

Peacebuilding & Humanitarian Mine Action: Strategic Possibilities and Local Practicalities



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About the report

This is the final analytical report from a collaborative policy research project "Mine Action Contributions to peacebuilding" that took place between the research institute Fafo Institute for Applied International Studies (Oslo) and humanitarian non-governmental organization Landmine Action UK (London). The report has been authored and edited by a team consisting of staff members from both organizations, with major contributions from an independent consultant.

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Fafo Institute for Applied International Studies

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Landmine Action

Landmine Action is a not-for-profit organisation committed to good governance and the development of civil society through the promotion of international humanitarian law, the relief of poverty and the empowerment of communities marginalised by conflict.

Landmine Action believes that safety and security are fundamental to poverty alleviation; they underpin trust relationships which are in turn the basis of property rights, credit and equitable transactions. Addressing the problems of conventional weapons and armed violence should therefore be seen as congruent with broader efforts to reduce poverty such as the Millennium Development Goals.

Landmine Action believes that local structures, with appropriate support, are best placed to promote community-based responses to the problems caused by conventional weapons in society. We work in partnerships and networks of like-minded NGOs, States, non-State actors, community-based organisations, donors and others to achieve our aims. Innovation is at the centre of Landmine Action's thinking. We seek to use our project work to influence the political and legal agenda in both the North and South and to promote new ways of working.

Landmine Action's values determine our relationships with all stakeholders including beneficiary communities, network organisations, donors and employees. Transparency, accuracy and honesty are crucial to the credibility of Landmine Action's work and partnerships. A commitment to effectiveness and cost efficiency drive our operational activities and inform our fundraising.

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List of Acronyms

ANBP	Afghanistan New Beginnings Programme
APM	Anti-personnel mine
AUSA	Association of the United States Army
CSIS	Center for Strategic and International Studies
CSPM	Conflict Sensitive Programme Management
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
DDR	Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration
DFID	Department for International Development
DSRSG Deputy	Special Representative for the Secretary-General
ERW	Explosive Remnants of War
EOD	Explosive Ordnance Disposal
EU	European Union
HMA	Humanitarian Mine Action
GICHD	Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining
ICBL	International Campaign to Ban Landmines
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
IDRC	International Development Research Centre
IMAS	International Mine Action Standards
INGO	International Non-Governmental Organisation
IO	International Organisation
JICA	Japan International Co-operation Agency
LTTE	Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam
MAFP	Mine-Action for Peace
MRE	Mine Risk Education
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NPA	Norwegian People's Aid
ODA	Oversees Development Assistance
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
PRIO	Peace Research Institute of Oslo
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
RS	Republika Srpska
SALW	Small Arms and Light Weapons
SDC	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
SIDA	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
SLIRI	Sudan Landmine Information and Response Initiative
SPLM	Sudan People's Liberation Movement
SSR	Security Sector Reform
UK	United Kingdom
UDAS	Udruzenje Amputiraca (Amputee Association)
UN	United Nations
UNAMSIL	UN Assistance Mission to Sierra Leone
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNMAS	United Nations Mine Action Service
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
UXO	Unexploded Ordnance

The Armed Violence Agenda: Bridging ‘security’ and ‘development’

The technologies of conflict are often treated as if quite separate from the processes of peace. This creates an artificial divide between humanitarian intervention and peacebuilding, and an often counter-productive disjuncture between actions designed to stop conflict, and actions designed to start development.

Gradually, empirical evidence and better analysis are pointing to a more complex, necessarily joined-up, but also potentially higher-impact approach in which action in the humanitarian dimension (designed to relieve immediate conflict-related vulnerability, suffering and disadvantage) supports, complements and amplifies action planned in the developmental dimension.

War and peace are not exclusive societal categories: war and peace are the ends of a spectrum, somewhere along which all countries find themselves. Equally, war does not end with peace. Rather, societies are engaged in a permanent process of managing inherent conflicts of interest or perspective between different groups. War, and other forms of conflict and violence arise periodically – and often repeatedly – out of peacefulness, at times when that management process breaks down. A period of peace must, then, be seen as an opportunity to prevent future conflict, just as much as it can be seen as a chance to reconstruct after conflict past.

The Geneva Declaration on Armed Violence and Development (2006) recognises explicitly the holistic nature of conflict and violence, and the need for holistic responses. At its centre, is a concern to bring ‘security’ and ‘development’ more coherently together. It is time to recognise the complementarity of ‘hard power’ in humanitarian interventions – the removal and destruction of weapons, the disposal of ordnance, the clearance of landmines and other explosive remnants of war – with the ‘soft powers’ of institution-building, reconciliation, the rehabilitation of communities and the reinvigoration of economic livelihoods.

This document sets out to show how humanitarian mine action has the potential to contribute considerably more widely within the broad prospectus of ‘peacebuilding’ than is often recognised or adequately exploited.

Executive Summary

'Humanitarian mine action' is now common terminology in international humanitarian and development assistance. 'Peacebuilding' is an area of increasing interest and attention, using both humanitarian and developmental concepts.¹ Together, humanitarian mine action and peacebuilding describe a variety of mechanisms by which external agencies engage with societies in conflict or in transition from conflict.² This report explores how humanitarian mine action and peacebuilding relate to one another, shows how humanitarian mine action can add real substance to peacebuilding principles, and suggests a way forward for external agencies to undertake a more integrated engagement with these complementary fields of conflict-related work, both as conceptual objectives and operational modes.

The aim of this report is to identify and examine the interrelationships between humanitarian mine action and peacebuilding, and to come up with recommendations for involved actors, including mine action agencies, affected communities, peace implementation actors and donors, on how policies and practices may be modified in favour of more strategic coherence. Central to the report's argument is that all five core components ('pillars') of humanitarian mine action – demining itself, as well as mine risk education, advocacy against landmine use, survivor assistance, and stockpile destruction – have the potential to contribute great value to peacebuilding through concrete, tangible, local- (or 'micro'-) level activities; whilst peacebuilding can help humanitarian mine action to situate its immediate contributions in the wider, macro-level of societal renewal in and after conflict.

The Joint Utstein Study defines peacebuilding as: the attempt "to encourage the development of the structural conditions, attitudes and modes of political behaviour that may permit peaceful, stable and ultimately prosperous social and economic development."³ This report adopts that definition throughout. The Utstein Study groups peacebuilding activities under four inter-related headings: to provide security; to establish the socio-economic foundations of long-term peace; to establish the political framework of long-term peace; and to generate reconciliation. Using the organising metaphor of a painter's 'palette' the study places useful emphasis on the ways in which these four objectives – and specific activities within each – can be combined in nuanced and complementary ways to contribute to peacebuilding in diverse conflict-affected settings.

¹ Although 'peacebuilding' itself is not uniformly recognized as a category of international development or humanitarian assistance it has become increasingly commonly used by donors to refer to a wide range of activities. This is embodied most strongly in the establishment in 2005 of the UN Peacebuilding Commission, and the associated finance mechanism, the Peacebuilding Fund (PBF) (see, e.g. <http://www.un.org/peace/peacebuilding>).

² This report aims recommendations primarily at the international community of agencies engaged in supporting humanitarian mine action and peacebuilding. The report recognises throughout, however, the vital interdependence between external agencies and 'internal' constituencies including both State and non-State actors within affected countries, and the ultimate goal of locally-determined, locally-owned benefits.

³ Smith, Dan, *A Framework for Peacebuilding: Getting Their Act Together*, Overview Report of the Joint Utstein Study of Peacebuilding, Evaluation Report 2004/1 Oslo: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2004:20.

The Utstein Study Peacebuilding 'Palette'

<p>Security Humanitarian Mine Action Disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration of combatants Security Sector Reform Tackling SALW problems</p>	<p>Political framework Democratisation Good governance Institution building Human rights</p>
<p>Socio economic foundations Physical reconstruction Economic reconstruction Infrastructure of health and education Repatriation and return of refugees and IDPs Food security</p>	<p>Reconciliation and justice Dialogue between leaders of antagonistic groups Grass roots dialogue Other bridge-building activities Truth and reconciliation commissions Trauma therapy and healing</p>

Among the peacebuilding activities it lists, the Utstein Study is somewhat exceptional in including humanitarian mine action. This is a positive and much-needed acknowledgement. However, listed singularly under the 'security' sub-heading, the Study's conceptualisation of humanitarian mine action retains a narrow, instrumentalist sense which remains common to many peace, conflict, mine action and development perspectives. By categorising humanitarian mine action exclusively within the security quadrant of the palette, the Utstein Study significantly under-capitalises the full range of contributions humanitarian mine action can make to and within other areas of peacebuilding.

Maintaining a narrow conceptualisation of humanitarian mine action results in a continuing failure to effectively integrate humanitarian mine action activities into any overarching peacebuilding strategy. A closer examination of the methods and impact of each of the elements of humanitarian mine action demonstrates considerable beneficial potential for peacebuilding.

Despite its limitations, the Utstein Study provides an important starting point. This report expands upon the Utstein palette of peacebuilding in order to examine it from a humanitarian mine action point of view, and uses it to develop a Mine Action Palette, showing how the various elements of humanitarian mine action have important, tangible political, socio-economic and justice and rehabilitation ramifications, in addition to the more obvious security gains:

The Mine Action Peacebuilding Palette

<p>Security •Marking, fencing and clearance of minefields •DDR: Stockpile destruction, removal of instruments of war, employment for former combatants • Potential to engage with SALW challenges •Increased human security</p>	<p>Political framework •Institution and competence building; planning, diplomacy, advocacy and management •Human rights and implementation of international humanitarian law (IHL) •Role for active and critical civil society •Engagement with Non State Actors</p>
<p>Socio economic foundations •Physical reconstruction •Economic reconstruction •Infrastructure of health and education •Repatriation and return of refugees and IDPs •Food security</p>	<p>Reconciliation and justice •Dialogue between former opponents •Opening up of public space •Trauma therapy and healing – victim assistance •Facilitation of evidence gathering</p>

This report offers two complementary conclusions: First, a strategic, comprehensive approach to peacebuilding (such as that reflected in the Utstein Study's palette model) can function as a useful organising framework for humanitarian mine action activities.

Second, humanitarian mine action can and should be more strongly mainstreamed into peacebuilding initiatives. Humanitarian mine action has the potential to build confidence, encourage communication, and create opportunities for joint, 'cross-lines' cooperation.

It should be noted, though, that the persistence of an instrumentalist view of humanitarian mine action – one that focuses on technical tasks, whilst simply assuming a positive contribution to wider peace – will not be sufficient. This report emphasizes that while humanitarian mine action projects *can be* crucial to successful peacebuilding, they may also, poorly designed and implemented, have negligible, and even negative impact, on peace processes. Thus, it is imperative to be explicit about humanitarian mine action's need to be locally-owned and conflict-sensitive at the strategic, institutional, programme and project levels as well as fully integrated with strategic peacebuilding and peacebuilding goals.

For these changes to happen, new types of partnerships between institutions on strategic, programme and operational levels will be required within the humanitarian mine action field. This report is a contribution towards raising awareness within both the peacebuilding and humanitarian mine action communities about the potential benefits of increased synergy.

Background

I.i Structure of this report

This report is divided in two major parts. Part 1 looks at two key concepts in international responses to armed conflicts; namely “Peacebuilding” and “Humanitarian Mine Action”. The report discuss how these two concepts are commonly understood and articulated by actors operating in so-called post-conflict scenarios, and further – how the concepts relates to each other, both in the literature and as practice. Section 2 of part one discuss opportunities to better embed humanitarian mine action as part of a strategic approach to peacebuilding.

Part 2 of the report looks at the practical challenges of integrating peacebuilding into Humanitarian Mine action activities.

I.ii Methodology

This research project was undertaken by the Fafo Institute for Applied International Studies (Norway) and Landmine Action (United Kingdom). Key components of the research process included: a series of roundtable meetings with HMA practitioners in Sri Lanka, Bosnia and Sudan; semi-structured interviews and discussions with representatives of both humanitarian mine action and peacebuilding organisations; desk research; and analysis based on the experience of the report’s authors.

