

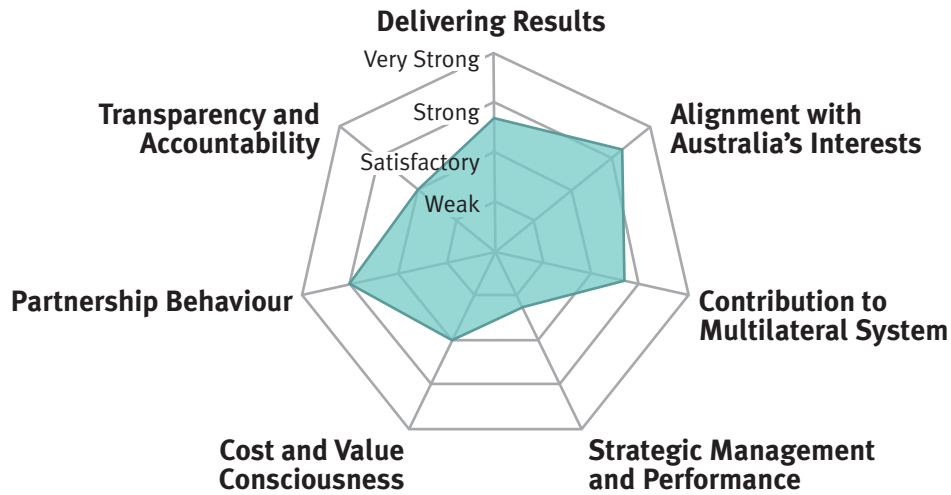


Australian Multilateral Assessment March 2012

United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS)



OVERVIEW OF ORGANISATION RATINGS



ORGANISATION OVERVIEW

The United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS) was established in 1997 as the focal point for all United Nations (UN) mine action activities. It is mandated by the General Assembly to coordinate the mine action assistance of the 14 UN agencies working to assist and support member states to implement mine action. At the global level, UNMAS coordinates the development of appropriate mine action policies and standards. At country-level, UNMAS is responsible for providing mine action assistance in the context of humanitarian emergencies and peacekeeping operations as well as providing resources for mine-action programs including mine clearance, stockpile destruction, mine risk education, victim assistance and advocacy activities.

UNMAS is part of the Office of Rule of Law and Security Institutions in the Department of Peacekeeping Operations. As part of the UN Secretariat UNMAS does not have its own dedicated governing body. It reports directly to the UN General Assembly (Assistance in Mine Action).

UNMAS manages or supports National Mine Action Coordination Centres in Africa, Asia, the Middle East and South America.

In 2010 its total operating budget was approximately US\$145 million. UNMAS is funded through donor contributions to the United Nations Voluntary Trust Fund for Assistance in Mine Action (US\$63.5 million). Additional resources are received from UN General Assembly appropriations for the mine action component of peacekeeping missions (US\$80.6 million).

Australia provided UNMAS \$15.3 million in 2010–11, comprising \$0.3 million of voluntary core contributions through Australia’s three-year core funding agreement and \$15.0 million in non-core funding. Australia is currently the eighth biggest contributor to the UN Voluntary Trust Fund for Mine Action.

RESULTS AND RELEVANCE

1. Delivering results on poverty and sustainable development in line with mandate

STRONG

UNMAS has produced tangible results that are improving the safety and livelihoods of hundreds and thousands of people through eliminating the threat of land mines and other explosive remnants of war. For example, the mine action program in Chad has seen mine-related casualties fall from 51 in 2009 to 17 in 2010 and 78 per cent of land cleared through the program intended for agricultural use is supporting livelihoods of the poorest.

UNMAS has demonstrated effective results at the field-level in mine action programs in Africa, Asia, the Middle East and South America resulting in increased agricultural productivity, improved trade, and access to health and education services through the release of land. Despite this success, there is little evidence that UNMAS has developed a results framework to systematically monitor the quality of its work and inform management decisions. Although incidental to its mandate, UNMAS’ work is substantially targeted at the poorest and most vulnerable people.

a) Demonstrates development or humanitarian results consistent with mandate

STRONG

Mine action activities coordinated by UNMAS have contributed to the steady and significant reduction of the threat posed by landmines and other explosive remnants of war as well as unmanaged ammunition depots and weapons stocks. According to the 2010 UNMAS report there is a strong link between mine action, particularly mine clearance, and broader socio-economic outcomes such as economic development through agriculture and improved access to health and education services for affected populations.

