



Foreign, Commonwealth
& Development Office



Wilton Park



Report

Utilising innovative financing models to further the goal of a landmine free world

Monday 7 – Wednesday 9 March 2022 | WP2025

In association with:



Counter Proliferation
& Arms Control Centre



UK Mission
Geneva



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In association with the UK Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office including the Global Mine Action Programme team, the Counter-Proliferation and Arms Control Centre (CPACC) and the UK Mission Geneva.

There remains a significant funding gap to address the magnitude of mine and Explosive Remnants of War (ERW) contamination globally, thwarting efforts by the mine action sector to make progress towards a mine free world in 2025.

The conference brought together representatives from the mine action community and innovative finance and development experts to discuss funding challenges faced by the mine action sector, and explore the potential of innovative financing mechanisms to address these challenges. Specifically, through enhancing the cost-effectiveness of funding, increasing its size by drawing in more mainstream development funding, bringing in private sector funding, and improving coordination and strengthening partnerships.

Participants emphasised that significant challenges remain in implementing innovative finance, and further considerations of its appropriateness in certain contexts need to be explored. At the same time, the meeting acknowledged that it has strong potential in the right circumstances to bring in additional funding for mine action and enhance efficiency through innovation and flexibility, paving the way for progress towards a mine free world in 2025.

Background / Rationale for conference

- Since the signing of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC) in 1997, 33 previously contaminated countries have completed mine clearance. However, there are 56 States and 3 territories still contaminated with mines and ERW. Of these, 34 are party to the APMBC under which they have an obligation to clear their contamination. Other State Parties have an obligation to assist. All State Parties have committed to the achievement of a mine free world by 2025, to the fullest extent possible.
- However, current funding levels are insufficient to achieve this goal. Global funding from international donors has remained relatively constant for the past five years (approx. \$500-600 million a year), 60% of which goes to 7 countries¹, meaning that many countries with legacy contamination receive less or no funding and are not able to 'cross the line' of completion. The sector has also traditionally been supported by relatively few donors, most of whom, to a greater or lesser extent, are facing cuts to their development budgets. Given these budgetary constraints, and growing demand for humanitarian

"Ambition for the mine action sector at large to explore new funding should be much higher".

¹ Iraq, Afghanistan, Croatia, Laos, Cambodia, Syria, Colombia

assistance (e.g. current events in Ukraine) the mine action sector cannot assume that current funding levels from traditional sources will be maintained.

- In addition to the funding shortfall, other challenges in mine action include: security issues; border disputes; accessibility; new laying of anti-personnel mines; lack of coordination; and competing priorities (both at the national and international level).
- State Parties have a commitment to explore new financing for mine action (e.g., Action 42 of Oslo Action Plan; Action 48 of Lausanne Action Plan), and over the past few years, the UK Government has been looking at this. One of the UK's priorities whilst it holds the Presidency for the Convention on Cluster Munitions, is to promote work on innovative financing for the sector.
- This conference, therefore, built on previous momentum for innovative finance for mine action, bringing together the mine action and broader development finance community to explore new partnerships and assess different options of innovative financing mechanisms that could be developed into a pilot project(s).

Innovative financing for mine action

1. There are broadly three phases to the life cycle of mine action in a contaminated country: an initial, humanitarian phase, to support peacebuilding and stabilisation efforts in the immediate aftermath of conflict; a longer development phase where often international assistance is required to clear legacy mine fields and return land to productive use; and a final peacetime phase of increasing national ownership where residual mine clearance is tackled. How innovative finance for mine action is applied will be dependent upon the phase a country is in (e.g., a focus on post clearance development might be most appropriate in an area with legacy contamination and no ongoing conflict).
2. Depending upon the phase, mine clearance can be seen as a means to broader stabilisation or sustainable development objectives. Some innovative finance approaches look at the potential to draw in additional financing for mine action by linking it to such broader objectives, for example by linking mine action with subsequent development on cleared land, thus appealing to organisations/institutions who typically focus on broader development outcomes. In this way, innovative finance can promote a synergy of efforts between different stakeholders, reducing siloes and strengthening coordination and partnerships both within the mine action sector and with new partners.
3. Establishing stronger linkages between mine action and development outcomes could also strengthen national ownership in affected countries by explicitly linking mine action to national development planning and priorities.
4. Because payments under innovative finance mechanisms require rigorous outcomes measurement, they can also improve data collection and evaluation of the longer-term benefits of mine action.
5. The conference focused on three innovative financing models: Impact Bonds; outcome-based public-private partnerships (PPPs); and front-loading. The first two are scalable, whilst the third – front-loading – is more appropriate for large-scale programmes (mine action across one or more countries).
6. Given the highly contextualised nature of contamination and mine action, there will be no 'one size fits all' innovative financing mechanism, but rather any structure would have to be adapted to the local problem and environment, and in some cases, innovative financing may not be an appropriate solution.
7. Key considerations for determining whether and which type of innovative financing might be beneficial for mine action include: ensuring that innovative financing draws