In the roundtables with practitioners from Sri Lanka, Sudan, and Bosnia-Herzegovina, participants were asked to draw upon their personal experiences in working with humanitarian mine action and peacebuilding in order to elicit concrete examples of interaction — whether positive or negative — between the two sectors, and practical recommendations for how such interaction can be deepened and improved meaningfully in the field. Some themes recurring throughout the different discussions include: the importance of embedded, participatory approaches in HMA; the need for increased transparency; communication as a means of increasing responsiveness; and coordination.

I.iii Project support

The project received financial support from the Royal Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the The Federal Department for Foreign Affairs (FDFA) – Switzerland and Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada Canada.

PART ONE: INTEGRATING PEACEBUILDING & HUMANITARIAN MINE ACTION

1.0 Peacebuilding (PB) & Humanitarian Mine Action (HMA)

The terms 'humanitarian mine action' and 'peacebuilding' are increasingly common in international humanitarian and development assistance.⁴ They are labels, each of which aggregates various mechanisms by which external institutions engage with societies in conflict or in transition from conflict.

This report explores how humanitarian mine action and peacebuilding relate to one another, and suggests a way of working that would conceptually and practically strengthen the capacity of external institutions to undertake a more integrated engagement in both areas.

1.1 Peacebuilding

The term 'peacebuilding' first came to prominence in former UN Secretary General Boutros Boutros Ghali's Agenda of Peace in 1992. In recent years, there has been a growing body of literature and experience documenting peacebuilding and suggesting approaches for more effective action (cf. Reychler and Paffenholz 2001; Smith 2004; OECD-DAC 2001; Berghof Center for Constructive Conflict Management). However, unlike humanitarian mine action, there are no recognised, agreed and codified approaches to peacebuilding, nor is it by itself recognised as an official category of overseas development assistance (ODA). There is still considerable divergence and controversy among thinkers and practitioners regarding what a just and sustainable peace looks like, and how it can be achieved.

'Peacebuilding' is used to denote very different things, both in the literature and in practice. On one hand, peacebuilding is understood to refer to "short-term involvement of the international community," and to place emphasis on "centralism and political measures primarily undertaken by external agents...." (Haugerudbraaten 1998). On the other hand, peacebuilding is also used to mean "long-term efforts by mainly indigenous actors to promote political and economic and a sustainable solution to the root causes of the conflict" (ibid.).⁵ In other words, 'peacebuilding' as a concept and consequent set of practices, incorporates both short-term, mechanistic interventions, primarily organised by external actors, and long-term, socio-structural engagement, endogenously produced. This report acknowledges the fundamental importance of the second of these two interpretations, but takes the view that 'external' and 'internal', 'immediate' and 'long-term', need not – indeed should not – be mutually exclusive. Following that, this report is aimed primarily at strengthening the field of international actors and their capacity to support national and local activities through the complementary fields of humanitarian mine action and peacebuilding.

There has been a growing frustration that international action designed to facilitate and enable peace and stability has been far from optimal. Often imposing external ideals and solutions, excluding local expertise and participation and acting without intra- or inter-organisational cooperation, peacebuilding interventions of the past have been criticised for redundant efforts, inefficient resource allocation, ignorance, and in worst-case scenarios, the escalation of conflict. This dissatisfaction with peacebuilding efforts extends from large-scale interventions, such as the international community's collective action in the Balkans, to the panoply of small-scale project interventions at community level by international development NGOs. International policies, institutions, mechanisms and approaches have been seen as inadequate and ineffective.

The UN Secretary General's 2005 report – *In larger freedom: towards development, security and human rights for all* – recommended the establishment of a UN Peacebuilding Commission, subsequently launched in October 2006. The report states that: "no task is more fundamental to the United Nations than the prevention and resolution of deadly conflict. Prevention, in particular, must be central to all our efforts, from combating poverty and promoting sustainable development; through strengthening national capacities to

⁴ The definition of peacebuilding as put forward by *The Utstein Study* 2004 and the definition of humanitarian mine action as established by *International Mine Action Standards* 2003 are being used throughout the whole report.

⁵ Quotes drawn from Alejandro Bendaña, "What Kind of Peace is Being Built?, Critical Assessments from the South", Discussion Paper, Prepared on the occasion of the tenth anniversary of An Agenda for Peace for the International Development Research Centre (IDRC), Ottawa:2003. This distinction originally appeared in, Henning Haugerudbraaten, "Peacebuilding: Six dimensions and two concepts", *African Security Review*, Vol. 7, No. 6, 1998.

manage conflict, promoting democracy and the rule of law, and curbing the flow of small arms and light weapons; to directing preventive operational activities, such as the use of good offices, Security Council missions and preventive deployments.” One of the recommended functions for the Peacebuilding Commission is to evaluate progress “in consolidating the public institutions and the economic foundations for longer-term stability.” The establishment of the Commission was, in itself, a tangible expression of the international community’s frustration with prior approaches to conflict, and a collective determination that peacebuilding should be more effectively organised and implemented.⁶ A key issue, with regard to ensuring effective organisation, is the establishment of a coherent definition of what peacebuilding actually constitutes.

In the first instance, ‘peacebuilding’ as formulated in recent literature challenges the – more often than not artificial – dichotomies of conflict/post-conflict and humanitarian/development. Approximately half of all countries that emerge from war lapse back into violence within five years. It is now commonly accepted that armed conflict is a symptom of underlying social, economic and political problems (UN Secretary General’s report 2005, paragraph 114). By moving beyond attention to symptoms – and the debilitating use of the symptoms to demarcate boundaries of funding or institutional mandate – the peacebuilding agenda offers new ways to think about and act on underlying conditions that contribute to conflict.⁷ Moreover, by moving beyond the periodic concept of bounded conflicts, the peacebuilding agenda emphasises the need for long-term commitments focusing on the instability and insecurity that characterise conflict-affected societies, as much or at least as well as on the immediate conditions of active fighting and its aftermath.

An effective response to peacebuilding from external actors in the international humanitarian and development community, involves primarily enabling, mobilising and supporting indigenous actors over the long-term, while ensuring that their own actions assist in redressing, and not exacerbating, the structural and proximate causes of conflict. In order to contribute positively to the wider processes of peacebuilding thus constituted, individual interventions (be they programmatic partnerships or individual projects) must recognise not only their potential to do good, but their potential also to do harm. Further, the question is not simply of ‘bad work’ vs. ‘good work’, in the sense of technical inputs or immediate outcomes; rather, it is the recognition of the wider social, economic and political contexts (from local to national) in which interventions occur – and the profound effects any and all interventions can have on the perceptions, political positionings, and material benefits of all groups in the intervention area (whether constituted as ‘stakeholders’ or not). The ability of external actors to achieve and maintain that quality of contextual awareness requires solid understanding, on-going analysis and sensitivity to the context of the conflict in which they are implementing. Poorly informed, badly designed or inappropriately implemented, conflict-related interventions (whether humanitarian or developmental) can damage peacebuilding processes – acutely at the level of local flashpoints. Any attempts at peacebuilding must be able to rely on adequate conflict sensitivity across contributory interventions.⁸

The Joint Utstein Study of Peacebuilding

The Joint Utstein Study of Peacebuilding (Smith 2004) – drawing together national policy and practice from Germany, Netherlands, Norway and the UK – defines peacebuilding as: an attempt “to encourage the development of the structural conditions, attitudes and modes of political behaviour that may permit peaceful, stable and ultimately prosperous social and economic development.” “Peacebuilding activities”, it continues, “are designed to contribute to ending or avoiding armed conflict and may be carried out during

⁶ This is not dissimilar to the collective commitments of over 90 States, between 2006 and 2008 to the Geneva Declaration on Armed Violence. That, too, embodies frustration with well-meaning but all too often widely dispersed, incoherent and poorly measured interventions.

⁷ In 2006, Lebanon and Sri Lanka both demonstrated the poverty of the categorical conflict/post-conflict construct, when situations labeled as post-conflict became active conflicts again, impacting heavily and negatively on both humanitarian mine action and peacebuilding efforts funded under post-conflict budgets.

⁸ The need for conflict sensitivity is as pressing in the field of humanitarian mine action as anywhere else. It may sometimes be assumed that HMA automatically contributes positively to the establishment and maintenance of peace. This is an unsafe assumption. Humanitarian mine action which cuts across delicate and often subtle national, regional and local political, cultural and factional lines of negotiation and settlement can easily feed negatively into conflict dynamics.

armed conflict, in its wake, or as an attempt to prevent an anticipated armed conflict from starting.”⁹ That definition of peacebuilding will be used throughout this report.

Whilst peacebuilding, defined in this way, can be interpreted as a macro-level process of international assistance dealing top-down, from the desks of Northern donors, with broad structural and cultural conditions, there is virtually unanimous support for the view that effective peacebuilding operates at multiple levels, right down to the local, village and even household. In any case, it becomes clear very quickly that, within macro-level aims, the activities that contribute to peacebuilding can be very specific, and may develop from local concerns, or be focused on issues of good project-level practice. In essence, macro-level peacebuilding effects rely, broadly and substantively, on the quality of micro-level conditions, and the effectiveness of interventions at the local level. Indeed, the premise of this report – that mine action and peacebuilding are highly complementary, despite being located notionally at the micro and macro levels respectively, demonstrates the fallacy of the micro-macro distinction in interventions aiming to combine humanitarian and long-term developmental goals.

The Joint Utstein Study developed a matrix by grouping peacebuilding activities under four main headings (see figure 1):

- To provide security;
- To establish the socio-economic foundations of long-term peace;
- To establish the political framework of long-term peace;
- To generate reconciliation, a healing of the wounds of war and justice.

The study’s matrix is further disaggregated into 19 different policy instruments and activities that policy-makers have at their disposal, distributed among the four matrix quadrants. Together, the 19 options in four categories are described as a peacebuilding ‘palette’ (as opposed to the more common ‘toolbox’ imagery) because:

[t]he interplay between the different elements of peacebuilding...goes beyond the purely mechanical and is harder to predict than the toolbox metaphor implies. Moreover, the possibilities for optimising and multiplying the effect by combining different kinds of activities are richer and more varied. Accordingly, the term ‘palette’ is preferred here, because one of the interesting things about peacebuilding ‘tools’ is that they can be combined together in ways that are specific to the country, region and conflict in question, for greater effect—like mixing paints (Smith 2004, 27).

Figure 1: The Utstein Study Peacebuilding ‘Palette’

<p>Security Humanitarian Mine Action Disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration of combatants Security Sector Reform Tackling SALW problems</p>	<p>Political framework Democratisation Good governance Institution building Human rights</p>
<p>Socio economic foundations Physical reconstruction Economic reconstruction Infrastructure of health and education Repatriation and return of refugees and IDPs Food security</p>	<p>Reconciliation and justice Dialogue between leaders of antagonistic groups Grass roots dialogue Other bridge-building activities Truth and reconciliation commissions Trauma therapy and healing</p>

⁹ Note that this approach to peacebuilding is slightly at odds with the mandate of the UN Peacebuilding Commission which is primarily about post-settlement/agreement action, rather than also the range of mechanisms and activities occurring before and during conflict.

The study notes that “this adds up to a varied palette of activities and projects, which can be combined – like mixing paints – to maximize impact.” As an organising metaphor, the Utstein ‘palette’ places useful emphasis on the way in which a wide variety of policy and practical approaches can be combined in nuanced and complementary ways to contribute, through a wide range of policy and project areas, to peacebuilding tailored to specific country contexts.

One of the sub-areas noted by the Joint Utstein Study, which comes under the heading of ‘security’, is humanitarian mine action. Our report builds on the palette metaphor and shows how humanitarian mine action activities can be engaged not just under ‘security’, but across all four of the Utstein policy and project quadrants.

1.2 Humanitarian mine action

Humanitarian mine action comprises a diverse range of activities focused on mitigating the impact of landmines and ordnance. The defining feature of humanitarian mine action is its focus on benefiting affected civilian communities.

Since the early 1990s, the HMA sector developed rapidly, coalescing around the work of humanitarian demining that started in the late 1980s. While ‘formal’ humanitarian mine action is generally externally driven and supported, ‘informal’ humanitarian mine action practices encompass the activities of people in affected communities to manage the threats and vulnerabilities from mines and ordnance for themselves (Moyes and Tinning 2005). The formal sector was initially strongly dominated by a sense of technical specialisation, driven by a reliance on former military personnel for core staff.