In 2010, UNMAS, in coordination with the members of the Inter-Agency Coordination Group for Mine Action (IACG-MA) measured implementation of the *UN Inter-agency Mine Action Strategy (2006–2010)* through a survey of 49 mine action programs that had received the support of the UN system.

As outlined in the 2010 annual report, at the field-level UNMAS and its partners have produced tangible results that are improving the safety and livelihoods of hundreds of thousands of people. For example, the mine action program in eastern Chad has tracked a notable reduction in reported mine-related casualties from 51 in 2009 to 17 in 2010. Additionally, 78 per cent of land that has been cleared through the program is intended for agricultural use therefore contributing to the livelihoods of thousands of people.

Other examples of broader development outcomes of UNMAS' work include mine action efforts in Sudan. Since 2005 over 45 000 kilometres of road have re-opened thereby increasing freedom of movement, reclaiming productive land and reviving trade while saving approximately US\$150 million in the cost of air transport for the United Nations Mission in the Sudan (UNMIS), and other humanitarian agencies.

UNMAS also has a program of mine risk education activities in partnership with UNICEF and other humanitarian organisations. Activities help reduce risks to civilians, particularly refugees and internally displaced persons. UNMAS also assists national and local authorities to implement mine and explosive remnants of war risk education, and provide guidance on standards. In Sudan, UNMAS supported the translation of the National Technical Standards and Guidelines on mine risk education, making them more accessible to local authorities and implementing partners.

Given the number of UN agencies involved in mine action the specific contribution of UNMAS towards these overall results is not clear. UNMAS plans to roll out a new set of indicators and targets by 1 July 2012.

UNMAS has also been successful in responding to humanitarian emergencies through the establishment of the standing mine action capacity mechanism in 2009. UNMAS personnel were deployed in March 2011 to coordinate the mine action response to the crisis in Libya.

UNMAS also contributes to mine action globally through coordination of international standards on mine action and advocating for the universal adoption of mine action treaties.

b) Plays critical role in improving aid effectiveness through results monitoring	SATISFACTORY
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There are examples from the field that UNMAS has effective monitoring and evaluation systems, such as in Afghanistan, but there is no evidence to suggest that UNMAS has developed a comprehensive system to monitor results in a systematic manner across all UN mine action activities.

As the UN focal point for mine action, UNMAS is responsible for reporting results against the *UN Mine Action Strategy (2006–2010)* to the UN General Assembly. It is not clear, at the institution-level, what system is used by UNMAS for monitoring and recording information on program quality and results. It is also not clear how UNMAS uses this information to inform the design and delivery of its programs.

There are some examples of UNMAS using good practice in monitoring to improve aid effectiveness. For example, the Mine Action Coordination Centre in Afghanistan has implemented a balanced scorecard system and receives regular reporting from

implementing partners which is systematically reviewed. Where under-performance is detected partners are given six months to resolve issues or operations are ceased.

UNMAS has developed the Recommendation Tracking Tool to monitor the implementation of recommendations from UN governing bodies on mine action but it is not clear how this tool is used to improve program performance.

The UN Joint Inspection Unit began a global evaluation of mine action assistance in 2010. No preliminary findings of the evaluation have yet been made publicly available. The evaluation is likely to have implications for UNMAS. At the urging of donors and other stakeholders, and upon agreement at inter-agency level, UNMAS deferred finalisation of the *2011–2015 UN Inter-Agency Mine Action Strategy* in order to take account of the evaluation findings.

c) Where relevant, targets the poorest people and in areas where progress against the MDGs is lagging	STRONG
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The work of UNMAS is directed by the existence of the threat of landmines and explosive remnants of war rather than poverty reduction considerations. That said, because UNMAS works to help conflict-affected communities in post-conflict and fragile states, its work is ultimately substantially focused on the needs of the poor and most vulnerable groups.

UNMAS’ strongest focus is in poor and fragile countries like Sudan, Congo, Somalia and Afghanistan. Even in middle-income countries like Colombia and Lebanon, UNMAS’ work is focused on the needs of the poorest communities that have been affected the most by civil conflict.

2. Alignment with Australia’s aid priorities and national interests	STRONG
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The work of UNMAS is very closely aligned with Australia’s objectives on global security including peacekeeping and humanitarian assistance.

UNMAS’ work in reducing the threat of land mines also closely aligns with four of the five strategic goals of the Australian aid program: saving lives, promoting opportunities for all, sustainable economic development and humanitarian and disaster response.

