Questions and Answers – Mine Action and Cluster Munitions Programme 2016-2020[1]

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Important information regarding submission of applications.

As communicated in the policy framework, applications need to be submitted either **by e-mail or by written mail**.

If an application is submitted by e-mail, please make sure that the e-mail (including any attachments) has a size of less than **10 MB**. A larger sized e-mail must be divided into multiple e-mails of smaller size.

The applying organization **bears sole responsibility** for submitting an application in a timely, orderly and complete manner. Submitting an application at the last moment, just before passing the deadline for submitting proposals, brings along risks with regards to receiving the application on time and in a complete manner. This in itself brings along risks for the results of assessing an application.

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[1] Total amount of questions: 63

Region/Activities - Track record/Threshold

Question	Answer
1. T1: The applicant must have relevant experience in the area of humanitarian demining in the proposed countries/regions. **What does region refer to? Is humanitarian demining limited to (1) Clearance and (2) Destruction of stockpiled mines, ERW, UXO, AXO, CM?**	'Region' refers to generally accepted definitions of regions, for example the Middle East, West-Africa or Central Asia. Humanitarian Mine Action refers to four activities: clearance, mine risk education, victim assistance and stockpile destruction. Specific clearance can also consist of battle area clearance and spot tasks.
2. The tender material highlight at page 8 under the sub heading 2.1 Who are the grants for? that the application must focus on at least three of the following for categories of activities: Clearance (surveying, mapping, marking and clearing) of mines, ERW, UXO, AXO and cluster munitions; Destruction of stockpiled mines, ERW, UXO, AXO and cluster munitions (including dismantling production and storage facilities); Assistance to victims and their families, including rehabilitation and reintegration; Activities aimed at raising awareness and educating local populations about the risks of mines, ERW, UXO, AXO and cluster munitions. **The proposal should include at least two countries, is it a requirement that each of the proposed country programs includes three of the above mentioned activities, or is it considered acceptable to distribute the three activities between all the proposed country programs?**	The proposal as a whole should cover the required categories of activities.
3. The tender guideline D.2 states that "In the last five years (2011-2015), the applicant or the lead party must have had a least three years' experience with implementing programmes in the target country or region with an average annual budget of €500,000". **Is the experience of implementing partners in the target country or region applicable in this case?**	The experience of implementing partners in the target country or region is not applicable in this case, unless this experience was realized with funding of the applicant.
4. In the tender document it states that "In the last five years (2011-2015), the applicant or the lead party must have had at least three years' experience with implementing mine action activities in the target country or region with an average annual budget of at least EUR 500.000." **In our case, we currently have projects in Colombia as well as Syria but do not qualify in terms of the previous annual budget required. Can this requirement in any way be waived considering that there are few operators in both those countries who will be legible to apply considering this requirement?**	All criteria will be applied as stipulated in the policy rules and application form.

5. D.2 calls for 3 years of experience in the implementation of HMA activities and an average annual budget of 500.000 EUR in the target country/region is compulsory. **Although, what does refer to region**? **Would the average annual budget be necessarily related to HMA activities?**	'Region' refers to generally accepted definitions of regions (multinational groupings), for example the Middle East, West-Africa or Central Asia. Yes, the average annual budget in this criterion refers to that related to humanitarian mine action activities.
6. **For the track record, can we use one country – which is not part of the proposal – to show our range of expertise regarding mine action?**	The track record must relate to countries referred to in the proposal.
7. At page 12, bullet point D.2 it says that " In the last five years (2011 – 2015), the applicant or the lead party must have had at least three years' experience with implementing programmes in the target country or region with an average annual budget of €500,000. **Must the annual budget of €500,000 in the last three years be linked to humanitarian mine action unit or is it the organization's overall budget portfolio in the target country or region that counts? (E.g. mine action department in a larger NGO)**	The average annual budget must be specifically related to humanitarian mine action activities.
8. At page 7, the document highlights that 20% can be spent in countries of own choosing where landmines are a major threat. **Does the average annual turnover in the last five years apply for these countries and would ERW also qualify as a legitimate major threat?**	The average annual turnover in the last five years applies for mine action activities in the region. Yes, ERW also qualify as a legitimate major threat.
9. Proposed track record projects should be no older than 2013, is that correct?	That is correct.
10. In the case of Colombia it has still not been determined in which exact areas operations will take place**.** **What degree of precision is required at this stage when describing where operations will take place during the project? Can general locations (e.g. a list of potential provinces, or other administrative divisions) be included with the understanding that more exact information is provided at a later stage?**	In order to make a qualitative assessment of the proposal exact areas should be mentioned as also the activities that will be executed in the region.

