission, and therefore measures to attune the prioritisation and planning of land release and clearance to the frontier can be seen as being highly relevant to existing government policy. There is also an implicit link perhaps made in the former NSDP at para 116 that states the, ***'RGC has been implementing a policy to distribute land to landless citizens including the families of armed-forces stationed along western and north-western border areas through the social land concession programme initiated by national and sub-national authorities.***⁷⁸

Overall, Deliverable 3 can therefore be seen as being extremely relevant. As the MTR notes, *This deliverable goes to the heart of the RGC's policy orientation through key documents such as the NMAS, the CMDG, and the Rectangular Strategy II, in addition to the overall CFRII output and outcome. Two simultaneous goals of reducing casualties and contributing to economic opportunities for the poor are highlighted in the NMAS in terms of mine/ERW clearance. The RGC policy documents generally raise the issue of mine clearance as a means to promote balanced economic development since*

⁷⁴ Arguments made repeatedly in discussion with Mr David Horrocks, UNDP Mine Action Advisor in Phnom Penh Sept-Oct 2015

⁷⁵ It is believed that only 4% of land released is not being used, according to Post Clearance Monitoring reports, which is relatively low figure. Source: Interview with David Horrocks, Mine Action Advisor, CFR II/Poverty Reduction, CMAA, 21st September 2015

⁷⁶ p. 26, MTR, June 2013

⁷⁷ "Rectangular Strategy" for Growth, Employment, Equity and Efficiency Phase II First Cabinet Meeting of the Fourth Legislature of the National Assembly at the Office of the Council of Ministers Phnom Penh, 26 September 2008

⁷⁸ p.35, NATIONAL STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT PLAN UPDATE 2009-2013. Since land in this area is often at least in part a suspected area, and this may account for the apparently disproportionate attention given to the social land concession in Teckar Phnom Chaa 317 site in Svay Chek, Banteay-Meanchay, as discussed elsewhere in this report.

clearance is carried out on land occupied by the rural poor who have been particularly victimised by episodes of conflict. In this regard, the mine clearance component of the project is the most directly relevant to the RGC's overall mine action objectives, and the expected output and outcome of the project.⁷⁹

4.2 Effectiveness: (Page 79 of the unabridged draft report).

In this evaluation effectiveness is understood, 'The extent that the intervention has achieved its expected results / outcomes / outputs, as described in the project document, annual work plans, and reporting'.

Summary: It should be noted that the project document *per se* contains no Log Frame⁸⁰ making the evaluation of effectiveness harder than it should be, especially with regards to KDs 1 & 2. It is clearly hard to assess the achievement of results, outputs and outcomes, in the absence of SMART indicators set within a logical framework that are *specific* to the project, its overall aims and objectives. Equally, the project document has no reference to a Theory of Change approach that would be necessary to fully evaluate the achievement of expected outcomes, and beyond that impact from project inputs and activities. **The M & E framework associated in practice with the project, against which progress is in principle at least measured, shared in the project reporting, is drawn heavily from the UNDP CPAP Results and Resources Framework, which is of limited utility for managing, assessing and monitoring (and evaluating) the performance of the Cfr II project in its own right.** This perhaps reflects UNDP's concern that the project's value comes from its contribution to the CPAP, and ultimately the UNDAF.

Some of these current indicators found in the project reporting may create misleading impressions, and be driven by factors entirely unconnected with the performance of the project i.e. '*reduction in casualty rates in Battambang, Banteay-Meanchay and Pailin*' is a poor indicator of the effectiveness of KD3 of Cfr II *per se*, but is related to the wide range of technical, social and economic factors that may drive risk-taking and therefore accident rates that are beyond the influence of the land release elements of Cfr II. Thus for example, the 2014 Annual Report reports a '207% increase' in landmines casualties which is only true considering the number recorded in 2014 and comparing that with the number recorded in 2013. Donors and other stakeholders were concerned by this increase, and as result CMAA launched an investigation into the problem and delivered a report in April 2014⁸¹. Again this seems to conflate concerns with CMAA's governance of the mine action sector *as a whole* with concerns over the performance of KD3 of the Cfr II project, as indicated by casualty rate data. The casualty report's recommendations all

⁷⁹ p.26, MTR, June 2013

⁸⁰ Comment by David Horrocks, UNDP Mine Action Advisor

⁸¹ *Report on study to find out the causes for increased number of casualties for the first 3 months of 2014*, CMAA April 2014. The report team did not include CMAA staff with operational and technical backgrounds. It highlights reclamation of explosives from ERWs for activities like fishing, foraging in suspected forest areas, travel by means of what it describes as 'heavy transport' in suspect areas and the 'use of heavy machineries to reclaim and ploughing land in contaminated areas.' It is clear that Anti-Tank mine incidents, the high impact nature of these incidents can and do skew casualty data which, as noted elsewhere does have a big impact on the current prioritization process. The report notes that the factors causing accidents (or vulnerability) lie in a wide range of factors, including livelihoods issues affecting the poor disproportionately (especially for day labourers who drive tractors, and those who forage in the suspect forest areas), legal issues (limitations on implementing the law on Explosives and Weapons), and what it describes as Human and Negligence factors. The report's proposed responses to these issues are mostly regulatory, including at point 6 'Take serious measures against those who are conducting private demining without a licence'. It also promotes more MRE, and crucially only promotes one operational technical mine action measure (point 7: Mine Action Operators must respond by collecting or destroying in a timely manner the mine/ERW reported to them by the community).

lie within the regulatory and coordination part of CMAA's general mandate, and its operational recommendations are not really interventions covered by the current Land Release work contracted under KD3. It might be more legitimate to be concerned about CMAA's performance under KD1 & 2 (which relate to its ability to fulfill its overall mandate), than to focus on this as an indicator of performance on the land release element of the project in just three provinces, albeit three of the most heavily affected provinces. In reality, the actual level of casualties, albeit a relatively meaningless indicator of CfR II performance under KD3, was *actually* above target in terms of the projected reduction detailed in project reporting, based on a 10% reduction year on year from the 2010 baseline⁸².

- **This is further reflected in comments contained in the 2014 Annual report as detailed in the main report.**

The one clear indicator of expected result, under KD3, release of 35 km² of land mapped and recorded from the BLS, has been much emphasized in project reporting as it has been greatly exceeded, suggesting to some extent that the project – as argued in the MTR - has been highly effective in this regard. However, this is a somewhat meaningless result, if delivered without reference to any form of understanding of impact. In the M & E Framework associated with the project, two output indicators are associated with KD3, both quantitative and both poor indicators of CfR II's effectiveness, namely: casualty rates as argued above, and area 'cleared'.

Understanding real impact, which has to be linked to effectiveness as recommended for the MAHD project, would require impact monitoring, precisely as described and envisaged in the Project Document signed in 2011⁸³. **No evidence of this was found during the course of the final evaluation, and the basic M & E framework forms part of the formal project reporting is clearly not the 'comprehensive' framework envisaged in the document. Intentions with regards to impact assessment and monitoring, linked to a performance monitoring system, remain a key aspiration for the new project, suggesting that in this regard at least the project has been somewhat ineffective.** Indeed, in many ways both this evaluation and its focus on outcomes and impact of the project at field level⁸⁴, and the priority accorded to the Household Impact study that was run concurrent in October 2015, felt like a demonstration of the limited progress to deliver this very important result of impact assessment and monitoring, and at a less ambitious level, the lack of any apparent evidence of meaningful and effective programme monitoring⁸⁵. With regards to this element, CfR II has been ineffective.

This is seen as a reflection of the dominance of a technical paradigm whereby monitoring is assumed to mean technical QA and QC (for which there has been substantial investment with technical advisors in the first half of the project, and established teams), rather than focusing on issues of project management (processes of prioritization and planning), or impact (socio-economic considerations). This is of concern given the fact that the project was centrally concerned (KD2), with building the capacity of the CMAA in terms of the socio-economic management of mine clearance,

⁸² A total of 40 casualties in 2014 is still a 45% reduction between what the target reduction of 10% a year against the baseline of 2010 should have delivered (10% reduction year on year should have left 73 casualties in 2013, a 10% further reduction in 2014 would have generated 66 casualties).

⁸³ p. 7, CfR II Project Document, 2011-15

⁸⁴ Almost to the detriment of being able to meet the terms of the TOR with regards to other evaluation questions (although on the other hand the bottom up approach provided evidence for all key questions).

⁸⁵ This is true both of UNDP and the CMAA, although it is understood that both have staff dedicated in theory at least to this activity. It is important to emphasize that the evaluator *found no evidence* and it is hoped evidence can be provided to enable this finding to be adjusted.

regulation and monitoring and project management. The Socio-Economic Planning and Database Management Unit is responsible for oversight of the Post-Clearance Monitoring Process undertaken in the field by MAPU staff, and whilst this process provides some meaningful quantitative data outputs *for the sector* (how much land was release for different types of usage⁸⁶, numbers of households benefiting, % of female headed households, total numbers of beneficiaries, % of females, % of PWD), this does not provide any real indication qualitative outcomes, nor does it seem to have been disaggregated in a way that would allow even these simple results to feed into CfR II reporting⁸⁷.

Nonetheless, the results, outcomes and impact documented by this evaluation's field work, supported and complemented by the results of the Household Study reveal that the project has been relatively effective in terms of KD 3, and to a lesser extent in KD 1 & 2. It has had many positive and sustainable impacts, despite having run for 5 year without any meaningful monitoring information on outcomes to enable course corrections should there have been issues. As detailed below, and in the annexes documenting the field work, there are certain anomalies in prioritization and task planning which do mean the project has been less effective than it could have been, had these been spotted in a more timely manner, and possibly – if warranted – corrected. These potential examples of ineffective delivery under KD3 have clearly impacted outcomes and impact too.

In many ways these issues were flagged in the MTR, especially with regards to KD1 & 2. The MTR remained slightly less aware of the potential issues arising in KD3, seeing this deliverable as being highly effective and in particular highly efficient, something that this final evaluation challenges, as stated below. The MTR's summary assessment of effectiveness is quoted in full below, *It is clear is that the CFRII has made considerable progress, however, there are a number of areas that need more focused work over the remaining three years of the project, if it is to deliver all the planned outputs and contribute fully to the Country Programme outcome of "National and sub national capacities strengthened to develop more diversified, sustainable and equitable economy" in the way that was planned.*⁸⁸ The 'focused work' proposed in these areas outlined in the MTR does not appear to have taken place (it relates to KD1 & 2) which appears to have been related to perceptions of donor interest and priority (to focus on KD3). The MTR's conclusions on effectiveness⁸⁹ remain to some extent valid at the end of the project and, perhaps, relate more to political and institutional realities that ultimately may be beyond the realm of possible influence for UNDP, and a project such as CfR II, to affect. This is the reality of Cambodian national ownership. The current state of the sector, and the CMAA's role within it, as described above, are a product ultimately of this national ownership. However, CMAA staff interviewed said that slowly CMAA's position, authority and respect within the sector was improving, and as a result of CfR I and II it has moved from being seen as 'weak and ineffective' in 2005, to having far greater influence and effectiveness as the national co-ordinator ten years later. Furthermore, at the sub-national level, operators interviewed suggested that the practical processes of co-ordination, prioritisation and planning were working relatively well, and the MAPU structure, did sit at the centre of these processes. The MAPU-led planning process engages with multiple stakeholders and considers a wide range of factors and interests in developing annual work plans at the provincial level. Indeed,

⁸⁶ 66.1% for agriculture in 2013 for example.

⁸⁷ More recent reporting does better in this regard, for example, the 2nd ¼ report for 2015, notes 'Of 240 sites visited, there were 77 (32%) were released under CFRI in 2014. 75% of the released land is being used for agriculture (75%), 17% for risk reduction/increased community safety and 8% not being used'.

⁸⁸ p.6, MTR, June 2013

⁸⁹ p.6, MTR, June 2013

many operators confirmed that the central CMAA's 'light touch' coordination was infinitely preferable to more directive and authoritarian forms of national co-ordination experienced in other countries, whereby central priorities can and often do take precedence over local planning, and the needs of local stakeholders, including beneficiaries. **Therefore, whilst comments made elsewhere about the limitations of community participation in the annual planning process in rural Cambodia are valid, the fact that there is a process at all, and that it is transparent and relatively effective, is a significant achievement of Cambodian ownership of mine action, and the institution strengthening and capacity development that has gone on under KDs 1 and 2 of CfR II.** As noted in the draft national mine action plan, *'The general principle in Cambodia is that whilst CMAA works to develop and promulgate general principles on prioritization, the detailed work on prioritization process within these general principles will be the work of the MAPU. As an additional enabling activity, the capacity of the PMAC/MAPU to manage this process will be reviewed through a needs assessment, carried out as a consultancy mission, and a capacity development plan prepared if necessary.'*⁹⁰ This last – as argued below – is critical to evaluating effectiveness of KD1, and was urgently prioritized for follow up research immediately after this evaluation formally ended⁹¹, since it is at sub-national level that the *real* business of mine action co-ordination takes place, and this appeared not to be sufficiently acknowledged in the MTR.

The MTR concludes its summary findings on 'effectiveness' by noting, *'However, where mine clearance operations are concerned (Deliverable 3) it is clear that work being carried out in the heavily affected provinces of Banteay Meanchey, Battambang and Pailin has effectively contributed to the outputs of the CFRII and its overall output related to the release of land through national mechanisms.'*⁹²

KD1: As the MTR notes, Although many of the pieces of the policy and strategic framework puzzle are in place, the aim to "provide the CMAA with the capacity required to effectively lead strategic development and policy dialogue and to ascertain its ownership and leadership of the sector" is not currently being addressed as effectively as possible by the activities being undertaken under this deliverable. The main strategy document, the NMA, was completed under the first phase of the CFR project. Since this development, there has been limited evolution in terms of the CMAA's leadership of the mine action sector as a whole through strategic development and policy dialogue. The MTR rightly notes that what it calls an 'ensemble of activities' undertaken under KD1, have not really 'created significant progress on the intended deliverable; this has left a gap at the level of sector-wide coordination'.⁹³ As detailed in Annex 7, Summary of Annual Work Plans, these three activities have essentially remained the same during the second half of the project, as is also reflected in the project reporting, and equally have done little more to progress the CMAA's strategic leadership beyond the situation in 2013 when the MTR was undertaken. Arguably this could be seen as a lack of 'adaptive management' by UNDP in its support to the CMAA, and a degree of de-sensitivity to evaluation, despite formal process of accepting and developing a management response plan to the recommendations of the evaluation. The MTR cites the following as examples of this:

- **Limited structured approvals of mine clearance projects**
 - Few donors having signed up to the Partnership Principles
 - Project documents not being submitted for review in a systematic

⁹⁰ p.18 Draft National Strategy Plan for Mine Action in Cambodia (v.3, early 2014)

⁹¹ NB The results of this review of the Planning and Prioritisation Process will be fed into the final version of this report

⁹² p.6, MTR, June 2013

⁹³ p.17, MTR, June 2013

- manners
 - Although the MTR accepts that the Mine Action Working Group and TRGs do provide a certain level of coordination and consultation
- **Absence of an annual mine clearance plan (for Cambodia, coordinated by the CMAA) and a sector-wide plan**
- **TRG's fail to address fundamental strategic issues**

The MTR even suggested that CfR II detracts senior management's 'time and focus' away from sector-wide co-ordination, and into the minutiae of management of one project. This was a comment made by one of the major operators during the course of this evaluation and in part goes back to questions discussed above in Relevance as to the appropriateness of a national co-ordinator directly managing a project that implements mine action operations. However, as lessons learned from the CfR I suggest, and evidence from CMAA staff received during the course of this evaluation suggest, the experience of managing CfR II has enhanced CMAA's status, but it can not be expected to resolve it entirely since, as stated, this lays with the Cambodian authorities to address, *if they* feel it is an issue. The 2013 GICHD review into the CfR II bidding process also concluded that implementing the CfR II project elements (under KD3) had strengthened the CMAA in terms of KD1 and 2.⁹⁴

The single most significant recommendation of the MTR concerned the development of an Annual Clearance and Mine Action Plan for the sector that *should*, it was argued, be prepared by CMAA for 2014, in consultation with mine action operators and development partners.⁹⁵ As CfR II ends no evidence was found to suggest this annual sector wide plan was in preparation, or that it has been accepted as a priority by the current Secretary General. The draft National Mine Action plan, produced after the MTR, during the second half of 2013, and finalized in early 2014, and referred to above as some kind of substitute for this sector wide annual plan has been shelved. Issues surround this issue are explored more in the main report at this point.

The bigger question for the purpose of this evaluation is the degree to which CfR II has been ineffective because it has not delivered this annual sector wide planning document, which the MTR saw as good practice, a recommendation that was accepted by UNDP at the time but not actioned. The current mine action advisor has suggested, as argued above, and with some justification, that **mine action co-ordination in Cambodia is decentralised, and occurs primarily at the sub-national level, with the centre providing policy and strategic direction. This model is actually highly relevant, and reflects Cambodian government policy on decentralization in recent years.** It is reflected in the output indicator '% of annual tasks conducted in accordance with the MAPU work plan' (which is allocated to KD2, showing a legitimate degree of overlap between KD 1 & 2), which in 2014 stood at 96% reflecting the pragmatic flexibility of the system, and also the willingness of the MAPUs to incorporate operator priorities. Evidence in the field suggested that 'off plan tasks' were usually related to urgent and unforeseen government priorities⁹⁶, and sensibly the system allows for this. Equally, and in line with CfR II priorities as well as the NMAS, the target for agricultural land use (set at 70% for 2015, up from 50% in the baseline year of 2010), appears to be on track,

⁹⁴ p. 2, *Review of the Cambodian Mine Action and Victim Assistance Authority (CMAA) 2011 – 2013 Bidding Process*, GICHD, 2013

⁹⁵ p.i, Annex A, CfR II Annual Report, 2014

⁹⁶ In 2015, in Pailin, the MAPU confirmed that only 2 tasks were off plan, related to the urgent need of the province to construct some buildings in a hazardous area. Chhim Sambath, Chief MAPU, Pailin 26th October 2015

with 66% of land being cleared for agriculture in 2013⁹⁷ as stated in the most recent project reporting. This is an output indicator allocated to KD1. Alternatively, the other output indicator for KD1 suggest on-going and relatively ineffective performance (against targets set in the project) in this regard. Firstly, the metrics for the per-centage of funding for mine action that is endorsed by the CMAA (baseline in 2010 of 0%, and target for 2015 of 80%), which in 2014 had only reach 40%. In absolute terms however, this represents a great improvement over the baseline, and consists of projects such as CFRII; and major projects funded by UK's DFID and WRA, of the US Dept. of State. This last is significant, since the US is not a signature to the Partnership Principles, this can be taken as a positive indicator of increased effectiveness of CMAA as the national body responsible for co-ordination. The CMAA Secretary General also reported that informal coordination with Japan has also improved over the course of the past year, and he expects relationships with both the Embassy and JMAS will continue to develop⁹⁸. Secondly, an aggregate metric based on an assessment of the 'Capacity of the CMAA to lead the implementation of the NMAS annually' (baseline 2009 0 point, target 2015 5 points) with an achievement in 2014 assessed as 1 point⁹⁹. This score is unlikely to change in 2015.

It should be noted that the wording of KD1 explicitly refers to the importance of ensuring mine action resources are 'effectively allocated to national priorities *as defined by local planning processes*'..... Overall, **therefore the absence of a collated national plan, arguably, does not matter so much in terms of CMAA's performance in delivering this key deliverable**, as argued by UNDP's mine action advisor, and **nor – arguably - does it detract from overall effectiveness in regards to KD1. What is critical then, as argued elsewhere, is not CMAA's ability to collate in one document these decentralized planning processes, but the quality of the planning and prioritization process that takes place under the MAPUs at the sub-national level.**

In this sense this KD1 can be seen to have been relatively effectively, although not perfect due to various slight anomalies detected during the course of the field-work, and referred to here. However, the MAPUs are not technically part of CMAA, and are part of the Provincial Administration drawn from various different government ministries. Their work, however, is overseen by CMAA, and takes places with the strategic and policy frameworks (especially the planning guidelines) that represent the top-down elements of the 9-step system. As confirmed by the CMAA Secretary General, they do though receive some direct support from CMAA under funding from Cfr II, such as stationery, equipment and motorbikes etc.¹⁰⁰ This can be interpreted as being in line with general Cambodian government policy on decentralization and the relationship between the national and the sub-national levels of governance, and can equally be seen as successful mainstreaming of mine action responsibility at sub-national level, especially with regards to the PMAC structure and their overall responsibility for mine action planning at provincial level.

Nonetheless, the degree to which the MAPUs and other sub-national processes can be evaluated as part of CMAA's effectiveness *per se* in nationwide co-ordination is open to question, and there might be value reviewing the structural position of

⁹⁷ The 2014 Annual Report, and 2015 Quarterly reports, use the same data, and given the time lag involved in PCM, it is understandable that 2013 is the last year for which information is available.

⁹⁸ Meeting with H.E. Prum Sophakmonkol, Secretary General, CMAA & Ly Panharith, Dep. Sec Gen CMAA, 16th October 2015

⁹⁹ Scores weighted by having NMAS annual work plans (2 points), progress reports (2 points) and NMAS integrated gender-sensitive M & E system in place and endorsed by TWG during Year 1, and sustained during Year 2 – 5 (1 point). The 1 point referring to the latter M & E system which judging by evidence from the evaluation is not working very well in terms of providing qualitative information on outcomes, although it does cover the national programme as a whole.

¹⁰⁰ Email to Paul Davies, 17th October 2015

the MAPUs in this light. Moreover, legitimate donor and other stakeholder interest in having better visibility of Cambodia's overall progress in implementing the NMAS, towards achieving its international obligations, especially under the APMBT, and to be assured that available resources are actually being allocated to national priorities in a rational and effective way, are currently being poorly met by this de-centralised process. This said, the CMAA's commitment to defining the scope of the problem through ongoing survey and initiatives such as the land reclamation survey, shows an important degree of alignment with, and understanding of, the concerns of such stakeholders, and places the national programme in Cambodia ahead of other such national programmes, many of whom appear actively resistant to such scoping and defining of the remaining problem.