UNMAS has specific policies, guidelines and activities directed at improving gender mainstreaming in mine action and assisting people with disability through its victim assistance work.

UNMAS operates almost exclusively in fragile and conflict-affected states and does so effectively in its mine action programs and emergency response capacity.

a) Allocates resources and delivers results in support of, and responsive to, Australia’s development objectives	VERY STRONG
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The work of UNMAS supports Australia’s objectives on global security including peacekeeping and humanitarian assistance. Mine action makes it possible for peacekeepers to carry out patrols and for humanitarian agencies to deliver assistance. It also helps the international community to deliver on commitments under the *Convention*

on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Antipersonnel Mines and on Their Destruction; the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons; and the Convention on Cluster Munitions.

UNMAS has provided Australia with useful policy and technical advice on the development of Australia’s working paper regarding the application of all available methods for the clearance of cluster munition remnants.

Australia’s UN Post in Geneva has worked closely with UNMAS liaison and policy staff in Geneva and New York over the past few years on treaty-based initiatives. This included close consultation on clearance of cluster munitions remnants with Australia in our role as Friend of the President on clearance for the Convention on Cluster Munitions (CCM) in 2010–11. In supporting our role, UNMAS drew on its lessons learnt in Lebanon.

b) Effectively targets development concerns and promotes issues consistent with Australian priorities	STRONG
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The work of UNMAS directly contributes to the Australian aid program strategic objective of saving lives. Strategic Objective 1 of the *Inter-Agency Mine Action Strategy (2006–2010)* was the reduction of death and injury by at least 50 per cent against which there was good progress including a 29 per cent decrease in mine-related casualties in Afghanistan between 2009 and 2010.

UNMAS also contributes to Australia’s strategic objective of sustainable economic development. In Afghanistan, the UN and its partners have sought new tactics to address these threats. For example, in Afghanistan, a shift to community-based demining, whereby Afghan demining experts train and mentor local community members to conduct clearance, has proved an effective way of operating in highly insecure parts of the country, while contributing to enhanced stability and economic development.

AusAID’s *Mine Action Strategy for the Australian aid program (2010–14)* defines Australia’s goal in the area of mine action as ‘to reduce the threat and socio-economic impact of landmines, cluster munitions and other explosive remnants of war’. This goal aligns closely with the UNMAS vision and mandate.

Around 85 per cent of UNMAS expenditure is directed at Africa and Asia which is consistent with the geographic priorities of the Australian aid program.

c) Focuses on crosscutting issues, particularly gender, environment and people with disabilities	STRONG
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In March 2010, UNMAS, in consultation with relevant UN agencies and other stakeholders, developed revised gender guidelines for mine action programs to help mine action policymakers and field personnel incorporate gender perspectives into all operations of mine action. The guidelines include lessons learned and best practices from around the world in gender mainstreaming in the domain of mine action as well as updated checklists for field personnel to use. The guidelines were produced through a consultative process and are designed for use by UN agencies, partner governments and implementing partners such as NGOs.

The guidelines are practical and include checklists for mainstreaming in each priority, identifying potential obstacles to implementation and suggested remedies and examples from the field. As the guidelines are relatively new there is no evidence yet of their impact on mainstreaming gender equality within mine action. The guidelines indicate that they will be reviewed on a regular basis to ensure they remain relevant to users in the field.

According to UNMAS, mine action contributes to ensuring environmental sustainability (MDG 7) in two ways:

- > handover of cleared land and land title promoting sustainable land use, and
- > improving access to safe drinking water through clearance and construction of wells.

There is no specific, separate environment policy or strategy for including environmental considerations into mine action, however the International Mine Action Standards includes guidance that is aimed at ensuring mine action activities minimise any impact on the environment.

The work of UNMAS has a direct and important correlation to the crosscutting issue of people with disabilities. UNMAS has two key roles in this area:

- > promoting the UN *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities* (CPRD), and
- > supporting people with disabilities as a result of mines through its Victim Assistance Program.

UNMAS developed an advocacy toolkit in 2008 to support efforts by United Nations-managed and supported mine action centres to advocate for the ratification and implementation of the Convention and its optional protocol. It is designed for field practitioners as a user-friendly overview of the convention to assist in dialogue with counterparts and explanations on how States can become Party to the convention. UNMAS also manages victim assistance programming in a number of countries such as Congo and Sudan, designed to meet the immediate and long-term needs of mine victims, their families, mine-affected communities and persons with disabilities.

d) Performs effectively in fragile states	STRONG
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By virtue of the experience of its staff, UNMAS is well versed in understanding the particular needs of operating in fragile states and implications of this for their operations.

