

DDG Vietnam

Accountability Framework (AF)

April 2016

This accountability framework summarizes those DDG commitments to our stakeholders in Vietnam 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. Vietnam mine and ERW contamination

It is widely known that Vietnam is one of the countries that is most heavily contaminated by unexploded ordnance (UXO); it is less well known that it has had, for years, one of the world's largest mine action programmes. The bulk of the contamination stems from United States (US) bombing during the Vietnam War, but there is also contamination from World War II, the First Indochina War against the French, and the Sino-Vietnamese War of 1979. Vietnamese officials have stated estimates that 66,000 km² (20 per cent of Vietnam's land mass) is suspected of contamination.

Vietnam's mine action programme has gone through a number of distinct phases. From 1975-78, the army, together with local militia, undertook a huge post-war clearance campaign as part of a broader post-conflict reconstruction programme. Using only basic technology, this cleared built-up areas and other essential livelihood spaces, but also led to thousands of demining casualties. In many cases UXO were simply hauled to shallow pits and dumped rather than destroyed.

The post-war clearance campaign ended in December 1978, when Vietnam invaded Cambodia to topple the Khmer Rouge regime, which led China to invade Vietnam briefly in early 1979. With the military fully engaged, clearance for civilian purposes was de-prioritised and undertaken by the military on a responsive basis only.

In 1986, the Communist Party instituted a package of economic reforms, which led to a surge in economic growth and a dramatic increase in development investments. Accordingly, the military was instructed to provide demining support to development projects. Rapid economic growth meant that the demand for demining began to outstrip the military's capacity. Demobilised soldiers began to take private contracts for clearance and, in the absence of regulations, problems multiplied.

Reforms began in 1996 when the Ministry of Defence established the Technology Centre for Bomb and Mine Disposal (BOMICO, now BOMICEN) and began a major expansion in equipment for specialised demining units. However, Vietnam's rapid economic growth meant that the army's demining units could not keep-up with demand and private firms continued to demine with little regulation.

MoD demining officials also started to become aware of developments in the international mine action field. Progress was slow however, in part because mine action was viewed to be only demining and the MoD took the lead on the Vietnamese side; it took years before sufficient trust was built to

overcome the resistance of defence officials to working with foreign governments and international non-governmental organisations (INGOs). Finally, in 2004 an agreement was signed between MoD and VVAF to launch Phase 1 of the Vietnam Landmine Impact Survey (VLIS), covering the six central provinces.

INGOs were also allowed to conduct demining operations in Central Vietnam, working under agreements with provincial governments. Aware that international support was available, but that few donors would fund the military, in April 2008, the Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs (MOLISA) issued a Decision to establish the Vietnam Bomb and Mine Action Centre (VBMAC) as a civilian demining operator. This attracted only modest donor support, in part because VBMAC was staffed entirely by military personnel and worked from MoD facilities.

The Government took additional series of actions starting in 2010. In April of that year, Prime Ministerial Decision 504 signified the approval of both a National Mine Action Programme ('Programme 504') and the National Mine Action Plan: 2010-2025. This represented a strategy rather than an isolated initiative: the first clear plan for a national programme that incorporated mine risk education (MRE) and victim assistance in addition to demining. Three ministries; MoD, Ministry of Planning and Investment (MPI), and MOLISA; were assigned central roles, and the plan envisaged that most mine action projects would be formulated by provinces for funding by the national government or donors. Planned spending would be in the neighbourhood of USD 150 million/year.

Implementation began well on some components of Programme 504 (e.g. the VLIS, plus increased international engagement) but, in general, progress has been disappointing. Vietnamese officials commissioned an assessment of the programme in 2012, which led in May 2013 to additional steps outlined in Decision 738. These included:

- Establish a true Mine Action Centre (VNMAC)
- House VNMAC, including the national database centre, outside of MoD premises
- Establish a policy dialogue mechanism between the Government and its development partners.

National mine action officials are now engaged in developing detailed plans for the measures incorporated in Decision 738.

Security and stabilisation

The Socialist Republic of Vietnam (Vietnam) is 1,650 kilometres long and from 50 to 600 kilometres wide. It borders China, Laos, Cambodia, the Gulf of Thailand and the South China Sea. Its 90 million people constitute the world's 13th largest population (third largest in ASEAN) inhabiting the 66th largest country. Population density in parts of Hanoi is among the world's highest at around 35,000 per square kilometre, but there are also sparsely populated remote areas, where the highest degree of poverty (between 15-20 per cent of the population) is concentrated, principally among the 53 minority ethnic groups. The 54th and majority ethnic group (Kinh) accounts for 85 per cent of the total population. The population is young (63 per cent under 35, median age 27) and adult literacy is around 94 per cent, but the quality of work-related skills and education is low.