Crucially, CMAA's current Secretary General, and UNDP advisory staff, have a long-standing concern that this process of de-centralised prioritization and planning has not been effective at directing mine action resources to the most impacted communities¹⁰¹. Prior to 2012, there was no top down instruction from CMAA to the MAPUs on priority communes (established now on the basis of casualty rates recorded in CMVIS data from the last five years, and the total size of recorded BLS polygons¹⁰²). This meant that the effectiveness of CfR I was limited by the CMAA/UNDP having no real ability to direct clearance resources to the most impacted areas, even at the provincial level. CfR II's focus on the current three provinces in the North West was therefore at one very basic level an attempt to ensure a better focus of resources on impacted areas. The current top down guidance does not rank impacted communes (and some appear to be relatively lightly impacted in terms of both criteria), and MAPUs only have to ensure 75% of the provincial work-plan tasks come from these impacted communes. This system is a great improvement on the planning vacuum that existed before, but very obviously it could be greatly improved in terms of matching the allocation of mine action resources with mine impact communities. This alone provides contextual background that accounts for some of the perceived 'planning anomalies' observed during the course of the field-work on this evaluation. Importantly in 2011, UNDP and CMAA were concerned about the situation, and attempted to introduce an 'Inter-rim Directive' that tried to provide a better fit between impacted communities and the allocation of mine action resources on an annual basis at the provincial level. This would have more tightly focused resources onto the more obviously affected communities, and require that 80% of assets be tasked in these areas during the course of the year. Reportedly this was rejected by CMAC as being too proscriptive, and CMAA's leadership at the time refused to push for the adoption of this system. **It should be noted that without such a more proscriptive centralized planning framework, attempts to link resources to the most impacted communities, such as was foreseen under the draft National Mine Action plan, or potentially and more simply for MAHD's tasks, will be undermined and this is seen as a key 'centre of gravity' for the entire system of mine action co-ordination and planning in Cambodia¹⁰³.**

¹⁰¹ Meeting with Tong Try, Senior National Project Officer, Clearing for Results II, UNDP, 9th December 2015

¹⁰² As noted these also are seen as imperfect tools. The casualty data maybe under-recorded, and the accuracy of the BS polygons is also open to question for various reasons: work of the informal private sector that is not being recorded, suspected area that was not previously captured, the back log in entering clearance data etc.

¹⁰³ As noted below at footnote 119, the current system allows for allocations of resources to be made in ways that appear to be disconnected to a rational allocation based on indicators of impact. The MAPUs can not be criticized for this as there is no formal expectation or requirement that they should link resources more tightly to impacted communities. It was noticeable however that in Pailin, during February - December 2015, 31.67% of CfR II tasks were allocated to what can be seen as the most affected commune, Stueng Trang, and 40% were in the second most affected commune, Steung Kach. By contrast in Banteay-Meanchay, 67% of CfR II tasks were allocated to the 7th most impacted commune, Svay Chek. Whereas in

The MTR is however justified in questioning the effectiveness of CfR II under KD1 in as much as there is a disconnect between the explicit wording of the deliverable, and the activities that are associated with it. Activity 1 for example refers to the development of a programme-based approach in the mine action sector, which is adjusted substantially (to reflect the reality) in the 2015 work plan that speaks only of ‘aligning the existing programme through the TWG’. Activity 2 merely references strengthening collaboration between MAPUs and CMVIS and does not focus attention on the importance of prioritization and planning at the sub-national level, as would be justified by the wording of KD1 and its *de facto* criticality not only for the effectiveness of CfR II’s work under KD3, but for the sector as a whole. Activity 3 explicitly calls for the compiling of a work plan on an annual basis. Again this wording remains the same until the 2015 work plan which again accepting this global work plan will not be delivered, merely calls for the project to work to ‘strengthen planning, monitoring and outcome assessment’.

- The project did attempt to establish baseline data, and commissioned the National Institute of Statistics, to undertake an outcomes assessment in 2013. This appears to have been an ineffective initiative, which curiously (given the project’s NIM status) appears to have been managed by UNDP on CMAA’s behalf. See main report at Page 90 for details.

Finally, as noted by the CMAA Secretary General KD1 and 2 both relate to issues of CMAA capacity, and its ability to adequately fulfill its mandate, especially with regards to co-ordination. CMAA and many operators consulted, consider the TWG and the TRGs to have improved in recent years, in part reflecting the quality of senior leadership now in place within the organization.

Overall then, KD1 is, as concluded by the MTR, only partially effective given the disparate range of activities supported which do not appear coherent. CMAA’s position and authority within the sector has improved over the course of CfR II, and it has improving relationships with many key stakeholder, including CMAC and NPMEC with whom it has worked directly on CfR II. It is also building relationships and has improved co-ordination with key donors, even those who are not formally signed up to the Partnership Principles, but who nonetheless are increasingly consulting with CMAA on the projects they fund and support. CMAA is, however, no further forward in developing and overseeing annual national mine action plans to deliver the NMAS. However, under its top-down guidance and policies, the bottom-up MAPU-led processes at the sub-national level are working relatively well in providing transparent and effective mine action prioritization and planning that reflects a broad and consultative process. Attempts to develop a more formal plan to deliver the strategy, that appear to have been driven more by UNDP than CMAA, however proved ultimately to be ineffective. Ultimately, the shape of such policies, frameworks and plans needs to be owned by the CMAA, and accepted by all major stakeholders, especially national stakeholders, if they are to be truly effective and ‘in use’ in real terms, and not merely artefacts developed as a result of external pressure and advice.

KD2: Refer to Page 92 of the Main Report

The MTR’s comments on the effectiveness of CfR II’s KD2 remain far more pertinent overall. It notes, *‘A significant emphasis of capacity development efforts– and certainly the emphasis of the Capacity Development Plan -- has been project management, and specific skills development. These are useful and worthwhile capacities to support as they do move the CMAA further down the road of being able to coordinate the sector. The*

Battambang only 19% of CfR II tasks in the same period were allocated in the top 10 impacted communes (only 2 were worked in), with 18.1 % going to the 14th most impacted, Ou Samril. See Annex 8 for details.

question at hand, however, is whether capacity development activities carried out thus far have substantially improved the CMAA's capacity in areas relevant to the overall coordination, planning, regulation and monitoring of mine action that are the key focus of CFRII'.¹⁰⁴ Evidence from interviews held with a wide range of staff from all key departments suggests that whilst de-prioritised since the MTR, such capacity development has retained this somewhat fragmented approach that has focused on generalized capacity development, more focused on implementing CfR II than equipping the CMAA to coordinate the sector, especially individual English language training which has taken use of generic external service providers, and – as suggested by the MTR – this has not been linked to any kind of gap analysis concerning CMAA's ability to perform its core business.

The 2009 Capacity Assessment referred to in the MTR, appears to have been the last time a comprehensive baseline assessment was attempted under CfR. The plan as noted by the CMAA Secretary General is now completely out of date and is 'too old to use'¹⁰⁵. The Jan 2011 '*Capacity Assessment Report and Capacity Building Plan of the Department of General Administration Cambodia Mine Action Authority (CMAA)*' appears to be more concerned with equipping CMAA with the capacity to undertake the required shift from implementing CfR as a NIM rather than a DIM project, and this is reflected in comments in the MTR that capacity development initiatives seemed during the first half of CfR II to being rather inward looking. The main report quotes extensively from the MTR at this point, as the pattern of the project, and overall situation, appears to have remained unchanged (Page 92/3).

Staffing Structure of CMAA (October 2015)¹⁰⁶

No	Department	Civil Servant	Contracted Staff
1	Secretary General	1	
2	Deputy Secretary General	2	
3	Adviser	6	
4	Secretariat	4	1
5	General Administration	13	16
6	Regulation and Monitoring (R & M)	6	28
7	Social Economic and Planning (SEPD)	22	18
8	Victim Assistance	6	6
9	Public Relation	6	5
10	TWG		1
11	Assistant	2	4

¹⁰⁴ p.21, MTR, June 2013

¹⁰⁵ Meeting with H.E. Prum Sophakmonkol, Secretary General, CMAA & Ly Panharith, Dep. Sec Gen CMAA, 16th October 2016

¹⁰⁶ Email from Ly Panharith, Dep. Sec Gen CMAA, to Paul Davies, 17th October 2015

Note: Nos. 4 to 11 include Deputy Secretary General, Director of Department and other department staff

One issue relating to KD2's effectiveness, concerns the structure of the CMAA and beyond this the breakdown of staffing between civil servants and contracted staff within the three key departments prioritised by CfR II, highlighted in yellow above. It can be seen therefore that key staff in R & M department (especially the QA and QC teams) and the SEPD (Data Base Unit, DBU), with whom much capacity building work has been devoted both by UNDP (with regards to the former) and other partners (especially NPA and GICHHD with regards to the latter) **are not actually civil servants by contracted staff. The DBU about which much concern has been expressed during the course of the project, is mostly staffed by NPA employees.** There are clear issues here that link between issues of effectiveness and sustainability. Beyond this, UNDP's current mine action advisor questions the fit of the current structure – an institutional effectiveness issue – with the CMAA's ability to fulfill its role, as detailed under KD2. *'The current organisational structure of the CMAA needs to be reviewed to ensure that the organisation remains fit for purpose in delivering its role and responsibilities. Currently, the management of the operational planning and information management responsibilities, Mine Risk Education responsibilities, and Regulation and Monitoring (Quality Management and Accreditation) responsibilities are all separated from each other under different departments and under the management of different Deputy Secretary-Generals. These key areas of responsibilities are crucial to effective and integrated approach to operational oversight and assurance of all mine action operations in Cambodia. The lack of an organisational structure to deliver these responsibilities in an integrated way, that is, an Operations Department with full responsibility for all operational oversight and assurance under a single Deputy Secretary-General, reduces the effectiveness of the CMAA'.¹⁰⁷*

Despite being a major KD of CfR II, it is clear from the above that the strategic approach and activities undertaken to achieve this deliverable were poorly conceived for reasons analysed in the MTR, and implementation has produced on partial results. The MTR's entirely sensible recommendation that *'the Capacity Development Plan should be re-assessed and re-adjusted to target the capabilities that have been highlighted in the Capacity Assessment document'* was only 'partially agreed' by UNDP, and the 2014 Annual report Management Response Update makes the comment that this recommendation is only 'partially agreed' and notes that *'limited budget for capacity development hampers some potential responses to this recommendation'*. CMAA's senior leadership noted that there had been discussions about addressing these issues after the MTR, but again these budget limitations and a desire of the donors and UNDP to focus on KD3, meant that no progress was made. As a result **no consolidated and current capacity development plan currently exists for the CMAA, and current management of this issue is delegated to department heads who identify their gaps and areas they need training in¹⁰⁸.**

The 2014 Annual Report Management Response further notes under 'comments' that UNDP intends to, *'Coordinate with potential DFID capacity building contracts to avoid duplication of effort. The contract was won by NPA/GICHHD partnership. These plans have yet to be shared with UNDP CFRII'*. This reflects a degree of 'fragmentation of advice' in supporting the CMAA due to the lack of a truly

¹⁰⁷ Email from David Horrocks, Mine Action Advisor, CMAA, to Paul Davies, 22nd November 2015

¹⁰⁸ Meeting with HE Prum Sophakmonkol, Secretary General, CMAA & Ly Panharith, Dep. Sec Gen CMAA, 16th October 2016. i.e the R & M department have training for the QA/QM teams, and the SEPD in planning and prioritisation

comprehensive capacity assessment and institutional development plan that could reasonably have been expected from CfR II given the centrality of this Key Deliverable. The current DFID capacity development project, although developed in consultation with the CMAA, and beyond the remit of this evaluation to review in detail, appears to suffer from the lack of such a global plan, and being able to fit within and contribute to a coherent approach to CMAA institution strengthening (that arguably should be led by UNDP given its dominant strategic position of support with the CMAA). As a result the project appears fragmented and in some instances questionable¹⁰⁹. **To some extent this goes to the heart of the quality UNDP's support to the CMAA as a whole, with regards to KDs1 and 2, both of which reflect on CMAA's ability to lead the sector. In turn, this reflects on the way in practice UNDP's attention has become overly focused on the land release component of KD3, and the 'projectising' of CfR II as an operational, rather than an institution strengthening project.** Consequently, as the CMAA Secretary General notes, despite their annual planning which identifies gaps in capacity, and attempts to address these, lack of funding means there are still many challenges and ongoing gaps.

Two key areas emerged during this final evaluation in terms of CMAA's ability to meet its mandate, and equally the project's delivery of KD2. These are the quality of prioritization and planning that take place at the sub-national level, as outlined above. Secondly, the work of any national mine action co-ordinator is firmly rooted in information management, and in particular in the work of the Data Base unit in overseeing the IMSMA system. This is clearly essential to support the development of work plans, to ensure effective prioritisation and the ability of a national coordinator like CMAA to accurately meet reporting requirements, including those with regards to progress in delivering the NMAS and meeting obligations under the APMBT.

There is currently a widespread perception that the CMAA DBU is not currently fit for purpose. Some of this relates to the overall position and authority of the CMAA as national co-ordinator, and issues (mostly in the past) with regards to willingness of operators to share reports with the organization. It should be noted that one operator, NPMEC although a partner under CfR II, still does not share reporting on work done outside the limits of that one project¹¹⁰. In October 2015, the DBU estimated that it had between 1200 and 1500 completion reports received but not entered on the system¹¹¹. One outcome reported of this, is that clearance operators accessing IMSMA for planning purposes may visit sites believing it is yet to be released, only to find it has been completed and the land is in use. Beyond this, the evaluation also revealed instances where SHAs were still recorded as un-cleared, and yet were under cultivation, presumably having been cleared by the informal (private sector). CMAA attribute the back log as being due to the late arrival of the new version of IMSMA, IMSMA NG, in December 2014 and the necessity therefore to translate all previous records from 2010 onwards into the new format, a requirement which operators also had to undertake¹¹². This has resulted in the current hiatus in data, and various operators are reportedly at various stages of completion in terms of translating data between the two systems. CMAA noted that it was only with the initiation of the BLS survey in 2009 that the DBU has been equipped to run IMSMA, since the system is dependent on surveyed polygons. The evaluator however has found various other information anomalies that were not

¹⁰⁹ Evidence is given in the main report at Page 95

¹¹⁰ Given NPMEC's central role in the informal formal (Government) sector above, this is a serious omission. Based on discussions at NPMEC HQ 16th October 2015.

¹¹¹ Email from Sara, Head of DBU to David Horrocks, 21st October 2015

¹¹² HE Prum Sophakmonkol, Secretary General, CMAA, 13th November 2015

readily understandable, despite attempts to gain clarification¹¹³. Further examples provided in the main report at Page 96/7. Again to some extent this is a reflection of issues of fragmentation of advice and the lack of a coherent overview of CMAA's institutional effectiveness and capacity development needs. Support to the DBU currently comes from GICHD and Norwegian People's Aid, and many of the staff working in the DBU are also NPA staff, an issue for sustainability as well. Although UNDP's mine action advisor has expressed concerns with the performance of the unit, this is seen to some extent as being beyond the scope of his work, even though it can clearly be seen to fall within the context of CfR II's KD2. Whilst CMAA's explanation for the current problems of the DBU are no doubt valid, the current hiatus relating to versions of IMSMA has already been going on for a year, and although progress has been made, CMAA acknowledges that it is not yet in hand. In these circumstances, where there is a clear functionality gap, urgent action *should* be prioritized and remedial steps taken.

Overall then it is clear that whilst some individualized capacity development took place, especially in the first half of the project, this was more focused on the internal requirements to manage CfR II, than the broader institutional capacity to fulfill its role across the entire sector, as detailed in the wording of KD2. Whilst the CMAA Secretary General believes that a lot has changed within the organization as a result of CfR II, in particular with regards to the QA/QC teams, Information Management Unit, SEPD, VA and Procurement staff of the GAD, and the CMAA is able to perform its work adequately, there has been only limited overall improvement at the institutional level, as highlighted in the MTR. The only conclusion possible is that the project has been relatively ineffective in this regard.

KD3: Refer to Page 98 of the main report. At first sight, it is easy to suggest that, as the UNDP project reporting emphasizes that CfR II has been both highly effective and – especially – efficient (as reviewed below) in delivering KD3. Summary statistics from the 2014 Annual Report¹¹⁴ and the 2nd Quarter 2015 Reports illustrate this.

Table 11: Cumulative Total of Released Land by CFRI and CFRII (2006- 30 June 2015)

	CFR Phase I (2006- Mar. 2011) (m ²)	CFR Phase II (May 2011-31 March 2015) (m ²)	Total CFRI + CFRII (2006 to 31 March 2015) (m ²)
Land Release Contracts	40,355,280	86,262,297	126,617,577
Land Reclamation Non- Technical Survey Contracts	N/A	28,916,067	28,916,067
TOTAL	40,355,280	115,178,364	155,533,644

Table 12: CFRII contribution to national outputs (01 Jan - 30 June 2015)

	CFRII Land Release	CFRII LRNTS	CFRII Total	National Database	% CFRII
Number of minefields/BLS Polygons released	270	747	1,017	1,102	92%
Total area (C1+C2+C3) (m²)	16,995,790	28,916,067	45,911,857	52,337,937	88%
- Area released by Non-Technical Survey (NTS) (m ²)	83,493	28,916,067	28,999,560	30,403,642	95%
- Area released by Technical Survey (TS) (m ²)	6,193,324	N/A	6,193,324	6,077,697	102%
- Area released by clearance (m ²)	10,718,973	N/A	10,718,973	15,856,598	68%
APM found/destroyed	2,686	N/A	2,686	2,822	95%
ATM found/destroyed	49	N/A	49	119	41%
ERW found/destroyed	3,581	N/A	3,581	5,243	68%
Improvised mines found/destroyed	5	N/A	5	66	8%

¹¹³ For example, clearance attributed to certain villages – for example Chaeng village in Chay Meanchay, or Khvav Lech in Svay Chek, but actually taking place many kilometres away according to the information in IMSMA.

¹¹⁴ The 2014 Annual Report, as other CfR II reports combines targets from both CfR projects (CfR 37 Km² and CfR II 35 km², overall 72 km²), and also results, noting that by the end of 2014, the combined target of 72km² had already been exceeded by a healthy margin.

Donors noted that they are generally satisfied with the reporting that they receive on the project. But it is the contribution of CfR II to the overall sector that they feel less clear¹¹⁵. **At first sight then, CFR II under CMAA management of a UNDP NIM project, has been highly effective.**

CfR II Project Outputs, including Land Reclamation Survey, to October 2015

	CFR Phase I (2006- Mar. 2011) (m²)	CFR Phase II (May 2011-30 Sep 2015) (m²)	Total CFRI + CFRII (2006 to 30 Sep 2015) (m²)
Land Release Contracts	40,355,280	95,958,288	133,980,765
Land Reclamation Non-Technical Survey Contracts	N/A	42,871,774	42,871,774
TOTAL	40,355,280	138,830,062	176,852,539

The third quarter of 2015, as reported in the Project Board meeting in Phnom Penh on 5th November 2015, detailed an extra 9,696,991 m² released during the second and third quarters, with an additional 13,955,707 m² released by the Land Reclamation NTS project, meaning an overall release of 23,652,698 m² released. In other words through the efforts of the regular contracted land release work of operators (using C1 NTS cancellation, C2 TS release and C3 released through actual clearance), together with the Land Reclamation project (using only C1 cancellation), nearly 74% of the original target of the 5 year CfR II project was achieved in just 6 months. **Whilst extremely impressive at first sight, these apparent indicators of effectiveness, should also signal a concern for the mine action community and donors.** Headline metrics such as these, especially when added together with financial data to produce metrics that hint at efficiency, can be misleading. As argued above, land release does not necessarily deliver impact in socio-economic and human security terms.

This said, UNDP, CMAA and SDC need to be commended for having the vision to commission the Land Reclamation Survey in 2015¹¹⁶, which was implemented and completed in the second and third quarters of the year. In part, this provides validation of the scepticism expressed above with regards to the apparent effectiveness of the project, because it was the suspicion that large areas on the database could be cheaply dispensed with through non-technical survey that motivated the initiative. In total, in the first 9 months of 2015 5,815 polygons were revisited, of which 500 were entirely released, with a further 531 partly released (over 20%). The success of this project to some extent perfectly illustrates the evaluator's concern with the dominant value of the project as being effective and efficient land release of existing BLS polygons.

N.B. It should be noted that a process of re-survey and land release through C1 was occurring anyway within the national programme during the period of CfR II, as stressed by CMAA management. Thus, during the Jan – June 2015, 2,378,563 m² was released through C1 in Odar Meanchay, and 3,313,255m² in Siem Reap. Arguably, this could be turned on its head and CfR II could be criticized in effectiveness terms for not incentivizing more investment in re-survey from the beginning of the programme, especially since NTS under CfR II has generated a total of 440 new BLS polygons in 2015 (417 during the Land Reclamation Survey period) and put an additional 66.23 km² on the database (65.38 km² during the Land Reclamation Survey period). Overall suspect

¹¹⁵ Comment by SDC at the CfR II Project Board Meeting, 5th November 2015, Phnom Penh

¹¹⁶ An additional US 740,000 was provided by SDC for this purpose.

area on the database has grown by 45.32 km² during 2015, something that is a cause of concern for some operators who have questioned the quality of the process underlying some of this survey.

It is not entirely fair to suggest that the fact that these 500 polygons could be released entirely, is indicative of poor initial BLS survey, although this might be a contributory factor. As such this serves to question the effectiveness of the BLS survey funded by CfR II during the first two years of CfR II, continuing work initiated in 2009 under CfR I. Far more probable is that this release of polygons has been facilitated by the combined effects of informal (private) sector mine action (the likely primary cause), including the threat-reduction work of unregulated private operators whose work was sanctioned with calls for greater restrictions and control in the CMAA's April 20124 report into rising short-term casualties, as well as on-going environmental degradation of some mines, and increased pressure on the land in certain locations. All of these factors together has meant that farmers in many areas have started to cultivate land surveyed and recorded as hazardous, and have been able to continue to do so *without evidence of mines* for three ploughing seasons (thereby meeting the national standard for land release).