The Standing Mine Action Capacity mechanism was established to deploy personnel to provide immediate response to emergency situations. As first responders, deployed personnel would need to be well equipped to operate effectively in very challenging environments. UNMAS has a reputation for operating effectively in its emergency coordination capacity in fragile states and situations such as the recent responses in Gaza, and Libya.

3. Contribution to the wider multilateral development system	STRONG
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UNMAS plays a unique and critical leadership role within the UN system on mine action and is increasingly playing a broader coordinating role with other stakeholders, including donors, partner governments and non-government organisations.

UNMAS, through its global focal point and coordination function, also plays a significant role in negotiating and implementing normative frameworks on mine action such as the *Mine Ban Convention*, the *Convention on Cluster Munitions* and the *Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons*. This work is relied on by a wide range of stakeholders working on mine action.

UNMAS provides technical expertise to national authorities and to other UN agencies in the development of norms and standards. It has partnered with the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining to develop and publish international standards on mine action and advocates for the universal adoption of mine action conventions by member states, as well as compliance with relevant obligations.

UNMAS plays a role supporting the mine action community to more universally apply technology to enable mine detection, ground preparation and mine clearance.

a) Plays a critical role at global or national-level in coordinating development or humanitarian efforts	STRONG
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UNMAS plays a critical role in coordinating the UN’s mine action efforts through its role as chair of the Inter-Agency Coordination Group for Mine Action. The Group brings together the 14 agencies involved in mine action, meeting monthly at the working-level and biannually at the Principal’s level. The monthly meetings provide a forum for discussion of current issues and information exchange on relevant updates including ongoing monitoring of threat levels.

The role that UNMAS plays within the UN system on mine action is unique and well defined.

The role that UNMAS plays coordinating broader global mine action efforts is less clear. UNMAS is increasingly playing a lead role in the coordination of global mine action efforts through, on behalf of the inter-agency, UN Mine Action Team, supporting the Mine Action Support Group and contributing to the Mine Action Directors Meeting. While these additional fora on mine action bring together a wider range of actors, it is not clear if UNMAS has been effective in its role of improved coordination of global mine action efforts and how they may be formally integrated into the mine action system.

UNMAS provides technical and logistical support, and has contracted a consultant to the role of Secretariat to support the activities of the Mine Action Support Group. The Mine Action Support Group is a forum of donors designed to simplify the coordination between donors and the United Nations Mine Action Team (UNMAT) to achieve greater transparency about funding availability and needs as well as to share different experience in combating the threats of mines.

UNMAS, on behalf of the UNMAT, together with the Geneva International Centre on Humanitarian De-mining runs an effective Mine Action Program Directors and UN Advisors annual meeting that brings together National Directors, UN program staff and other mine action players including donors, NGOs and other international organisations such as the International Committee of the Red Cross.

b) Plays a leading role in developing norms and standards or in providing large-scale finance or specialist expertise	STRONG
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UNMAS has a general responsibility for enabling and encouraging the effective management of mine action programs, including the development and maintenance of standards.

A Review Board chaired by UNMAS was established to oversee the continuous review process for the standards with each standard to be reviewed every three years or when there is an urgent operational need.

In addition to the development of international standards on mine action, UNMAS strongly advocates for the universal adoption of the existing legal frameworks for mine action including the *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities*, as a framework for delivering victim assistance to survivors.

UNMAS provides useful technical advice to other UN agencies on issues such as disarmament including the development of the *Small Arms Control Standards* and the *International Ammunition Technical Guidelines*.

UNMAS input into Australia-led papers was professional, timely, expert and helpful. The Australian UN Post in Geneva also welcomed UNMAS input at meetings under the *Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons* (CCW), including on dealing with explosive remnants of war during Australia’s Presidency of Protocol V and improved explosive devices, and the *Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention* (MBC). UNMAS has effectively helped to build expertise amongst delegates and inform arms control negotiations with relevant information from the field.

c) Fills a policy or knowledge gap or develops innovative approaches	SATISFACTORY
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UNMAS plays a role supporting the mine action community to develop a more universal application of technology to enable mine detection, ground preparation and mine clearance, as well as other elements of mine action, to be conducted more cost effectively, quickly, and with less risk through the establishment of a centralised point for information exchange on mine action technologies. As part of this, UNMAS agreed to convene a small working group to examine the possibilities and propose a solution. It was intended that UNMAS would develop and maintain a UN information gateway, providing open access to a wide variety of mine related information including technology, although it appears that this has not yet been developed.

