

DDG Afghanistan

Accountability Framework (AF)

June 2015

This accountability framework summarizes those DDG commitments to our stakeholders in Afghanistan that are additional to DRC's global accountability framework. The global accountability framework is valid for DRC and DDG everywhere; it is available on www.drc.dk

1. Afghanistan mine and ERW contamination

Afghanistan remains one of the countries most contaminated by landmines and explosive remnants of war (ERW), mainly the result of the decade-long war of resistance that followed the Soviet invasion of 1979, and the 1992–1996 internal armed conflict. The United States-led coalition's intervention in late 2001 added considerable quantities of unexploded ordnance (UXO) to the problem, including (cluster) sub-munitions, and further use of mines by Non-State Armed Groups (NSAGs). In 2002 Afghanistan signed the Ottawa anti-personnel mine ban treaty, committing to clear and destroy all emplaced and stockpiled anti-personnel mines on Afghan soil.

In March 2012, Afghanistan submitted a ten year extension request to the States Parties of the Ottawa Mine Ban Treaty (MBT) by which they will remove all anti-personnel mines in the country by 2023. The extension request also includes a work plan to remove all hazards (anti-tank mine fields and battle fields included). The ambition is to clear 314 landmine & ERW projects in order of priority from 01 April 2013 to 31 March 2023. The biggest challenges foreseen in reaching the goals before 2023 include but are not limited to; i) lack of sufficient donor funding, ii) considerable number of new hazards added to the challenge as a result of an up-dated non-technical survey, iii) lack of support to demining from the government of Afghanistan (GoA), collapse of coordination bodies in country, and iv) increased insecurity in rural and ERW affected communities across the country.

The Afghan Compact (2005) and the national mine action strategy from 2003, for several years served as the guiding policy for the Mine Action Programme of Afghanistan (MAPA). These documents have now been replaced by a 10-year work plan (2013/2023) supplementing the Ottawa MBT extension and subsidiary, supported by an annually developed Integrated Operational Frameworks (IOF) highlighting the GoA's annual priorities for mine action in Afghanistan.

Security and stabilisation

The provision of security and stabilisation in Afghanistan is undergoing a transition where the Afghan security forces by the end of 2014 were handed-over the responsibility as ISAF forces are withdrawing from the country. This transition is foreseen by many to result in escalation of hostility and insecurity across country. Indeed 2014/2015 has seen a surge in security related incidents. Additionally, the potential return of an estimated 3-4 million registered and un-registered Afghans still residing in Iran and Pakistan could significantly impact the economic and security situation in the country, as the GoA has very limited capacity to facilitate and service these returns.

2. DDG Afghanistan - mandate and objectives

DDG is a humanitarian mine action unit in DRC established in 1997 and based upon support to three instruments of international law; (i) the Ottawa MBT (adopted 1997), (ii) the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons, including protocol V from 2003 addressing ERW, and (iii) the Convention on Cluster Munitions (adopted 2008).

In conjunction to the above DDG's global mission is to:

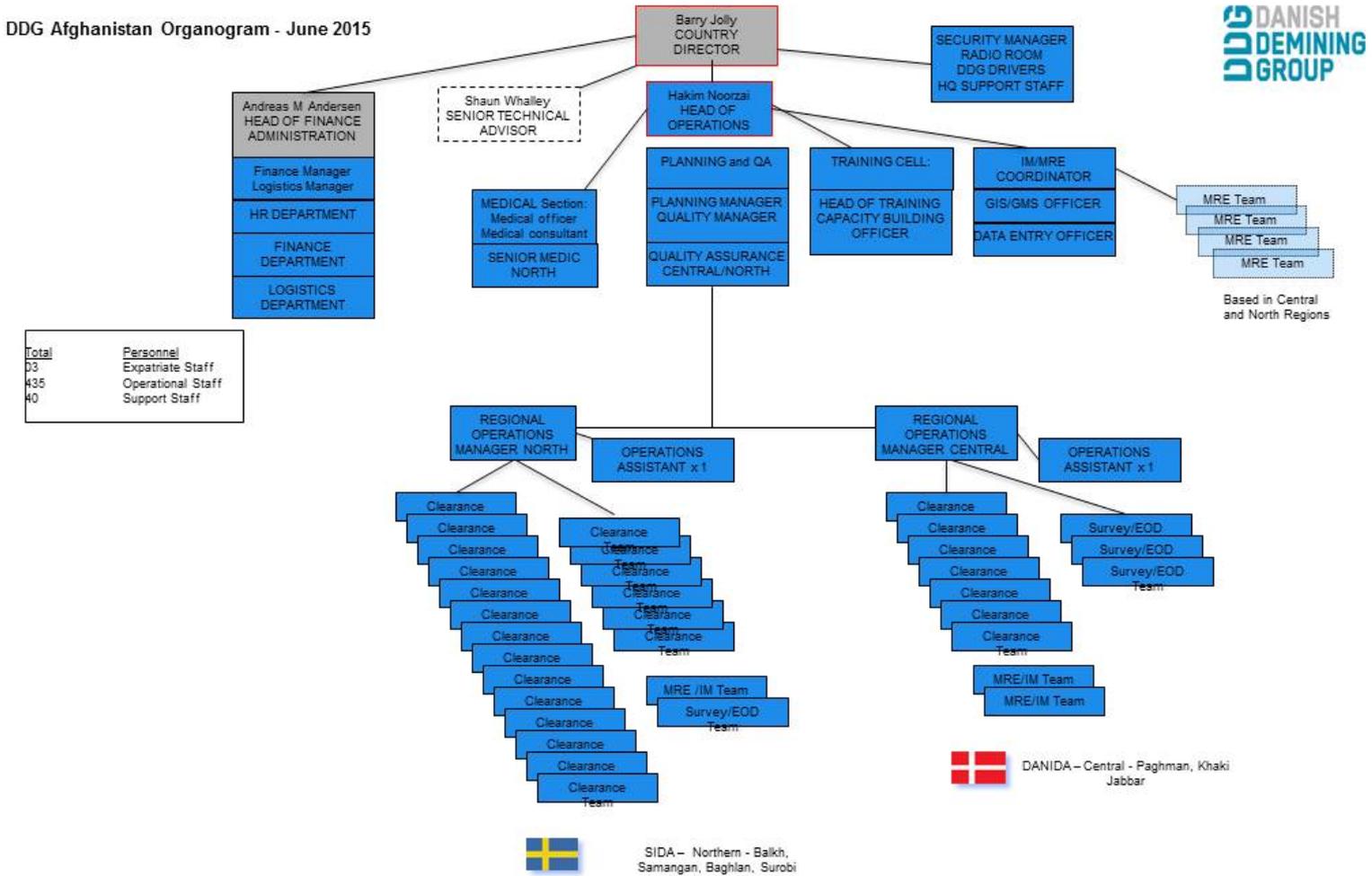
“Recreate a safe environment where people can live without the threat of landmines, unexploded ordnance and small arms light weapons.

DDG Afghanistan aims to:

- Enhance human security by reduction of the threat and impact of ERW on the civilian population of Afghanistan, by delivery of the following Mine action (MA) services; i) non-technical surveys, ii) clearance of mines and ERW, iii) marking and mapping of unsafe areas, and iv) provision of Mine Risk Education to vulnerable groups of people.
- Strategically plan programme activities in those areas identified by the GoA and the Afghanistan National Development Strategy (ANDS) as priority areas for the return of IDPs, refugees and other displaced people.
- Deliver MA services to provision for a regeneration of livelihoods and durable solutions with a regained access to valuable resources including agricultural and grazing land, roads, water sources and residential areas.
- Strengthen Afghan national ownership and sustainability of the programme by capacity development of management and monitoring within the programme, including planning and coordination with the MACCA. In addition, focus on selected geographical areas for MA service delivery to improve quality, outreach and accountability of the programme in relation to beneficiaries.

3. Organigram including staff line functions

The organisational chart below illustrates the current structure.