For a time, a ‘development’ focus wrestled to become the dominant organising principle,¹⁰ and efforts continue to better integrate humanitarian mine action with development. However, over recent years, the dominance of the military/technical perspectives has been displaced – not by a development focus – but by a bureaucratisation of the sector and its practices.¹¹ The emergence of this formal bureaucracy is most apparent in the International Mine Action Standards (IMAS). The swing between dominant technical and bureaucratic framings of humanitarian mine action has tended to obscure its potential to contribute to socio-structural change – axiomatic in both developmental and peacebuilding domains.

Although usually considered ‘post-conflict’ activities¹², humanitarian mine action can be undertaken during armed conflict or during times of rising tension when renewed outbreaks of widespread violence are possible. Humanitarian mine action activities are undertaken as both emergency activities driven by a humanitarian imperative and as longer-term activities under a development agenda. Indeed, due in part to the organisation of donor funding and the lack of clarity regarding operational models, the divisions between emergency/humanitarian and development implementation in humanitarian mine action are often blurred.

In principle, humanitarian mine action literature recognises that the ‘problem’ of landmine and ordnance contamination arises through the combination of an *external* threat (posed by items of ordnance) and the

¹⁰ An effort was made to formalise such an organising principle in the Bad Honnef Guidelines, and there has been an ongoing effort to assert the value of community-level analysis as the basis of local-level planning and resource allocation (through such mechanisms as ‘community liaison’). This, in many ways, has become interlinked with an ongoing question of whether mine action implementing bodies should have internal mechanisms for evaluating and prioritising locally appropriate tasks or whether this process should be undertaken by external bodies (either development agencies, or central mine action coordination institutions). This latter point is raised as a question of interest by Ted Patterson in Maslen, *S Mine Action After Diana: Progress in the Struggle Against Landmines*, Landmine Action, London: Pluto Press, 2004: 130.

¹¹ For many countries, HMA is governed by the requirements of the Ottawa Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Treaty which imposes on States Parties certain obligations to support humanitarian mine action work and to address anti-personnel mine contamination within their own territory. The new Protocol V to the UN Convention on Conventional Weapons, which has recently entered into force, imposes additional obligations on States Parties regarding contamination with unexploded ordnance and abandoned explosive ordnance.

¹² Reflecting again the problematic language and concepts evident in the artificial periodicity of ‘conflict’ and ‘post-conflict’.

internal vulnerabilities of individuals, communities and societies often labouring under conditions of extreme poverty, who must negotiate their daily lives and generate their livelihoods in the face of this threat. So, for example, people often have accidents with mines because economic pressures push them to use land that is suspect.

In practice, however, humanitarian mine action is often focused primarily on the external element – on efficient, effective and accountable mechanisms to reduce the external threat constituted by the ordnance itself. In adopting this focus, and working towards the instrumentalist objectives it entails (such as quotas of cleared land), other outcomes derived socially, economically or politically from cleared land (outcomes which can be both positive and negative) may be considered of secondary importance, or not considered at all.

The five pillars of humanitarian mine action

The International Mine Action Standards (IMAS) define ‘mine action’ as those “activities which aim to reduce the social, economic and environmental impact of mines and unexploded ordnance (UXO)”.¹³ These activities are divided into five complementary areas: humanitarian demining, mine risk education (MRE), advocacy against anti-personnel mine use, survivor assistance and stockpile destruction (see box 1).

Box 1: IMAS 04.10 Glossary of humanitarian mine action terms, definitions and abbreviations

Humanitarian mine action: activities that aim to reduce the social, economic and environmental **impact** of mines and UXO.

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

- a) Mine risk education (MRE);
- b) Humanitarian demining, i.e., mine and UXO survey, mapping, marking and clearance;
- c) Survivor assistance, including rehabilitation and reintegration;
- d) Stockpile destruction; and
- e) Advocacy against the use of anti-personnel mines (APM).¹⁴

Note: A number of other enabling activities are required to support these five components of humanitarian mine action, including: assessment and planning, the mobilisation and prioritisation of resources, information management, human skills development and management training, quality management and the application of effective, appropriate and safe equipment.

HMA: beyond landmines

It is notable that the five pillars on which the humanitarian mine action sector bases itself are, themselves, a wide-ranging and disparate set of disciplines, with processes and outcomes impacting much more widely than simply in direct relation to landmines and UXO. Whilst some activities share, to a degree, common technical ground – such as the shared requirements of explosives engineering in landmine clearance, ordnance disposal, and stockpile destruction – each of the pillars of humanitarian mine action can also stand separately, in many cases as identifiable with other socio-economic and political aims of humanitarian and developmental practice as with landmine or UXO-specific activity.

¹³ It should be noted that while HMA terminology is often associated primarily with anti-personnel mines, humanitarian mine action is relevant to all activities aimed at reducing and eliminating the threat of explosive remnants of wars (ERW) and all types of landmines (anti-personnel and anti-vehicle). Despite this common aim, we will argue that humanitarian mine action activities are best understood individually (or as individual elements working in combination).

¹⁴ These are the components of mine action as defined in the 2nd edition of IMAS, 2003.

- Survivor assistance, for example – previously referred to as ‘victim assistance’ – has little, in its technical details and in its macro-level context, to do uniquely with mines and ordnance, and much more to do with health services, social constructions of disability and disability policy-making, and the psycho-social processes of recovery from trauma.¹⁵ This acknowledgement is not intended to deny, for example, that supporting people to find common ground as survivors of landmine accidents is a worthwhile activity – but to note that the project model is not necessarily specific to the mechanism of injury.
- Stockpile destruction is primarily about treaty implementation and improved control of military structures.¹⁶ Although this area of work *can* protect against further landmine use, it only partially overlaps with the processes by which a post-conflict community is helped to manage the threat of landmine contamination on its agricultural land. Stockpile destruction (and associated weapons reduction and safety management systems) has as much to do with building capacity of, and confidence in, the security institutions of the State, vital for strengthening the credibility of governance structures as well as reducing the weapons-related risks of renewed violence, as it has to do with reduction in landmine stocks themselves.
- Advocacy against landmine use is often focused on treaty implementation, and clearly relates to reduction in weapons use. But HMA-related advocacy, equally, can strengthen much more widely the confidence, capacity, and engagement of civil society voices, in particular, in this instance, in articulating the responsibilities of the State, and creating popular pressure for States to assume those responsibilities.¹⁷
- Mine risk education, in both its pedagogic and participatory practices, is as closely related to community development, needs assessment, and communications protocols such as health education, as it is to landmine clearance and injury reduction. MRE – feeding into wider forms of ‘community liaison’ – can contribute further, to systems of information dissemination, themselves promoting community inclusion, rights-awareness, and broader aspects of social cohesion.

An additional component of humanitarian mine action which, while not listed in the sector’s own definition is probably surpassed only by demining as a cost centre within humanitarian mine action, is the function of ‘coordination’, as conceived at various levels. Whilst these pillars may assert their commonality under the term ‘humanitarian mine action’, it is a nominal meeting of different humanitarian functions, cohering around demining as the greatest focus of resource mobilisation.¹⁸ The pillars do, clearly, share in a common

¹⁵ We use the term ‘survivor assistance’ here rather than ‘victim assistance’ in recognition of the importance of social constructions of victim-hood and disability in shaping the challenges faced by mine and ordnance accident survivors. The UN mine action policy on victim assistance (UNMAS 2003) uses the term ‘victim’ to describe all those communities and families that have been affected by mines, whilst reserving the term ‘survivor’ for those that have lived through accidents.

¹⁶ See also GICHD, *Explosive Remnants of War (ERW) — Undesired Explosive Events in Ammunition Storage Areas*, Geneva: GICHD, 2002 and Moyes, Richard (ed.), *Global Survey 2003-2004: Explosive remnants of war and mines other than anti-personnel mines*, London: Landmine Action, 2005. Available at www.landmineaction.org/resources/resource.asp?resID=1048 on the danger of poorly-managed explosive stores.

¹⁷ Whilst adoption and adherence to the anti-personnel Mine Ban Treaty should be part of demonstrating commitment to protection of civilians, humanitarian norms, civil society functions and general moral control over the military on the part of the State, it can, at its most cynical, be a mechanism to ensure access to money. This may be supported by a tendency of some institutions to hold treaty acceptance as a requirement for mine action funding. Such a practice effectively holds mine-affected populations hostage against a State over which they likely have little purchase.

¹⁸ Some would argue that other functions of mine action have had an essentially parasitic function in relation to landmine clearance – drawing away resources from functions that offer a real solution to the problem of mine contamination.

undertaking, but each can (or could) be seen equally to share in a common endeavour with other parallel practices within, for example, development, security or peacebuilding fields.

1.3 Peacebuilding and HMA – towards a more aligned and integrated approach

This report suggests that the strategic and comprehensive approach to peacebuilding epitomised by the Utstein palette could function as a useful organising framework for humanitarian mine action. Peacebuilding can assist with the formulation of a more effective strategic framework for humanitarian mine action than is possible either under an emergency or a development agenda, because it is more comprehensive in addressing structural as well as symptomatic factors, and is conscious of the cyclical and long-term nature of conflict and peace dynamics.

At the same time, a deeper understanding of the tangible benefits of humanitarian mine action could strengthen the hand of peacebuilding proponents, at a local and national level, to deliver concrete actions that genuinely improve people's lives in the short, medium and long term. Humanitarian mine action certainly has this capability, and therefore is a small but important tool within an overarching approach to peacebuilding.

Humanitarian mine action in peacebuilding literature

Humanitarian mine action is not substantially discussed in current peacebuilding literature. Similarly, much of the prominent grey literature on peacebuilding or peace implementation mentions humanitarian mine action only very peripherally, if at all.¹⁹ Humanitarian mine action is not, it appears, seen as a critical determinant of successful peacebuilding in the same way that, at the macro-level, good governance, economic development and physical security are. Yet, as this report argues, humanitarian mine action activities can indeed make a contribution to wider issues – both at the macro and micro levels – of governance, development and security.

HMA is not unique in being ostensibly peripheral to contemporary peacebuilding. Only since around 2000, has the body of peacebuilding literature focused substantively on cross-sectoral linkages (such as education, health, the private sector, land reform, youth, and peacebuilding), but there still remains little documented experience to draw upon.²⁰

Peacebuilding in humanitarian mine action literature

Like HMA in peacebuilding literature, peacebuilding has not been systematically developed in the policy statements of major humanitarian mine action donors (Harpviken and Skaara 2003). Moreover, in the statements examined under this research project, the focus of HMA was primarily on security, secondarily on development, and only marginally on political issues – that is, only marginally conceived of as contributory within the peacebuilding palette. Although mine action donors are increasingly emphasizing the relationship between HMA and processes of reconstruction, that relationship, and those processes are frequently associated with assumed dividends for peace, without adequate attention to the fact that relationships between interventions, reconstruction, development and peace are by no means automatic, often complex, and occasionally actually negative from the point of view of the last of them, peace.

The HMA/PB Gap

Where attention *has* been paid to the relationship between humanitarian mine action (HMA) and peacebuilding (PB), that attention has been focused on the paradox that where humanitarian mine action does, in fact, have peacebuilding effects, those effects can be problematic for peace. HMA/PB literature has been exploring, in particular, the issue of 'politicisation' in the way that mine action priorities are set. This concern is not only felt in the humanitarian mine action sector but has been expressed widely elsewhere among humanitarian actors concerned with whether and how to align with peacebuilding initiatives (Lange

¹⁹ See, for example, Reychler and Paffenholz 2001; CSIS-AUSA 2003; Stedman, Rothschild and Cousens 2002; Dobbins 2003; Kaldor et al. 2004, Call and Cousens 2007.

²⁰ See, for example, Smith and Vaux 2003 in relation to education; Banfield, Gündüz and Killick 2006 in relation to the domestic private sector; and USAID 2005a and USAID 2005b on land and conflict and also youth and conflict.

and Quinn 2003).²¹ However, HMA can provide an unusually acute context in which such issues can be seen and understood (see box 2).²²

Box 2 Case Study: Un-conflict-sensitive humanitarian mine action in Bosnia and Herzegovina

Landmine clearance can bring clear and tangible benefits to vulnerable populations. Those implementing this work inevitably want to focus on the concrete task in front of them –to get the mines out of the ground and reduce populations’ fear of their environment. However, these benefits may be undermined if the work is not organised and funded responsibly.