ORGANISATIONAL BEHAVIOUR

4. Strategic management and performance

WEAK

UNMAS' mandate is clear, but it lacks strong strategic management without a dedicated executive board. It is also currently operating without an overarching strategy while its 2011–15 Strategy is being finalised to take account of the (delayed) Joint Inspection Unit evaluation findings. Further, UNMAS' dual role as coordinator and implementer of mine action activities has impacted on its ability to perform a strong leadership role across the UN's mine action program.

UNMAS has sound monitoring and evaluation systems and processes in place for some of its operations, such as in Afghanistan, but there is no evidence of a current overall framework for monitoring and evaluation of its global efforts, or appropriate mechanisms to realign programs not delivering results. UNMAS has indicated that a new organisation-wide system of targets and indicators is due to be implemented by the second half of 2012.

UNMAS relies on generic UN recruitment processes and this has resulted in key positions being vacant, including the Director position (vacant since April 2011).

a) Has clear mandate, strategy and plans effectively implemented

WEAK

While the work of UNMAS is focused exclusively on mine action, the range of activities undertaken by UNMAS in this sector is not clearly defined in its mandate. Its stated mandate is diverse and is comprised of three key functions:

- > General Assembly mandated focal point for mine action coordination including responding to issues identified by the sector—including the UN System and Member States
- > coordination of international mine action standards, and
- > provide mine action assistance during humanitarian emergencies and peacekeeping operations.

In addition to these functions, UNMAS provides resources for mine action programs including mine clearance, stockpile destruction, mine risk education, victim assistance and advocacy activities.

Overall, there are many strategic documents guiding the UN's work on mine action, however there is no single strategic document, such as a detailed annual plan, that clearly defines the specific role that UNMAS will play in achieving the objectives of the overall UN mine action strategy. The lack of an overarching framework does not appear to be a major impediment to UNMAS management, because their small size enables an opportunistic approach to implementation of its work. The delay in finalising the new strategic framework presents a barrier to assessing UNMAS' overall effectiveness.

The UN as a whole has had clear strategic goals for mine action, although there is no current UN Inter-Agency Mine Action Strategy for mine action as the 2011–15 strategy is still under development. Even once this strategy for mine action is in place, UNMAS will

not have a strategic document that outlines how it advances these goals and how its contribution towards these goals will be measured.

The work of UNMAS is guided by several UN-wide strategy documents on mine action including the *Mine Action and Effective Coordination: The United Nations Inter-Agency Policy, United Nations Inter-Agency Mine Action Strategy 2006–2010* and the terms of reference of the Mine Action Area of Responsibility (MA-AOR) within the Global Protection Cluster which formalises the responsibility of UNMAS as the coordinator of the MA-AOR and guides the overall response of UNMAS and partners in the immediate aftermath of conflict or natural disaster. The MA-AOR improves prior frameworks for rapid response and integrates theses within the broader cluster system.

These documents aim to provide clarity on the coordination efforts of the UN on mine action but are very descriptive and do not clarify the inter-relationship between the many players in mine action including the decision making processes. The documents provide few concrete details on the systems and processes underlying this work such as the allocation of resources and task or reporting requirements.

UNMAS has attempted to address this through the development of the annual portfolio of mine action activities. This document is meant to service the entire mine action sector and includes project outlines from national programs, UN programs, and NGO and civil society organisation partners. In situations where donor funding is not earmarked against particular projects, the process by which resource allocation under the Voluntary Trust Fund is made is less clear.

b) Governing body is effective in guiding management	WEAK
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UNMAS does not have a dedicated executive board as it is part of the UN Secretariat. The Inter-Agency Coordinating Group on Mine Action is the principal forum for the coordination of UN mine action policies strategies and initiatives at the global-level. This group does not have a clear reporting structure or process for decision making.

The United Nation’s collective work on mine action is reported directly to the UN General Assembly (Assistance on Mine Action). UNMAS is formally a division of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations which directs and manages its operations.

c) Has a sound framework for monitoring and evaluation, and acts promptly to realign or amend programs not delivering results	SATISFACTORY
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UNMAS is responsible for coordination of tracking progress against the objectives of the *United Nations Mine Action Strategy (2006–2010)* and reporting this to the UN General Assembly. The Secretary-General’s report on *Assistance in Mine Action (2011)* reports on progress against objectives made by all UN partners and includes statistics on the impact of various initiatives including beneficiaries.