“Innovative finance is not impactful in and of itself – it needs to effectively address the problem identified (e.g., bringing in new funding, enhancing agricultural yields on cleared land).”

in additional financing to the mine action sector; balancing the higher transaction cost of the innovative finance options against the potential for better outcomes; assessing donors' legal and budgetary constraints (e.g. budget accounting and disbursement schedules); conducting conflict sensitivity analyses (not necessarily as a reason to say no to a project, but as a lens to design programmes that work constructively in complex environments); understanding the risk of unintended consequences (e.g. increased inequality, land misappropriation, environmental damage or illegal logging); considering the social value as well as the economic value of land; ensuring clarity and agreement amongst stakeholders around the problem that needs addressing; and defining appropriate, verifiable and attributable performance measurement.

Outcomes finance – Impact Bonds

8. Impact Bonds are a form of outcomes finance, which aims to make development programs more efficient and effective by making payment conditional on results achieved, rather than inputs or activities. This focus on results makes it a powerful tool to incentivise flexible, adaptive implementation, and commonly-agreed outcomes can help to align different stakeholders.
9. Service providers are not paid in full unless and until agreed outcomes are fully achieved. Under this model, therefore, providers often need an additional source of funding to cover costs incurred during the project. Instead of relying on service providers to source risk capital themselves, Impact Bonds employ external capital to fund service provision, typically from investors such as Development Finance Institutions (DFIs), or large social/philanthropic investors. Repayment of investors by an outcome funder – usually donors or governments – is then dependent on achievement of independently verified outcomes. Risk is, therefore, transferred from the donor – and the service provider – to the Impact Bond investors. The Impact Bond investors, rather than the donor, also take on (or further outsource) responsibility for performance management.
10. Impact Bonds have the potential to drive better outcomes and reach a higher number of beneficiaries through incentivising adaptive management and collaboration. The FCDO Development Impact Bond (DIB) Pilot Programme, evaluated by Ecorys, found that Impact Bonds lead to a greater focus on outcomes and alignment on outcome measurement; better feedback loops (more external scrutiny, challenge and support to address underperformance); drawing in of external expertise and perspectives to facilitate problem-solving (due to range of stakeholders involved); and a high stakes environment, which increased accountability and transparency, but might have adverse consequences on morale in challenging periods.
11. Impact Bonds are a good instrument for catalysing change, and have been previously funded by many mine action donors in other areas for this purpose.
12. From a investors' perspective, a DIB is attractive as it ties financial performance to outcomes, which leads to true impact, compared to examples where there is "impact washing".
13. The FCDO Pilot Programme also found that five conditions support the launch of an impact bond: demand from government or donors to pay for outcomes; a regulatory environment that allows outcome funders to pay for outcomes and for investors to make returns; responsiveness of the Impact Bond to the regional economic and political context; availability of data to feed into targets and support a business case for investors; and, market capacity (incl. intermediaries for service design and delivery, and service providers).
14. However, due to the number of stakeholders involved and the focus on incentivising strong performance management, Impact Bonds typically have higher transaction costs (approx. 10% higher than comparable non-Impact Bond funded projects). This can though be proportionally reduced with scale.

"Impact Bonds can create a different mindset within donors and implementers, driving organisations to be more innovative in the way mine action is delivered".

15. An Impact Bond for mine action would likely finance projects at the mine action-development nexus. Investors could finance service providers to both clear contaminated land and subsequently invest in productive, job-creating use of the cleared land, although these could be separate organisations. Outcome funders would then repay investors if these outcomes (e.g., agricultural income or job creation) are achieved. There is also potential to focus on outcomes that deliver climate positive and/or biodiversity benefit.
16. Such a structure would incentivise innovation through: increased flexibility, more efficient and effective delivery due to adaptive feedback loops, payments tied to productive use of contaminated land, and a more client-centred approach focused on potential beneficiaries. Importantly, linking mine action to development outcomes has potential to bring in new multilateral and foundation funding for mine action, and to tap into new funding streams from bilateral donors.
17. Key considerations for an Impact Bond in mine action include: ensuring a small number of metrics upon which payment is dependent to minimise data collection burden on service providers; considering how to measure and prove attribution; and, making sure the high stakes environment that can be created by Impact Bonds does not inflict undue pressure on Standard Operating Procedures or affect safety in the field.