Budget - Template

Question	Answer
11. **Is there a particular budget template we would need to use or can we use internal developed tools?**	A template for the submission of budgets is not available. A budget presented in excel is desirable. However, at minimum, a distinction between geographical areas, outcomes and years should be made.
12. **Is there a template for the submission of budgets?**	
13. **Is there a specific budget template and what is meant by detailed budget? What is the level of detail required for the budget submission?**	
14. Local partner implementation: **Is there a limit to the amounts that can be transferred to local partners? How should local partner budgets be presented - as a lump sum? Or with an itemized budget per partner?**	There is no limit to the amounts that can be transferred to local partners. However, when this concerns considerable amounts an itemized budget per partner is required.

Budget – Audit Streamlining

Question	Answer
15. Historically the Netherlands have requested that budgets are streamlined with calendar years. **Could you please clarify whether the budgets need to be constructed by 12 months for a 48-month period (from 1 Sept to 31 Aug) or do these need to be synchronized with calendar years?**	The budget and future reporting is to be synchronized with the calendar year. Please note that reporting should be done according to IATI standards.
16. The proposal must include a detailed multi-year budget and liquidity forecast for the first 12 months of the project proposal. **Does this mean that the budget has to be divided into 4 x 12 months periods, and not calendar years?**	
17. **Is a yearly audit required? Calendar year? Or 1 Sept – 31 Aug (12 months periods)?**	

Budget – Overhead Costs

Question	Answer
18. **Which percentage of overheads may be allocated in relation to the management of this multi-year and multi-country contract?**	A maximum of 9% overhead/administrative costs may be added.
19. **Can a fixed administration percentage be added to the project budget to cover HQ support**?	We prefer budgets based on 'integral costing through tariffs' (linked to the outputs/outcomes) with (thus) zero overhead.
20. **Do all budgeted costs have to be linked to outcomes/outputs or may a separate budget to cover support costs (not linked to outcomes/outputs) be attached?**	

Budget – Other

Question	Answer
21. **If audits are required, may audit costs be included in the budget?**	Yes, audit fees should be included in the budget.
22. Form A D11 and D12 Clarifications refer to multi-year estimates. **Could you please clarify what you mean by multi-year estimates and how these differ from the proposal and the budgets?**	By multi-year estimates the same is meant as the (multi-annual) budgets of the proposal.
23**. How should salary costs be presented in the budget? As a total amount including salary related costs such as housing, flights, insurances, visa costs etc.? Or should all salary related costs be itemized?**	Total amount per outcome / region / year
24. **How should staff partly working on the budget, party on other projects be budgeted for? By a monthly percentage? Or by a specific number of months**	Preferably a tariff system based on integral costing should be applied (see questions 18-20) - if not, by budgeting for a specific number of months is acceptable.
25. **Do budgets need to be submitted separately for each country plan, in one single budget for all countries, or as individual country budgets with an overarching budget summarizing all countries?**	Please submit individual country budgets with an overarching budget summarizing all countries

Emergency Response

26. Page 7 of the tender guidelines state that for the emergency response funding, "(…)funds can be released in two ways: b) in response to suggestions to selected partners, and supplementing other donors' efforts." **Will the selected partners mentioned be the successful organizations selected to run projects under this tender, or will there be a separate process to select partners to implement emergency response projects?**	The successful organizations selected to run projects under this tender, will be the organizations to implement the emergency response projects. At this stage we cannot offer exact clarity yet on how the allocation of emergency response funding will be organized. This however will be communicated as soon as possible.
27. **Could you explain more at this stage on how the emergency response grants will be administratively included in the grant?**	
28**. Is there any more information that can be given at this stage on the process of the 'flash calls'?**	
29. **Can only grant accredited partners reply to flash calls?**	