There is evidence that monitoring and evaluation systems are in place in specific operations. For example, the Mine Action Coordination Centre of Afghanistan (MACCA) uses a balanced scorecard-based evaluation system to manage its operations.

Documentation suggests that this was an initiative of this particular centre rather than a UNMAS-wide system.

Australia in its consideration of funding to UNMAS' operations in Afghanistan assessed the program as having good monitoring and evaluation systems in place.

A particular strength of the system was monitoring and evaluating the work of implementing partners. If an implementing partner falls below the standard set by MACCA, it is required to take corrective action within six months or suspend operations.

Despite good examples at the activity level, there does not appear to be a system applied across UNMAS operations to capture relevant data on the indicators of the *UN Inter-agency Mine Action Strategy (2006–2010)*. There also does not appear to be any process for independent verification of data or periodic evaluation of operations.

In an attempt to improve performance in this area, UNMAS developed the recommendations tracking tool in 2008 with the aim of developing a system that would track recommendations that have been made with regard to the UNMAT headquarters and field programs, and monitor them through to implementation. The recommendations tracking tool is not publicly available and is not reported against in the UNMAS Annual Report so it is difficult to assess whether this has been a useful tool.

d) Leadership is effective and human resources are well managed	WEAK
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UNMAS is headed by a Director, however this position has been vacant since April 2011. In addition to the position of Director, several other key positions within UNMAS are also vacant. This reflects the fact that UNMAS is reliant on broader UN recruitment procedures, which are inherently slow. UNMAS headquarters presence is small with a total of 27 staff-posts and therefore vacancies are felt more acutely. UNMAS has far more flexible procedures, managed by UNOPS, for recruitment in the field.

5. Cost and value consciousness	SATISFACTORY
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As a result of a funding shortfall in the Voluntary Trust Fund, UNMAS has had to reprioritise its programs and reduce operational costs. The trend towards a decrease in donor funding for mine action is driving UNMAS towards a greater focus on cost effectiveness.

UNMAS considers costs and assesses value for money in its operations. UNOPS is the primary implementing partner for UNMAS reports it is cost effective. Some concerns have been raised by donors at UN Mine Action Directors Meetings about the responsiveness, delays in disbursements and the high transaction costs associated with UNMAS allocating funds to UN agencies relative to NGO implemented operations, particularly in Africa.

Through the appointment of UNOPS as primary implementing partner, UNMAS programs challenge partners to think about value for money given the infrastructure, experience and knowledge that UNOPS brings to this role.

a) Governing body and management regularly scrutinise costs and assess value for money	SATISFACTORY
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As a result of a funding shortfall in the Voluntary Trust Fund, UNMAS has had to reprioritise its programs and reduce operational costs. The trend towards a decrease in donor funding for mine action is driving UNMAS towards a greater focus on cost effectiveness.

In order to address the decline in donor funding, UNMAS has developed the *Resource Mobilisation Strategy 2011–13*.

UNOPS is the principal service provider for UNMAS operations. The UNOPS Mine Action Unit was established in 1998 to provide specialised project management, technical and legal expertise as well as support for fielding personnel and procurement of services and supplies. The arrangements are governed by an umbrella Memorandum of Understanding between UNOPS and UNMAS. UNMAS management claims this arrangement is highly cost effective and the Australian Multilateral Assessment has no reason to doubt this given the infrastructure, experience and knowledge that UNOPS brings to this role.

Concerns have been raised by donors including Australia about the responsiveness, delays in disbursements and the high transaction costs in relation to program implementation when other UN agencies are selected as implementing partners over other organisations such as NGOs that may be more cost effective. There does not appear to be a system in place to assess the cost effectiveness of UNMAS proposals received as part of the annual Portfolio of Mine Action projects.

b) Rates of return and cost effectiveness are important factors in decision making	SATISFACTORY
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UNMAS commissioned a study to seek the best modality to implement peacekeeping activities funded by the Assessed Budget. UNMAS also has plans to commission an evaluation in 2012 to find a cost effective way to implement Voluntary Trust Fund-funded projects and to monitor and evaluate its cost effectiveness.

c) Challenges and supports partners to think about value for money	SATISFACTORY
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Through the appointment of UNOPS as primary implementing partner for over 90 per cent of its programs, UNMAS programs challenge partners to think about value for money given the infrastructure, experience and knowledge that UNOPS brings to this role.