Where the State is weak, as it is likely to be in the wake of bitter fighting, criminal and factional elements can flourish. Limiting the influence of such groups should be an overarching goal of peacebuilding and humanitarian assistance. Humanitarian mine action, through its structures of contracting and financial allocation, can contribute to that goal or can work against it.

In the aftermath the Bosnia conflict, the humanitarian mine action sector failed to evaluate its interaction with criminal or political factions. Demining processes were largely commercialised, and, lacking adequate transparency, accountability and contextual awareness, funding of such activities fell prey to nepotism, corruption and ethnically-based patronage structures. Ultimately, millions of dollars were channelled through such patronage systems to unscrupulous men of significant political and criminal affiliations. Through this failure, humanitarian mine action not only jeopardised the efficiency and quality of demining efforts but also may have setback processes of social reform and post-conflict recovery.

There is now greater recognition that post-conflict assistance must be undertaken with sufficient understanding of the actors and institutions that have caused or perpetuated conflict. It is inadequate for those funding or implementing projects to ignore these problems or to write them off as inevitable in such environments. Donors and implementing agencies need to respond to these risks and to show responsibility and accountability in that response.

Adapted from Martin Bell in Matthew Bolton and Hugh Griffiths, *Bosnia’s Political Landmines, A call for socially responsible and conflict-sensitive mine action*, London: Landmine Action, September 2006. Available at: <http://www.landmineaction.org/resources/Bosnias_Political_Landmines.pdf>/SLIRI

Although the available literature is helpful in laying the groundwork upon which future HMA/PB integration can build, there remains a tendency to take a narrow, technical and somewhat instrumentalist view of humanitarian mine action – focusing primarily on the physical outputs derived from surveying, mapping, marking, and clearing mines, whilst generally ignoring the other components of humanitarian mine action. The Joint Utstein Study is unusual in highlighting humanitarian mine action as a core policy instrument for peacebuilding, but conventional in still conceptualising HMA in the narrow, instrumentalist sense. By limiting HMA within the Security quadrant of its peacebuilding palette, the Utstein study reproduces the widely held underestimation of HMA’s capacity to contribute to other areas such as the socio-economic or reconciliation dimensions.²³ Despite its limitations, the Utstein study provides a useful platform from which to take forward the integration of HMA and peacebuilding.

²¹ A discussion of this and the plotting of a way forward can be found in Maria Lange and Mick Quinn, *Conflict, humanitarian assistance and peacebuilding: meeting the challenges*, London: International Alert, 2003.

²² Concern has been raised, with regard to humanitarian mine action playing an explicit political role in peacebuilding. Harpviken and Skaara 2003:818 note that such a role thereby “risks defeating the purpose, since it is exactly the ability to ‘depoliticise’ the landmine problem that gives mine action its potential.”

²³ The security dimension of the peacebuilding palette may involve disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration (DDR) initiatives of former combatants, and/or wider security sector reform initiatives (SSR). In recent years, there has been more thought about how to align DDR and SSR with strategic approaches to peacebuilding (Bell and Watson 2006). However, current thinking about the constructive peacebuilding role humanitarian mine action can play within DDR and SSR processes is very limited indeed.

Harpviken (Third World Quarterly 2003; Harpviken and Roberts, PRIO 2004) acknowledges that humanitarian mine action can be an “early entry point for positive interventions in conflict and post-conflict situations” (Harpviken and Roberts 2004). Indeed, the analysis shows how landmines and ERW allow for international and/or crosslines engagement via a concrete problem, through well-defined processes and frameworks, even in the absence of a formal peace agreement. Moreover, once dialogue is established on the ‘mine problem’, it is easier for the parties to push the discussion forward to other issues, at other levels (see box 3).²⁴

Box 3 Case Study: Peacebuilding and SLIRI/Landmine Action in the Nuba Mountains of Sudan

From its beginnings in 2001, Sudan Landmine Information and Response Initiative (SLIRI) has had the potential to become an influential humanitarian mine action organisation with the capacity to use the humanitarian mine action platform for engaging Sudan’s adversaries in a peacebuilding dialogue. Explicitly intended to be an “indigenous, grass-roots organisation working with both sides of the conflict”, SLIRI consulted village leaders –Emirs, Omdas and Sheikhs alike, assembled a network of village contacts and employed local volunteers in an effort to survey landmine and UXO contamination and incidences in both government and Sudan People’s Liberation Movement (SPLM) controlled areas. This network not only made it possible for Landmine Action/SLIRI to proceed quickly through the survey period and recognise local priorities but also made it possible for SLIRI to provide survivor assistance and awareness programmes, train leaders in helping villages avoid injury and execute clearance and stockpile destruction in crosslines areas.

Although the SLIRI/Landmine Action project did not set specific peacebuilding goals or indicators, several positive outcomes have been reported, falling under the four pillars of peacebuilding. Under the auspices of governance and political framework, the Landmine Action/SLIRI project boasted the successful creation of a non-partisan institution at the national level; the indigenisation of a sustainable, capable institution both at national and regional levels, and the contribution to an active and critical civil society at nation and regional levels. The intervention increased security by marking and clearing areas and, through clearance and MRE, reducing landmine incidences and casualties. The mine clearance operations are rumoured to be the catalyst for an evidenced increase in internally displaced person (IDP) rate of return and more secure livelihood opportunities –both considered to be socio-economic benefits.

Most compelling, however, are the reconciliation effects of SLIRI/Landmine Action activities. By establishing Sector Operation Centres throughout the North and South and creating two-person crosslines survey teams that operated in both government and SPLM controlled areas, SLIRI increased crosslines dialogue between former opponents. Furthermore, what originated as an information gathering scheme for SLIRI became a greater network that linked over 50 villages and communicated through village committees, approximately 20 county or provincial committees and several State-level committees. This crosslines village network made SLIRI potentially the most efficient and extensive mine risk education and community liaison organisation in the Nuba Mountains and fostered what is now referred to as a ‘community of common concern’.

Adapted from Jim Freedman and Richard Moyes, *Mine Action and Peacebuilding: Evaluation of the SLIRI/Landmine Action Socio-Economic Impact and Dangerous Areas Surveys in the Nuba*, 2005

But beyond being an early entry point, humanitarian mine action is still primarily framed as instrumentally contributory, in terms of the various benefits derived from cleared infrastructure and land (Hauge 2004; Sekkenes 2004 (manuscript); Harpviken and Isaksen 2004). Such instrumentalist approaches – focusing heavily on the material aspects of cleared land – neglect the constructive peacebuilding effects of mine risk education, victim assistance, stockpile destruction, and advocacy which offer vital opportunities to broaden and deepen the links between and benefits of both sectors on a concrete, community-centric level.

In short, a brief overview of relevant literature suggests that the fields of humanitarian mine action and peacebuilding are not ‘talking’ to each other as much as they should. And where HMA and PB issues are analysed together, there is a continuing tendency to distinguish, artificially, between the macro-effects of

peacebuilding, and the micro-effects of mine action constituted primarily as concrete, technical clearance processes. This division of focus neglects important social contributions and the potential for micro- and micro-to-macro-impacts arising from HMA's localised culturally sensitive projects grounded in participatory approaches, which include mine risk education, victim assistance, and advocacy.²⁵

²⁵ The extent to which mine action should adopt standard participatory approaches is disputed. Roberts and Frilander (2004), for example, argue that “using traditional governance structures to liaise with the local population (Roberts and Frilander 2004, 18)” in Sudan is insufficient, though they give no guidance on which measures should be taken to remedy this situation (a particularly vexing one, since the population they are referring to is rural, dispersed, poor, with high rates of illiteracy and poor access to communications). Circumventing or going over the heads of traditional authorities or structures is anathema to development participatory approaches and, at the very least, should not be done lightly or in the absence of strong knowledge of the society in which one is operating. We argue that using participatory approaches should be the default mode for mine action as well as in peacebuilding and development.

Summary of Key Points from Part 1, chapter 1

- Comprehensive 'peacebuilding' has four inter-related components: security, economic development, political framework, and justice and reconciliation. Peacebuilding encourages attention to structural conditions, attitudes, and modes of political behaviour that permit peaceful, stable social and economic development.
- Peacebuilding may be carried out during armed conflict, in its wake, or as an attempt to prevent an anticipated armed conflict from starting, thus moving beyond the problematic language and concepts of 'conflict' and 'post-conflict'
- Peacebuilding can offer a useful organising framework for humanitarian mine action actors who seek to recognise and optimise the impact their interventions can have across a wide range of conflict-related sectors.
- Humanitarian mine action comprises a diverse range of concrete activities focused around the common aim of mitigating the social, economic and environmental impacts of landmines and explosive remnants of war.
- Humanitarian mine action, like peacebuilding, is usually undertaken in the post-conflict phase, but can be undertaken during conflict or in situations of rising tension where previous violent conflict existed and the threat of it re-starting is present.
- Humanitarian mine action can offer useful tangible activities and benefits to the wider process of peacebuilding.
- A more productive relationship between peacebuilding and humanitarian mine action is desirable and achievable but not straightforward.

2.0 Humanitarian mine action on the peacebuilding palette

Four fields of activity are, cumulatively, considered to comprise peacebuilding: security, governance, justice and reconciliation, and economic and social well-being (CSIS-AUSA 2003; Smith 2004; Taylor and Jennings 2005). These are, broadly, reflected in the four quadrants described in the Joint Utstein Report:

Figure 2: The Joint Utstein Peacebuilding 'Palette'²⁶

<p>Security Humanitarian Mine Action Disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration of combatants Security Sector Reform Tackling SALW problems</p>	<p>Political framework Democratisation Good governance Institution building Human rights</p>
<p>Socio Economic Foundations Physical reconstruction Economic reconstruction Infrastructure of health and education Repatriation and return of refugees and IDPs Food security</p>	<p>Reconciliation and justice Dialogue between leaders of antagonistic groups Grass roots dialogue Other bridge-building activities Truth and reconciliation commissions Trauma therapy and healing</p>

As can be seen, humanitarian mine action — along with disarmament, demobilisation, and reintegration (DDR) of combatants, and programmes to deal with small arms and light weapons (SALW) — is considered part of the security domain. Indeed, humanitarian mine action is generally ascribed to the security component of peacebuilding (Smith 2004). However, this classification is based on too narrow a conception of humanitarian mine action – tending to focus only on the technical aspects of surveying, mapping, marking, and clearing mines (and even then ignoring the potential outputs of mine clearance in areas other than security), and ignoring other humanitarian mine action functions.

The positioning of humanitarian mine action in security marginalises its actual and potential contributions across all four of the peacebuilding quadrants. Maintaining such a narrow conceptualisation will result both in failure to capitalise on the contributions and dividends available from well-planned HMA, and failure to effectively integrate humanitarian mine action activities into any overarching peacebuilding intervention strategy. The various elements of humanitarian mine action have important, tangible political, socio-economic and justice and rehabilitation ramifications, in addition to the apparent security gains. A closer examination of the methods and impact of each of the five pillars of humanitarian mine action demonstrates much broader and more beneficial potential for peacebuilding.

It is very important to note that:

- These outputs do not occur ‘co-incidentally’. They need to be planned for, and deliberately sought after, if they are to be achieved.
- Different programme models are appropriate for working towards different outputs – no one demining programme, for example, is capable of producing all of the possible outputs ascribed to humanitarian mine action in the outline below.
- These are all positive outputs. In all of these areas, it is possible for humanitarian mine action activities both to fail to realise possible positive outputs (representing missed opportunity) and to have actively negative outputs if implemented badly. It should not be assumed that

²⁶ In practitioner roundtables, conducted during the research phase of this project, we found that using the metaphor of the ‘peacebuilding palette’ as a starting point for discussion was very useful in getting practitioners to think creatively about the linkages between the sectors, and how they could be facilitated and fleshed out in practice. Given its prominence within the peacebuilding literature, and this practical utility, we believe this model represents a useful organising tool for our analysis.

humanitarian mine action activities are an automatic good. Activities implemented without utilising a conflict-sensitive approach have a greater potential to have a negative impact. This holds even for those processes, such as the removal of landmines, which may in general be held to be uniformly positive. We discuss possible negative outcomes – and the need for conflict-sensitive HMA further in Part 2.