Conferences

30. Under D13 it states that: "D.13 The application must not relate to: the organisation of conferences". **What counts as conferences here? Does a workshop, covering for instance victim assistance, count as a conference or a workshop?**	Only meetings which are necessary to enhance knowledge on clearance, victim assistance, mine risk education or stockpile destruction are eligible for funding.
31. The grant cannot fund the organization of conferences. **Does this also include technical consultations/round tables and/or side-events?**	

Activities – Programme

32. Under D.11 it states that D.11 The activities must focus on at least three of the following four categories of activities: • Clearance (surveying, mapping, marking and clearing) mines, ERW, UXO, AXO and cluster munitions • Destruction of stockpiled mines, ERW, UXO, AXO and cluster munitions (including dismantling production and storage facilities); • Assistance to victims and their families, including rehabilitation and reintegration; • Activities aimed at raising awareness and educating local populations about the risks of mines, ERW, UXO, AXO and cluster munitions. Clarification: This should be evident from the proposal and the accompanying budget and multi-year estimate. **Does this mean for each project country/region or for the proposal as a whole?**	This criterion concerns the proposal as a whole.
33. D.11: In relation to the 3 or 4 categories of activities: **Do they need to be implemented from the start of the project and in each target country?**	The proposal as a whole should cover the required categories of activities.
34**.** At page 16, Policy Criteria, P.1, issue b) it reads that activities should "promote human security and stability for people, after the end of an armed conflict". **What is exactly meant by this? For example in a scenario as the Syrian civil war the conflict is ongoing and currently difficult to foresee the end of it. What would be the criteria for approving a Dutch funding project in Syria? (as an example).**	The programme focuses at activities in areas where armed conflict has ceased and activities to promote human security and stability can be set up. This does not mean the conflict in the whole country needs to have ceased for activities to start in a specific area.
35. On page 8 of the tender guidelines the five categories of mine action activities given include "2. Destruction of stockpiled mines, ERW, UXO, AXO and cluster munitions (including dismantling production and storage facilities);" **Please could you clarify how dismantling production facilities is defined? Does this activity category include all PSSM activities?**	For destruction of stockpiles please refer to the International Mine Action Standards; specifically IMAS 4.10, 09.30, 10.50, 11.10 and 11.20.
36. D.12: **Is it possible to have a clarification about the 2 suggested demining techniques? Toolbox generally refers to three methods: manual demining, mechanical demining or animal detection, but then option 1 is also Manual detection. Must manual detection be necessarily combined with mechanical means?**	Demining techniques required should be used concerning the specific conditions of the geographical area where demining takes place. D.12 requires using at least one of the mentioned demining techniques, so manual detection does not necessarily have to be combined with another technique/mechanical means.

37. At page 8 under the subheading 2.1 Who are the grants for? it highlights destruction of stockpiled mines, ERW, UXO, AXO and cluster munitions (including dismantling production and storage facilities) as one of the four main activities to deliver on. **Should the destruction of stockpiled mines, ERW, UXO, AXO and cluster munitions (including dismantling production and storage facilities) be seen as comparable with the IMAS definition of stockpile destruction (IMAS 04:10) "the physical destructive procedure towards a continual reduction of the stockpile of explosive ordnance", and that stockpile refers to "a large accumulated stock of Explosive Ordnance"?**	Yes.

COCA

38. **As a COCA has been assessed as valid in 2015 (i.e. the proposal was assessed), via for example the FLOW process, is it necessary to submit a new COCA or COCA light form?**	No, submitting a new COCA form will not be necessary in this case. Please refer to this particular 2015 COCA and assessment in your application. Please do mention any possible relevant changes that have occurred since.
39. **Would an obtained valid FPA (2014 at latest) agreement mean that no organizational check should be completed? It would suffice to attach a copy of the FPA?**	Yes, in this case it is sufficient to attach a copy of the FPA.
40. **Can you confirm that if an organization ISO9001 certified, that is does not have to complete the Checklist Organizational Capacity Assessment (COCA) (Form D/Form E)?**	Yes, in this case it is sufficient to attach a copy of the (recent) ISO certification.