4. DDG Afghanistan is committed to work within and meet the requirements of the following codes, laws, standards, etc.

International commitments

- The 1997 Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on their Destruction
- 1980 Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons and Amended Protocols II and V on Explosive Remnants of War
- 2008 Convention on Cluster Munitions
- The 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights
- The 1949 Geneva Convention and Protocols

- The 1951 Convention and the 1967 Protocol on the Status of Refugees
- The 1998 Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement
- The International Committee of the Red Cross Code of Conduct for Disaster Relief
- The SPHERE Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards for Disaster Response

Organisational commitments

- Danish Refugee Council “Vision, Values and Standards” within the Programme Handbook
- Danish Refugee Council Code of Conduct
- The standards for humanitarian assistance listed in the DRC global AF (available on www.drc.dk)
- Compliance standards as guided by the Danish Refugee Council Operations Handbook

National commitments

- Cooperation with local communities, national authorities and relevant partners to improve Implementation of the MAPA and to promote solutions to the residual problem of mine/UXO contaminated areas in Afghanistan, particularly with a view to improve the livelihoods of beneficiaries in local communities
- Mine Action Coordination Centre of Afghanistan (MACCA)
- National labour laws
- Reporting to Ministry of Finance, Ministry of economics and Ministry of Disaster Management
- NGO registration requirements and visa conditions
- United Nations Mine Action Standards (IMAS)
- Afghanistan Mine Action Standards (AMAS)
- DDG Afghanistan SOPs

5. DDG Afghanistan relations to stakeholders and beneficiaries

At DDG Afghanistan we wish to be accountable. Not only to our donors and in meeting our goals and immediate objectives through daily operations, but most importantly to those we try to assist. In line with commitments, we consider it important to inform and provide our beneficiary communities and relevant stakeholders with information about our Accountability Framework where the organisation deems it safe to do so. However, due to a highly sensitive and complex situation and the general concern about security, DDG Afghanistan opts for a low profile approach. Therefore, DDG will avoid making information publicly available and instead work in close cooperation with relevant stakeholders, local authorities and community leaders to identify and liaise with beneficiaries, whilst to an extent it is considered safe to ensure beneficiary participation throughout programmes and project cycles.

Community-based demining

DDG Afghanistan seeks to employ and source as many resources as feasible from the communities where we work. The community based demining approach ensures local ownership, as well as income generating activities, leaving behind a sense of pride in the communities once activities stop, while increasing the safety of staff when activities are ongoing.

DDG accountability to the MACCA

DDG Afghanistan is accountable to MACCA and designated regional MACCA offices for the quality of our work. We provide this stakeholder with regular reports on our progress in Mine Action services delivered and DDG Afghanistan is subject to regular external quality assurance and control conducted by this partner.

Community liaison

With an ongoing transition on responsibility for stabilisation from international forces to Afghan, DDG foresee increased tension between formal and informal government structures. This requires more focus on liaison and communication with the communities where MA services are delivered; engagement with Informal stakeholders, local authorities and elders in communities to seek informed consent on accessibility to tasks sites for clearance operations, approval of activities and accountability of all DDG's MA services.

Impact monitoring / beneficiary feedback mechanisms

DDG has a number of years' experience in conducting Impact Monitoring (IM) and will continue to explore ways to develop quality monitoring and feedback mechanisms as a way to optimise relevance, accountability and positive impact of the programme and individual projects implemented.

Complaint mechanism

DDG Afghanistan has developed a formal complaint mechanism where a written or verbal complaint is accepted and is dealt with by a DDG complaints committee. In case of severe breaches of the DRC Code of Conduct, a designated task force based at DRC HQ in Copenhagen will be automatically involved. This complaint mechanism includes the use of a standardised complaint sheet indicating the procedure, tracking and verification system of any complaints reported.