2.1 Humanitarian mine action inputs across the peacebuilding palette

The following sections provide a preliminary sketch of positive outputs that different humanitarian mine action activities can have under the different quadrants of the peacebuilding palette.

2.1.1 Humanitarian demining

Humanitarian demining is a relatively new field of humanitarian and developmental endeavour, beginning in the late 1980s in Afghanistan and since becoming a key activity in many countries undergoing or emerging from conflict. Humanitarian demining (in contrast to military mine clearance) is performed largely by civilian organisations — chiefly nongovernmental organisations (NGOs), UN bodies, and specialist State institutions.²⁷ It is usually paid for from grants of aid. In this context, the term ‘humanitarian’ does not make claims to the impartiality, neutrality, or independence of the actors involved.

National militaries *can* conduct humanitarian demining (so long as the focus of their work is civilian benefit rather than militarily strategic) even though militaries are clearly not impartial, neutral, independent, or humanitarian organisations. It is important to note, though, that different standards are generally considered appropriate for demining in support of humanitarian ends rather than for militaries clearing mines during conflict.

Demining may also be conducted as a commercial activity. Here, the ultimate objective of the project may be of significant development importance (such as the renovation of a road). A key distinction between commercial activity and HMA is that commercial clearance tasks are usually identified and delimited by the contracting agency, whereas humanitarian clearance tasks may be more flexible, with implementing agencies having greater capacity to negotiate tasks with beneficiaries. There is an ongoing debate about the relative effectiveness of humanitarian and commercial approaches in different situations.

Humanitarian demining consists of a wide range of different functions, which can themselves be implemented through a variety of mechanisms and modalities. Key functions include:

- Survey of suspect areas (based on information gathering and triangulation);
- Technical survey/area reduction (using mine clearance techniques to more accurately determine the contaminated area);
- Marking and fencing (in an effort to exclude the local population from a suspect area);
- Mine clearance (locating and destroying the mines in an area);
- Explosive ordnance disposal (finding and destroying other types of unexploded ordnance – such as grenades, rockets, aircraft bombs);

As noted above, operations may be:

- Centrally-planned, or locally-responsive;
- Funded as commercial or humanitarian projects;
- Implemented by the local military, a specialist State body, or international NGOs.

Implementing modalities vary over time and relative to the degree of threat that landmines and ordnance present. Thus, an ‘emergency’ capacity may operate at a higher level of cost and use more external inputs to address high levels of threat. But over time, a more appropriate response may be to transition the

²⁷ Though it may also be undertaken by militaries and has been supported through military-to-military assistance.

implementing role to State structures (such as the police or military); indeed, the implementation of mine clearance work may actually be a useful mechanism for engaging more broadly with such bodies.

A fundamental aspect of the demining process is the establishment of priority areas for clearance. This process of prioritisation determines who will be the first beneficiaries. Different structures of national coordination, and different models of implementation will significantly condition the mechanisms by which such – often highly political – prioritisation is undertaken.

Beyond the obvious material aspects of clearing contaminated ground and rendering it good for renewal and re-use, humanitarian demining offers broader value both in emphasising and embodying fair decision-making (in setting clearance priorities and ensuring those priorities relate transparently to immediate need) and in creating an operational bridge between affected communities and local military or governmental institutions, and between State and non-State actors (including former combatant factions).

Considerations for Implementation

Rebuilding communications and responding to needs

In the political framework, and reconciliation and justice quadrants of the Utstein Palette, humanitarian demining should maximise its capacity to be responsive, by building flexibility into the priority-setting process, so that HMA personnel can react as situations change (e.g. an influx of returnees to an unmarked area).²⁸ Such operational flexibility requires strong relationships and open communication between the humanitarian mine action personnel on the ground, other NGOs and international organisations (IOs) (e.g. UN High Commissioner for Refugees, UNDP), the national humanitarian mine action committees, and other national and local government officials dealing with humanitarian mine action and prioritisation.

In executing humanitarian demining initiatives, organisations should engage on as equal terms as possible with State and non-State actors. Equal engagement is important in creating trust between different sides and with international actors. This means the formulation of similar training regimes, codes of conduct and transparency and accountability mechanisms for use with non-State, as with other, actors. However, humanitarian mine action personnel should also be aware of the potential resource differential, lower capacity, and institutional weakness on the non-State side, and budget accordingly.

Rehabilitating homes and communities

In the socio-economic quadrant of the palette, humanitarian mine action is critically important to the issue of return for refugees and IDPs, although not always in the straightforward and positive way that might generally be assumed. The topic of refugee and IDP return was particularly emphasised in the Sri Lanka and Bosnia-Herzegovina roundtables; those discussions again highlighted how fraught the relationship between humanitarian mine action and refugees and IDPs was, and illustrated the importance of *appropriateness* and *embeddedness*. On the one hand, clearance of mines from villages, homes, schools, and fields facilitates the safe return and resumption of some form of normality for refugees and IDPs. However, the priorities of the displaced and those of humanitarian mine action workers may not always coincide. Many elements factor into peoples' decision to return, of which danger from mines and ERW is just one; people may be willing to risk returning to an uncleared area if they don't perceive the mine threat to be that acute or feel that the demining work is progressing too slowly or is focused on other areas. Done poorly, humanitarian mine action can actually exacerbate the danger to returnees, as seen in the example from Bosnia-Herzegovina (see box 4).

²⁸ Physical clearance of mines can also be instrumental to rehabilitation and justice efforts, as seen in Bosnia-Herzegovina, where the demining of booby-trapped mass graves allowed for the recovery of remains and for identification and evidence-gathering to occur.

Box 4 Case Study: Humanitarian mine action and refugee/IDP return in Bosnia-Herzegovina

In the Bosnia-Herzegovina roundtable, one practitioner recounted that mine clearance had initially been done only in a limited manner, such that in villages only the path to a house and a 3-meter perimeter around it was cleared. This was done in order to encourage and speed up refugee return. However, because the returnees had received little in the way of MRE and were under the assumption that the entire area around their homes was cleared, accidents ensued. Moreover, because refugees and IDPs were returning to areas that, although nominally cleared, had no social or economic assistance or infrastructure in place, they were forced to participate in subsistence farming and foraging, activities that also resulted in accidents.

The pursuit of political goals can result in work being implemented in a way that leaves a significant residual risk to the target population. It could be argued, however, that had the clearance been done more widely around specific houses at this point, other people would have been returning to homes where no clearance had been undertaken. In managing these processes effectively much depends on the ability to communicate clearly the limitations of the work conducted and the reasoning behind these decisions.

Rehabilitating ex-combatants

Contributing both to DDRR process, and to the reconciliation and justice quadrant of the palette, humanitarian demining organisations can and should expand the training and employment of local citizens, particularly ex-combatants. Ex-combatants have participated in demining in Sri Lanka²⁹ and Bosnia, and practitioners — while recognising the sensitivity and public mistrust that may arise when shifting people from a fighting role one day to a peacebuilding one the next — generally supported this practice, arguing that it fosters income generation, increases local capacity and ownership, and helps with the rehabilitation and reintegration of ex-combatants. Training and employing local ex-combatants as deminers —preferably deployed to work across (former) combat lines — formed part of a disarmament, demobilisation, and reintegration (DDR) package attempted in Afghanistan (Strand 2004, see box 5).

However, it is important to stress that demining training should not be the only element; as with other DDR programmes, there must also be an emphasis on social reintegration, psycho-social rehabilitation, appropriate reintegration payments, and other types of vocational training that can provide ex-combatants with useful skills when demining comes to an end. This latter consideration is particularly important, as the point was repeatedly stressed that a security environment is unsustainable without social and economic viability for ex-combatants. Providing post-clearance viability will require humanitarian mine action and security actors to work in an integrated fashion with peacebuilding actors to ensure that the ‘softer’ aspects of reintegration are included, along with the more ‘technical’ components of disarmament, demobilisation, and training.

²⁹ In Sri Lanka, demining is done by both government (Sri Lankan Army) and non-State (LTTE) actors, with assistance and funding from international NGOs. The use of the term “ex-combatants” in the Sri Lankan context may not be technically correct, given the lack of a comprehensive peace agreement, but this phrase was generally used by Sri Lankan practitioners to describe, in particular, the local deminers operating on the LTTE side.

Box 5 Case Study: Reintegration of ex-combatants through demining efforts in Afghanistan

Strand (2004) examines the outcome of the Mine Action for Peace (MAFP) project in Afghanistan. The project had two goals: to improve Afghanistan's capacity to deal with landmines and unexploded ordnance (UXO); and, on the peacebuilding side, to facilitate local reintegration of ex-combatants through employment in humanitarian mine action and use demobilisation processes to weaken combatant-commander relationships. In the discussion, an astonishing fact emerges, which is stated most clearly in the conclusion:

The most striking and perhaps also the most interesting aspect of the project for a discussion on peacebuilding was the unintended reconciliation effect among former combatants. This reconciliation process appeared to have been initiated by the demobilised combatants themselves as they realised that they needed to have full trust in each other if they were to work together as a demining team: if they were unable to settle old scores and come to terms with the past, their lives would be at risk. The initial ANBP [Afghanistan's New Beginnings Programme] and MAFP had not considered the potential reconciliation impact that can occur when people who have fought on opposite sides are engaged in joint training or working together. Yet, in the case of demining, former enemies would not only have to work and train side by side, but also to trust each other in risky situations (Strand 2004, 51).

What is astonishing here is not that reconciliation occurred among these ex-combatants — but rather, that it was “unintended (*Ibid.*, 51) and “not among the original objectives” (*Ibid.*, 46). This is because, from a peacebuilding perspective, the crosslines, grassroots rehabilitation aspect is obvious and rudimentary and would have been a primary component of the project from the outset.

Rehabilitating the role of the military

Organisations working on humanitarian demining can contribute to security sector reform through systematic, constructive and transparent engagement with national military institutions. Such work can be extremely sensitive and demanding, particularly in the absence of a comprehensive peace agreement, but it can also be vital to pushing forward momentum and action for a sustainable peace. HMA personnel must be aware of the trade-offs involved in working with national military institutions, as they encompass profound political and human rights issues. For example, if the armed forces are rife with gross human rights abuses and still operating under the same wartime leadership, HMA organisations must determine whether the military can be a credible partner, and what supportive national or international structures or oversight are needed to impose standards and ensure future accountability. As noted above, humanitarian mine action personnel must also be aware of the sensitivity inherent in putting former war-fighters (and war-fighting machines) to work as deminers and peacebuilders, particularly when military deminers will likely be engaged in areas heavily affected by combat and/or behind the lines of their own former engagement. As discussed in the Sri Lanka roundtable, these sensitivities can be particularly heightened when an accident occurs, again illustrating the need for operational transparency and quick and responsive communications with the local population.

Engaging national military institutions can be effective, particularly if the military is looking to ‘relegitimise’ itself by working constructively towards peace and security.²¹ Engaging in humanitarian mine action allows post-conflict militaries to re-situate themselves in public perception, and redistribute their resources and personnel to a new, productive task. This, in turn, can avert or mitigate the mass decommissioning of excess professional soldiers — a major destabilising factor in many newly post-conflict societies — and can provide missions on which newly-integrated units can work together. The influx of resources, in terms of personnel and money, from national military institutions can be vital to humanitarian mine action. The fact that militaries increasingly view landmines as illegitimate can also make them a willing and effective partner. Given the complexities, the potential for peacebuilding benefit, but the risks of harm also, it is critically important that HMA and military engagements are the subject of clear and agreed standards of conduct, training, division of labour, areas of responsibility, and national and international oversight and accountability mechanisms.

Figure 3: Humanitarian Demining: Potential for Integration in the Peacebuilding Palette

<p>Security</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marking, fencing and clearance of minefields • Improving human security 	<p>Political framework</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Democratisation through transparent and inclusive priority-setting processes • Institutional capacity-building through coordination of communication between personnel on the ground, NGOs, IOs, national HMA committees and other national and local officials
<p>Socio Economic Foundations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Repatriation and return of refugees and IDPs • Reconstruction of infrastructure • Food security • Employment for former combatants 	<p>Reconciliation and justice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reintegration and rehabilitation of former combatants • Reconciliation between former adversaries when working together as deminers • Facilitation of evidence gathering

2.1.2 Survivor assistance

Survivor assistance encompasses a broad range of possible activities that link to various health services, vocational training and social constructions of disability. According to a definition developed by the International Campaign to Ban Landmines (ICBL), the activities and concerns involved can be divided into nine categories as follows:

- Emergency medical care
- Continuing medical care
- Physical rehabilitation, prostheses and assistive devices
- Psychological and social support
- Employment and economic integration
- Capacity-building and sustainability
- Legislation and public awareness
- Access
- Data collection.