Application Format

41. **Do you expect Form C- 'Programme proposal application form' to be structured as per the headings listed within the 'checklist', or can the proposal be structured in a different way so long as those components listed within the checklist are included throughout?**	The programme proposal application form can be structured in a different way as long as the components are included in the application and referred to with page number on the application form.
42. **Is there any guidance on how Form C- 'Programme proposal application form' should differ from the 15 page country plans? Is there any structure recommended for the individual country plans, or any specific content you would like to see included?**	There is no prescribed structure. Please do make sure that all criteria relevant for the country plan mentioned in par. 4.3 of the policy rules are covered.
43. At page 10, 3.1 Instructions for drafting applications, bullet point (four), it reads that "applicants must submit a separate plan for each country" **What is expected included in such a country plan? Beside the**	Elements that should be included in the country plans are a specific context analysis regarding socio-economic development and landmine, cluster munition and other ERW contamination. In the county plan should include activities targeted at the specific country including outputs and outcomes.

checklist from the Application Format Programme proposal (Template C), may the applicant submit supplementary documents, such as LFA, activity plans for example?	
44. **Is there any guidance concerning how the country plans will be scored/assessed compared to Form C- 'Programme proposal application form'**	The country plans will be assessed as part of the overall proposal.
45. With regards to the LFA: **Is there a particular LFA template we would need to use or can we use internal developed tools?**	It is possible to use internally developed tools.
46. **Can we confirm that the 70 page maximum for the programme proposal excludes the Threshold Check and Track Record forms (Forms A and B)?**	Yes, the 70 page maximum for the programme proposal excludes the Threshold Check and Track Record forms (Froms A and B).

Threshold Check (specific)

47. We are seeking clarity on the threshold check relating to the remuneration of managers and board members. We have received conflicting information in the past in this regard. **We are seeking clarity as to whether the term "annual salary" in section D5 of the threshold check form refers only to the amount actually received by the employee.** As such amounts paid by an employer to the government on behalf of an employee for tax and social security contributions should not be included in the calculation of "annual salary" or included in "other payables" in section D5. **Please could you confirm if this understanding is correct?**	The annual salary refers to the GROSS amount to be received as agreed in the employee's contract PRIOR to any deductions such as taxes and social security contributions. Pension contributions paid by the employer are considered as remuneration, under the category "pension contributions".
48. We are seeking clarity on the threshold check relating to remuneration of board members. Again we have received conflicting information in the past in this regard. Please can you confirm that the threshold check refers only to remuneration of board members for their activities within the legal entity applying for Dutch Government funding? It is often the case that board members/Trustees of a charity do not receive any remuneration from the charity but may have senior paid positions within other organizations in the private or public sector. **Please can you confirm that it is only the remuneration paid by the NGO to a board member for their work in the NGO which is of relevance to this threshold check? Please can you confirm that the**	The only relevant remuneration of board members for this check is the remuneration paid by the NGO to a board member for their work in the NGO. The monies received by a board member in their professional life outside of the NGO are not relevant.

monies received by a board member in their professional life outside of an NGO are not relevant?	
49. Applicants eligible for the Mine Action and Cluster Munitions 2016–2020 grants are defined as "independent, not-for-profit, civil society organizations (CSOs) with legal personality". **Since the term CSOs is not defined more specifically, could you please clarify if it also includes foundations that have been set up by the Government, but are non-profit and operating in humanitarian and public interest?**	The term CSO has been translated from the Dutch 'maatschappelijke organisatie' which comprises a somewhat broad definition. It includes all organizations with a public (general interest-related) goal. A CSO's basic elements are: a not for profit private legal entity, serving general interest, neither established by a public authority nor connected to a public authority either de facto or under its constitution.
50. D.13: The grant cannot fund commercial services or activities. **Does this also include assisting victims of landmines or cluster munitions to set up their own income generating activity?**	No, contributing to the livelihood opportunities of victims of landmines or cluster munitions is not defined as a commercial service or activity but as victim assistance.