- The main report contains an important observation on these issues at Page 101

It should be remembered that the vast majority of CfR II beneficiaries, some 83.5% of those households interviewed in the HH study, and others living in mine affected areas are, and have been for years, cultivating land *with* evidence of mines. The relatively low accident rates in recent years indicate that this is a rational choice, within reasonable levels of risk, and not behaviour that should be sanctioned or – even more irrelevant at this stage – attempt to be suppressed through further MRE¹¹⁷.

As the MTR review notes, *The effectiveness of the project approach and its implementation turns on whether the prioritisation model operates as it should and guarantees that Provincial work plans for clearance developed by MAPU are being developed in a transparent and inclusive manner.*¹¹⁸ This does, however, start to merge into considerations of impact reviewed below. The fieldwork associated with this evaluation has revealed, as detailed above at Section 3.2 (and in the annexes containing the field studies) several apparently anomalous situations¹¹⁹. It is of particular interest for these arguments to point that large areas of SHA were cancelled by an operator in the north of the Teckar Phnom Chaa 317 site in Svay Chek commune.¹²⁰ **Thus while large areas may have been released quickly, and at low cost, does this make the land release effective (and efficient). As noted above, quantitative indicators of area released, divorced from outcomes and impact monitoring information, becomes a rather meaningless target, suggesting that for evaluation purposes**

¹¹⁷ As ever caveats need to be made about possible under-recording of accidents and incidents in new villages where the poor are most vulnerable, as well as the high impact of ATM incidents in terms of casualties when these incidents occur.

¹¹⁸ p.26, MTR June 2013

¹¹⁹ For example, in Sre Antak village, a large site with very low mines being prioritized by the commune chief, over the priorities of the villagers, who had – as demonstrated by later clearance under CfR II and suggested by outstanding SHAs in the village centre far higher priorities, both in risk and threat density and characteristic terms.

¹²⁰ This is an area that has seen extensive clearance by CMAC (rather than cancellation and release through technical survey) and under CfR II contracts, and on many polygons low yields in terms of mines, and often low risk mines being cleared (many areas where the only mines found were Type 69s for example). Analysis revealed that 57% of tasks done by CfR II in February – October 2015 in Banteay-Meanchay were recorded as being allocated to Khvav Lech and Chamka Lo villages, when in actual fact most were in Teckar Phnom Chaa 317.

assessment of effectiveness in these circumstances, and with the current information available becomes a rather hollow exercise.



NB note the area cleared is in m² and the figures shown here need to be multiplied by a factor of 10,000. Data represented in this way to make meaningful comparison between area and items cleared over the course of the project. Figures for 2015 are projected on a pro-rata basis, as per results to October 2015

Source: UNDP CfR II project data contained in full as Annex 9 of this report.

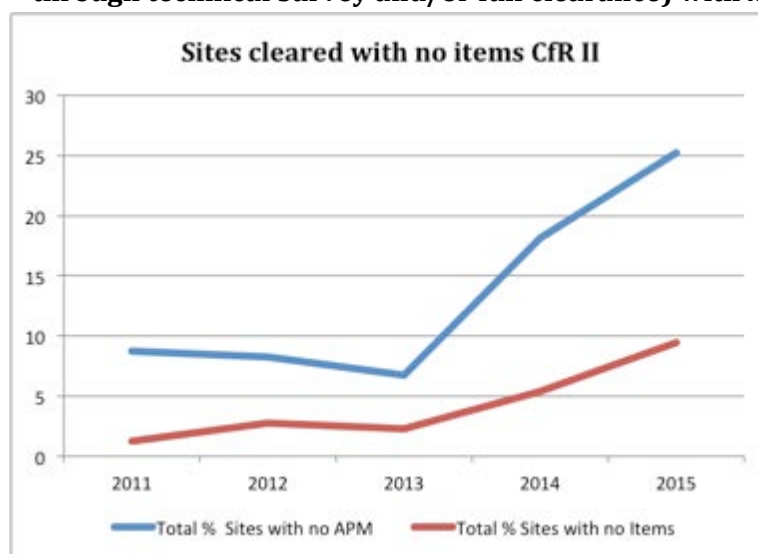
However, even different or additional quantitative indicators could potentially greatly enhance both the

monitoring and evaluation of effectiveness any future project. As noted in the MTR one key metric of effectiveness is to consider the number of items, especially APMs (and in some places ATMs) found¹²¹. Thus whilst the total area released year on year under CfR II has risen, it is perhaps no coincidence that the overall numbers of items found and destroyed, including APMs has fallen steadily since 2012.

Observation: It should be noted that the overall paradigm within which CfR II and the Cambodian mine action sector operators is the APMBT, but as noted above ERW have become a more pressing humanitarian issue. In many communities, such as Ta Mang and Prasant Tbaeng, random ATMs often in fields that have been 'threat-reduced' but not cleared to national standards (thereby leaving some residual threat items) can have a devastating impact, even if the number of such incidents is relatively small. Thus whilst the legal regime governing mine action is focused on APMs, the humanitarian and developmental impact of other items is arguably as important in risk management terms, if not more so, and future projects (MAHD) need to consider this.

121

Even more disturbing are the number of sites released (and typically this means through technical survey and/or full clearance) with *no items*, as illustrated below.



This appears to have dramatically increased in the second half of Cfr II. UNDP staff working on Cfr II have suggested that this is not related to pressures on operators to deliver ever more efficient programming, and base these arguments on the independence of the MAPU prioritisation and planning system from operator influence. However, both this evaluation, the GICHD bidding review (2013) and the DFID evaluation (2013)

cited above have found evidence that operators can – either for good or ill – influence the selection of sites that go into the overall provincial work plan from which Cfr II tasks are selected. One mine action expert suggested the only way operators could achieve the world-beating low costs associated with the project was by consciously selecting tasks from the work plan which would enable them to process large areas of low threat land, together with a mix of higher impact tasks. It is plausible to suggest that operators may even promote some of these tasks onto the work plan during the process in order to be able to achieve such low cost operations. CMAC's clearance certainly appears to operate on a form of fixed site basis – selecting a few locations such as Teckar Phnom Chas 317 in Svay Chek or Duon Tret, Tassanh, in Samlout – and clearing a range of SHAs in those areas. UNDP staff have also suggested that falling numbers of item found are normal in a mature mine action programme, but this is not necessarily a reflection of the national programme, but rather of results produced by the way Cfr II is structure and the implications and pressures that have flown from this.

Jan-Jun2015

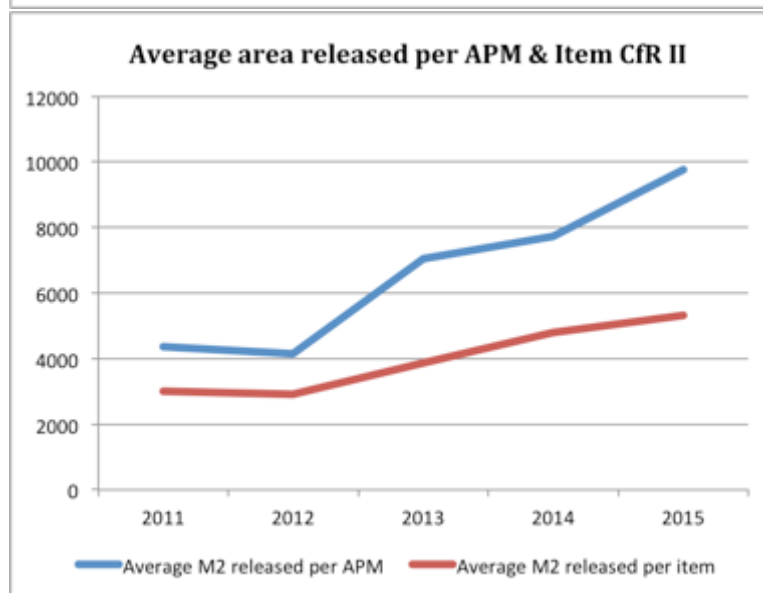
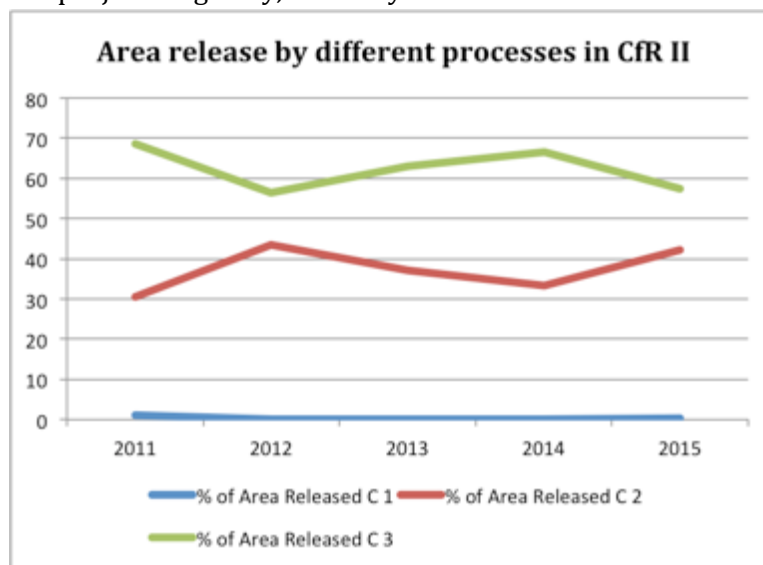
OPERATOR	C1(m ²)	C2(m ²)	C3(m ²)	TOTAL(m ²)	AP	AT	ERW
CMAC	32,473	2,816,267	4,363,083	7,211,823	864	35	604
HALO TRUST	18,727,108	203,371	3,460,951	22,391,430	707	30	86
NPMEC	0	252,385	2,034,160	2,286,545	578		205
MAG	5,548	13,841		19,389			
CSHD							
Grand Total	18,765,129	3,285,864	9,858,194	31,909,187	2,149	65	895

Source: CMAA Fact Sheet, 5th June 2015

Whilst it is noticeable that HALO Trust's reporting information appears to be the most comprehensive (CMAC certainly had released more land that reported on the fact sheet above), it is perhaps significant that HALO cleared 707 APMs in the course of releasing 3,664,322 m² through C2 and C3 processes, whereas Cfr II contractor CMAC cleared 864 APMs in the course of releasing 7,179,350 m². This means HALO is destroying 1 mine for every 5,182 m² released by these processes, whereas CMAC is destroying 1 mine for every 8,309 m² released. There is nothing wrong *per se* with these CMAC performance results, and it is impressive to see that a substantial amount of land is being released through technical survey. HALO Trust noted that CMAC is a good operator for clearing

large low-density minefields (such as A2.2 and A4), for which HALO has no current efficient solution. Equally, this reveals the importance of having a diverse national programme with different operators with different core strengths and competencies. **However, it is clear that in Cambodia today there are still high-risk, high density SHAs.** HALO has for a long time been known for its focus on high-density minefields, especially those in the K5 border mine belts. Its focus on these areas is now seen as even more relevant due to migration and land hunger issues to these last remaining areas of the frontier, and therefore mine action in these areas is certainly much more than 'chasing numbers', but reflects a focus on high impact minefields, that often contain densely laid high-risk mines (PMNs), and is therefore highly effective in every sense.

It is also questionable that whilst the Land Reclamation project was able to release large areas of land, operators typically released very little land by C1 throughout the course of the project. Arguably, this may reflect the effectiveness of the MAPU led planning and



prioritization process, putting better tasks on the workplan. However, the possibility exists that some areas cleared or released through technical survey could and should have been released by NTS (C1). It is encouraging in effectiveness terms to see that whilst most land released under Cfr II is still released as a result of C3, the amount of land released by C2 has increased slightly over the course of the project.

Finally, while the number of sites cleared with no items has risen, so too has the average area released per mine cleared risen over the course of the project. This is reflected in an apparent significant increase in the cost per APM destroyed as detailed below in the section on efficiency. Again it is possible to

interpret this not as being a reflection of a process of working through higher priority minefields earlier in the project (as we have seen new area is being added to the Data Base, and HALO Trust continues to clear far more dense minefields), but rather **may represent the influence of the project on the operators, under pressure to deliver increasing cost savings in the name of efficiency.** Equally, if this is true it could be seen as evidence of operator influence in the MAPU planning process. Ultimately,

something is producing these changing metrics, and the project has to provide a convincing analytical narrative in the context of effectiveness. It is noticeable that such a narrative and depth of analysis has been missing from reporting presented to donors and this needs to be improved going forward into the MAHD project

Overall then, CfR II has in its own terms (as an area release project) been highly effective project in delivering results under KD3. However, metrics of area released on their own, are relatively meaningless, and as argued below may have become a perverse incentive. As argued above, more meaningful quantitative indicators can be achieved by including information on the number of items cleared, and especially APMs (in the context of the APMBT framework that dominates the sector to a large extent). Beyond this in the context of contemporary Cambodia, this could be further dis-aggregated between low and high-risk mines cleared, as a measure of true effectiveness. **High-risk mines in areas which have seen substantial informal sector demining, such as Chaeng, in Chay Meanchay represent a clear blockage that the formal sector is uniquely able to respond to, and it is surprising that areas such as those, or the outstanding high-risk minefields in the centre of Sre Antak, in Sala Krau, are yet to be cleared by CfR II** (this is especially true since the 'knowledge is in the system' and in both cases these villages were flagged as clear priorities by **district level authorities**, and yet have not been released under five years of CfR II). Ultimately, as described in the project document itself, effectiveness can only be truly assessed by linking the outputs generated, with the outcomes to be reviewed under impact. **The impression generated at the end of this final evaluation (to be validated by further research) is that whilst KD3 has been effective in its own terms (over-delivery of land released in quantitative terms), and should still be considered relatively effective even after qualification, it is likely to have been less effective than it might have been in real terms because concerns exist about the quality of the prioritization and planning process that is taking place at sub-national level under the MAPUs.**

4.3 Efficiency (page 107 of the unabridged draft report)

Efficiency is understood as, *The extent to which inputs (financial, HR, technical, material resources were converted into outputs, in the most efficient way possible.* As the TOR states that the evaluation will use the documented benefits of the CfR II, to assess its efficiency. Efficiency is never simply delivering results as cheaply as possible but also relates to the effectiveness in delivering results or outputs, and beyond this the outcomes and impact of the project. Therefore, a contract that is seen as cheap cf. the intended deliverables, is not at all efficient if the outputs are poor or partially achieved, and the impact negligible. **An evaluation of efficiency can not therefore be divorced from comments on the effectiveness of the KDs as above, as well as comments on impact below. The final evaluation has the strong impression (from project reporting and comments made by the project team) that the project has taken efficiency as arguably its dominant value, and this is reflected for example in the presentation of results to the Project Board on 5th November 2015, which explicitly stated the area cleared, contract value and what this represents in cost per m² released.** The word efficiency is also used explicitly in the language of KD3. Equally, as noted below, it stressed the vital importance of transparency in local planning (by the MAPUs). This is therefore to some extent the 'centre of gravity of the entire project'. It is noticeable too that no such headline attention was given to the efficiency with which KDs 1 & 2 were delivered, again reflecting that KD3 has become somewhat conflated with the project as a whole, and little if no discussion in the Project Board was had with regards to KD 1 & 2.

Current Contracts: 01 February to 31 October 2015

Province	Contractor	Contract Value (USD)	BLS Area (m ²)	Cost per m ² (USD))
Battambang	CMAC	2,039,107	11,855,957 m ²	0.17
Banteay Meanchey	CMAC	1,015,315.42	5,730,350 m ²	0.18
Pailin	NPMEC	758,253.00	4,136,009 m ²	0.18
Total		3,812,675.74	21,722,316	

NB Wikipedia defines A **perverse incentive** is an incentive that has an unintended and undesirable result which is contrary to the interests of the incentive makers. Perverse incentives are a type of unintended consequence. For example, in Hanoi, under French colonial rule, a program paying people a bounty for each rat tail handed in was intended to exterminate rats. Instead, it led to the farming of rats. Perverse incentives are well known in the provision of public goods, and donor funded mine action would fit this definition. In this case, the incentive is to provide land released for an ever lower price. This may create an incentive not to operate on priority SHAs more efficiently, but rather to ensure the land that is being released has the characteristics that facilitate cheap and easy release, regardless of the priority (impact) on the people and blockage it represents to local development. **The independence and transparency of prioritisation and development of the local MAPU planning process is thus the critical element not only for the effectiveness and impact of the CfR II, but also for efficiency.**

As argued, throughout this report, the cost per m² *released* metric is at best slightly meaningless, and at worse may represent such a perverse incentive that is feeding through into site selection through the undue pressure this puts on operators, which in turn *possibly* leads operators to influence the independence of the MAPU planning process. It is this that may lie behind the slightly odd selection of tasks observed during the field work, and be reflected in some of the metrics presented in graph form in the effectiveness section above. At the very least, expert interlocutors have pointed out that the drive for year on year efficiency improvements have resulted in CfR II getting a cheap price, but not paying the full economic cost of the clearance¹²². Whilst this practice might superficially be seen as delivering value for the donors and beneficiaries, the opposite maybe true if efficiency has created a perverse incentive. As ever, when efficiency dominates someone pays the price, and in this instance it might be the operators who are being forced to operate, and establish a pattern of operation, that is below the economic costs associated with the activities undertaken, which in turn damages their sustainability. Equally, beneficiaries may also be poorly served by such a system if it does result in perverse incentives where difficult minefields that are assessed as being operationally slow (in terms of potential ability to release m²) are discounted from the priorities because they can't be done under the current cost structure¹²³. Current reporting on the project, and the monitoring upon which it is

¹²² Interviews with Bob Keeley, Mine Action Consultant. Bob made recommendations to UNDP that developed into CfR I and worked as a consultant on CfR II. He has extensive mine action and Cambodia experience.

¹²³ It should be emphasized again that this is an interpretation and one that some in the UNDP project team firmly reject, stressing the independence of the MAPU led prioritization process. It should be stated that this

based, does not appear to be able to provide conclusive evidence on these points. Donors are merely being told that the system as it is *supposed to work* is designed to prevent such issues occurring by maintaining a separation between prioritization and planning and operations. **In reality, the MAPUs are part of the Cambodian provincial government in each province. They will be subject to pressures and forces, and to the culture and values of local government whereby it would be entirely naive to suggest that the power and importance of operator institutions such as CMAC and NPMEC, and their leaders, would be without some influence.** Judging by the results of CfR II and especially its impact, as detailed below, **this influence is not being exercised in a wholly detrimental way: the project is still fundamentally delivering positive outcomes.** Rather the argument presented here suggests that the **efficiency value may be creating unfair pressures, whereby these networks of influence are understandably triggered to allow operators to perform under these financial conditions.** Rather than castigating the operators *if this is the case*, this reflects on the way the project has been structured and run. **It is clear that the only way operators can deliver this type of value, or rather agree to such low prices, is due to the operation of economies of scope, whereby CfR II benefits from costs and assets being covered by other donors i.e. CMAC's equipment is provided largely as GIK by the Japanese government, and these assets are deployed by CMAC to leverage its mine action assets that are funded by the project.** These points were well noted in the 2013 GICHD review of CMAA's bidding processes under CfR II¹²⁴. **In these conditions where the project benefits from economies of scope, it can also be seen to be highly efficient, but the sustainability of this is to be questioned.** Finally, the number of 'low-hanging fruit' polygons where cheap and easy land release may be achieved, especially in light of the success of the land reclamation survey funded through CfR II, will no doubt decline in coming years. The existence of such cherry picking of sites was also observed in the 2013 GICHD report, and has been commented on by many key informants. Closely related to this, some operators expressed concern that the large areas now being put in the database – as detailed above – may, in some way represent an attempt to 're-stock' such low-hanging fruit polygons. **The efficiency value must therefore have less prominence in MAHD, especially if the project re-orientes its culture to focus more on maximizing outcomes and impact in both human security and well being, and livelihood and development terms, as argued below in the impact section.**

The MTR review, lacking the bottom up perspective which this final evaluation has enjoyed, was far less critical and summarized efficiency of the project as: *Overall, the efficiency of the CFRII should be judged as very high....It is also important, however, to ensure that as costs are cut, QA/QC activities are guaranteeing the quality of clearance operations and MAPU post clearance monitoring is confirming that land release has indeed been carried out on the areas prioritised by the provincial clearance plan and that this land is being used for the intended purpose.*¹²⁵

was not the impression of the DFID evaluation in 2013, nor of this one, and the extent of the independence of the MAPU prioritization process will be subjected to further research since it lies at the heart of the effectiveness, efficiency and impact of the CfR II as it is currently structured.

¹²⁴ *In the case of Cambodia, CMAC has been given vehicles and equipment that makes it able to undercut any prices offered by any other operator. Likewise, NPMEC, as an integral part of the Royal Cambodian Armed Forces, enjoys state-supplied vehicles and state-paid salaries and equipment. These competitive advantages have removed any element of completion from the process and other operators realise that they cannot compete on equal terms.* p.19 *Review of the Cambodian Mine Action and Victim Assistance Authority (CMAA) 2011 – 2013 Bidding Process*, GICHD, 2013

¹²⁵ p/6-7, MTR, June 2013

As argued above it is not merely that the land has been used for the intended purpose, but that the right land – the land having most impact on the community has been prioritized. It is also clear that QA/QC activities are primarily technical in nature, and have not been focused on these more programmatic issues of prioritization and planning, assessing impact of contamination and which individuals are most vulnerable and most in need of assistance, especially with regards to the project's aspiration to be 'pro-poor'. As for the MTR's suggestion that these prices represent a 'remarkable achievement', there is nothing that remarkable about forcing operators to price their work at levels that are below the economic costs. **One expert interviewed during the course of the evaluation estimates that a fair figure for priority land release in Cambodia, that fully captured the economic costs of the operation, including depreciation on assets etc, would be between US 1.20 and US 1.72 per m².** HALO suggested that they might be able to compete in the low price environment under which CfR II has operated, but again – as with CMAA – only because much (if not all) of their fixed costs have been covered by other donors, and all they would be offering to CfR II would be their variable costs¹²⁶. Experienced mine action managers consulted in the course of the evaluation said they would be able to make contracts work at this level of price, but only in the short-term, where most of the costs i.e. of assets, training and depreciation were covered by other donors AND where they could 'cherry pick' tasks to be able to achieve cheap land released on a significant percentage of the tasks undertaken, allowing operations on more demanding sites. **It is strongly suspected that this is the only way the CfR II miracle of efficiency is being sustained, and as argued above if this is true, then efficiency has already become a perverse incentive, as it is driving the cherry picking, rather than more mindful considerations of beneficiary outcomes and impact.**

KD1 & 2: The MTR notes that the project has charged a general management fee of 7%, although typically with UNDP NIM projects this is not the end of UNDP charges, which usually include some elements of cost recovery for services in support of NIM projects. In addition, advisors and other staff will have been charged to the project, although the number of advisors has been reduced during the second half of the project, directly as a result of funding shortfalls and donor pressures¹²⁷. **Whilst making the project cheaper, this does not immediately or necessarily make the project more efficient as the MTR seems to imply.** The MTR equates growing national capacity with efficiency gains as international advisors are reduced, which is questionable, especially as some of the national staff involved in key positions in the CMAA are actually contracted staff, and therefore cost more than civil servants, and investment in their increased capacity may ultimately prove ineffective and inefficient as they are less sustainable. Indeed, it is arguable that by increasing international advisory support in the area of mainstream project management (especially monitoring) the project might have become far more effective, with greater impact, and therefore efficiency would have risen. Both the CMAA's leadership and one of the major donors expressed concern that UNDP's costs were high, and perceived as high in relation to the value-added, therefore being considered inefficient. It is quite possible that the desire to achieve greater efficiency, especially following the MTR, may have led to the recent reduction in advisory support to the project which may have gone too far, with one full time mine action advisor being stretched too thin across a big portfolio to be able to have sufficient impact. The evaluator can not fully assess this as no detailed accounts have been provided showing the charges made, and only the project reports with summary financials have been made available. These have been analysed below on a year-by-year basis with budgets and disbursements made summarized by Key Deliverable.