The importance of survivor assistance being integrated coherently with broader development and peacebuilding programming is clearly noted in the UN humanitarian mine action policy note on ‘victim assistance’ (UNMAS 2003).

Considerations for Implementation

Strengthening disability rights and health services

Increasingly, survivor assistance is seen within the broader context of healthcare and disability rights, particularly with the recent adoption of the new UN Convention on the Human Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Survivor assistance is gradually being integrated into broader disability issues. Funding is still provided for mine survivors, but there is a growing trend to provide money as part of disability support programmes. One such integrative approach is evidenced by UK/DFID’s support programmes, which do not separate out mine victims but “focus on assisting disabled people, including anti-personnel mine victims, through bilateral programmes aimed at poverty eradication, healthcare and community-based rehabilitation” (International Campaign to Ban Landmines 2004).

The focus of international attention on landmines can allow survivor assistance programmes to leverage funds and attention in support of broader needs for medical services and psycho-social rehabilitation, and to challenge social constructions of disability in the target area.

Building common ground across front-lines

Crosslines programmes — in which survivors are teamed with those similarly situated on the other side(s) for joint therapy sessions and training — have been successful in Sri Lanka and Bosnia-Herzegovina. These programmes forge genuine, positive crosslines links among participants and their families, and should be replicated and standardised as part of survivor assistance programmes in general. Standardising crosslines survivor assistance programmes can also generate institutional links between governmental and nongovernmental organisations on both sides (see box 6).

Along with the integration potential listed above, there are also possible areas of collaboration with mine risk education programmes, using the experiences of mine survivors to inform and better target MRE material. Some survivors may wish to be active in the MRE programmes themselves, as both a part of their rehabilitation and as a means of earning income.

Box 6 Case Study: Using landmine survivors in Bosnian landmine initiatives

Landmine survivors can form a powerful voice to draw attention to the challenges of life after violent conflict. In Bosnia-Herzegovina, local NGOs such as Udruzenje Amputiraca (UDAS) and the Amputees Association (Bijeljina) are comprised largely of war veterans and mine/ERW survivors and focus on mine awareness, assistance provision to disabled veterans and mine victims, and lobbying for the political, economic, legal, and social rights of the disabled. These organisations are multi-ethnic and work in both entities in Bosnia-Herzegovina (i.e. Republika Srpska (RS) and the Federation). UDAS, in particular, has achieved results at both the municipal and entity (RS) political level at the same time that it has forged institutional and personal links across the former conflict lines and provided employment and income for disabled victims and their families. International actors, including specialised NGOs can provide initial funding, assistance, training, and networks for these local endeavours.

Figure 4: Survivor Assistance: Potential for Integration in the Peacebuilding Palette

<p>Security</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Immediate medical assistance 	<p>Political framework</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legislation to support survivors • Access to information and understanding of rights • Support to State medical institutions
<p>Socio-Economic Foundations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Infrastructure of health – providing emergency and continuing medical care • Physical rehabilitation and prostheses • Psychological and social support • Employment and economic integration 	<p>Reconciliation and justice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cross lines dialogue between survivors from different sides • Psychological and social support

2.1.3 Stockpile destruction

Stockpile destruction refers to the controlled destruction of mines held by parties to a conflict. States Parties to the Ottawa Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Treaty are bound by Article 4 to destroy stockpiles of mines that they possess so as to prevent the deployment of these mines in the future.

But stockpile destruction need not be undertaken solely as an act of treaty compliance, however, but can be conducted as a deliberate confidence-building initiative by the State, even if it is not party to the Ottawa Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Treaty, or by other parties to the conflict who cannot be part of the Treaty. For example, stockpile destruction is one component of Geneva Call's Deed of Commitment that non-State actors can sign in order to demonstrate their commitment to ending use, production, stockpiling and trade of anti-personnel mines and other victim-activated munitions.³⁰

Considerations for Implementation

Building confidence, security, and institutional capacity

By conducting stockpile destruction in an open, transparent and verifiable way, the process can be used to build confidence in the parties' commitment to moving away from armed conflict. Transparency can be promoted by undertaking publicly-accessible stockpile destruction processes in conjunction with the media and through the use of authoritative third parties to confirm the processes undertaken.

Practitioners Perspective 1

Sri Lankan practitioners recommended the creation of a crosslines body, with some international members, to monitor and verify stockpile destruction. This would ensure the public and other parties to the conflict that weapons are in fact being decommissioned and destroyed, not merely disappearing out of sight in order to resurface again later.

Reducing weapons access

Stockpile destruction can be one component of a broader programme of engagement with military structures. In this respect, stockpile destruction overlaps between 'humanitarian mine action' and a range of programmes designed to address small arms and light weapons, DDR and security sector reform.

The control of arms and ammunition holding on the part of State and non-State parties can be a useful, concrete point of engagement to support security sector reform and disarmament/DDR, or an entry point into broader DDR and SSR programmes. Such programmes can include engagement with national arms laws, work with military and paramilitary organisations, and work with police forces to register and control access to weapons and ammunition, and to account for arms and ammunition held. Landmine stockpile destruction would be a logical component of such programmes.

Practitioners Perspective 2

Bosnian practitioners recommended that humanitarian mine action personnel liaise with and assist local communities to organise disarmament drives, whereby citizens can turn in weapons (sometimes for a small reward), which can then be decommissioned and publicly destroyed.

Figure 5: Stockpile Destruction: Potential for Integration in the Peacebuilding Palette

Security <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Physical security (and safety) of ordnance and ammunition stores• Reduced likelihood of further mine use	Political framework <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Adherence to international treaty obligations supports rule of law• Confidence building
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³⁰ For more information on Geneva Call and its Deed of Commitment, visit www.genevacall.org.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can be undertaken as part of Security Sector Reform and DDR programmes 	
Socio-Economic Foundations	Reconciliation and justice <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitoring and evaluation as a confidence building activity

2.1.4 Advocacy

Advocacy against landmine use is primarily about treaty implementation, development of civil society, and issues of State responsibility. HMA-related advocacy can contribute, beyond the immediate questions of landmines and UXO, to the growth of participatory and vocal civil society organisations and associations – themselves vital to the kinds of public and popular participation (for example in governance and justice terms) on which peacebuilding initiatives rely. Both international and national HMA practitioners, in the research informing this report, emphasise the need to build local capacity for advocacy and to link advocacy — which is sometimes perceived as abstract or secondary to more immediate needs — with concrete actions and advances on the ground.

Considerations for Implementation

Building civil society networks, capacity and voice

Landmine advocates can assist and participate in grassroots crosslines and cross-sectoral coalitions. Humanitarian mine action personnel, particularly those working with MRE and survivor assistance, can be integral to bringing together organisations working on cross-cutting issues, such as children’s issues or rights for the disabled, and illustrating the need for advocacy on humanitarian mine action to be included in their work. They can also help integrate a mine/ERW component to existing advocacy on peace, reconstruction, reconciliation and development issues, thus situating humanitarian mine action within the broader nexus of peacebuilding activities.

International actors working in-country should focus on generating and strengthening local knowledge and ownership, so that advocacy can continue when international personnel leave. This should be done through local training, capacity development and provision of funding, where appropriate. Furthermore, while international organisations or NGOs may focus on ‘big picture’ targets like accession to the Ottawa Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Treaty, local capacity can focus on more incremental, but equally important tasks, such as legislative change at the national and municipal levels, education reform, or pension reform for disabled veterans or victims of mines/ERW. Transnational civil society organisations, like the International Campaign to Ban Landmines and the Cluster Munitions Coalition, aim to achieve this local capacity building through their support of national and local NGOs and community-based organisations.

Creating national conflict consciousness

Advocacy can also be used to raise awareness of the effects of conflict and mines/ERW on civilians in parts of the country not directly or as heavily affected by war, for example, in the south of Sri Lanka (see the Practitioners Perspective below). Creating awareness of the destruction, insecurity and needs of the most affected populations through advocacy and outreach campaigns can chip away at the resistance to concessions by those less personally affected by the conflict.

Practitioners Perspective 3

Sri Lankan practitioners, in particular, noted that people in the south (especially Colombo) were typically not as affected by war as those in the north and east, and were unable to understand the scale of the destruction and resources needed for recovery in those areas; they were therefore less willing for the government to grant political and economic concessions to the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE)

and thus created political restrictions on the government which contributed to the stalemate in the peace process. The Inter-Religious Peace Foundation of Sri Lanka and other organisations have implemented awareness raising campaigns in the south of Sri Lanka to highlight and educate people of the impact of mines and ERW on civilians in the north and east.

Figure 6: Advocacy: Potential for Integration in the Peacebuilding Palette

<p>Security</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduction in mine usage 	<p>Political framework</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Democratisation • Participation in civil society organisations
<p>Socio Economic Foundations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical reconstruction 	<p>Reconciliation and justice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dialogue • Awareness of crosslines local and national experiences

2.1.5 Mine risk education

Mine risk education, in both its pedagogic and participatory practices, is as closely related to community participation in planning and needs assessment, and in communications efforts such as health education, as it is to landmine clearance and injury reduction.

The relationship between mine risk education and ‘community liaison’ continues to be a source of confusion within the sector. It is common for community liaison to be considered only under the auspices of mine risk education.³¹ Whilst the idea of community liaison has languished, much loved in theory but little seen in practice, the wider humanitarian mine action world has seen far greater momentum behind the centralising trends of coordination and task distribution. Community liaison is about the greatest possible devolution of prioritisation and resource allocation decision-making possible to achieve, yet this devolution fits awkwardly with the demands of greater centralised control and standardisation. This is the key reason for the failure of community liaison to achieve appropriate prominence within humanitarian mine action – a failure that encapsulates the fragility of the ‘development’ and peacebuilding potential in HMA. Community liaison, including MRE, helps HMA personnel to understand community needs, not only in relation to contamination but also across a much broader range of security and livelihood issues. Community liaison HMA personnel can operate – carefully – as intermediaries between communities in which they are working, and whose needs they come to understand, and wider State and international development and peacebuilding actors.

Considerations for Implementation

Building knowledge of local conditions, and cross-sectorally coordinated responses

MRE can thus be strategically used as a link between constituencies, both within humanitarian mine action — that is, connecting up the various HMA pillars — and between humanitarian mine action and other actors, including peacebuilding, development, humanitarian, and security. MRE is about the dissemination of information, but it is also about information gathering. Since MRE involves working closely with local officials, educators, and citizens — for example, through conducting repeated house-to-house visits and helping develop school curricula on mines – MRE personnel are well-placed to know what is going on in the

³¹ See, for example, the position of community liaison in the narratives of Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD 2002 and Maslen 2004).

local community, both in terms of local concerns, and the activities of other national and international agencies. MRE personnel can play a critical role in facilitating communication and collaboration between different actors at the local and international levels, bringing together various groups and strategies.

Strengthening communication from the macro to the micro level

Additionally, the forums provided by MRE can be used to disseminate broader information, as seen in Sri Lanka, where information on the peace process and ceasefire agreements was distributed and discussed using channels provided by MRE. These MRE channels of communication, be they in the form of house-to-house visits or larger community meetings, can be an opportunity to inform citizens on a range of issues beyond humanitarian mine action, including human rights, return issues, legal issues pertaining to property and restitution, progress in rebuilding and infrastructure development, and so on.

Reaching specific groups

MRE personnel should work with other actors, particularly local NGOs focused on children’s and women’s issues and survivor assistance programmes (see below), to ensure that MRE material is culturally sensitive, age-appropriate, and relevant to the local situation, pattern of land usage, and conflict history.³² Such efforts will both improve the quality and effectiveness of MRE material, while establishing links between humanitarian mine action and other actors that can be used for future collaborative projects.