Vietnam is now a middle-income country (GDP per capita USD1,900 in 2013) and its wealth is the second most evenly distributed in ASEAN after Indonesia. It is the world's 41st largest economy (PPP), in transition from agrarian to industrialised and from centrally planned to market-based. Vietnam has been cited as having the fastest growing middle class in the Southeast Asian region and this is expected to rise from 12 million in 2012 to 33 million in 2020 (Boston Consulting Group Survey 2012). Agriculture still accounts for some 70 per cent of employment, but contributes only 17 per cent of GDP, despite Vietnam being a global agricultural player in several commodities. The remainder of the economy is 40 per cent manufacturing, construction and industry, and the balance of 43 per cent services.

Vietnam is one of the world's few remaining one-party communist states. The Communist Party of

Vietnam (CPV) Central Committee—in which political power is formally vested—comprises 175 full and 25 alternate members elected at the Party Congress, held every five years (the Twelfth Party Congress is scheduled for 2016). The Central Committee meets twice a year and acts as the CPV's supreme decision-making organ. The Central Committee in turn elects a Politburo (currently 16 members), which runs Party affairs between Central Committee meetings and is Vietnam's most powerful political body in practice. The three most powerful political positions are the General Secretary of the CPV, currently Dr Nguyen Phu Trong, Prime Minister, currently Mr Nguyen Xuan Phuc, who heads the government and the President, currently Mr Tran Dai Quang, who is Head of State.

The Government is accountable to the National Assembly. In recent years, the National Assembly has become increasingly active and influential in setting national priorities, with members prepared to criticise the Government vigorously. Administration and policy implementation is the responsibility of government ministries and equivalent agencies, although these organisations are now also playing a more significant role in policy development.

The increasing role of the National Assembly in reviewing legislation and policies and a gradually more incisive media have contributed to greater transparency in Vietnam, but there are limits to dissent. Individuals can incur long prison terms on broadly framed charges, such as espionage or undermining national security and propagandising against the state. Notwithstanding some recent responsiveness on the part of the Vietnamese authorities on questions of religious freedom, several high-profile arrests and trials over recent years have brought the international spotlight back onto Vietnam's one-party political system and management of diverse political views.

Vietnam pursues an explicit policy of comprehensive international integration and takes an active role in international affairs, highlighted by its hosting of APEC in 2006, accession to the World Trade Organization in 2007, its non-permanent membership of the UN Security Council in 2008-09 and chairing of ASEAN in 2010. Vietnam was recently elected to the Human Rights Council (2014-16) and is currently campaigning for a seat on the UN Security Council (2020-21).

2. DDG Vietnam - 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.”

In support of DDG's global mission, DDG Vietnam has set its mission to recreate a safe environment in Vietnam where people can live without the threat of landmines, unexploded ordnance and small arms and light weapons.

In order to achieve this mission, DDG Vietnam has set the following strategic objectives:

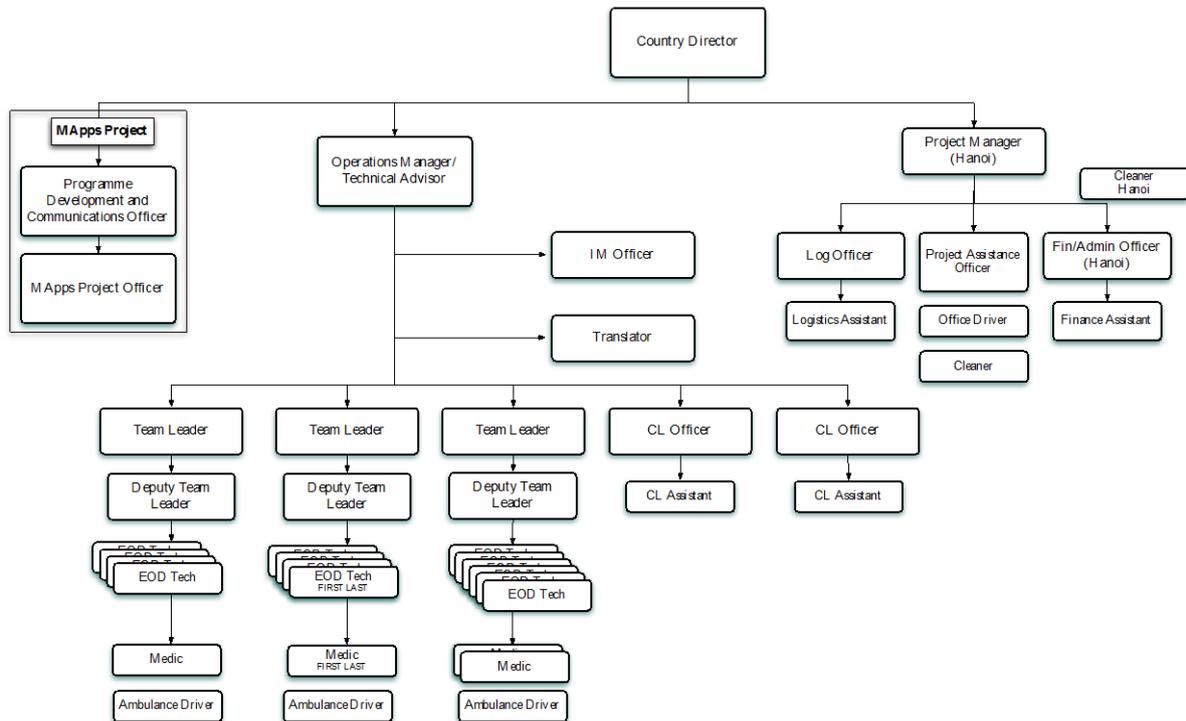
Programmatic Objectives

- Reduce the threat of ERW to communities by:
 - Clearance of ERW
 - Risk Education
- Facilitate an increase in the use of productive land by returning land to the communities.
- The capacity building of National Institutions in Mine Action.

For the foreseeable future, DDG intends to focus these activities on three provinces in central Vietnam, namely Quang Nam Province, Thua Thien Hue Province and Quang Ngai Province. The primary motivation for this is to maintain geographic focus. However, this will not exclude DDG exploring other viable opportunities elsewhere in Vietnam.

3. Organigram including staff line functions

The organisational chart below illustrates the current structure.



4. DDG Vietnam 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 Convention 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 National Mine Action Plan: 2010 -2025 and to promote solutions to the residual problem of mine/UXO contaminated areas in Vietnam, particularly with a view to improve the livelihoods of beneficiaries in local communities
- Vietnam National Mine Action Centre (VNMAC)
- National labour laws
- Reporting to PACCOM, Department of Foreign Affairs and Provincial People's Committee of provinces where operations are undertaken.
- NGO registration requirements and visa conditions
- International Mine Action Standards (IMAS)
- Vietnam National Mine Action Standards (NMAS)
- DDG Vietnam SOPs

5. DDG Vietnam relations to stakeholders and beneficiaries

At DDG Vietnam 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. DDG will work in close cooperation with relevant stakeholders, local authorities and community leaders to identify and liaise with beneficiaries, to ensure beneficiary participation throughout programmes and project cycles.

DDG accountability to the Provincial People's Committee, Project Steering Committee and VNMAC

DDG Vietnam is accountable to Provincial People's Committee and designated Project Steering Committee for the quality of our work. We provide this stakeholder with regular reports on our progress in Mine Action services delivered. With the establishment of the VNMAC, and as it assumes a more active role in the coordination of mine action activities in Vietnam, DDG will become increasingly accountable to the VNMAC for the quality of our work, and will be subject to external quality management inspections.

Community liaison

DDG Vietnam emphasises focus on liaison and communication with the communities where MA services are delivered; engagement with informal stakeholders, local authorities and leaders 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 Vietnam 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 Provincial People’s Committee and Project Steering Committee following the policy of prioritising high and medium impacted communities. DDG where possible include the target groups and selection of beneficiaries, secured by initial assessments and survey activities, in project design.
- **Capacity development:** DDG prioritises, but does not limit to, the strengthening of the National management capacity at Vietnam HQ level. DDG on an annual basis attempts to offer all employees a 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.
- **Advocacy:** Amongst donors, relevant authorities and stakeholders in the MA sector DDG 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 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 leaders 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, and prosperity of socio-economic development in local communities.

6. List of DDG Vietnam projects

<i>Project title</i>	<i>Objectives</i>	<i>Beneficiaries</i>	<i>Relevant Authorities</i>	<i>Funding Donors</i>
“Unexploded Ordnance (UXO) And Landmine Clearance Project: Quang Nam Province, Vietnam (Phase I)”	<p>1. To improve safety and further the options for socioeconomic development through clearance of landmines and unexploded ammunition in the most contaminated provinces in the central Vietnam.</p> <p>2. To develop and test a new information system for the distribution of knowledge regarding landmines and unexploded ammunition in Vietnam.</p>	240,000	VNMAC, PPC Quang Nam, DoFA Quang Nam, DoFA Quang Tri	AP Moller Foundation

<i>“Linking Communities to Mine Action Through Digital Platforms”</i>	Improve the means of providing relevant and actionable information to those affected by ERW contamination, and those who assist the affected communities.	18,000	PPC Quang Tri, DoFA Quang Tri, DPC Hai Lang	Orient Foundation