UNOPS tendering and contracting practices have resulted in significant savings through the competitive process undertaken for clearance contracts and the subsequent contract negotiation and monitoring carried out. In 2008, UNOPS implemented an accreditation process, that reviews the operational capacity of organisations against a number of criteria and quality indicators for anyone wishing to bid on a contract.

6. Partnership behaviour

STRONG

UNMAS works effectively in partnership with Australia and others at global level. As a relatively small organisation, it can remain flexible in its approach and respond to partner priorities. Feedback from stakeholders on this is positive.

UNMAS provides technical assistance to build the capacity of partner governments to develop national systems for mine action, including legislation and standards. It provides substantial opportunities for partner governments and civil society in mine-affected countries to incorporate their priorities the annual portfolio of mine action projects. Feedback from Australia's overseas mission in Ramallah indicates that authorities in Gaza appreciated the role UNMAS played in clearing unexploded ordinance from the Gaza Strip following the December 2008 to January 2009 conflict.

a) Works effectively in partnership with others

STRONG

UNMAS plays a lead role in managing partnerships with a range of UN departments, offices, programs, agencies and funds involved in mine action. As Chair of the Inter-Agency Coordination Group on Mine Action at the working level, UNMAS effectively maintains partnerships with the 13 other UN agencies to achieve the strategic objectives of the UN Mine Action Strategy.

UNMAS seeks to actively engage with partners outside of the UN system through the International Meetings of National Mine Action Program Directors and UN Advisers. This forum brings together representatives from national mine action programmes, UN field personnel, donors and other stakeholders including NGOs on an annual basis to discuss issues of common concern. UNMAS has incorporated a 'hard talk' session into the agenda where participants are able to submit questions and comments anonymously, suggesting a commitment to engaging in open dialogue with partners.

Feedback from a range of stakeholders suggests that UNMAS engages effectively at country-level with partners, including national and local governments.

AusAID's Global Mine Action Program is satisfied with the UNMAS partnership and UNMAS responsiveness to requests for information and reporting.

Feedback from Ramallah post indicates that authorities in Gaza appreciated the role that UNMAS played in clearing unexploded ordinance from the Gaza Strip following the December 2008–January 2009 conflict. UNMAS worked very closely with a limited number of organisations in Gaza and had good working relationships, playing a coordination and clear humanitarian role in a highly politicised context.

AusAID's Afghanistan program has commented positively on the strong coordinating role of UNMAS in Afghanistan (through the Mine Action Coordination Centre in Afghanistan), including establishing long-term relationships with implementing partners and the Afghan Government.

As a relatively small organisation, UNMAS is able to remain flexible in its approach and responsive to the priorities of partners. Further, through the establishment of the Standing Mine Action Capacity, UNMAS is able to quickly mobilise resources, including

personnel, to respond to requests for assistance from partner countries or the international community such as the recent response in Libya and the Gaza Strip.

b) Places value on alignment with partner countries' priorities and systems	STRONG
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Feedback from Australian overseas missions and AusAID headquarters suggests that UNMAS operates most effectively at the country-level by working closely with partner governments, donors and implementing partners to define priorities for mine action. UNMAS supports partner countries' priorities and systems by providing technical assistance to build the capacity of national governments to develop national legislation and standards on mine action. In 2010 UNMAS responded to a request from the Colombian Government to assist with the development of national guidelines and technical standards for mine clearance operations as well as procedures for accreditation, quality assurance and information management. UNMAS also supported the Democratic Republic of Congo to develop legislation on mine action which was subsequently approved by the national assembly.

In Afghanistan, UNMAS is managing mine action on behalf of the Afghan Government but is working closely on transition of management to the relevant government departments.

c) Provides voice for partners and other stakeholders in decision making	STRONG
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UNMAS has developed the annual portfolio of mine action projects as a means to present a comprehensive picture of the full range of mine action needs in particular countries and thematic issues related to mine action. The Mine Action Portfolio, in addition to being a good tool for coordination, provides a voice for partners through the submission of proposals. The Portfolio ideally reflects projects developed by mine-affected countries based on their priorities and strategies.

The process for coordinating proposals occurs at the country-level and is geared towards maximising participation by relevant stakeholders. A country portfolio coordinator leads each country portfolio team and coordinates the submissions of proposals to headquarters. While the majority of coordinators are UN officials, this role is increasingly being assumed by national authorities. The country portfolio teams include representatives from national and local authorities, non-governmental organisations, the UN and the private sector. Locally based donor representatives are invited to attend preparation meetings. This approach incorporates the views of key partners in the process of identifying priorities, although it is not clear what input, if any, these stakeholders have in the decision making on approval of proposals for funding or whether this is a donor-driven process.