Practitioners Perspective 4

The issue of inappropriate MRE material was particularly stressed in the Bosnia roundtable. In addition to the recycling of material from Mozambique (cf. chapter 5.3 Responsiveness and effective communication), participants related several stories of faulty MRE implementation: for example, posters targeted at schoolchildren showed the Superman cartoon character scooping up a mine, creating the impression that mines could safely be picked up and moved. Similarly, in some in-class demonstrations, mine personnel picked up and handled disabled mines to show the children what mines look like; again, giving the impression to young children that mines could be picked up and examined without harm.

Collaboration between humanitarian mine action personnel and refugee organisations, in particular, is necessary to educate refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs) on mines and ERWs before they return, and to coordinate HMA and refugee/returnee programmes. In each of the practitioner roundtables, the potential difficulties in the relationship between humanitarian mine action and refugees/IDPs was emphasised. Refugees and IDPs often wish to return to their homes as soon as possible and can be quickly frustrated with the slow pace of mine clearance. Conversely, the work of humanitarian mine action organisations can be made significantly more difficult if spontaneous return occurs to unsafe areas — particularly if injuries or fatalities subsequently occur, leading to breakdown in local confidence in external agency support to their communities. It is therefore critical that refugees and IDPs be educated on mine issues — emphasising the fact that clearance should be conducted only by professionals — and be informed about the progress of humanitarian mine action and the ramifications of that progress for their return home. MRE personnel can be the conduits for this education and information and can also work with organisations in the home community to ensure that the infrastructure (schools, wells, markets, etc) is in place and safe before return occurs, so that there is something for refugees/IDPs to return to.

Figure 7: MRE: Potential for Integration with the Peacebuilding Palette

<p>Security</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improving individual security • Within Security Sector Reform programmes, MRE can engage police as part of information gathering and public education structures 	<p>Political framework</p>
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³² Cf. p. 42, *Practitioners perspectives*, on the issue of inappropriate MRE material.

Socio Economic Foundations

- Implemented through education infrastructure as part of schools curriculum

Reconciliation and justice

- Engagement with crosslines, cross-sectoral actors at all levels of society to encourage participation and communication

2.2 The Humanitarian Mine Action Palette

All five pillars of humanitarian mine action provide entry points for and support to peacebuilding initiatives and prospects. As is shown below, different aspects of the HMA programme approach contribute in each of the four peacebuilding quadrants set out in the Utstein palette:

Figure 8: The Humanitarian Mine Action Palette

<p>Security</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Marking, fencing and clearance of minefields •DDR: Stockpile destruction, removal of instruments of war, employment for former combatants •Potential to engage with SALW challenges •Increased human security 	<p>Political framework</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Institution and competence building: planning, diplomacy, advocacy and management •Human rights and implementation of international humanitarian law (IHL) •Role for active and critical civil society •Engagement with non-State Actors
<p>Socio economic foundations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Physical reconstruction •Economic reconstruction •Infrastructure of health and education •Repatriation and return of refugees and IDPs •Food security 	<p>Reconciliation and justice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Dialogue between former opponents •Opening up of public space •Trauma therapy and healing – victim assistance •Facilitation of evidence gathering

Summary of Key Points from Part 1, chapter 2

- Limiting humanitarian mine action to the security sector of peacebuilding significantly under-capitalises the capacity of HMA to contribute to peacebuilding across all four key programme areas.
- Humanitarian demining can involve commercial, military, paramilitary and humanitarian actors, requiring careful transparency and oversight mechanisms; humanitarian demining can ensure fairness and responsiveness in clearance prioritization and design;
- Humanitarian demining can extend local training and employment, on equal terms for all participants, for local communities including ex-combatants, and can help legitimise peace-time roles for military and police institutions.
- Survivor assistance can leverage wider support to rights legislation and healthcare; it can form the basis of crosslines survivor assistance programming which has proven to be successful in forging crosslines links between victims and their families.
- Stockpile destruction can serve as a confidence-building activity, and can, when conducted in a transparent and verifiable way, contribute to the security, political framework, and reconciliation and justice efforts.

Advocacy against landmine use often focuses on treaty implementation. But such advocacy can also encourage the development of crosslines civil society, building civil society-State communication towards State acknowledgement of responsibilities, contributing to wider strengthening of local capacity and participation, and popular pressure for improved governance. Mine risk education can build communication, information-sharing and confidence-building between communities, local HMA programmes, and wider peacebuilding actors and initiatives; MRE can provide vital education and information to maximise safe return of displaced populations.

- All five HMA pillars – demining, survivor assistance, stockpile destruction, advocacy and mine risk education – can contribute significantly to all four peacebuilding programme areas set out in the Utstein palette.

PART TWO: PEACEBUILDING IN HMA – PRACTICALITIES

Through roundtable discussions and desk research conducted as parts of this project, a number of practical issues, with respect to aligning HMA more closely with peacebuilding – and indeed with the wider development agenda – were identified. They include: mainstreaming HMA; and ensuring HMA conflict sensitivity.

1. Mainstreaming, coordination, integration

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), which occupies a key coordinating role over much humanitarian mine action at the national level, formulates the mainstreaming of humanitarian mine action into development as follows:

While it is increasingly recognised that humanitarian mine action is a development issue, much work remains to be done to effectively link humanitarian mine action and development efforts. UNDP addresses humanitarian mine action from a development perspective and advocates for the mainstreaming of humanitarian mine action in development planning and programming processes. This involves encouraging mine-affected developing nations to include humanitarian mine action in their national development plans, including their Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs) and the UN Development Assistance Frameworks. It also involves working with local actors to plan and implement humanitarian mine action in coordination with development projects and programmes whenever possible. UNDP also actively engages traditional donors to fund humanitarian mine action projects through development budgets, and encourages international financial institutions to contribute more funding to humanitarian mine action through loans to mine-affected states.

Humanitarian mine action was born out of the recognition of a shocking and tangible problem that conflict had produced over huge areas and in a wide range of different countries. The relatively rapid rate of HMA's growth was generated substantially because practitioners in a wide range of different sectoral fields (demining/ex-military, medical, legal, educational, developmental, security) found common ground and common goals in addressing the problems caused by landmines. At the same time, the very momentum of 'humanitarian mine action', compounded by the success of the Ottawa Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Treaty, resulted in donors developing specific humanitarian mine action policies and funding streams, and in some implementing agencies identifying themselves exclusively as HMA. This 'sectoralisation' of humanitarian mine action is largely artificial. HMA itself, properly understood, is a cross-sectoral concept, and one therefore that represents a good candidate for mainstreaming. There are, however, caveats in mainstreaming HMA.

First, integration of humanitarian mine action into wider frameworks – such as peacebuilding or development – tends to be controversial, with organisations and personnel worried about loss of often limited resources, subversion of sectorally specific objectives, and loss of sector-specific skill-sets. More broadly, with calls for the mainstreaming of environmental, gender, and sustainability overwhelming entire management cycles, there is considerable 'mainstreaming fatigue', and a recognisable danger that integrating yet another mainstreaming concern, without providing clear ideas of where cross-sectoral linkages can be made at practical programme levels, will meet with reluctance and disinclination.³³ Yet mainstreaming

³³ Several examples exist of issues mainstreamed through institutional mechanisms, such as 1) wider macro-processes of development and peacebuilding (PRSPs, the Utstein Peacebuilding Palette); 2) Country or sectoral strategies developed by larger agencies (for example, bilateral agencies such Department for International Development (DFID), UN agencies, such as UNDP, or NGOs like the Norwegian People's Aid (NPA), national government authorities and local government authorities); 3) The institutional approaches of individual multi-mandated agencies (for example UNDP, government agencies and individual NGOs (both local and national)).

humanitarian mine action does not necessarily mean making humanitarian mine action subservient to other agendas.

Indeed, mainstreaming 'humanitarian mine action' as a whole makes no sense. Some HMA interventions are appropriate for emergency assistance, while others are fundamentally linked to long-term development and peacebuilding. For mainstreaming to proceed meaningfully, a focus on disaggregated concrete elements is required. A promising example of this is the integration of humanitarian mine action and small arms and light weapons (SALW) control in the OECD-DAC security sector reform work.

Second, mainstreaming should not entail the complete submersion of sectorally-specific priorities. Good mainstreaming entails, rather, a balance between sectoral and general priority setting and practice. *Over-*integration between HMA and, for example, the wider developmental agenda, can create its own problems. Too often the integration of humanitarian mine action and development re-situates humanitarian mine action (specifically humanitarian demining) as a sub-contracted function guided by commanding developmental objectives. This can result, for example, in scarce demining resources being spent clearing relatively low-risk land in support of priorities other than those of the landmine-affected community.

Considerable emphasis in conventional HMA is placed on high-impact mine and ordnance contamination, with highly financed and highly technical responses. This is understandable. Landmines stand in their own right as a problem for affected communities. There can be few more fundamental relationships, in rural societies, than between a community and its economic base – between farmers and the land. In the pursuit of a mainstreaming agenda, it is very important not to lose sight of this.

Yet HMA practitioners recognise the contribution their inputs make to the 'normalisation' of economic life at the village level which is a critical element of the success of any peacebuilding process. In linking sensibly to longer-term developmental objectives, HMA needs to be able to contribute to a sustained residual capacity within affected communities to deal with lower-level conditions of contamination, as well as for longer-term community-level rehabilitation and reintegration projects. While there have been some attempts to provide training for a longer-term response, humanitarian mine action needs to further emphasise approaches that address both external threats and internal vulnerabilities and ensure that communities have the capacity to deal with the longer term impacts of landmines and ERW.

An important mechanism to advance the process of mainstreaming HMA approaches in peacebuilding and development is inter-agency and cross-sectoral coordination. Roundtable participants emphasised the need to increase coordination between humanitarian mine action and other aid organisations on the ground, as well as with security forces, in order to maximise the impact of limited resources and increase capacity (see box 7). Participants noted that, in a number of instances, effective coordination between international, local, cross-sectoral and crosslines organisations, has created a positive example illustrating that cooperation is possible even if a peace process is stalled. It is worth noting that 'coordination' – as with the discussion of mainstreaming above – does not always have to mean command and control.

Box 7: Case Study: informal inter-agency integration

One relevant observation from peacebuilding experience and literature is the importance of leadership and personalities in bringing together disparate actors, even if formal integrative structures are not in place. For example, in the UN Assistance Mission to Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) —which was not an integrated mission from the start and, indeed, was a disaster until its overhaul and an influx of troops and resources from the United Kingdom in 2000, the multiple-hatting of Deputy Special Representative for the Secretary-General (DSRSG) Alan Doss eventually gave him authority over many strands of the mission, but it is widely agreed that his personal leadership skills, knowledge, and judgment were determinative to the mission’s operational integration and overall success: “The best relations between humanitarian, political and other actors came after the introduction of an integrated mission structure and the appointment of a DSRSG...This improvement is...largely attributable to the character, skills and humanitarian background of the individual DSRSG [Doss], who recognized the legitimate autonomy of different actors and sought to achieve only that level of coherence which was needed to reach effective solutions and which was feasible given the varied mandates (Porter 2003, 12).” In terms of further collaboration between mine action and peacebuilding, it is relevant to note that Doss’s success hinged to some extent on his pragmatic rather than dogmatic approach to integration, in which integration was not an end in itself, but only one means to the end of mission effectiveness. Thus, even if mine action and peacebuilding activities are not formally integrated, valuable interaction, information-sharing, and coordination can take place on an informal level if initiative is taken.

At a macro-level it is likely that, with the establishment of the UN Peacebuilding Commission, the drive for coordination will have renewed impetus, at least in certain contexts. However, a coherent framework approach for the practical operationalisation of peacebuilding has not yet been adopted across the board, at the level of international and national policy-making. Planning and design tools, such as the World Bank Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) exist, but are not fully engaged or utilised yet in relation to conflict and peace dynamics (being somewhat dependent on a measure of political stability for their effective utilisation). Policy frameworks planning explicitly for peacebuilding itself remain substantively absent from the array of national policy tools. That said, the Utstein study’s ‘peacebuilding palette’ does provide a useful starting point. And the UN Integrative Missions Approach, the peacebuilding strategy of Norway, and the global conflict prevention pools approach of the UK are multilateral and bilateral embodiments of this focus. At a regional level, the Stability Pact for the Balkans also utilises a related framework.