¹²⁶ Matthew Hovell, Country Director, The HALO Trust, 28th September 2015

¹²⁷ p.25, MTR June 2015

Year	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	Total
Key Deliverable						
KD 1						
Budget	254183.74	291988.18	418545	284268	427573	1676558.54
Disbursed	254183.74	304680.6	364794	282223	282126	1488007.37
Delivery %	100	104	87	99	66	89
% of total budget	6.0	5.5	8.8	4.5	7.0	6.3
KD 2						
Budget	248072.52	319237.56	273444	209164	310880	1360797.9
Disbursed	248072.52	256628.66	256596	205403	207833	1174533.31
Delivery %	100	80	94	98	67	86
% of total budget	5.9	6.0	5.7	3.3	5.1	5.1
KD 3						
Budget	3736352.43	4673284.63	4071111	5878669	5353131	23712547.3
Disbursed	3736352.43	4462231.67	4017922	5710683	4856348	22783536.9
Delivery %	100	95	99	97	91	96
% of total budget	88.2	88.4	85.5	92.3	87.9	88.6
Total	4238608.69	5284510.37	4763100	6372101	6091584	26749903.7
Total Disbursed	4238608.69	5023540.93	4639312	6198309	5346307	25446077.5
Delivery	100	95	97	97	88	95

As can be seen key deliverables 1 and 2 only received 11.4% of the overall project budget, a total of US 2,662,540.68 actually disbursed over the course of the project, or some 10.46%. **Given the overall development of the CMAA during the course of CfR II, as detailed above in the effectiveness sector, and its enhanced credibility and ability to lead the sector, albeit not through the delivery of a programme approach, it is possible to see this as relatively efficient use of funds.** The project overall can also be considered efficient since the CfR modality offers the donors¹²⁸ involved an efficient method of reducing their transaction costs, pooling their funds in a process which supports the ideas and principles of aid effectiveness, including the core idea of national ownership. The MTR review notes that CMAA management were concerned about certain advisory positions being reduced, and that this was driven by perceived financial pressures. It is interesting when analyzing the figures above that whilst funding dedicated to KDs 1 & 2 fell from the high of 14.5% of total budget in 2013, to a low of 7.8% in 2014, budget had increased for both deliverables to 12.1% during 2015, more than was allocated at the start of the project.

Of more relevance for the efficiency argument, especially with KD2 is the degree to which the funds allocated (US 1,360,797.3) contributed to the achievement of the deliverable. As noted in the effectiveness section above, the lack of a coherent and comprehensive approach to capacity building and institutional strengthening of the CMAA, meaning this deliverable was assessed as being relative ineffective, can only mean that although relative low amounts of funding were provided to this activity over the 5 years of the project, these resources have been used relatively inefficiently. This may well be a case where greater investment in a more coherent and strategic plan, would have been more effective and therefore more efficient. This said, it maybe that the barriers to change in this area are not related solely to human resources or even internal capacity issues within the CMAA, but rather more to the institutional

¹²⁸ CfR II has had major contributions from the Australian Agency for International Development, the Canada International Development Agency, Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, Government of Austria, the UK's DFID, the Norwegian MFA, Ireland's Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, and the Government's of France and Belgium

relationships within the Cambodian government, and political priorities and incentives that have mitigated against the full realization of the organization, as envisaged in the CfR II project document. In this regard, a more efficient approach might have been to have based the budgets and activities on a comprehensive institutional analysis, that involved a functionality gap analysis, and the root causes for this, and on this basis developed a set of activities with realistic targets.

KD3: The MTR enthuses that *'data for clearance rates show that efficiency has indeed increased'*¹²⁹. Once again it is important to stress these are land release contracts and not clearance, a distinction which is made elsewhere in the MTR. The relevant data is as follows:

Table 10: Released Land by Contract Year

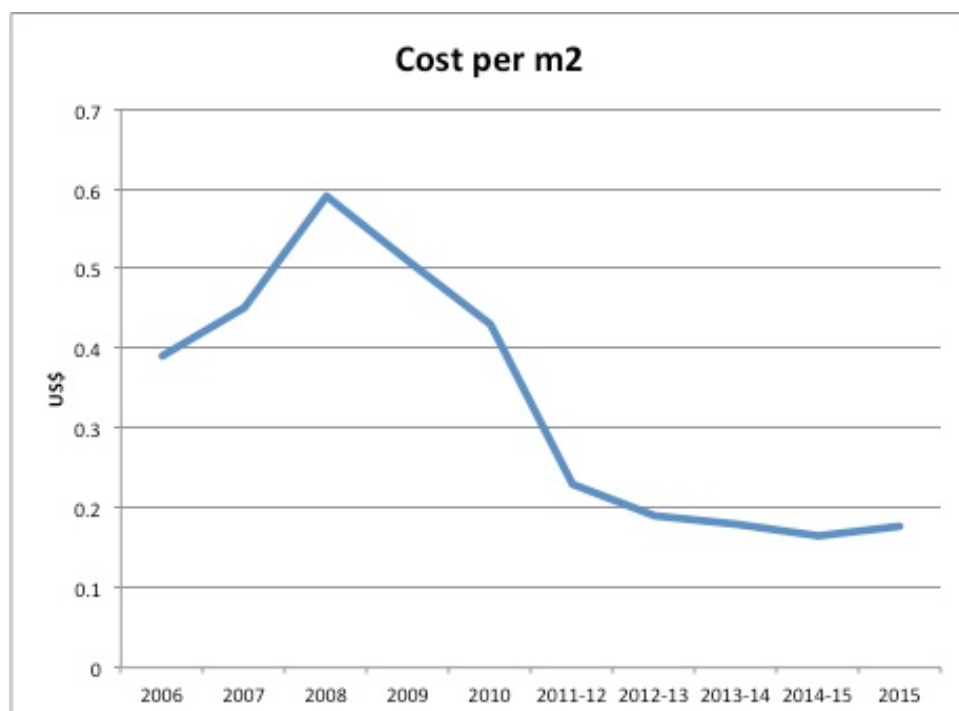
Contract Year	Total Contract Value (US\$)	Land Released (m ²)
2006	3,450,000	8,700,061
2007	4,120,000	9,071,891
2008	4,000,000	6,788,437
2009	4,006,912	7,811,856
2010	3,445,648	7,983,035
Total CFRI	19,022,560	40,355,280

May 2011-April 2012	2,381,616	10,349,648
February 2012-January 2013	2,883,034	15,013,587
February 2013 to April 2014	4,193,647	22,983,035
May 2014-January 2015	4,056,170	24,579,096
February-October 2015 (estimated)	4,911,961	54,071,558
Total CFRII	18,426,428	126,996,924
TOTAL CFRI + CFRII	37,448,988	167,352,204

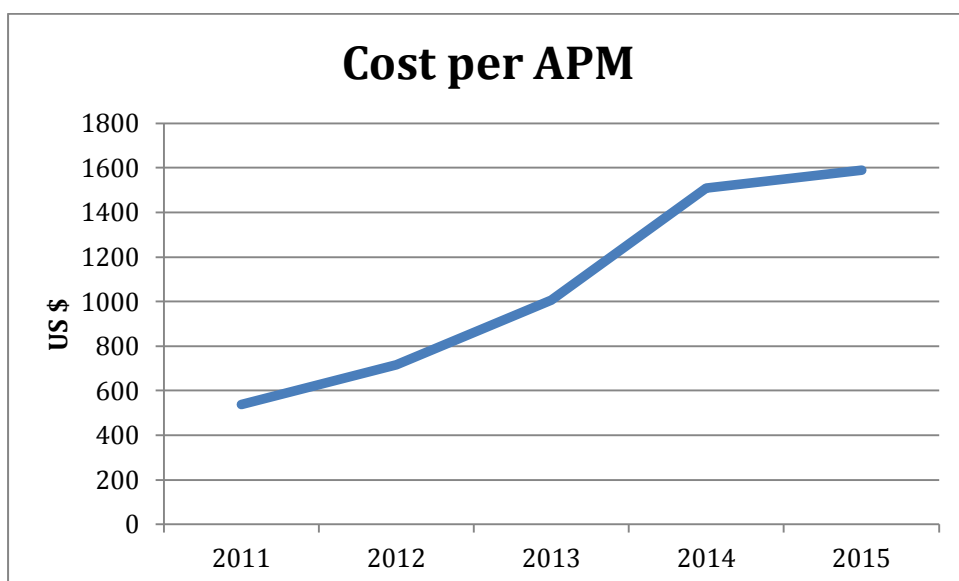
Source: p.18, Clearing for Results Phase II, Annual Report 2014. NB February – October 2015 actually delivered 21,722,316 m² for US \$3,812,675.74

CfR Contract Year	Cost per m ² released (US Cents)
2006	0.39
2007	0.45
2008	0.59
2009	0.51
2010	0.43
2011-12	0.23
2012-13	0.19
2013-14	0.18
2014-15	0.165
2015	0.176

¹²⁹ p.28, MTR June, 2013



The above table and chart reveal graphically the drive for low cost land release that has occurred since 2011 under CfR II: it is argued here that although these are low price contracts, this does not automatically mean they are efficient.



It is revealing that whilst the cost per m² has decreased, the cost per APM destroyed has increased by a much greater margin, perhaps indicating that the drive for greater efficiency has in some ways reduced effectiveness of the land release, and certainly reduced its impact. It should be noted that the CfR II practice of spreading contracts over a calendar year, and having variable rates has made this a difficult calculation to estimate. The method used was to pro-rata the costs of the contracts on an equal basis, and split them up between individual calendar years.

The over-reliance on one quantitative indicator of cost-effectiveness in CfR projects without reference to another arguably more important quantitative indicator in risk reduction terms (cost per APM destroyed), can clearly all too easily create a mis-leading impression. In cost per APM destroyed the project has become less effective and efficient, again indicating the operation of the efficiency value as a perverse incentive.

Year	Total APM	Cost - ProRata	Cost per APM
2011	2916	1571867	539
2012	4781	3428714	717
2013	3295	3315594	1006
2014	3132	4723790	1508
2015	2684	4263361	1588

The MTR at 'Conclusion 2' notes the following. **In 'Conclusion 2.1' it states that costs (actually written as cost-effectiveness which is not the same thing) have been decreasing throughout the project.** This is confirmed by the data for remainder of the project as detailed above. The MTR attributes this to the competitive bidding process used, but also notes that these low prices could not have been developed without such a comprehensive approach to land release. This is true, but as noted in various places in this report, this is not necessarily a clear 'good'. Evidence of increasing area cleared with no mines, or very low mine counts, or low risk mines, mitigates against the assumed 'good' of release large amounts of area without reference to other quantitative indicators. Efficiency can only be assessed in relationship to other such quantitative indicators such as items per site. Moreover quantitative indicators without reference to qualitative indicators such as impact on human security, well-being, livelihoods and development are also relatively meaningless as is now accepted by UNDP (in fact UNDP has been pushing this agenda around the project since at least the time of the MTR).

In 'Conclusion 2.2' the MTR ties itself up in notes about seeking to disaggregate costs of clearance from other processes for land release (C1 & C2). This goes to the heart of the limited utility of efficiency calculations and values in a land release project, as argued above. Whilst the CfR II project records, in excel rather than IMSMA, do keep records on the different processes applied, trying to allocate costs between these different processes is not only beyond the resources of this evaluation, but is also impossible precisely because the process is *comprehensive* land release, where these different processes are aggregated, and left to operational discretion in the field. As shown above, typically CfR II contracts have resulted in only C2 and C3 being used to release land. However, rather than a financial analysis, it is clear from in-depth case investigations on individual sites, such as was possible during this consultancy that some tasks have been released in a high inefficient manner¹³⁰.

Furthermore, it is strongly suspected that the clustering of operational sites as observed from detailed review of the clearance records for CfR II is perhaps driven by the need to operate cheap price land release. Detailed review of the clearance data has revealed that CMAC often clusters its work in a limited number of sites for a series of years, often clearing large SHAs¹³¹.

- Page 115/6 of the main report has a case study of such 'Clustered Operations', Chaeng, Chay Meanchay CMAC 2014

¹³⁰ Pg. 115 of the main report has a case study of inefficient (and ineffective) land release: BS/CMAA/02975 Sre Antak village, Salar Krau commune, Salar Krau district: a 'Community Forest' site, several kilometres from the village centre.

¹³¹ Examples of these include 'clustered operations' in places like Teckar Phnom Chas 317, in Svay Chek, or Chaeng, Chay Meanchay. Again price structures like these, it is evident, will mitigate against operating on multiple small high impact sites in dispersed locations. Cheap priced land release can more easily be had locking down on a few sites, where camps can be established, especially where there are large SHAs requiring release. Again questions the independence of the local planning process, since if CfR II sites were being prioritized by the community and allocated on a needs and impact basis, it is unlikely the we would see such pronounced clustering which makes sense from an operational point of view, especially given the price structures within which operators are being forced to compete.

In 'Conclusion 2.3' the MTR notes that '*valid cost comparison between organisations in Cambodia and with outside organisations are not possible to achieve with the current data available*'.¹³² The statement that '*other operators in Cambodia have categorically said that they can not compete with the low prices for work established under CfR II leads to the conclusion that the work of the CfR II bid winners has been extremely cost-effective*' is completely wrong. It indicates nothing of the sort, simply that the winners have been able to offer to release land for an extremely low price. The efficiency and effectiveness of the process is another matter entirely. More pertinent is the warning flagged later in this section. '*A note of caution is warranted as well, however, when the productivity per platoon m2/month is calculated for NPMEC at 43,571 for 2012 and the target for 2013 is 47,142. Again the calculation is for land release and not full clearance, although the rate of clearance recorded by NPMEC is almost 5 times greater than the fastest productivity on the chart below (see column e). **This could denote a methodology that is moving too quickly to be in compliance with the CMAS/IMAS.** Once again, a well functioning QA/QC function is required to maintain safety and quality assurance*'.¹³³

The table referred to in the MTR is included below, but as noted only refers to manual mine clearance, rather than mixed methods employed by operators like CMAC, and is NOT dealing with land release. Nonetheless, as benchmark it does serve as a salutary warning against misinterpreting the pricing of these CfR II contracts, and misinterpreting them as being efficient, in the way the MTR appears to do.

Table 4: Manual mine clearance trials – cost-effectiveness analysis						
Technique	Average rate					Cost/m2
	m2/hr	m2/day	m2/month	Platoon m2/month	Platoon ha/month	
(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)	(f)	(g)
1 ^{a)}	1.26	7.56	158.76	2857.68	0.29	7.35
2	3.42	20.52	430.92	7756.56	0.78	2.73
3	4.44	26.64	559.44	10069.92	1.01	2.11
4	4.56	27.36	574.56	10342.08	1.03	2.07
5	0.6	3.6	75.6	1360.8	0.14	14.67
6	1.38	8.28	173.88	3129.84	0.31	6.62
7	0.48	2.88	60.48	1088.64	0.11	18.67
8	1.56	9.36	196.56	3538.08	0.35	5.87

a) Cost range for 7 hour day.

Source: A Study of Manual Mine Clearance, Chapter 5, August 2005, p.27, GICHD

As noted in the MTR, and quoted above, the bidding process has been critical to achieving these low price land release contracts, and therefore in 2013 UNDP commissioned the GICHD to review these bidding processes. The main purpose of this review was to '*identify the extent to which the 2011-13 competitive procurement of demining and baseline survey services resulted in cost-efficiency gains, best value for money, fairness, transparency in the allocation of money and delivery of project deliverable*'. In other words, issues that have core relevance to the evaluation of efficiency.

¹³² p.37, MTR June, 2013

¹³³ p.38, MTR June, 2013

The report clearly flags concerns raised here about undue operator influence in the process, stating that whilst, ***‘CFR has resulted in a reduction in the price of land release in Cambodia. As CFR Phase II was implemented concurrently with the new land release methodologies, it is not possible to accurately determine what cost efficiencies resulted from CFR and what cost efficiencies resulted from the new land release methodologies. An additional factor to consider in the price of land release is that operators have been able to choose which tasks they want to work on from a list of tasks produced through the MAPU and PMAC processes. This has led to operators selecting tasks partially based on the estimated ease of land release, leaving the more complicated tasks as spare tasks. This can result in lower prices per square metre for the chosen tasks than for the spare tasks. UNDP comments that the responsibility to prioritise tasks has been de-centralised to the affected communities but the review team feels that this would be better achieved by more precisely determining the tasks to be worked on in the scope of work. UNDP clarifies that the two bidders included approximately 73% of the available tasks in their work plans and included the remaining 27% as reserve tasks. Although not included the purview of this review, it would be interesting to know the basis on which the bidders selected the 73% of tasks for inclusion in their work plans’.***¹³⁴ More than just this, during the course of this evaluation it is strongly suspected that some of these tasks selected by the MAPUs have been directly influenced by the operators precisely in order to be able to cherry pick suitable easy tasks when the annual list of sites is presented. One small example of the gap between theory (of MAPU independence) and practice, is that it should be remembered that resource and equipment constraints mean that MAPUs are often dependent on operators to access the field, especially in the more difficult and remote locations (that are often also the most impacted).

This evaluation does not agree with the bidding review report when it concludes that CFR II has *‘successfully established a benchmark cost per square metre of releasing contaminated land in Cambodia’*¹³⁵. **The report itself notes in the longer quote above that what the bidding process has achieved is setting a price not a cost, and a price which can only be sustained due to economies of scope.** Beyond this the current pricing structure may – quite likely according to the GICHD report itself – operating as a form of perverse incentive where, at its most benign, the easiest tasks are in practice done first. Ultimately, although such land release practice is cheap, it can be seen as inefficient and therefore ineffective, creating opportunity costs in impact terms. The report also concludes that because the two bidders who have consistently won contracts under CFR II have not bid against each other since 2012, and other operators can not compete¹³⁶ due to the price levels that have become the norm, and the scale of the contracts, *‘the competitive element of the process is absent’*.¹³⁷ The report therefore concludes that, *‘The review team questions whether the current modality is the most transparent and effective to employ in the light of the number of existing operators willing and capable to respond to tenders. Therefore, the review team recommends that the*

¹³⁴ p.8, *Review of the Cambodian Mine Action and Victim Assistance Authority (CMAA) 2011 – 2013 Bidding Process*, GICHD, 2013

¹³⁵ p.19, *Review of the Cambodian Mine Action and Victim Assistance Authority (CMAA) 2011 – 2013 Bidding Process*, GICHD, 2013

¹³⁶ As noted, HALO believe they might be able to compete, but only because they also have economies of scope that would allow them to operate such contracts below the economic cost. No doubt HALO’s willingness to engage in a land release contract at these prices suggests they believe that substantial area can be released still through C1 and C2 on many of the tasks that make it onto the MAPU annual work plan. HALO stated that they did not try to tender as the CFR II tenders were always issued at a time when they were preparing major bids for other donors and they do not have the resources to undertake two major bid applications at the same time.

¹³⁷ p.1, *Review of the Cambodian Mine Action and Victim Assistance Authority (CMAA) 2011 – 2013 Bidding Process*, GICHD, 2013

competitive bidding modality not be used for future projects'. This recommendation was not adopted because UNDP rules for NIM projects mean that it is unable to contract operators for projects such as these without a tender process. This said it does seem that UNDP accepted the recommendation to move to an open tender process, as the 2014 Annual Report notes, 'After an international competitive bidding process, CMAA and NPMEC were awarded funds to implement land release from 01 May 2014 to 31 January 2015'¹³⁸. Exactly, as the bidding review report suggested though, such a change did not create a different outcomes since the current price norms are below the economic cost levels. The report suggests some measures that might increase competition¹³⁹.

The report proposes that CfR II should consider covering training costs, and this was also flagged by one of the contractors interviewed during the course of this evaluation. certainly the relatively short contracting period (less than a year) can be seen as a potential source of inefficiencies, raising transaction costs for both contractors and the CMAA. The report also reviews the differences between a cost and task based approach, concluding, '*In either case, it is **important that CMAA has clear criteria concerning the task priorities, otherwise bidders will game the system by systematically selecting tasks that could be done at low per/unit cost rather than those that would deliver the most value-for-money.** In either case, CMAA could use the same type of basis of payment (broadly, fixed price, which places the onus on monitoring quality; or cost-plus, which puts the onus on monitoring productivity). The review team believes that it is the basis of payment that has the biggest impact because it shapes the incentives facing the winning bidder*'.¹⁴⁰ **The report's conclusion that the current competitive tendering modality is not the best funding modality for mine action in Cambodia is highly significant, but has been dismissed because it does not fit UNDP's rules and NIM project procedures. This evaluation would agree with the conclusion of the GICHD report, that the competitive bidding process is not genuinely competitive, nor is it having a positive impact on either the operators or the process of land release under CfR II. As strongly suggested by the bidding report, and also by the evidence of the field work undertaken on this evaluation the current system is not only sustainable – or healthy for the operators - since it has driven the price of land release below the economic costs, in so doing it has almost as an inevitable consequence created a perverse incentive whereby the whole planning and prioritization system, and quote possibly only going survey work, is influenced to allow such a pricing structure to be sustained. In these circumstances, although CfR II has created a low price land release environment, it can ultimately only be seen as relatively inefficient.** It is relatively inefficient because clearly many of the tasks being release *are* genuine priorities and this is having positive impact on beneficiaries, as detailed in the section below. Nonetheless, there is an opportunity cost created by the current system that means it contributes to a reduction in impact (over what might be possible to achieve under a different tendering and contracting regime).