7. Transparency and accountability**SATISFACTORY**

There is scope to improve UNMAS' transparency, as documents are not always easily accessible on its website. The UNMAS annual report provides detailed financial reporting on income, including funds raised through the Voluntary Trust Fund, and expenditure, including program allocations and operating costs.

UNMAS has implemented adequate financial and risk management systems to manage and report on its annual budget. With more than 97 per cent of its voluntary contributions being earmarked there is little discretion over resource allocation. UNMAS promotes transparency of partners through the requirement that audits are undertaken for every project upon completion.

a) Routinely publishes comprehensive operational information, subject to justifiable confidentiality**SATISFACTORY**

UNMAS publishes financial flows, results information, budgets and project descriptions. It also produces an annual report that provides detailed financial information including a breakdown of donor contributions to the Voluntary Trust Fund, program support costs and allocations by thematic and geographic programs. The figures are based on actual expenditure over the calendar year and include outstanding advances to implementing partners.

The UNMAS website does provide some relevant information such as UN policies and guidelines on mine action and annual reports. Overall, however, it is difficult to navigate and access a broad range of relevant information including operational documents and detailed program information.

UNOPS, the principal service provider for UNMAS, is a signatory to International Aid Transparency Initiative making transparent the use of the 90 per cent of UNMAS funds programmed through UNOPS.

b) Is transparent in resource allocation, budget management and operational planning**SATISFACTORY**

According to the 2010 Annual Report, donors earmarked 97.4 per cent of funds with the majority of voluntary contributions directed towards UNMAS programs in Afghanistan and Sudan. With more than 97 per cent of its voluntary contributions being earmarked there is little discretion over resource allocation.

UNMAS has implemented adequate financial and risk management systems to manage and report on its annual budget.

As part of the July 2010 Policy Committee recommendation, UNMAS and its UN partners are planning to improve the governance mechanisms of the Voluntary Trust Fund and allocation process for un-earmarked funds.

UNMAS sets fundraising targets based on the annual portfolio of mine action activities even though this does not include the full range of UNMAS activities. The full scope of

UNMAS activities planned for each year, including provisions for potential emergency response, is not publicly available and therefore it is difficult to assess UNMAS as being transparent in either budget management or operational planning.

c) Adheres to high standards of financial management, audit, risk management and fraud prevention	SATISFACTORY
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UNMAS has adequate financial and risk management systems in place. UNMAS follows the UNOPS' formal processes for audit and fraud prevention for the funds directed to UNOPS. All funds provided directly to NGOs are subject to the financial rules and regulations of the UN Secretariat which include internal and external auditing and corruption practices.

UNMAS adopted the Programme and Financial Information Management System (ProFI) developed by UNODC in 2008. The software system provides a full project life cycle's workflow including finance, data, document and programme management.

In addition to the establishment of ProFI, UNMAS has been working on the establishment of a funds tracking database to improve the overall monitoring of incoming funds. UNOPS submits quarterly reports on income, expenditure and projected cash requirements on behalf of UNMAS. NGOs receiving funds from UNMAS are also required to submit their financial reports to UNMAS.

UNMAS developed a risk management approach to the management of field programs in 2006 to improve the strategic response to threats, as well as to ensure better exploitation of opportunities. As part of the development of the new approach, risk management shifted from a mainly field requirement to a joint exercise between the field and headquarters to ensure more timely completion of the risk matrix and encourage more in-depth analysis and closer monitoring of risk. The matrix is completed twice annually with the implementation of approved recommendations monitored through the recommendations tracking tool.

d) Promotes transparency and accountability in partners and recipients	SATISFACTORY
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The implementation of UNMAS' work is carried out by a wide range of partners including national and local governments, local and international NGOs, private companies and militaries.

UNMAS promotes transparency of partners through the requirement that audits are undertaken for every project upon completion. UNMAS regularly reviews the substantive and financial reports submitted by implementing partners including UNOPS and NGOs. Bi-weekly meetings between UNMAS and UNOPS jointly review financial and operational performance. NGO grant agreements include mandatory auditing upon project completion.

In addition, UNMAS desk officers conduct field missions to monitor the activities of national counterparts and local NGOs.