2. Ensuring HMA conflict-sensitivity

A growing body of literature suggests that even well-intentioned interventions, from the macro- to the micro-level, can exacerbate tension and fuel conflict.³⁴ The commensurate conceptual shift in programming has been from one in which outcomes other than those directly attributable to the project or intervention were ignored, or assumed to be positive (‘doing good’), to one in which positive project objectives are complemented by measures to avoid negative impact (‘do no harm’). This is now known as ‘conflict-sensitive’ programming (see box 8).

³⁴ This body of work also describes how a more effective response can be achieved. Amongst the better-known works are *Do No Harm* (Anderson 1999), *Aiding Violence* (Uvin 2001) the works of Kenneth Bush (1998 and in *Berghof Handbook for Conflict Transformation, Dialogue Series* 2003 and 2005), Luc Rechleyer and International Alert and Saferworld.

Box 8: Definitions of conflict sensitivity

A. *Conflict-sensitive approaches to development, humanitarian assistance and peacebuilding: A Resource Pack* defines conflict-sensitivity as the capacity of an organisation to:

- Understand the (conflict) context in which it operates;
- Understand the interaction between its operations and the (conflict) context; and
- Act upon that understanding of this interaction in order to avoid negative impacts and maximise positive impacts on the (conflict) context and the intervention

Source: Africa Peace Forum, Center for Conflict Resolution - Uganda, Consortium of Humanitarian Agencies – Sri Lanka: Forum on Early Warning and Early Response, International Alert, Saferworld, 2004.

B. An interview process of development international non-governmental organisation (INGO) staff initiated by International Alert and appearing in the publication *Building institutional capacity for conflict-sensitive practice* found conflict sensitivity to be seen as primarily about:

- The quality of policy and contextual analysis, including conflict analysis and analysis with partners;
- Mechanisms for applying this analysis; and
- Mechanisms for learning across programmes and across organisations

Source: Maria Lange, *Building Institutional Capacity for Conflict Sensitive Practice: The Case of International NGOs*, London: International Alert, 2004.

C. Mimeo for a Department for International Development (DFID) funded World Bank project on mainstreaming conflict sensitivity within PRSPs proposed that a strategy would be conflict sensitive if it:

- (i) Is cognisant of the sources of conflict, and at the very least has been developed in a way, and proposes a programme of action, that does not exacerbate conflict further and
- (ii) Where appropriate, seeks to address sources of conflict.

Source: mimeo – *Roundtable Agenda on PRSP and conflict sensitivity in Bosnia*, Sarajevo, 2004

A number of ‘tools’ have been developed to support actors humanitarian, developmental, and peacebuilding actors in paying greater attention to the conflict-provoking potential of their interventions, and the more sophisticated contextual analyses needed to mitigate that potential (see box 9).³⁵

Box 9: The “What” and “How” of conflict sensitivity	
What to do	How to do it
Understand the context in which you operate	Carry out a conflict analysis, and update it regularly
Understand the interaction between your intervention and the context	Link the conflict analysis with the programme cycle of your intervention
Use this understanding to avoid negative impacts and maximise positive impacts	Plan, implement, monitor and evaluate your interventions in a conflict-sensitive fashion (including redesign when necessary)
Source: <i>Conflict-sensitive approaches to development, humanitarian assistance and peacebuilding: A Resource Pack</i> . Africa Peace Forum, Center for Conflict Resolution - Uganda, Consortium of Humanitarian Agencies – Sri Lanka, Forum on Early Warning and Early Response, International Alert, Saferworld, 2004. Available at: < http://www.conflictsensitivity.org >	

³⁵ For an overview of these tools, see Africa Peace Forum et al., *Conflict-sensitive approaches to development, humanitarian assistance and peacebuilding: A Resource Pack*, London: Africa Peace Forum, Center for Conflict Resolution – Uganda: Consortium of Humanitarian Agencies – Sri Lanka: Forum on Early Warning and Early Response, International Alert, Saferworld, 2004. Available at www.conflictsensitivity.org

Whilst it is unlikely that individual, often small-scale project interventions will impact directly on overall peace and conflict dynamics at the national or international levels, it is important to note, as argued elsewhere in this report the artificiality of the micro-macro divide. By feeding tensions at the village, community, or sub-regional level, projects such as those undertaken under HMA can without doubt negatively affect the grounded settlement and/or reconciliation processes on which national peacebuilding depends.

Box 10: Mainstreaming conflict issues and conflict sensitivity

The notions of conflict sensitivity, mainstreaming of conflict issues within other areas of action and more strategic approaches to peacebuilding have been codified in a number of policy statements. Critics note that these policy statements, while appropriate, have yet to be put into practice and that levels of awareness about these statements are very low in conflict-affected countries. (International Alert and Saferworld, *Conflict Sensitive Approaches to Development in Africa* Peace Forum et al. 2004)

Selection of key multi-lateral and bilateral policy documents indicating the importance of:

- Conflict sensitivity as an operating principle
- Mainstreaming of conflict issues within other areas of action
- Integrated and strategic approaches to conflict and peacebuilding

Austrian Development Cooperation, *Peacebuilding and conflict prevention – policy document*, Vienna: 2006

Department of International Development (DFID), *Preventing Violent Conflict*, London: 2007

EU Programme of Action on the Prevention of Violent Conflict, Gotenborg, 2001

European Commission, *Communication from the Commission on Conflict Prevention* COM (2001) 211 Brussels: European Commission, 2001

German Federal Government *Action Plan. Civilian Crisis Prevention, Conflict Resolution and Post-Conflict Peace-Building*, Bonn, 2004

Japan International Co-operation Agency, *JICA Thematic Guidelines on Peace-building Assistance*, Tokyo, 2003

Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, *Peacebuilding: A Development Perspective*, Oslo, 2004

OECD, *Conflict, Peace and Development Co-operation on the Threshold of the 21st Century (1997), and Helping Prevent Violent Conflict: Orientations for External Partners*, Paris, 2001

Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA), *Promoting Peace and Security Through Development Cooperation*, Stockholm, 2003

Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), *Conflict-Sensitive Programme Management in International Cooperation (CSPM)*, 2005

There can be a tendency in technically standardized aspects of humanitarian mine action to adopt homogeneous approaches to programme design and implementation. Standardization of technical procedures is inevitable – and vital to the quality of many aspects of HMA work. However, for HMA programmes to improve their conflict-sensitivity, such standardization should be subject to localised contextual analysis. Improving conflict-sensitive HMA will depend on improving local programme knowledge, participatory programme processes, and transparency. None of these is especially novel in the wider field of development interventions, but their importance, both to conflict-appropriate approaches and the inherent tendency of aspects of HMA to apply standardized procedures, should not be under-emphasised with respect to strengthening HMA's role in peacebuilding.

Embedded knowledge

A critical theme emphasised by the roundtables was that everything in a conflict-affected context, is connected – and that everything is political. Consequently, knowledge and awareness — specifically in terms of how intervention activities, actors, and methods impact on, and are perceived in, the immediate local and national environment — are vital. External actors, whether in humanitarian mine action or peacebuilding, must think through the implications and ramifications of their work in order to forestall or minimise unintended consequences and maximise positive peacebuilding and confidence-building effects.

This requires interventions to be properly ‘embedded’ both in the immediate environment, and in the larger geographical and historical contours of the host country and its experience of conflict.

In order to achieve embeddedness, participants of the roundtables emphasised the need to think as broadly and holistically as possible about activities and impact, encompassing political, economic, social, gender, community, and security ramifications at micro- and macro-levels. A ‘core knowledge-base’ should, at the least, comprise the conflict history in the area (including the extent of forced migration, if applicable), details of relevant political, linguistic, economic, religious, socio-economic, and analysis of ethno-demographic characteristics and cleavages. There should be familiarity with the prevailing or dominant form(s) of political representation and economic modes of production (e.g., subsistence agriculture, cash crops, industry, informal markets, etc). Literacy rates and/or access to education and the situation with regard to gender relations are also relevant, particularly in terms of planning and implementing mine risk education programmes.

Participatory approaches

While peacebuilding is characterised by the use of participatory approaches although to a somewhat lesser degree than within development practice, participatory approaches are not as commonly used, nor are they used to their full potential, in humanitarian mine action. Humanitarian mine action can be seen as an intervention by ‘outsiders’. At each roundtable, practitioners consistently and strongly emphasised the importance of participatory approaches, particularly in terms of actualising the two-pronged objective of peacebuilding and humanitarian mine action. Participation can encourage interaction and cooperation with a range of local, national, and international, crosslines and cross-sectoral actors, which might not otherwise occur.

To take the example of HMA and gender, although organisations founded for and run by women have been particularly important to peace processes, peacebuilding, and development, many of the women practitioners in roundtable discussions, particularly in Sri Lanka and Sudan, felt sidelined by the humanitarian mine action process, which remains male-dominated. International personnel can be inclusive and gender-sensitive by working with local women’s groups that have a standing and stake in the community, as well as through their hiring practices. Also, a wide variety of resources and tools now exist that can be drawn upon by practitioners to assist in making better gender-sensitive choices in undertaking peacebuilding, thus fostering a greater sense of equality and embeddedness.²²

In advancing participatory approaches to local, conflict-sensitive situation and needs analysis, roundtable participants identified as important the combination of vertical *and* horizontal communications. ‘Vertical communication’ refers to communication that occurs between people or groups at different levels of an organisation, power structure, or hierarchy; the phrase was used by roundtable participants to describe both communication between government and citizens (and, in the cases of Sri Lanka and Sudan, non-State actors and supporters), and between international and national actors and the local population. ‘Horizontal communication’ applies to communication that takes place across lines or sectors between actors of roughly

²² See International Alert and Women Waging Peace, *Inclusive Security, Sustainable Peace: A Toolkit for Advocacy and Action*, Washington and London: Hunt Alternatives Fund and International Alert, November 2004. This comprehensive resource for practitioners and policy makers is intended to enable women to engage strategically in peacebuilding and security processes. See particularly the chapter on, ‘Small arms, light weapons and landmines’.

equal stature — for example, between representatives of the antagonistic parties, or between the different actors involved in the international presence.

Transparency

Transparency was identified as a particular issue for HMA actors, where there is a special need to confront perceptions of bias or political legitimisation. External actors working in vulnerable and insecure areas are power brokers: where and with whom they choose to work effectively empowers one group or set of residents over another, with important, if sometimes subtle, political, economic, social, and security implications. By utilising diverse and culturally relevant conduits of information sharing, through, for example, the media or in combination with MRE, humanitarian mine action organisations can provide accurate information concerning participation, expectations and accomplishments. It was specifically noted during the Sri Lanka roundtable that HMA advocacy needed to be moved more identifiably into the public eye in order to broaden local involvement. In particular, also, transparent and reliable monitoring and reporting of the destruction of mines and UXO was cited as potentially highly contributory to confidence-building and peacebuilding.

Summary of Key Points from Part 2

Mainstreaming

- Humanitarian mine action – as defined activities across a range of sectors – should be more strongly mainstreamed into peacebuilding and development agendas;
- The lack of an overarching strategic approach to dealing with development and/or peacebuilding issues is well recognised.
- To improve efficiency and impact, humanitarian mine action needs to foster greater coordination with other aid organisations and with the wider community of peacebuilding actors.
- The Utstein peacebuilding palette provides a useful way to conceptually think about a comprehensive approach to peacebuilding and how to link humanitarian mine action more effectively to it.

Conflict-sensitivity

- Everything in a conflict or post-conflict situation is connected and everything is political, therefore, it is vital that all external actors understand how interventions impact and are perceived in the immediate local situation.
- Even well intentioned interventions (such as humanitarian mine action) can negatively contribute to conflict dynamics, making peace more difficult to achieve or ultimately fuelling violence.
- A 'conflict-sensitive approach' is a way by which the risks of negative impacts can be reduced and positive impacts enhanced.
- A 'conflict-sensitive approach' requires linking conflict analysis to planning, implementation and evaluation of any intervention, including that of humanitarian mine action.
- Humanitarian mine action should be an embedded activity, understanding and viewing any intervention as actually embedded within the local political, social and economic realities in which they work.
- Humanitarian mine action should be a participatory activity, involving local actors at all stages and levels of project intervention.
- Transparency, through accurate reporting, the media and in collaboration with MRE activities, can help to confront rumours, minimise possibly detrimental effects and increase the potential for confidence building and peacebuilding.

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