4.4 Impact (Page 121 of the unabridged report draft)

Impact is defined as, '*Consequences of the project from a long-term perspective (primary and secondary long-term effects) produced by the project intervention, directly or indirectly, intended or unintended*'. NB It should be noted that when evaluating the long-term impact (consisting of a range of effects) of an intervention like CfR II is hard to be completely confident that one can attribute cause and effect to one particular programming intervention. In both the Household Survey and field-work of this

¹³⁸ p.17, Clearing for Results Phase II, Annual Report 2014

¹³⁹ Included as Annex 10

¹⁴⁰ p. 21 *Review of the Cambodian Mine Action and Victim Assistance Authority (CMAA) 2011 – 2013 Bidding Process*, GICHD, 2013

evaluation, beneficiary individuals/communities were selected from the 2011-13 period of CfR II, with a view to enabling these long-term impacts to become discernible. Follow up, longitudinal studies are strongly recommended, especially with communities and individuals targeted through these two recent pieces of work, but other data sets, such as those from the 2013 NIS study, should be valued as well. It remains a challenge to be entirely sure that one is disaggregating the impact of CfR II from the impact of other mine action activities, especially those of the formal sector, or other mine action programmes. These issues are lessened when doing direct beneficiary interviews, but Focus Group Discussion outcomes are still valid for what they show about the generic impact of both mines and mine action. These insights on the way mines and mine action affect communities, will have great bearing in learning lessons that should help to make MAHD a better programme than CfR I & II.

KD 1 & 2: As is implied by the MTR's summary findings, the impact of these deliverables has already been addressed in the section under 'effectiveness'. In the absence of meaningful SMART indicators associated with these deliverables, inevitably a discussion of effectiveness merges with impact. The MTR notes, *'What is clear is that the CFRII has made considerable progress, however, there are a few key areas that need continued work over the remaining three years of the project, if it is to deliver all the planned outputs and have the intended impact. With some key adjustments to the implementation of activities under Deliverables 1 and 2, the complete impact of the project could certainly be achieved by 2015'*.¹⁴¹ However, as noted above, the recommended adjustments in this regard were not made. It is interesting to review the financial metrics presented in the efficiency section above to note that although there was a perception during 2013 that budget shortages and donor pressures forced these deliverables to be de-prioritised, this is not actually reflected in the budget and spending records. With a noticeable dip in 2014, budget levels for these deliverables in 2015 were actually increased again in 2015, and on average were broadly similar to those during the first years of CfR II. Rather it appears that the decision to reduce the technical advisory team, served to reinforce previous practices that, as noted in the MTR, resulted in the activities associated with these deliverables lacking coherence. In turn such coherence could only have been based on an objective institutional functionality and capacity assessment, predicated not against the ability of CMAA to implement CfR II in NIM modality, but rather against its requirements to fully engage with its role as national regulator and co-ordinator. As noted, this assessment was that was not carried out. As with conclusions given above under effectiveness, **it is nonetheless clear that there has been positive impact in terms of these deliverables, but more could have been done if a strategic and coherent approach had been taken, in part as recommended by the MTR.** Furthermore, the CMAA's overall leadership of the sector, especially in measures such as the planning guidelines, can be seen to have contributed to the positive impacts recorded under KD3, as described below.

KD3: The focus of this evaluation, especially in terms of assessing outcomes leading into impact, under guidance from UNDP's Mine Action advisor, and the very apparent centre of gravity of interest in UNDP and also the donor community, is located in KD3. This said, it should be noted that the overall outcome anticipated in the UNDP CPAP, is that *"National and sub-national capacities are strengthened to develop a more diversified, sustainable and equitable economy"*, which arguably relates more to KDs 1 & 2, than KD3. In the early part of the project, KD3 directly contributed to this through the support of the BLS survey which was essential to strengthening national capacity both nationally and sub-nationally, but apart from the land reclamation survey in 2015, this element has been completed and KD3 has become in the second half of the project a land release

¹⁴¹ p7, MTR, June 2015

initiative. Although the BLS has required substantial ongoing revision nationwide, as illustrated by the work of the land reclamation survey in the three target CfR II provinces, this has had a major impact on strengthening national capacities as envisaged by the project, by making a significant contribution to Output 2 of the CPAP (*National structures and mechanisms ensure demining resources are effectively allocated promoting the release of land for productive use by the poor*).

In terms of the intended outcomes it is worth stressing that the CPAP Output 2's emphasis on the effective allocation of mine action resources to promote, 'the release of land for productive use by the poor' (pro-poor land release), thereby contributing to the CPAP Outcome 1's 'more diversified, sustainable and equitable economy', is not logically connected to the output language used in the key deliverables of CfR II. KD1 refers to '*most resources are effectively allocated to national priorities as defined by local planning processes and **maximises the land available for local development***', which is not explicitly or implicitly pro-poor, as noted above, in fact may benefit the middle and richer classes. KD3 merely aims to ensure land release 'for productive use' in an 'efficient and transparent' way. Again these outputs are not explicitly pro-poor and therefore it is perhaps optimistic to anticipate a pro-poor output and outcome in the CPAP from the activities and intended results of CfR II. In fact, explicitly this evaluation and the results of the Household Impact (HH) survey have revealed, the impact of CfR II is not pro-poor, but as the 2013 DFID evaluation cited above revealed, the beneficiaries of clearance were generally 'middle class' or rich *by village standards*. For example, the household study revealed that only 12.8% of CfR II beneficiaries were confirmed as ID Poor, the majority not being in this group (see table in Annex 11, or Page 122 of the unabridged report draft).

Nonetheless, as detailed above in section 3.3 'Cambodian Political and Development Context', and section 4.1 'Relevance', land release undertaken under CfR II has been extremely relevant, and is central to supporting economic development that is more diversified (geographically) and sustainable. Of itself though it is unlikely that anything done under CfR II will have promoted a more 'equitable' form of development. As noted, discussion of land redistribution to the poor – especially of land released by mine action in remote 'frontier' locations – in various government policy documents has not typically been observed in the mine action sector, or more specifically, it can be stated with some confidence there is limited evidence of this as an impact of CfR II, from either the household study or the field work undertaken during this evaluation, as detailed below. It should be noted though that, as argued throughout this report, those middle class, or even rich people, living in remote frontier locations, and currently owning (or claiming ownership) of land, *were formally poor*. The act of moving to the frontier is not the act of middle class or rich people, but rather of those whose lack of land and poverty drove them to settle hazardous and remote areas far from their original home provinces. As such, mine action land release supported by CfR II has facilitated the conditions for safe economic and livelihood development for people who were recently poor¹⁴². Nor typically has it allowed them access to land *per se*, except in cases where people were not using parts of their land that they perceived to be especially risky (usually in conditions where they had enough low risk land, if not 'safe' land, to farm). What has been done is to allow them access to *safe* land, land that has been cleared to national standards, usually land that had formally been 'threat-reduced' by in the informal mine action sector. In many instances, this resulted in the land being cultivated in different, more productive and efficient ways i.e. being willing to use power ploughs and/or tractors on the land.

¹⁴² See point 2 in the extended quotation below from a study of post-clearance livelihoods.

It is worth citing evidence from the House Hold Impact study undertaken by UNDP during the same period as this study.

*LAND SIZE AND VALUE BEFORE AND AFTER THE CLEARANCE*¹⁴³

There was no baseline study on the exact size and value of household's utilizable land before clearance. However, people had fresh memories (from 2011 to 2013) on their lands size before the land release. Farmers stated that the value of their land is higher due to increased productivity as they can use their entire land, thanks to clearance. Hence, clearance enabled households to utilize their land in its full potential, subsequently increasing agricultural productivity, that in turn affected value of their lands.

Table 4: Size of land before and after clearance

	province			
	Battambang	Banteay Meanchey	Pailin	Total all provinces
	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean
Size of <u>residential</u> usable land <u>before</u> clearance	0,3	0,1	0,2	0,2
Size of <u>residential</u> usable land <u>after</u> clearance	0,4	0,3	0,2	0,3
Size of <u>agricultural</u> land <u>before</u> clearance	1,4	1,1	1,7	1,3
Size of <u>agricultural</u> land <u>after</u> clearance	2,6	3,3	2,6	2,8

It is noticeable that in two provinces the size of residential land increased, and in all provinces the size of agricultural land increased after land release, represented here as clearance. These results are likely to be the result of actual clearance, as usually where land has been released through cancellation (through NTS) or released (through TS) there would be little discernible difference in land area being used (since even suspect land is often used, as documented above). **The fact that formal clearance by CfR II has resulted in such an increase in agricultural land is highly significant, and illustrates that although the informal private sector may have opened up sufficient land for subsistence, clearance by the formal sector has made a substantial further contribution.** The informal sector, that includes self-help demining by farmers themselves, as well as the work of paid private informal contractors, may avoid high-risk minefields and many examples were found in the course of the field-work for the final evaluation where the informal sector had cleared part, but not all of a farmer's land. Evidence from field work in this final evaluation suggested that part-clearance of a farmer's contaminated land, in order to give 'enough land' to subsist on, was quite common, and would explain why formal clearance at a later date can add value, and release still more land, increasing the land area available. There were other examples however where villagers either through self-clearance, or by paying the private sector, established large plots on hazardous areas as a means of staking a claim to the land (it had to be under cultivation and occupied in order to establish such a claim during the 1998-2001 window before the passing of the Land Law.) **These findings are highly significant though, and illustrate that although farmers have both self-cleared, and used the private informal mine action sector to access land, and continue to farm land they consider hazardous (often with evidence of mines turning up, especially during ploughing), the formal mine action sector does contribute and have impact in terms of increasing the availability of safe land for**

¹⁴³ p.15, Draft Version of UNDP House Hold Impact Survey of CfR II Beneficiaries

farming. In other cases, evidence from the field work on the final evaluation suggested that villagers using suspect land, cultivated it in ways designed to limit the risks, and that once clearance by the formal sector had taken place they were confident to cultivate the land more normally, especially with regards to the use of power ploughs and tractors. In turn, these changes greatly enhanced efficiency and productivity of farming undertaken on the land. Therefore, even in instances like these where there is no increase in the area of land available for agriculture, the way in which it is being farmed may be far more efficient, directly enhancing livelihoods and community development.

As noted above, UNDP has been concerned about the lack of information on outcomes and impact, and has attempted to rectify what can only be seen as the limited effectiveness of the internal monitoring practices of CfR II, and a failure to achieve the kind of impact monitoring foreseen in the project document as stated above. For example, in addition to the 2013 NIS Outcomes study, UNDP also commissioned a report entitled, *Post-Clearance Land Use in Cambodia* ¹⁴⁴. This study explicitly looked at, ‘...constraints to productivity among households whose previously mine-contaminated lands have been cleared or released’. ¹⁴⁵ It is worth citing the summary findings of this report (Pages 123-4 of the unabridged report has more detail).

The study concluded with four observations about post-clearance households, their needs and how best to deliver them,

1. *Livelihood strategies of households cultivating contaminated lands are uniquely conservative, low-risk and inclined toward making low investments in order to ensure at least a minimum return.*
2. *Post-clearance households have nevertheless the capacity and potential for changing their livelihood strategies. They are not among the poorest of the poor. They have land and, with land, they possess a safety net and the potential for absorbing the assistance proposed here.*
3. *In the areas surveyed and in the areas generally where clearance is taking place one finds considerable variation among households: different cropping regimes, different access to rural roads, water, credit and other services critical to serving the production needs of post-clearance households....A critical feature of any assistance would be to undertake a preliminary needs analysis and match identified needs with services in a given location.*
4. *In order to effectively address the needs of post-clearance households, a responsive mechanism must be devised.*

The conclusion is that post-clearance households represent a distinct group with characteristic constraints that persist for an extended period of time after clearance and that these constraints impede households from making optimal use of cleared lands. These households are poor but not extremely so and as they possess land, they are not without the potential for significantly increasing their farm production. It is anticipated therefore that the absorption capacity of these households is adequate and where appropriate inputs and services are provided, the production of these households is likely to increase significantly in a short period of time. Returns to even a modest intervention are likely to be appreciable. ¹⁴⁶

¹⁴⁴ Prepared for United Nations Development Programme by Jim Freedman and Nhean So Munin 15 March 2013

¹⁴⁵ p.v, *Post-Clearance Land Use in Cambodia* Prepared for United Nations Development Programme by Jim Freedman and Nhean So Munin 15 March 2013

¹⁴⁶ p.v, *Post-Clearance Land Use in Cambodia* Prepared for United Nations Development Programme by Jim Freedman and Nhean So Munin 15 March 2013. **Highlights in bold added.**

In effect, the study is suggesting that beneficiaries of CfR II benefit from clearance, but would benefit more if a bespoke response mechanism was available to assist them. The evaluation and HH study revealed that although many beneficiaries were more prosperous they were also more indebted, in part as a result of clearance, because they were more willing and able to raise capital on the security of their now cleared land, land that is worth considerably more than suspect land, even if under cultivation as a result of the work of the informal mine action sector. UNDP was exploring options of providing such additional support to beneficiaries, through the MAHD project and CMAA to NCCD-S or the MAFF, looking to provide additional infrastructure or livelihoods assistance to beneficiary communities¹⁴⁷. CMAA appeared reluctant to engage with such additional activity in the context of the new NIM project, and their concerns are understandable since it would require ‘doing more with less’, and arguably pushing them into an area of programming that is beyond their mandate. Nonetheless, as has been argued in this report, beneficiaries of mine action – especially if future projects work in the new ‘frontier’ communities with less of a time lag – are almost a self-selecting group in need of targeted development support. They are opening new land, and taking risks that have been proven over the last 20 years to dramatically improve their livelihoods. As noted below, mine contamination still serves as a ready but effective proxy indicator for poverty. It was therefore somewhat surprising to learn that donors were not interested in supporting such an initiative, but perhaps this reflects the same concerns as CMAA expressed. Namely that the concept might be relevant and potentially highly effective, but the modality in the context of a mine action UNDP NIM is not right.

Outcomes and Impact information from the evaluation field work:

It should be noted that many of the key insights on outcomes and impact have already been written up and included in the Executive Summary section above.

General Outcomes from the Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) in Battambang, Pailin and Banteay-Meanchay

The following bullet points summarise some of the key highlights from the FGDs conducted in the course of the evaluation. These are written up both in Annex 3¹⁴⁸, with more detailed notes on the impact of mines and mine action from the field work are contained in Annexes 4-6, which contain the full write ups of the provincial village studies undertaken.

- **Mine action funded by CfR II and other donors and agencies has made a substantial positive impact in targeted villages.** It has been greatly appreciated at individual household and community level. The project was also regarded extremely positively by all formal government representatives met from village and commune leaders, to district and province level officials. UNDP and the CMAA are very well regarded as a result.
- **Villages are safer, happier and have ‘better living’ than 5 years ago:** mine action has contributed to this. But villagers are much more indebted (investing in their farms)

¹⁴⁷ Discussion with Mr David Horrocks, UNDP Mine Action Advisor, October 2015

¹⁴⁸ Annex 3 contains aggregated results of two participative exercises which engaged all FGD members, overcoming issues of participation noted elsewhere. All members were asked to individually list the three top impacts of mines and at a slightly later stage in the process the top three impacts of land release in the community.

- **Mine contamination serves as a proxy indicator for poverty**, as only the poorest live and take risks with, or move to and settle areas with mines. This is usually as a result of land hunger as discussed.
- **The migrant poor are the most vulnerable to mines¹⁴⁹**. It was a striking unifying theme of the fieldwork to understand better the way **the poor have, and continue to, 'move to the frontier' and are most vulnerable group in terms of mine and ERW threats in Cambodia in 2015, just as they have been for the last 20-25 years.**
- **Incident and accidents 'hot spots' serve as an indicator of impact.** The CMAA's top down prioritization process for communes, based on accident rates over the last 5 years, is therefore a simple and effective prioritization tool (but accident data needs to be accurate, and as noted above it may be under-recorded, ironically especially from the most vulnerable communities, on the frontier).
- **Beneficiary communities rate equally 'human security and well-being', and 'livelihood and development', issues as being both impacts of mines and impacts of mine action (land release).**
- **Land release has improved access to many remote rural villages, allowing villagers to access basic services such as health and education, and equally has allowed service providers, including other development projects, credit providers to access them.**
- **Many are still taking-risks with mines: both those with (clearing and cultivating risky areas) and those without land (foraging in known risky areas for livelihood supplements is often high risk). In both cases it is the poor who within these vulnerable mine-affected communities who are most at risk**, with regards to the former as hired day labour is often the most vulnerable in at risk communities. In many locations FGD's cited 'fear of accidents when ploughing or cultivating' as an impact of mines, and the absence of this fear as being an impact of CfR II land release. These findings were confirmed as well by the HH Study, as cited below.
- **Some villages have achieved a self-defined impact free status but are not yet threat free.**

¹⁴⁹ For example, Sre Antak, and Veal Cheang in Pailin are 'new villages', settled in the 'frontier' of the Cambodian West in the last 20 years. The people (often landless and driven by poverty) have come from all over Cambodia and have migrated to suspect land on the promise of cheap land. They have ended up clearing the forests to make residential and agricultural areas – those who came first grabbed large areas of land and have sold them on to those who came later. People are mobilized to settle these areas through networks of families and friends, and sometimes agents. Those who came first took big risks clearing mined areas, but many of them were former soldiers (Government), and the implication is possibly that the regime has encouraged former soldiers to settle the western areas, partly to give them opportunity and partly to enhance their political and social control. The settlements may also be linked to and motivated by the logging of the forests for profit, and perhaps this is part of the 'offer' from the Cambodian state to the landless. This was suggested as a motive in itself by the Sala Krau Deputy District Governor in a meeting on 27th October. Regardless, those who came first and those who continue to farm SHAs took high risks, and it is ironic that now CfR II and other donors / operators are implementing clearance work – for development - of roads etc – AFTER the people have settled the area and done much of the clearance work spontaneously. This shows a failure to understand where the high-risk communities were in the past. NB It is disturbing to think of mine action agencies 'clearing for development' tasks that have no mines, whilst poor vulnerable people were hacking out new communities on minefields without any former support, even beyond the 'view' of the formal sector which is finally catching up with their reality, a reality which at 15 – 20 years old is hardly new. In Veal Cheang clearance only started in 2000.

- **Many villages prioritised by CfR II are not yet impact free**, therefore current system of prioritisation and planning can be seen to work relatively well. It reflects good and effective partnerships with operators and communities, although the independence of the MAPU-led planning process can be questioned and operators seem to have more influence than communities. Overall, CMAA is therefore effective and having a positive impact in its co-ordination role, albeit from the rather removed perspective of being a governance role, with direction being provided through policy frameworks and planning guidelines (as per KD1).
- **It became evident from the field work that to enhance the overall impact of future programmes, the impact of mine action (delivering results for those most in need), and not efficiency *per se*, measured solely in quantitative outputs should be the 'dominant value' of MAHD.** The current dominance of efficiency is almost meaningless, since m² released means very different things in different places, and might and arguably does detract from impact.

Other findings from the FGDs worth noting included:

- **In many locations ATMs on old routes were noted as causing problems** including preventing the use of tractors and power ploughs (and therefore making cultivation inefficient¹⁵⁰) and enhancing access difficulties to markets and services. Known ATM hazards were often associated with APMs.
- **Comment:** CfR II has prioritised some A3 (ATM minefields) in several locations, and this is to be commended, although this does not respond to the need to meet APMBT obligations. The fact that CfR II resources are dedicated in this way is a good sign that local concerns and a risk management perspective is being taken. This said ATM hazards can often also be cleared far more quickly than APM hazards (using large loops etc), and therefore they may also provide 'cheap' m² for operators.
- **Some FGDs revealed that CfR II clearance enabled them to 'safely construct houses'.** In Sre Antak, villagers reported that before they had only been able to construct a small shack and lacked the confidence and safe land to build more substantial homes. The HH study below reveals that CfR II has resulted in an increase in residential land for most beneficiaries.
- **Comment:** the target of releasing agricultural land is highly relevant, as argued above. But in some situations providing safe residential land, and land for infrastructure (schools, roads etc) is more important in the short term. Many villages revealed that the first priority was for safe residential land and then infrastructure. MAHD needs to accommodate such local realities, and the metric of % cleared for agriculture whilst important is not always locally the most appropriate output.

This evaluation has greatly benefited from having been implemented concurrently with the Household (HH) Impact survey, organised separately by UNDP and the CfR II project.

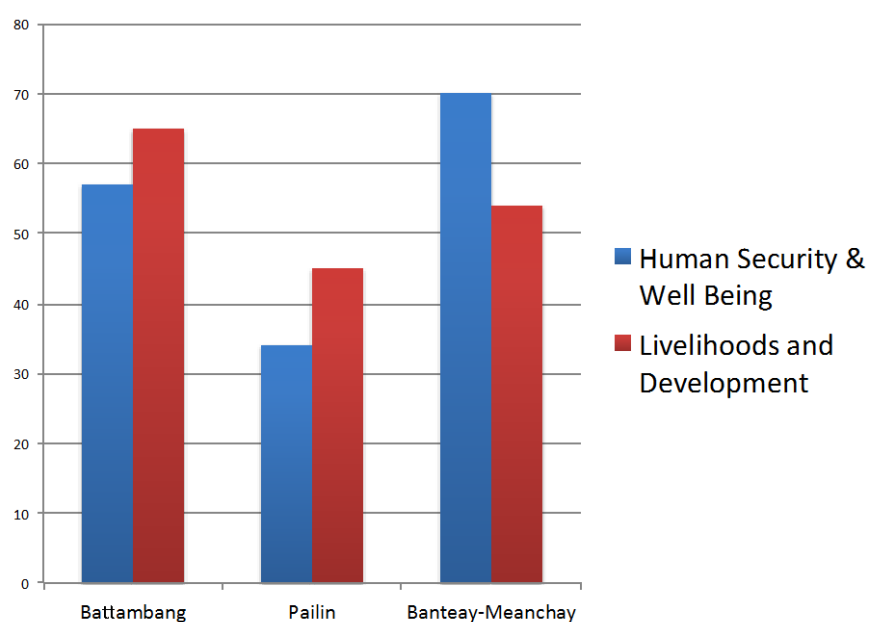
¹⁵⁰ People in Ou Trav Chao Village, Serey Meanchay Commune reported that they cultivate suspect land, but cultivate it differently until cleared i.e. using hoes and hand tools (mostly where they suspect presence of ATMs). This means they use the land less efficiently and effectively. This is a similar phenomena to Lao PDR where people cultivate 'more carefully and don't dig as deep'. This was also true in Sre Antak and Veal Cheang villages in Pailin, and in some villages in Banteay-Meanchay.