Value based accountability principles

The following operational principles are applied throughout the implementation of projects intended to ensure a high quality and positive impact of Mine Action services delivered to beneficiaries:

- ***Participation:*** The MA activities, in particularly clearance of tasks will be steered and coordinated by the MACCA following the policy of prioritising high and medium impacted communities. DDG where possible include the target groups and selection of beneficiaries in project design. Secured by initial assessments and survey activities.
- ***Capacity development:*** DDG prioritises the strengthening of the National management capacity at HQ level, but not limited to. DDG on an annual basis offer all employees a large number of professional courses and vocational training to improve their future job opportunities.
- ***Gender:*** DDG offer equal employment opportunities for both men and women in delivery of MA services. This is practically feasible in positions at one of DDG's three offices and in field activities on survey and MRE due to consideration of gender-specific risks.

- **Advocacy:** Amongst donors, relevant authorities and stakeholders in the MA sector DDG advocates for Afghanistan's fulfillment of compliance with the Ottawa MBT and advocates for the delivery of MA services to mine and ERW affected communities in the country.
- **Do-no-harm:** To the extent possible and with due consideration of the security situation in the country, DDG develops risk analysis on individual projects to ensure adequate attention to the principle of Do-No-Harm in delivery of MA services. The aspiration of implementing a complaint procedure across the organisation is seen as a measure to assist management in this regard.
- **Collaboration with local partners:** DDG seeks to cooperate with local authorities, local elders and the broader community to link MA services delivered with local development plans in areas of operations. The interest is to improve sustainability of projects believed to be most relevant and sustainable when based on cooperation with relevant actors.
- **Sustainability:** With an overall focus on durable solutions to the effects of mine and ERW on local populations and communities in the country sustainability is in the forefront of programming. This is secured by implementation of clearance operations in selected areas where operations are complementary to national and provincial development plans, provision for the safe return of IDPs and refugee and prosperity of socio-economic development in local communities.

6. List of DDG Afghanistan projects

<i>Project title</i>	<i>Objectives</i>	<i>Beneficiaries</i>	<i>Relevant Authorities</i>	<i>Funding Donors</i>
<i>"DDG support to the National Mine Action Programme of Afghanistan"</i>	<p>1. Remove obstacles for the safe passage to and productive use of resources that can help realise the country's development potential.</p> <p>2. Consistently and increasingly improve safety, quality, relevance, and cost-effectiveness in programming and implementation.</p>	50,000	MACCA/DMC, Kabul and Parwan province governorates	DANIDA
<i>"DDG Humanitarian mine action support to the national Strategy through clearance and enhanced quality control"</i>	<p>Provision, through clearance, of safe land for agriculture, animal husbandry, resettlement or follow-on development.</p> <p>Provision of Mines Risk Education to the most vulnerable groups within affected areas prior to, during and subsequent to clearance operations.</p> <p>Targeted development training through DDGs' dedicated training facility and external training courses.</p> <p>Capacity building of DDG staff</p>	150.000	MACCA/DMC, Balkh and Samangan province governorates	SIDA

7. Essence of Accountability Baseline and Accountability Improvement Plan 2015

The DRC/DDG Operations Handbook and Programme Handbook have been distributed among management in the field.

AF has been finalised, introduced to senior managers and distributed for posting. AIP is completed with references to the HAP self-assessment, and methods for further implementation of AF benchmark principles developed.

1. Management will ensure that a continued review of DDGs accountability framework and establish monitoring mechanisms to ensure implementation and further compliance on focused areas for improvement.
2. Managers' and staff responsibilities for implementing the AF are clarified at all levels.
- A plan for closing gaps in meeting the AF is elaborated in consultation with relevant staff and stakeholders.
3. New/old staff will receive training as required to ensure an understanding of their role in implementing the actual AF with due consideration of the security situation in Afghanistan.
4. Information sharing with beneficiaries and stakeholders will be strengthened in accordance with a pilot contextual policy and plan for sharing of information.
5. The annual programme review will include an analysis of performance against the HAP benchmarks, complaints and other feedback received, based on prior collection of data from beneficiaries and relevant stakeholders.
6. Findings from monitoring and evaluations, complaints and other learning processes will be reflected in the design of new activities.