Monitoring and Evaluation

51. At page 16, 4.4 Other, monitoring and evaluation - first paragraph mention that selected organisations will consult with the ministry on "indicators on programme level". **Does this mean suggested indicators already stated in the proposed proposal may be amended after a potential selection?**	Yes, because of the obligation to report according to IATI standards the MFA aims to align the indicators used by organizations.
52. At page 16, 4.4 Other, monitoring and evaluation – third paragraph, it reads "all applicants must conduct a final programme evaluation". **Can this evaluation be conducted by an internal evaluator or does it have to be an external?**	The evaluation needs to be conducted by external evaluators
53. Section 4.4 of the tender guidelines (p16) states that "All applicants/consortia must conduct a final programme evaluation of the programmes' effects". **a) Are applicants expected to budget separately for a final evaluation?** **b) Can the evaluation be conducted internally by an organisation/consortium or does it need to be conducted by external evaluators?** **c) Does the Ministry envisage conducting its own evaluation of the programme?**	a) Yes, applicants are expected to budget separately for a final evaluation. b) The evaluation needs to be conducted by external evaluators c) This is intended.

Other Questions

54. Page 8 of the tender guidelines refers to applications submitted either independently or as part of a consortium. **Can a lead organization submit an application as an independent organization with sub-contracted local partner organizations?**	Yes, a lead organization can submit an application as an independent organization with sub-contracted local partner organizations.
55. The tender guidelines state in section 2.3 that "The applications that best meet the assessment criteria and are awarded most points will be given priority in the award of grants". **Is there an evaluation criteria stating how points will be allocated that could be shared with bidders?**	We cannot share this document at this moment.
56. **Why has Advocacy been left out in regards to the implementation of the Ottawa and Oslo convention?** As mentioned in the Background section, Mine action is about more than demining also asking attention for the impact on people and society. In most countries, assistance is still needed to assist citizens in advocating for their rights in relation to both conventions. Advocacy plays –as the fifth pillar of MA- a crucial role for engagement of local government, as requested by the call. Is also in line with recommendation 2,3 and 8 of the October 2015 evaluation, in order to raise the profile of mine action, more advocacy is needed at the local (and international) level.	The Netherlands sees advocacy as an important element of mine action but supports advocacy through other ways than financial funding through the Mine Acton and Cluster Munition Programme 2016-2020.
57. Would the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs appreciate an operational complementarity in the field for different Mine Action actors? (And could this also result in joint analyses?)	Yes.
58. In regards to timing: **Do all countries in the current grant proposals need to run for a minimal period of 36 months or is it only the overall grant?**	The 36 months refers to the overall grant.
59. **Can investments in relation to innovation be allocated on the 80% priority country allocation?**	Yes.
60**. What rules or guidelines exist for funding of national community-based organisations or local NGOs?**	The internal guidelines of the applicant are prevalent
61. We are considering building the (clearance) capacity of a national agency, in partnership with a national authority. **What rules, considerations or guidelines exist for Dutch support to national actors via the NGOs in this tender?**	There are no upfront limitations to this

62. 57. In section 4.3 'Policy Criteria' it is stated that the programme check will assess the quality of the programme proposal based on a number of criteria including "The extent to which the programme proposal contributes to the Minister's objectives in the area of mine action and cluster munitions." **Could you confirm what these objectives are?**	The degree to which mine action activities contribute to peace and security. Specifically how mine action activities and clearance of cluster munitions contribute to human security and stability for people and create preconditions for social economic reconstruction after an armed conflict has ceased.
63. At page 16, B. Technical Criteria, issue P.8 – outcomes, outputs and resources are asked to SMART. **What is meant by SMART resources?**	SMART as an abbreviation stands for: Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-bound.