The findings generally fit with evidence gathered and resulting analysis from the field work of this evaluation. In fact it is suggested these two sets of results actually triangulate with the earlier NIS Outcomes study, from 2013, as referred to above. The summary of the key impacts that emerge from the draft HH report are contained as Annex 11 (and pages 127 – 130 of the unabridged version of the report).

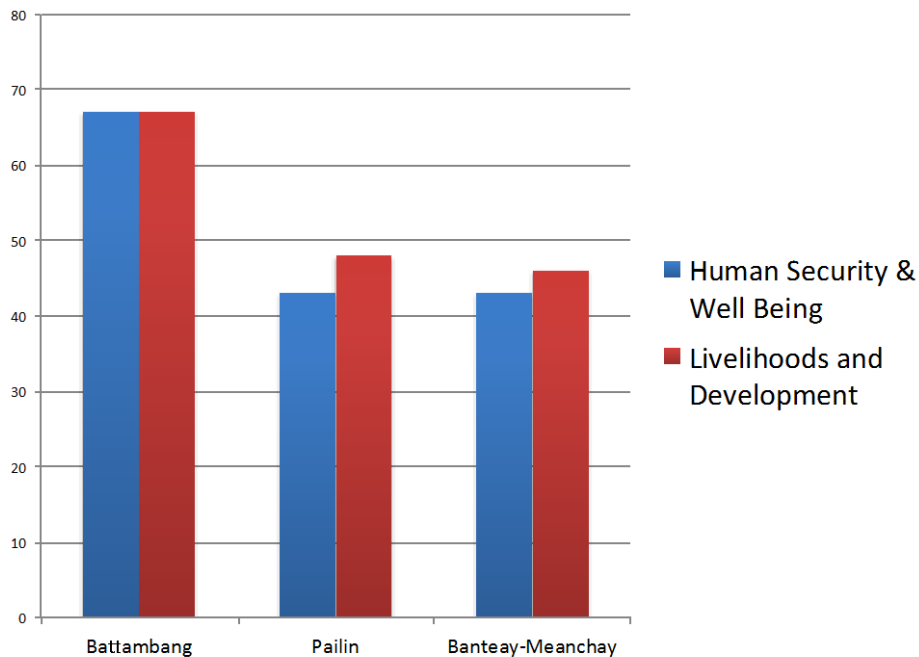
The following charts summarise the results of participative individual exercises conducted with FGD members during the fieldwork for the evaluation. In each FGD all participants were asked to list out the top three impacts of mines and ERW in their communities, and at a later stage the three top impacts – as they perceived it – of land release. The findings were captured and then aggregated and the number of response in each category turned into graph form. Based on the responses it became clear that it was possible to form two broad categories of impact of both mines, and then subsequent land release. These were:

- Human Security and Well-Being
- Livelihoods and Development

Summary Findings Impact of Mines



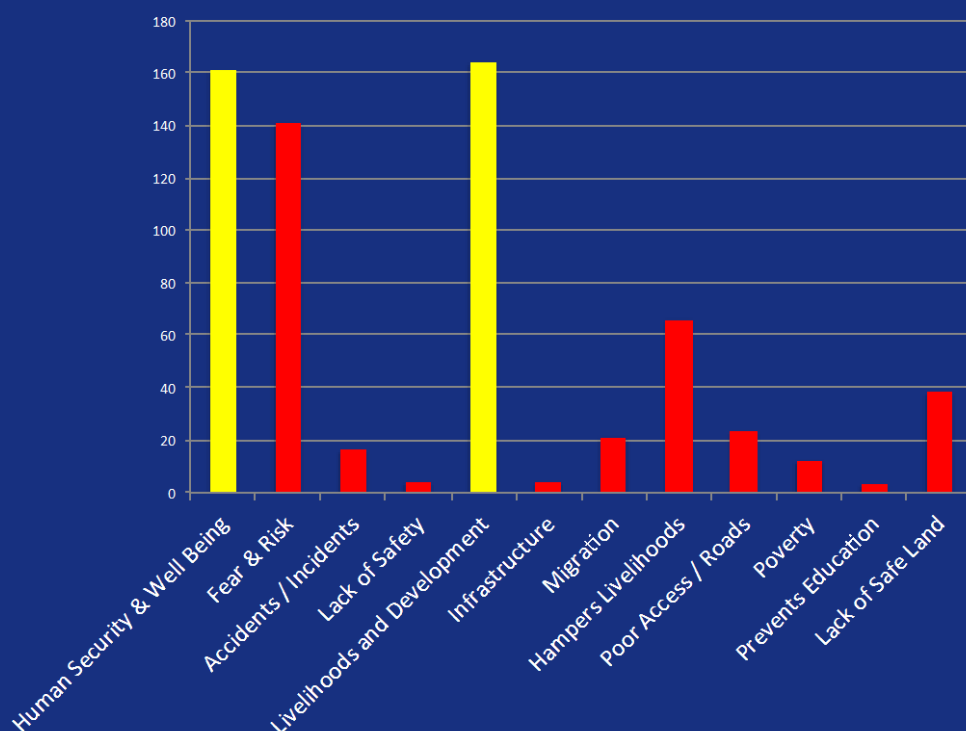
Summary Impact of Mine Action / Land Release



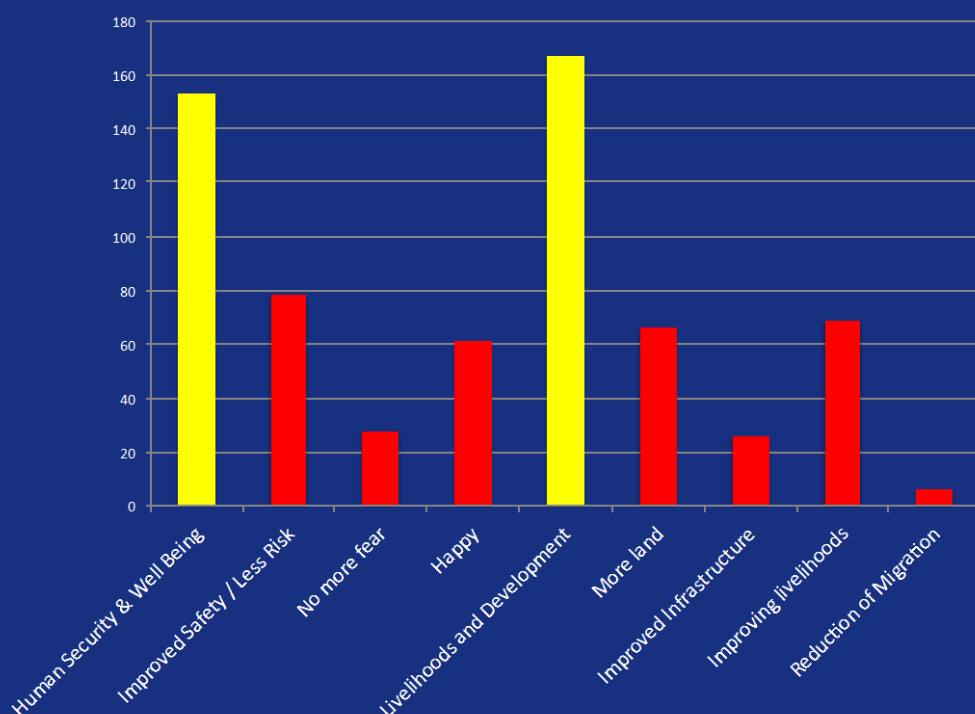
As illustrated above, in all three provinces the impact of both mines and land release were perceived to be equally concerned with human security and well-being as well as 'livelihoods and development'. **To talk of 'mine action for development', as if this was isolated and entirely different to humanitarian mine action (for security and individual well-being and peace of mine – freedom from fear), would make absolutely no sense to anyone in the 12 CfR II villages surveyed in the course of the evaluation.** In fact, even responses classed as 'livelihoods and development' (as revealed in Annex 3), really also contained a human security / safety aspect, since as noted in the results of the HH study, people often referred to *more safe land*. In these results this has been recorded as a livelihoods impact response, but also clearly relates to security too. Not only is this in line with the HH Impact Study, but also with the UNDP IEO 2015 study on the impact of mine action supported by the organization globally, cited above. **Together these results show comprehensively that the single most important outcome and impact is related to enhanced safety and security of communities threatened by landmines hazards.**

The following graphs dis-aggregate the results presented above on a province by province basis. In both graphs below the total number of responses from all three provinces are summarized in the yellow columns, and disaggregated further in the red columns. These sub-categories in some cases can be seen to overlap to some degree, but they have been chosen to reflect as accurately as possible the responses made by individual villagers. Greater detail is captured in the tables in Annex 3 which write up the group work from each village.

Summary of FGD Findings: Impact of Mines



Summary of FGD Findings: Impact of Clearance



It should be noted that, under impact of clearance (land release) above 'happy' is an important category of response. This is a very similar response to those made in similar FGD work undertaken in June 2015 in the course of doing the IEO Impact study in the Lao PDR. Individual and community 'happiness' as an impact of land release /

clearance is a reflection not only of the relevance of the work to the people most affected by mines, but also the fact that mines and the risks they pose have significant psychological impact on affected individuals and their communities. Liberating people from fear is an extremely important outcome of a land release project such as CfR II, and again clearly is not automatically reflected in m² released records, since not all land thus released is viewed with the same level of fear, nor is it considered locally to have the same amount of risk.

4.5 Sustainability

Sustainability is defined as, *The continuation of benefits from a development intervention after major development assistance has been completed. The probability of continued long-term benefits. The resilience to risk of the net benefit flows over time.* The TOR states the evaluation ‘will assess how the project’s achievements contributed to sustainability by engaging appropriate Government, non-Government and community level stakeholders.

UNDP’s support under CfR II to the CMAA, and beyond that the formal mine action sector, is likely to be sustainable provided – and only if – overall international ODA funding to the sector is not reduced too rapidly, as noted above in section 3.4.1 ‘The Mine Action Sector’ and elsewhere in this report. UNDP and the RGC have rightly been concerned about this since at least 2011, especially as Cambodia moves to middle income status and overall amounts of ODA are reduced. In this regard CMAA has its own fate, and that of the formal sector, in its hands, as this reflects directly on its ability to present the donor community with a coherent picture of the scale of the remaining problem, and its plan for addressing this through implementation of the NMAS, as well as the promulgation of an explicit transition strategy for dealing with the residual problem through what might be referred to as ‘reactive’ mine action. **In this regard, the need for a newly revised mine action plan to implement the NMAS, and lay out how Cambodia intends to meet its international treaty obligations as well as its strategy and planning for transition to a residual capacity, are absolutely critical.** However, in one important sense, the benefits and outcomes of CfR II are entirely and unambiguously sustainable. Namely, the primary output or ‘product’ of CfR II’s KD3, of safe land released, in large part cleared, to national standards, resulting in reduced risk for users. This product can be considered (in the absence of future armed conflict in Cambodia) as entirely sustainable and has generated a series of long term and positive impacts, including enhanced land values, as noted above. Community perceptions of the safety of the land have also been greatly enhanced. It will also avert future mortality or morbidity as a result of incidents, and the associated health and loss of labour costs will also be substantially reduced. These all are unambiguously sustainable outcomes of the CfR projects.

The MTR summarises its findings on sustainability by noting, *The key aspect of the CFR project is related to its overall outcome, which highlights the need to ensure that “National and sub-national capacities are strengthened to develop a more diversified, sustainable and equitable economy”. The intention is that the CMAA will no longer require international assistance in the future and will succeed in effectively managing the mine action sector autonomously over the medium to long term to ensure maximum impact from mine action activities in terms of economic development. Therefore in order to accomplish a sustainable solution, support to RGC structures that will coordinate mine action efforts autonomously is imperative. These structures remain in need of support, however, with some adjustments to the CFR II project, the project outcome should persist over the long term....The largest mine clearance capacity in Cambodia is a national capacity. It currently includes both civilian and military elements. At the moment the standards of clearance have remained high in the national humanitarian mine action programme (where quality is monitored by CMAA).*

CMAA is a professional organisation with internationally recognised reputation, however, it is impossible to know what other organisations – commercial or NGO – could eventually find their way into the mine clearance component. Without a strong and functioning CMAA that ensures accreditation procedures to guarantee professionalism, quality in the sector could be in jeopardy over the long term¹⁵¹.

It is clearly incorrect to frame the need for sustainable coordination as being to ensure maximum impact from mine action *in terms solely of economic development*, and as argued above humanitarian (security) outcomes are equally important, in both theory and practice. In turn this is already reflected in the NMA and to some extent acknowledged in the draft strategic plan (from early 2014) that has now been shelved. Nonetheless, the MTR is correct to emphasize the centrality of issues of sustainability to Cfr II's design and strategy. Issues of promotion of the CMAA and of building its capacity and leadership of the sector, within the context of promoting the NMA, are also central to the 'brief description' section of the project document. Although the project did not in practice adopt the adjustments called for by the MTR, as referred to above, CMAA's management assesses that it can now maintain its current leadership role in the sector with reduced UNDP support¹⁵². Indeed, the new MAHD reflects this confidence, and has far less emphasis on capacity development than Cfr II. Equally, operators interviewed during the course of the evaluation suggested that CMAA is working effectively as the national co-ordinator, expressed satisfaction with the TWG mechanism, and noted that CMAA is far superior when compared to other equivalent national authorities. Operators also commended a willingness on the part of senior CMAA management to be pro-active in informal coordination, for example resolving problems between operators when required. CMAA's management stated that it is now more engaged with operators that were formally beyond its reach, and has for example started to accredit an increasing number of RCAF demining platoons, and is continuing discussions with NPMEC on these matters.

Ultimately, a nationally owned and sustainable coordination mechanism, with CMAA at its heart, requires a Cambodian solution to these issues, and there is evidence that under its senior leadership CMAA is now successfully pursuing these goals. However, it is also clear that much has already been achieved, and that Cfr I & II have played a significant role in transforming the capacity and authority of the CMAA over the last 10 years. A 2012 GICHD report on transition issues noted that, *The establishment of CMAA, as both a coordinating body for all mine action activities and a regulator on behalf of the RGC, consolidated national ownership by giving the RGC the capacity to lead the mine action programme according to its priorities and strategies, and to regain donor confidence. However, despite the high level of national ownership, there are still a number of projects supported by different development partners, which are independently managed and implemented, including projects on MRE, demining, and integrated demining and development projects.*¹⁵³ As noted above, this situation, although improving, remains essentially the same in 2015. Later, the GICHD report notes, *The adoption of a programme-based approach (PBA) by the Cambodian mine action sector has given an unquestionable leadership position to the RGC in leading the programme, and is considered crucial in guaranteeing the continued enhancement of operational efficiency in*

¹⁵¹ p.7/8, MTR, June 2013

¹⁵² Meeting with HE Prum Sophakmonkol, Secretary General, CMAA & Ly Panharith, Dep. Sec Gen CMAA, 16th October 2015

¹⁵³ Executive Summary, *Transitioning Mine Action Programmes to National Ownership*, Cambodia, GICHD, March 2012

*the sector. The application of the Harmonisation, Alignment and Results Action Plan and the relevant joint monitoring indicators by all stakeholders is essential to the successful implementation of the NMA. The TWG-MA ensures policy dialogue, encourages the development of new partnerships, and harmonises activities and projects to avoid redundancy and resources duplication.*¹⁵⁴ As already recommended, whilst a ‘more of the same’ approach from UNDP in terms of institution strengthening and capacity assessment, appears to have been discounted by both the organization and CMAA, there is arguably an ongoing need for targeted and bespoke support to the CMAA to enhance its performance, and therefore its sustainability. This needs to be based on an institutional functionality and capacity self-assessment exercise, as recommended above. In particular, concern remains with the number of key functions of the CMAA, such as the QA/QC teams and large parts of the DBU, that are currently staffed and funded by CfR II and other external sources, a point that – as cited below – was emphasized by the MTR’s concluding remarks on KD2.

Detailed comments on sustainability by Key Deliverable are contained in Annex 12, and at pages 136 – 141 of the unabridged version of the report.

4.5 Coherence & Complementarity

The TOR asks ‘*Has the CfR II project complemented other mine action projects to create added-value and synergy?*’ CfR II’s land release tasks are drawn from the annual work plan drawn up at provincial level, and other operators suggested that the CfR II partner operators, CMAC and NPMEC take on the tasks that they are most suited to undertake, typically low density, large sites. In this sense, CfR II can be seen as complementing the work of other operators, funded by other donors, in part because the smaller operators admit they don’t have a ready and cost-effective solution to these types of low-density large sites. It is possible that the structure of the CfR project, as argued above under the Efficiency section, has indeed encouraged the MAPUs to ensure that a portion of the annual work plan includes tasks of this nature, that can be done easily, and allow the operators to meet the pricing structures of the contracts. It is not suggested that all CfR II tasks are like this, just that a portion of them appear to be, regardless of whether operators influence the MAPUs to put them on the work plan for the year or not.

CfR II’s work has also created synergies and complemented the work of other projects as a result of the support given to the national prioritization and planning process, ensuring that there is a rational basis, rooted in an evidence of impact, even under the current criteria, for operational resource allocation decisions. All operators work within this strategic framework, and can be seen to have benefited from it, as well as participating in it, and contributing to it. Finally, CfR II’s work in supporting and strengthening the CMAA’s leadership of the sector as national co-ordinator, through processes such as the TWG has added value across the sector from which all other mine action projects, their operators and donors, have benefited, as discussed elsewhere in this report. The coherence of the formal sector has undoubtedly improved as a result. There is, however, still no over-arching annual national mine action plan, but coordination is happening on the sub-national basis, and increasingly CMAA is engaging with all donors and operators, and this can ultimately be seen as an added value of CfR II, although credit needs to be given to the CMAA’s current senior leadership who have risen to the challenge.

¹⁵⁴ p.44, *Transitioning Mine Action Programmes to National Ownership*, Cambodia, GICHD, March 2012

4.7 Gender

The TOR asked two questions with regards to gender, namely, ‘Has the CfR II project adopted an inclusive approach?’ and ‘Has gender been mainstreamed at all levels of the project cycle to ensure an inclusive approach?’.

The MTR observed that, *‘Gender considerations are being addressed in a comprehensive manner by the CMAA, despite some areas where improvements can be made. The issue of gender and the promotion of women’s rights has been highlighted by the RGC as a priority area for action, as has disability rights more generally. This commitment is evidenced by the development of its Gender Mainstreaming in Mine Action Plan (2013-2015) that establishes a roadmap for integrating gender considerations into the sector.’*¹⁵⁵ This comment remains valid at the end of the project. The gender mainstreaming plan was rooted in the evidence provided by GAP Gender Baseline Report undertaken 2012-13.

The MTR also notes that the mine action sector in Cambodia is, and always has been sensitive to the need to incorporate gender considerations. In the mid-1990s, MAG employed the first ever all female teams, selecting women who had either lost their husbands to landmine incidents, or whose husbands had been injured by mines and could not work. As the MTR notes, Cambodia is still possibly one of the most successful countries in the world in terms of promoting gender equity in the traditionally male dominated area of demining and EOD. NPMEC according to the MTR was aware of the need to integrate female de-miners, and although they expressed a commitment in this regard, they had no female deminers in 2013, and CMAA has no data on this in 2015 suggesting there has perhaps been no progress, and also this is one example of the ongoing limited oversight CMAA has over NPMEC even though it is a major CfR II partner. According to the CMAA Secretary General, HALO Trust’s CEO has recently expressed a commitment in achieving gender equity in its demining

De-miners by Gender, 2015

Operator	Male 2015	Female 2015	% 2015	% 2013 ¹⁵⁶	Change	Total 2015
CMAC	1630	126	7.17	5.12		1756
HALO Trust	634	229	26.53	17.11		863
MAG	169	68	28.69	34.32		237
CSHD	24	6	20	22.58		30
NPA	34	33	49.25	N/A	N/A	67
NPMEC		No Data	0?	0		
Total	2491	462	15.64			2953

Source: Email from **Sophan Ek, CMAA**, to Paul Davies, 21st October 2015

¹⁵⁵ p.44, MTR, June 2013

¹⁵⁶ The MTR miscalculated the %s, dividing the number of female deminers by the number of male deminers, not the total number of deminers to find the % of female deminers overall.

It was noticeable though that all of the MAPU's met were men, and it would be instructive to know how many female MAPUs there are across the whole programme. One major objective of gender mainstreaming across the project cycle is to enhancing women and girl's voices in the planning and prioritization process, as well as data collection, and one way to encourage this will be to ensure gender equity within the ranks of the MAPUs. CMAC's Community Based Mine Risk Reduction (CBMRR) network, being fundamentally a community liaison (CL) function, seems to be strongly dominated by women, as is often the case with CL, and greater prominence could be given to the CBMRR network in the planning process, especially with regards to mobilizing women and girls, which remains a problem as noted in the MTR. CBMRR members seemed isolated from other mine action agencies, and this appears to be something of an under-utilised resource that CMAA could do more to leverage.

As the MTR notes though, *'However, gender considerations are more complex than simple hiring practices. For this reason, CMAA has just developed its Gender Mainstreaming in Mine Action Plan (2013-2015) – a period of time that dovetails with the CFRII project. As per the UN Gender Guidelines for Mine Action Programmes, this plan addresses gender not only in terms of gender balance, but also in the integration of gender considerations within programme design'*.¹⁵⁷ The plan encompasses many accepted good practices, such as the need to collect gender disaggregated data, ensuring fair distribution of benefits of mine action, and designing programmes around different needs based on gender and age. The CMAA established a gender focal point in March 2012, and has a gender team. However, as the MTR notes, *'In terms of addressing gender considerations in the prioritisation of clearance efforts, MAPU teams have recorded that women are less frequent participants than men at all levels of meetings to establish a provincial mine clearance plan – Commune (16% women participants), District (20.5% women participants) and Provincial (26% women participants)'*.¹⁵⁸ As noted above, the issue of participation of women and girls was noted and reflected with regards to the FGDs undertaken during the course of this evaluation. In response to a specific enquiry about gender issues, the evaluation consultant wrote to UNDP in November 2015, *'Overall then in terms of participation in the evaluation, the women hung back, the MAPUs seemed to have very low awareness of gender issues and the importance of the basics of gathering gender disaggregated data. But my impression was that the dominant thing was not about gender, but about power in the communities and the CPP village chief expects - and the people expect - to take a lead'*.¹⁵⁹

The MTR also notes that in terms of vulnerability to landmines, it is men and boys who make up the majority of the victims, and yet no tailored initiative, including MRE, are being overseen or promoted by the CMAA to address this issue. This maybe an example where gender is mis-understood as being solely about women and girls, which is of course entirely wrong, and gender fundamentally relates to the different social, economic and cultural roles people have in their societies, and crucially how this affects their vulnerability to landmine and ERW threats, and therefore differential levels of risk. Activities such as driving tractors are male roles, and therefore a gender driven source of vulnerability to ATM threats. However, as detailed above proscribing such high-risk activities, or attempting to change behavior through further MRE is seen as of questionable value, particularly at this stage of the programme.

During the second half of CfR II, CMAA continued to promote gender mainstreaming objectives. For example, in 2013, CMAA's gender team undertook five missions to the

¹⁵⁷ p.44, MTR, June 2013

¹⁵⁸ p.45, MTR, June 2013

¹⁵⁹ Paul Davies email to Napoleon Navarro, UNDP Cambodia, 5th November 2015

field to understand how the Department of Women's Affairs had gone about mainstreaming gender equity, and also to better the needs of female de-miners and dog handlers. They also organized a TRG to finalise the baseline report and the development of the GAP. GAP handbooks were printed in both English and Khmer, and distributed to operators. The 2014 Annual Report noted that, *'The CMAA Gender Mainstreaming Team is headed by a staff member from Public Relations Department as the Gender Focal Person. The team coordinates with the Technical Reference Group on Gender, composed of representatives from the Ministry of Women's Affairs, Ministry of Social Affairs, Veterans, and Youth Rehabilitation, Mine Action Planning Units, UN agencies, and international and national non-government organizations'*. The CMAA's gender team also organized a two day course with the Ministry of Women's Affairs (MoWA) on Gender Mainstreaming for the 15 head MAPUs, to become focal points for the promotion of women in mine action planning and prioritization. A further workshop was organized to review the disaggregation of data collection by sex and gender, comparing 2012 to 2013. In early 2014, an annual survey of gender mainstreaming targets achieved by 2013 was also carried out noting some incremental improvements in for example, women's participation in mine action planning and prioritization. Nonetheless, the report notes the following key challenges remaining:

1. *The number of female staff working in the CMAA remains low;*
2. *The total number of women working in mine action has decreased compared to previous years and requires intervention from all stakeholders;*
3. *The Gender team of the CMAA still faces some challenge in developing the monitoring and evaluation systems framework for the GAP assignment.*¹⁶⁰

Quarterly reports from the project for the first two quarters of 2015 confirmed ongoing activities within the context of promoting gender mainstreaming, such as further visits to 7 provinces in the first quarter, to work with the MAPUs to complete the gender questionnaires for 2014¹⁶¹, and further training of the MAPUs from 8 provinces and operators on mainstreaming gender in the workplace was undertaken, again in partnership with the MoWA¹⁶².

Overall, there clearly has been a great deal of effort invested in this area, and some progress in the mainstreaming of gender in the project cycle over the course of CfR II, and this issue has been owned by the designated gender focal point within CMAA. The gender focal point cited the steady improvements in women's participation in the planning and prioritization meetings at community level, and the fact that the SEPD is collection disaggregated data so that such improvements can be monitored as one set of evidence to support this claim¹⁶³. The Gender Focal Point noted that there are an increasing number of women working the CMAA, and they are also employed in more senior roles than at the start of CfR II. She noted, as demonstrated above that in many of the leading operators in the Cambodian mine action programme, the number of women employees is gradually increasing. UNDP's support through CfR II was assessed as extremely important in the promotion of gender mainstreaming in the CMAA, and beyond into the sector.

¹⁶⁰ p.16, CfR II Annual Report, 2014

¹⁶¹ p.6, First Quarterly Report, CfR II, 2015

¹⁶² p.8, Second Quarterly Report, CfR II, 2015

¹⁶³ Interview with Ms. Peang Sovannary, Adviser & Gender Focal Point, CMAA & Ms Keo Kunthear Duongchan, Secretary to Gender Team, 2nd October 2015

In summary then, it can be seen that the programme has adopted an inclusive approach to gender and gender issues have to some extent been mainstreamed into the project cycle. The CMAA gender focal point noted that members of the gender team are now present in all the key CMAA departments responsible for the annual planning cycle, and this of itself has facilitated gender considerations into the annual process. It was noted that the current GAP will be completed in 2015, and there will be a review and reflection and these issues will be included in a new gender mainstreaming plan that will be needed to maintain the momentum¹⁶⁴.

5.0 Conclusions:

- CfR II has been generally a good project in terms of all of the core evaluation questions: relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact and sustainability. It has been and remains highly relevant, achieved very positive impact and most these outcomes will be sustained for the longer term, especially in an environment of sustained ODA for mine action. The project has also been highly effective in its own terms, although more could have been done to ensure greater outcomes and impact across all three deliverables, and the project appears to have only a low level of responsiveness to the recommendations produced by the MTR in 2013. More could have been done, especially in terms of KD s 1 and 2 if significant issues flagged by the MTR had been acted on, perhaps not exactly in the way recommends in the MTR. However, the MTR's analysis on a number of key issues was sound. That said the MTR is slightly less critical of CfR's achievements in terms of the efficiency criteria. As argued above, over emphasis on delivering low price land release contracts has been confused with 'efficiency' and this may have acted as a perverse incentive that has detracted in real terms from the project's overall effectiveness and impact.
- CfR II's success is in large part due to the very *real* relevance of Mine Action in Cambodia, and Cambodian ownership of the issue through all levels of government. This was unambiguously observed throughout this evaluation. CMAA is much strengthened both as a result of the CfR projects, I and II, and under its currently widely respected and competent new leadership is a world leading national mine action authority. UNDP has at times, including during the period of the development of the new MAHD not treated CMAA with the respect it deserves as both the national implementing partner of the CfR II, and also as the lead agency of the RGC on mine action issues, and a more participative approach that respects CMAA's knowledge and authority is appropriate going forward. Failure to do so is highly counter-productive to the stated project aims of CfR II which is centrally concerned with strengthening CMAA and building its capacity.
- Although much has been achieved, and CMAA emerges from 10 years of UNDP support through CfR I & II far stronger and with greater authority, the new project, MAHD needs to continue to support this process of institution strengthening, and adopt a new and more participative approach to this, built on a capacity and functionality self assessment exercise. Such support should be based on a request from CMAA, and be guided by CMAA's assessment of the strengths and weakness of UNDP support over the period of the CfR projects.
- CMAA's institutional capacity and performance as the national co-ordinator has been strengthened and enhanced, in part through ongoing UNDP support under

¹⁶⁴ Ibid.

CfR II, but more perhaps through the empowering affects of being able to contract operators to undertake survey and land release operations under KD3. Whilst accurately scoping and recording the extent of the technical problem through baseline survey. But as argued above, it can be questioned if contracting operations is really the role of the national co-ordinator and regulator? The MACCA in Afghanistan underwent a very successful change process in the 2005-09 period that involved stripping away all functions that were *not* truly concerned with national co-ordination, in part because it can generate conflicts of interest. Empowering CMAA through allowing it to fund operations has worked as a medium term strategy, but it is arguably not appropriate and equally not sustainable. CMAA's authority and power as national coordinator needs to be built further through political processes and agreements between key stakeholders, both international and national. New mechanisms to allow CMAA to govern pooled funds, especially for the purposes of ongoing survey, may need to be found, rather than the current NIM modalities i.e. a review of the desirability of returning to a Trust Fund mechanism, such as used by UNDP in Lao PDR.

- Efficiency, effectiveness and impact of operational land release elements can be improved. This might seem a counter-intuitive statement given low prices per m² of land released. However, there is some evidence that these low price contracts have acted as a 'perverse incentive', and have encouraged operators to select 'easy' tasks from the annual work plan at provincial level. where large amount of area can be released quickly. Beyond this it is possible that operators are actively influencing the MAPUs in including such tasks in the work plan listings, explicitly for this reason. Therefore a higher cost per m², that delivers demonstrably greater outcomes, perhaps by having different or additional metrics of outputs may well be considered more efficient, as well as having greater impact.
- Information Management is weak and needs to be urgently improved. This is seen as essential for effective day to day coordination and planning, as well as longer term strategic planning and reporting. There appears to be a culture of acceptance of the current low levels of performance that needs to be challenged. Part of the problem may lie with the late delivery of IMSMA NG in late 2014, but this is not really credible as an excuse in late 2015. There needs to be more verification of the accuracy of information recorded in IMSMA, as many anomalies were discovered during the course of the evaluation.
- Operators, even those directly contracted under CfR II, should be considered as partners, not contractors. Their needs should be considered more holistically, i.e. by paying closer to the economic costs of land release, thereby allowing for more sustainability in operations i.e. depreciation of equipment, training and personnel support costs.
- More effort should be invested in understanding impact of mines and mine action (based on evidence). Impact monitoring systems as envisaged in CfR II's original project document were never achieved, and this was a failing that needs to be rectified with immediate effect. Initially, this can be done through an impact survey, but systems need to be built to monitor impact over the long term. The evidence-base that emerges from should form the basis of a new attempt to reach common agreement amongst stakeholders about what impact of mines and mine action means, and thereby promote national programme wide alignment. These understandings should be reflected in prioritisation and planning, and operational partners should be incentivized for delivering maximum impact, rather than releasing land at the lowest possible price.

- Casualty rates are an important indicator of impact, but CMVIS's data maybe under-recording the true scale of the problem, especially given that it only records incidents associated with established villages (recorded in the Gazette), and the most vulnerable communities in high threat areas, where risks are highest, are new migrant villages being established on the 'frontiers'.
- There is a clear connection between migration, land hunger, land distribution and vulnerability to landmine threats. This has been the pattern since at least 1995 and is still ongoing in areas of northern Banteay-Meanchay and Odar Meanchay along the northern border with Thailand, as well as in the south west in Pursat, again on the border with Thailand.
- The mine action sector in Cambodia consists of far more than just the 'formal' humanitarian sector, funded largely by ODA and implemented through well recognized accredited operators such as CMAC, HALO Trust, MAG and NPA etc. Much of Cambodia's hazardous areas have been 'threat-reduced' if not cleared/released to national standards by the informal private sector, whilst significant work – funded by the RGC and implemented by NPMEC and RCAF – is going on in what this report refers to as the 'informal formal' (government) sector. These sectors need to be understood and accepted more, and brought more under CMAA's purview. Efforts to integrate the informal private sector into the formal sector need to be prioritized, as the informal private sector will have an important role to play with dealing with Cambodia's residual capacity, especially in any remaining frontier communities where risks and vulnerability are highest.
- An explicit national mine action plan to deliver the NMA is still required, that also presents an explicit transition strategy. The draft plan delivered in early 2014 as a result of a UNDP consultancy, presumably paid for under CfR II, has been shelved, but is seen as a good initial draft that attempted to deal with all of the key issues. A transparent review is required to understand why this element of the project has been ineffective, and appeared to alienate some major national stakeholders. Current Cambodian government strategy for dealing with transition issues, and the fate of existing agencies (such as CMAC) needs to be made explicit and discussed openly with other stakeholders. The RGC owns the sector in its broadest sense, in part through significant financial contributions, far more than many contemporary mine-affected countries with long international mine action support. This should be celebrated and welcomed, but there should be less distances between the real government narrative and those shared with international partners, operating solely within the formal mine action sector.
- **Annual prioritisation and planning at the sub-national level, under the MAPUs remains the absolute lynch pin of the entire systems of co-ordination that is undertaken under the auspices of the CMAA.** While the system was seen to work reasonably well, as reflected in the positive impact of CfR II and its land release observed during the course of the evaluation, some anomalies were revealed. These anomalies may or may not be that significant, but certainly there are some open questions around the independence of the process, and also the degree of popular participation in a meaningful sense, as described in the planning documents. This needs to be further investigated as an immediate priority. **Moreover, the current top down planning guidance, although better than what came before, is seen as being too vague, with a lack of ranking of impacted communes, and a limited requirement that 75% of tasks occur within any of the communes listed as impacted which is**

not considered an effective way of linking mine action resources to the community level priorities.

6.0 Findings and Detailed Recommendations

Findings and recommendations have been split between UNDP and CMAA, although to some extent this is rather arbitrary, as UNDP will need to work with CMAA on implementing recommendations it accepts in the management response, and equally many of the recommendations that appear to be more directly concerned with CMAA will best be progressed with support from UNDP and its mine action team. In both cases UNDP and CMAA will obviously need to agree with the recommendations, or a modified form of the recommendation, in the usual way.

For UNDP:

Finding: Funding non-technical re-survey in 2015 in CfR II's target provinces (also known as the Land Reclamation survey), was a highly effective and efficient way of improving the accuracy of the database, and resulted in the cancellation of substantial areas of suspect land, and the generation of additional suspected hazardous area. Evidence exists that even in the target areas further cancellation might be possible, and this is likely to be true in non-CfR II provinces as well.

6.1 Consider funding further non-technical survey through CMAA in the new project.

Finding: Some of the suspect hazardous area recently added to the database in 2014-15, including during the recent re-survey project appears questionable.

6.2 Contract a technically competent third party operator to verify recent re-survey work.

Finding: the MAPU-led planning process can be argued to have resulted in sub-optimal prioritization and task allocation *in some cases* under CfR II. UNDP has already commissioned an initial study following the Final Evaluation, and the results of this have been submitted as a stand-alone report that is included as a separate annex to this report. Key findings from this study have also been integrated in the findings of this Final Evaluation report. Evidence of anomalous prioritization (which were found in all three target provinces), also suggest that there has been a weakness in monitoring of CfR II since they have only come to light at the end of the project. These weaknesses need to be addressed by both CMAA, as the implementer of the project, and by UNDP as the steward of this nationally implemented project.

6.3 Review the capacity of the MAPUs to manage the planning and prioritization process. Review the structural and institutional position of the MAPUs within the system of Cambodian national governance of mine action coordination, and the degree to which this affects their effectiveness.¹⁶⁵ Formulate a plan to address any gaps identified in MAPU performance in planning and prioritisation, including (as required) a capacity development plan.

Finding: there has been inadequate non-technical monitoring of the work contracted under CfR II's KD3. This includes inadequate ongoing monitoring of impact, as described

¹⁶⁵ MAPUs interviewed in the course of the evaluation revealed that many were demoralized as they had been seconded from mainstream government departments in which they had hoped to build a career, and felt sidelined into the MAPU role which does not reflect their skills, training and aspirations, creating a motivational issue. This is compounded by practical challenges they cited around budgets and equipment, especially with regards to means of transport to remote areas, as cited in the MTR as a constraint.

in the CfR II project document. ‘Non-technical’ monitoring is also lacking¹⁶⁶ with regards to the prioritization and planning decisions made under the MAPU-led process from which the task lists for the CfR II contracts are generated. Although the MAPU’s are not part of the CMAA *per se*, their work – as noted by the Mid Term Review – is absolutely essential to the effectiveness, efficiency and impact of CfR II funded activity under KD3. This needs to be improved in future projects, and suggests that the whole structure of governance of mine action at the sub-national level may need to be reviewed, as addressed under a separate finding and recommendation. Given CfR II’s NIM modality energy has rightly been placed into capacity development of CMAA’s QA/QM teams (technical monitoring). It is also accepted that the MAPU’s provide basic post-clearance monitoring, which has been helpful for example in verifying that beneficiaries almost always have retained control of their land post land-release. However, there is also a clear place for regular independent monitoring by both UNDP and CMAA (as the project implementer) of the overall process, especially with regards to the prioritization and planning process overseen by the MAPUs from which task lists for CfR II contractors are generated, and the way in which operator’s task lists under CfR II were finalised. This process was found to be far less participative in practice than is described in the formal systems, and operators have an ability to cherry pick tasks, to reject some tasks due to perceived operational factors¹⁶⁷, and can also introduce alternative tasks to the work plan. **While this is to be welcomed in some regards, reflecting a healthy degree of flexibility in mine action co-ordination, and effective partnership between operators and MAPUs, the outcomes of these practices needs to be monitored more closely.** Evidence gathered during the field work on the evaluation, and during the follow up study on the MAPU planning and prioritisation process, suggested that **in some cases the current system may have produced sub-optimal outcomes in terms of the impact of tasks cleared, the order of tasks being cleared in a community over a period of years, and the presence of what might be considered priority tasks that are left undone for many years.** In the same way as UNDP provides financial assurance to donors through audit processes, despite CfR II being a NIM project, it is suggested that the organization also needs to ensure that operational field level processes are working properly. Financial audits, without audits checking the health of project implementation issues, is very partial in terms of providing project assurance to donors and other stakeholders. UNDP and CMAA need to mutually commit to achieving higher levels of accountability for essential project elements such as the impact assessment and monitoring system described in the original project document. Donors – arguably – should also be more demanding in holding both UNDP and CMAA to account for delivering such core elements of the project.

6.4 Ensure more effective independent monitoring, not just of the technical quality of land release, but also of the more general management of the multi-stakeholder process of land release at sub-national level, in particular paying close attention to the bottom-up elements of prioritization, planning and task allocation to operators.

Finding: The 2013 NIS Outcomes study contains important information. It is essential that those reviewing such work should be sufficiently versed in the context to make sense of the data being presented, and it is possible that this was not the case in this instance. It also seems strange that the comments on the document come solely from UNDP staff and not CMAA. The possibility of accessing this baseline information in the

¹⁶⁶ It could be stated that the need to monitor the MAPU process was not foreseen in the project document and this could be considered a design failure.

¹⁶⁷ Usually safety and access are used as reasons for rejecting some sites during the task inspection stage of the process, but this also may provide a ready excuse for operators to reject tasks which are seen as technically difficult, or hard to safely achieve the required m2 to be cleared under CfR II contracts.

near future, would be of great value in terms of deepening understandings of outcomes and impact of mine action.

6.5 Review again the 2013 NIS implemented ‘Outcomes Study’ in light of the new evidence on impact provided by this evaluation and the UNDP Household Impact study.

Finding: there are now a substantial number of valuable data sets that can be used for further longitudinal studies on the impact of mines and mine action. Considering the scale of investment in mine action in Cambodia, and globally, very few studies of this kind have been done. UNDP/CMAA is uniquely placed now to build on this work, and to provide analysis that may have impact and value for global mine action.

6.6 Use the data sets generated from this evaluation’s field work, the household study and if possible other outcomes studies, including both studies from 2013 referred to in this report, as the basis for further longitudinal studies on the impact of mines and mine action.

Finding: there is a need to understand more systematically the impact of mines and ERW on affected communities in Cambodia, and to use this more coherently in the CMAA’s ‘top-down’ planning guidance given to the MAPUs at sub-national level. Such an impact assessment, like other forms of survey can perhaps best be delivered through mainstreaming of the function, as understanding impact requires regular updating, rather than just a ‘one off’ process. Provincial MAPUs could play a vital role here and be commissioned and supported to undertake impact surveys. Capacity could be built through support from an experienced operator to ensure sustainability is achieved. The impact study results should be used to establish new CMAA planning guidelines that build on existing good practice. These should factor in future use of areas, with estimates of how this will change the impact of mines on people, and therefore the overall risks arising¹⁶⁸. In short, CMAA should try and focus the formal sector into the remaining areas of the ‘frontier’ where this study has found that mines posed a high-risk threat and have greatest impact.

6.7 Fund and undertake an impact survey at the start of the next phase of UNDP support to the CMAA to develop an evidence base for prioritization and planning, and to strengthen the capacity of MAPUs.

Finding: the draft national strategic plan developed to implement the current CMAS has been shelved, and a new plan is needed that develops the scheme of prioritization to include not just the technical characteristics of the minefield / SHA, but also its socio-economic impact. This should include inclusion of accurate casualty data from the immediate location, since accident data is a proxy of socio-economic impact, as well as an indicator of humanitarian consequences.

6.8 Develop a new national strategic plan that seeks not only to deliver APMBT obligations, but that also maximizes the impact of annual mine action work undertaken in the short term is needed

Finding: CfR II contracts sought to maximize cheap land release, measured in m² output terms, that was represented in efficiency terms. They did not focus on understanding, measuring or maximising the impact of funded mine action in human security,

¹⁶⁸ For example, Wat Banan, on Phnom Banan or Komping Pouy reservoir are areas in Battambang, contain multiple high threat minefields (A1), containing high risk mines, and are key tourist attractions. However, the lack of recent accidents de-prioritises these areas, which is an issue of concern for the local authorities as revealed in an interview with the Banan Deputy District Leader on 19th October 2015.

livelihood and developmental outcomes terms. Focusing on outcomes and impact would align future projects more with the IMSMA definition of mine action as being about risk reduction. There is currently a lack of common understanding of impact between stakeholders, as implied in comments under 6.17 below.

6.9 Design future contracts for land release to ensure there are performance metrics that assess, measure and reward the delivery of impact.

Finding: CMAA is in need of further capacity building and support at the inter-institutional level. Particular attention needs to be focused on the capacity and performance issues of the Data Base Unit and information management. Special attention should be paid to this matter, and due to now long-standing issues an urgent assessment, and remedial action should be taken. Gaps in functionality in this regard are directly impacting CMAA's effectiveness in part of its fundamental core business. There is also currently a fragmentation of advice from different stakeholders involved in supporting CMAA, and UNDP needs to position itself more pro-actively to overcome this issue and ensure greater coherence to such advice.

It is noted that UNDP is currently planning a sector review for the start of 2016. This should include a comprehensive review of CMAA's institutional capacity, and the inter-institutional and political issues that may present challenges for it in fulfilling its role as national coordinator and regulator, and not just as the national entity tasked with implementing CfR II, or any future UNDP project. **The CMAA is in urgent need of an institutional functionality and staffing capacity assessment that considers its current performance as national regulator and co-ordination, identifies gaps and the reasons for these gaps (some of which may not purely be due to staff or institutional capacity, but other structural or political issues), and develops a plan to strengthen the organization and enhance performance.** A commitment to continuous improvement is important in any institution, no matter how well it performs. Such a finding and associated recommendation is not therefore intended as criticism, but it is clear there is still a gap between CMAA's stated role, and its ability to perform this. CMAA's strategic vision for governance of the sector should also be reviewed in a participative process that engages with major stakeholders: donors, national and international operators, relevant line ministries at national and sub-national level, and representatives of beneficiaries. **Agreements need to be reached about planning processes and documentation that whilst built on local processes, is also capable of aggregation, such that the relatively effective planning that is happening at a sub-national level is captured, consolidated and communicated in order to be able to better demonstrate progress against the known extent of the problem, and to illustrate CMAA's effective leadership of the sector in delivering the current and future CMAS.**

Whilst UNDP and its development partners involved in CfR II have expressed a focus on land release as the priority, these same donors have also expressed commitment to seeing the CMAA strengthened as well. To some extent these issues will be highlighted by the forthcoming sector review, but a separate and complementary institutional capacity assessment report should also be commissioned. This should be a highly participatory process of self-assessment within the CMAA, but should also engage with other key mine action stakeholders, as well as other Cambodian institutional stakeholders at national and sub-national level. In a facilitated process the CMAA should be encouraged to develop a revised and bespoke vision and mission statement, which reflects the realities of Cambodia and governance policy i.e. emphasis on decentralization etc. In other words, whilst such a process should benchmark international good practice, it should not be slavishly shaped by international perceptions of the same. It should reference these, but adapt them to Cambodian

realities. This should be part of planning for performance monitoring system under the future UNDP project. Such future support for capacity building should be based on a request from CMAA, and be guided by CMAA's assessment of the strengths and weakness of UNDP support over the period of the CfR projects.

6.10 Review with CMAA both it's internal capacity (functionality) AND its intra-institutional level (political) challenges in fulfilling its role; develop and implement a programme of UNDP support during the future project that addresses these findings in a coherent way that also compliments the advice and support received by other stakeholders providing support to CMAA

Finding: the poorest do not own land, and the majority of CfR II's beneficiaries were not technically poor. Mine action does not facilitate land redistribution to the poor in the vast majority of cases. The poorest are often the most vulnerable, as they are still forced to engage in livelihood strategies that often involve foraging in high-risk areas (in some cases evidence of this in A1 minefields).

6.11 Consider incentivizing the release of purely risk reduction sites in future projects (such as contaminated common land, often hills, not own by an individual landowner), rather than setting the release of agricultural land as a key value, if UNDP wishes land release to operate with 'pro-poor' as a core value.

Finding: UNDP is rightly concerned about sustainability of the sector and is keen to see the Royal Government of Cambodia (RGC) increase its financial support. However, it needs to be acknowledged that the perception that the RGC's funding is 'tokenistic' is somewhat unfair and misleading as it is based on a conception of the sector that is too narrowly defined in terms of the 'formal' (or as the Secretary General of CMAA refers to it, the 'humanitarian') sector, whereas if the 'informal formal' RGC funded sector is included, then it can be seen that the RGC already provides meaningful funding to mine action, in both absolute terms, and relative to other mine affected countries. Ironically, the Government's focus on providing mine action resources for 'big D' development projects is a far closer linkage between mine action and development, than the small 'd' development that is usually thought of as accruing from the formal (humanitarian), and donor funded sector. **The key to making sense of the medium term challenges of sustainability is to accept that at some point donor funded, pro-active formal clearance that targets the 'humanitarian' needs of 'the poorest'¹⁶⁹ will cease in Cambodia.** These arguments were made very clearly in the draft national mine action plan from 2013 cited elsewhere in this document. UNDP should encourage and support the CMAA in facilitating discussion about the transition strategy for the mine action sector which openly addresses issues such as the apparent preference for the Cambodian military and/or police EOD units, perhaps in partnership with CMAC, as the residual capacity operator. In order not to squander the considerably capacity built within CMAC, discussions could and should consider migration of at least some of these personnel, skills and systems into the RCAF/NPMEC department if this is indeed the direction in which the RGC wants to go. Transition planning should also consider what role informal sector providers can play going forward in providing 'on demand' services, especially as the formal eventually starts to decline, when as predicted ODA for formal mine action is reduced. Two recommendations are associated with this finding.

¹⁶⁹ As argued here and in the DFID country case study evaluation in 2013 it is not the poorest who benefit directly from the humanitarian sector, but rather the middling and richer classes living in rural areas. In settler communities these are 'new -rich' families who typically have taken great risks to own their land. The poorest benefit from working in a safer environment in the agricultural sector, driving tractors, ploughing etc

6.12 Plan for a residual and reactive response capacity (perhaps centred on the police EOD units that are already in receipt of RGC funding).

6.13 Develop a resource mobilization plan to support the new national plan to deliver a revised CMAS, as recommended above.

Finding: CfR II lacked a Log Frame and/or Theory of Change. The new UNDP project document MAHD does already have a Theory of Change (ToC) that is to be welcomed as a positive step. This should be reviewed in light of the ToC developed based on a far wider and longer term evidence base of UNDP support to mine action globally, as included in the recently completed UNDP IEO study referenced in this document. There is also substantial evidence from the Household Impact Study and this Final Evaluation. The new project should be reviewed participatively with the CMAA as the national partner during the current extension period of CfR II, until February 2016.

6.14 Revise, as required, the new project document in light of new evidence on impact, and ensure it has a Log Frame and SMART indicators associated with each Key Deliverable and its associated activities

Finding: the ‘*Baseline Study on Mine Interventions within the CfR II Implemented Regions*’ (January 2014), commissioned by UNDP contains a very important set of findings that remain relevant. Mine action investments can be leveraged by providing targeted assistance.

6.15 Pursue funding and donor support for the idea of targeted development assistance (referred to in the report as a ‘responsive mechanism’) to allow beneficiaries of mine action land release, especially those in the most impacted frontier communities, to leverage the advantages that the provision of safe land, or additional safe land, gives them. This should *not* be promoted through CMAA due to capacity issues, and conceptually might sit better in other parts of government.

Finding: MAPU prioritization of CfR II tasks in Pailin has appeared to respond more closely to the priorities and impacted communities (in part as identified in the top down planning instruction) than in Battambang, and certainly in Banteay-Meanchay where CfR II tasks in recent years are assessed to have had least impact. There are relatively serious questions about some of the task allocations made to CfR II in Banteay-Meanchay. During the first year or so of the new UNDP project funding for land release is reduced compared to funding available under CfR II. Greater impact may be had in restricting funding to Pailin alone, and/or Pailin and Battambang.

6.16 Consider restricting land release contracts under first years of new project to Pailin alone, or Pailin and Battambang.

For CMAA:

Finding: greater stakeholder alignment can be achieved by reviewing, and agreeing, key concepts. Critical here is to agree what mine action¹⁷⁰, and its impact, is really about based on the new evidence of the impact of mines/ERW, and of mine action / land release, as a result of field work undertaken in this study, and from the UNDP Household Impact Study (2015). It is accepted that the CMAS currently serves to provide such alignment and common conceptual understandings, but it is suggested that in some regards this needs to be reviewed and revised. For example, the division between mine

¹⁷⁰ This might seem self-evident, but the current focus on land release for agriculture in order to assist in poverty alleviation, and the assumptions and values that underlie this, does not seem to fit well with the IMAS definition of mine action as being about risk reduction

action for humanitarian and development purposes seems an arbitrary distinction, not supported by current evidence. There needs to first be common understanding of what is meant by 'impact' in order to align the sector to ensure the impact of mine action is maximized in the short term by the national programme.

6.17 Review and revise the CMAS in participatory fashion with stakeholders in light of new evidence on the impact of mines/ERW and mine action in contemporary Cambodia: achieve greater alignment of the national mine action programme around the key concepts in the revised CMAS.

Finding: a great deal of risk reduction in mine affected communities has for at least 20 years been the result of 'threat reduction' (rather than mine clearance) work by what this report refers to as the 'informal private sector'. This accounts for the fact that in many cases land which is formally still recorded as hazardous has either in part or completely been farmed, sometimes for many years without significant accidents, especially in recent years. This is also a function of the reduced functionality of many mine types in Cambodia. This is not to endorse or approve private operators who are not accredited, or operating to national standards, and neither is to sanction them. Rather it is suggested that it is essential to map their work, to use their outputs and insights as 'evidence' for ongoing survey, and to assist with planning and prioritization. Such relationships could perhaps best be achieved at provincial level by the MAPUs. MAPUs should first engage with a mapping exercise to see who is operating on a province by province basis, and establish regular liaison and information exchange with them. QA teams may wish to review the processes used, and assess if and how such operators could be accredited. CMAA should consider options for removing barriers to having at least a relationship of communication with such informal private sector operators. If private sector companies are avoiding CMAA because they are unable or unwilling to pay the registration fee – stated as US\$ 1000 for two years and US\$ 200 per team – then perhaps the fees should be waived. The other issue concerns appearing to sanction the operators who, since they have not registered, have not been accredited and are not bound by national standards and SOPs. This is a harder issue, but the costs of not having a relationship – of continuing to not have a relationship – appear higher than the risks of building one.

6.18 Engage and develop a relationship of greater communication with the informal mine action sector

Finding: accident data is not being recorded in CMVIS for some 'new villages', not recorded in the official Gazette. This also means that any future impact survey will need to move beyond official established villages and to capture new villages forming on the remaining frontier. If the next project wants to prioritise the 'release land for the poor' then it needs to focus especially on such new villages that are 'on the frontier', as remaining priority sites in more settled areas, including former 'new' villages that were 'on the frontier' have largely allocated land, and in many cases landowners are no longer formally ID poor, as illustrated by the results of the Household Study.

6.19 Review accident data collection and management processes, and ensure information from 'new villages' is pro-actively collected and entered into the system.

Finding: the top down planning guidance issued by CMAA to the MAPUs lacks precision and should be more directive. The current system seeks to identify 'priority communes' on the basis of casualty rates in the last five years, and the size of recorded SHAs. Only 75% of tasks have to take place in such priority communes, and no effective ranking of

communes is made against which MAPUs are expected to prioritise the annual provincial work plan. Casualty rates do go some way towards indicating impact of mines and ERW, but can be misleading, especially in the case of one off accidents with ATMs that may have multiple victims. Equally, the accuracy of SHA information on the database can be questioned (i.e. evidence of much land under cultivation, even area that is recorded as being A1 in some cases). Both these metrics are considered as attempting to give an approximate indication of impact, but the recommended impact survey will provide a more nuanced measure. The value in doing this, however, without a more directive system of top down planning, focusing on ranking the most impacted communities (villages) not just communes, will be lost. Donors and operators should be consulted, and attempts made to link this new system to a renewed commitment to the Partnership Principles, and the CMAA's endorsement of funding proposals in the formal humanitarian mine action sector. In other words, a revised planning directive needs to have teeth and the support of as many key stakeholders as possible, including the relevant Cambodian development agencies. This is required to allow the CMAA to meet its most fundamental responsibility as national co-ordinator: namely, to ensure that mine action resources are distributed in a rational way. Serious consideration should also be given to options to completely clear whole communities, which would also offer efficiency gains to operators. The key to this would lie in effective prioritization of the most affected and impacted communities through more directive top down planning guidelines, and identification of 'killing zones'¹⁷¹ and 'low hanging fruit' i.e. the few remaining minefields in and around (the real) Chaeng village in Chay Meanchay.

6.20 Revise and re-introduce a new version of the 2011 Inter-rim Directive that should develop a more proscriptive system of prioritization whereby more mine action resources are systematically focused on the more impacted communities, or even villages, within the worst affected provinces.

Finding: there is a wide difference in the functionality of different mine types present in Cambodia, resulting in widely different levels of risk associated with them. In terms of the current land release standard references to 'evidence of mines' is too broad to capture 'evidence of risk'. Too many tasks under Cfr II appear to have been cleared only to generate low risk mines that in most cases are inert. This is not considered effective mine action, and the impact at community level is likely to be limited. Two recommendations are associated with this finding.

6.21 Revise land release standards to capture the difference in risk from different types of mines

6.22 Include a measure of risk associated with the assessed mine type in each SHA in the prioritisation guidelines issued to the MAPUs i.e. so that higher-risk mines are prioritised over low risk mines.

Finding: The evidence for too many years already is that those most at risk from mines have received MRE on multiple occasions, and yet for a range of reasons, predominantly livelihood reasons, continue to take risks with mines. In these circumstances, **MRE for the general population must be considered to have been highly ineffective, and with limited impact to date.** Further investment in MRE for the most vulnerable groups is considered likely to be highly ineffective, inefficient (even though it is cheap) and is likely to have extremely low, if no impact, going forward. Community Liaison, on the other hand, the process of establishing on-going flows of information with at risk

¹⁷¹ In the late 2000s the MACCA in Afghanistan focused on identifying the killing zones through a participative planning process. They found 109 locations where typically one accident was happening every three months. After clearance, casualty rates the following year dropped to just 9. Email from Alan MacDonald, former Project Director, 20th December 2015.

communities, especially on accidents and previously unknown hazardous areas, is considered essential going forward and is always seen as having high effectiveness, efficiency (because it is extremely cheap) and delivers big impact for mine action planning and co-ordination.

6.23 Further MRE should be focused on basic awareness messages for children, and mainstreamed as is already happening through the school curriculum.

Finding: the MAPUs are almost entirely male, and despite having had gender training, appear quite ‘gender-blind’ in practice. Since, as noted above, the MAPU are critical to the day-to-day business of mine action co-ordination, prioritization and planning, it is in this *fora* that gender equity and empowerment is arguably most required. CMAC’s CBMRR could be mobilized and empowered more in planning and prioritization, not only for their apparent local knowledge, but also to provide greater gender equity in the process as they have a far greater per centage of women.

6.24 CMAA should encourage the provincial government to recruit and train more women in the ranks of the MAPUs, and a survey should be undertaken to establish a baseline of gender balance in the MAPU structures.

Finding: the Gender Action Plan needs to be reviewed and updated, with attention paid to the sub-national level, and the MAPU structure. Lessons learned should be fed into the new project activities, and budget should be made available for this critical issue.

6.25 Review and revise the Gender Action Plan with particular attention to the sub-national level

Finding: tasks have been suspended by the military and border police on the K5 in the so-called ‘white zone’. This does not fit with obligations under the APMBT, nor do claims that this is due to there being doubt as to whether the territory is Cambodian or Thai always hold water and evidence exists that other motives exist for the suspension

6.26 CMAA needs to engage on the issue of suspended tasks in the K5¹⁷².

¹⁷² It is noted that CMAA management commented in the feedback presentation on 21st December 2015 that this was already being dealt with. Nonetheless it is a serious potential breach of Cambodia’s legal obligations under the APMBT and reference to this needs to be made here.

Annex: 1 Documents Reviewed

Post-Clearance Land Use in Cambodia Prepared for United Nations Development Programme by Jim Freedman and Nhean So Munin 15 March 2013

Clearing for Results Phase II, Annual Report 2013

Clearing for Results Phase II, Annual Report 2014

Clearing for Results Phase II, Quarterly Reports 2013 – 2015

Mid-Term Review (MTR) CFRII, June 2013

Draft National Strategy Plan for Mine Action in Cambodia (v.3, early 2014?)

'Informal Village Demining in Cambodia: An Operational Study' (Handicap International, 2005)

Evaluation of the Results, including Impact, of UNDP Support to Countries on Mine Action (DRAFT), Independent Evaluation Office of the UNDP, 5th October 2015

Doing No Harm? Mine Action and Land Issues in Cambodia GICHD Report, September 2014

Capacity Assessment Report and Capacity Building Plan of the Department of General Administration, Cambodia Mine Action Authority (CMAA), January 2011

“Rectangular Strategy” for Growth, Employment, Equity and Efficiency Phase II First Cabinet Meeting of the Fourth Legislature of the National Assembly at the Office of the Council of Ministers Phnom Penh, 26 September 2008

NSPD, 2014-18

NSPD, 2009-2013

Post-Clearance Monitoring Consolidated Report, Nov 2013 – February 2014, CMAA

Review of the Cambodian Mine Action and Victim Assistance Authority (CMAA) 2011 – 2013 Bidding Process, GICHD, 2013

IMAS 04.10, Second Edition 01 January 2003 Amendment 7, August 2014, *Glossary of mine action terms, definitions and abbreviations*

Transitioning Mine Action Programmes to National Ownership, Cambodia, GICHD, March 2012

Annex 2

Schedule of Meetings

Monday 21st September:

UNDP Cambodia (to discuss and plan Household Impact Study :

- Rukhshona Rajabova, M & E Officer,
- Tong Try, Senior National Project Officer
- Mr. David Horrocks Mine Action Advisor Clearing for Results
- Individual meeting with Mr David Horrocks, Mine Action Advisor, Clearing for Results.

Wednesday 23rd September:

- Mr. David Horrocks Mine Action Advisor Clearing for Results

Monday, 28th September:

- Presentation of Inception Report and Evaluation Methodology to Stakeholders, CMAA
- Matthew Hovell, Country Director, The HALO Trust

Tuesday, 29th September:

- Mr. David Horrocks Mine Action Advisor Clearing for Results

Wednesday, 30th September:

- Enrico Gaveglia, Deputy CD, UNDP, 30th September
- Aksel Steen-Nilsen, Country Director, Norwegian People's Aid

Thursday, 1st October:

- CMAC
 - H.E. Heng Rattana, Delegate of the Royal Government In charge as Director General of CMAC, **CMAC**
 - Oum Phumro, Deputy Director General, CMAC
- GAD, CMAA
 - Ly Panharith, Dep. Sec Gen CMAA,
 - Seng Samath, Director of GAD, CMAA
 - Nem Veasna, Chief of Procurement (plus colleagues in the department .
 - Sreng Sorphea, HR Officer, CfR II
- SEPD, CMAA
 - Chhiv Lim, Director of SEPD
 - Kieng Mony, Deputy Director of SEPD
 - Nguom Monoketya, Deputy Director of SEPD
 - Hean Kimsir, Chief of MAPU Coordinating Office, SEPD

Friday, 2nd October:

- PR Department, CMAA
 - Mr Ek Sophan, Deputy Director, PR Dept.
- Gender
 - Ms. Peang Sovannary, Gender Focal Point
 - Ms Keo Kunthea Duongchan, Secretary to Gender Team.
- R & M Department
 - H E Tep Kallyan
 - Mr Eang Sophano, Deputy Director R & M
 - Mr Sun Ban Keang, Monitoring Officer

- VA Department, CMAA
 - Mao Bunnhath, Director of VA Dept;
 - Ny Nhar, Deputy Director, VA Dept;
 - Prak Sokyou, Deputy Sec Gen
- Chan Rotha, Deputy Secretary General, CMAA

Monday, 5th October:

- HE Prum Sophakmonkol, Secretary General, CMAA

Tuesday, 6th October:

- **Australian Embassy / DFAT**
 - Arjun Bisen (2nd Sec ,
 - Sokunthea Nguon (Programme Manager, Development Co-operation ,
 - Tokyo Bak Senior Programme Manager, Disability and Mine Action, Development Cooperation
 - Nicholas Wolf, former 2nd Secretary 2012-15, by telephone from Canberra
- Rukhshona Rajabova, M & E Officer, Cfr II
- **UNDP Cambodia**
 - Setsuoko Yamazaki, Country Director, UNDP
 - Enrico Gaveglia, Deputy CD, UNDP, 30th September

Thursday, 8th October

- Tong Try, Senior National Project Officer
- Mr. David Horrocks Mine Action Advisor Clearing for Results
- Oum Sam, Oum Sang Onn (Sam Oum Project Manager DFID Mine Action Capacity Development Project, Humanitarian Disarmament Programme Cambodia, NPA

Friday, 9th October

- Keita Sugimoto, ex UNDP CMAA MA Advisor
- Bob Keeley, past Mine Action Consultant to UNDP Cambodia (also interviewed on 15th October

Wednesday, 14th October

- Mr. David Horrocks Mine Action Advisor Clearing for Results

Thursday, 15th October

- Bob Keeley, past Mine Action Consultant to UNDP Cambodia (also interviewed on 15th October

Friday, 16th October

- NPMEC
- HE Prum Sophakmonkol, Secretary General, CMAA & Ly Panharith, Dep. Sec Gen CMAA
- Planning meeting for the field work at CMAA

Saturday, 17th October

- Mr Greg Crowther, Country Director, MAG

Sunday, 18th October – Friday, 30th October: Field work in Battambang, Pailin and Banteay-Meanchay

Saturday, 31st October:

- Escorted field visit with HALO Trust to mined locations in north west Banteay Meanchay

Monday, 2nd November:

- Meeting with HALO Trust HQ in Siem Reap, Matthew Hovell and Letty Philips

Wednesday, 4th November:

- Meeting with SDC: Rahel Boesch, Director of Cooperation, Development Counselor, Sovannarith Hem, Head of Agriculture and Food Security, Saramany Duong, Programme Officer, Agriculture and Land Governance
- Ros Sophal, DBU, CMAA
- UNDP group meet for presentation of initial findings.

Thursday, 5th November:

- Attendance at Project Board Meeting, CMAA & Presentation of initial Findings.

Friday, 13th November:

- Rukhshona Rajabova, M & E Officer, UNDP (to discuss outcomes of Household Study)
- Ratana Norng, Programme Analyst, UNDP (Agriculture)
- HE Prum Sophakmonkol, Secretary General, CMAA