Case study 1: skills training Impact Bond, Palestine

18. Unemployment rates in Palestine are very high, including for educated youth and women. This was assessed to be largely due to a mismatch between the skills required by employers and those available amongst young graduates. Traditional skills training development projects were not sufficiently attuned to employer needs; they were incentivised to produce outputs (trained graduates) rather than outcomes (skilled employees). In response to this, the Palestinian Ministry of Finance and Planning, the World Bank Group, Social Finance, EBRD, Bridges Fund and DAI developed an employment-focused DIB to deliver skills training that matched the real world need of employers. Full outcomes-based payment was dependent upon the skills training leading directly to long-term jobs. The World Bank Group (donor) committed up to \$5.75M in outcomes funding (dependent upon delivery of sustainable jobs) and contracted with investors (EBRD, Bridges Fund) to deliver the outcome. The investors provided \$1.8m in working capital upfront through an Impact Bond and took responsibility for contracting with training providers to deliver the project. Investors took the performance risk, but achieved a profit if outcomes were met. In this project, the investors are recycling profit to finance further training provision.
19. Training providers are selected competitively, based on their ability to get trainees into sustained jobs, rather than number of people trained, and they work in consortia with prospective employers from the inception of the programmes so they can tailor training to the employer's specific demand. This close collaboration between employers and service providers encouraged by the nature of the funding model produces better-designed employment programmes, and also generates continuous insights to improve future training offerings for new cohorts. Jobs are independently verified by a major global accounting firm, ensuring an objective, mutually acceptable, measure of employment. The training providers (NGOs in this case) are shielded from financial risk by the Impact Bond investors.
20. The DIB is currently in its second year of implementation, and, so far, over 200 young Palestinians are in employment, 130 of whom have been in sustained employment for more than three months, and over 70 for more than six months, an indicator of long-term employment in Palestine, and therefore a key measure of success for the programme.

21. The DIB has demonstrated the potential of outcomes finance to maximise results, even against the backdrop of Covid-19 and the unrest in the West Bank in 2021, by changing the incentives of how training should be provided to focus on employment. The World Bank also commissioned a rigorous independent analysis and found that the project would be more efficient than comparable traditional approaches (because the project is delivering more jobs than traditional projects, the cost is less per job created).
22. Another key success factor of the programme is data-driven decision-making, which enables adaptive performance management and rapid identification of problems.
23. The governance structure of the programme is a Board of investors with an external Board chair, which allows decision-making to be controlled by investors.

Case study 2: Humanitarian Impact Bond (HIB), Mali, Nigeria and Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)

24. In 2017, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and its partners (outcome funders and investors) launched the first Impact Bond in a humanitarian context, with the aim of unlocking new financing for physical rehabilitation centres to improve effectiveness and efficiency of service delivery, and ultimately better support people with disabilities. The ICRC was motivated to experiment with an innovative finance model because it was having difficulty raising sufficient funds for the rehabilitation centres from traditional fundraising activities.
25. The Impact Bond financed three new physical rehabilitation centres in Mali, Nigeria and DRC, and outcome payments were dependent on the staff efficiency ratio (defined as the number of patients who regained mobility due to a mobility device divided by number of local mobility device professionals). After the external verification in July 2022, investors will receive a return based on maximum staff efficiency ratio. Total outcome funding is CHF 26.90 million from Switzerland, Belgium, Italy, UK, and La Caixa Banking Foundation, and total investment was CHF 18.6 million from Foundation Lombard Odier, Munich Re and others.
26. The HIB allowed ICRC to engage with new partners, unlock new sources of funding and transfer financial risk to investors. This multi-year funding also allowed for a more efficient roll out of the project, giving ICRC flexibility to deploy money when and where needed, rather than depending on annual appeals funding, which is typically earmarked and comes from a few donors.
27. Through the HIB, ICRC also designed and tested a new data management system, which improved programme efficiency. These efficiency measures are now being deployed across all ICRC physical rehabilitation centres to improve service delivery. While the data management system could have been developed without a HIB structure, the HIB was a driver in prioritising and proving better data collection and analysis, and ring-fenced a budget for this workstream.
28. Key lessons learned include: the importance of focusing on the challenge to be addressed, rather than selecting an innovative financing mechanism and retrofitting it; having an adaptive management structure and rapid feedback loops to course correct when needed; the need to secure institutional buy-in; and, conducting an assessment of organisational readiness (e.g., through BCG's organisational readiness good practice playbook).

Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs)

29. The second type of innovative financing mechanism explored during the event was a public-private partnership (PPP) using outcome-based subsidies to incentivise both mine clearance and subsequent private sector, for-profit, investment on cleared land.

"The value of the Humanitarian Impact Bond (HIB) was more than outcomes funding raised."

“Mobilising just 1% of private sector finance could fill the SDG gap”.

30. In this model, the government wants to bring the private sector in to support its development goals (e.g., to create jobs) but subsidies may be needed to attract companies. Applied to mine action, the government transfers ownership of contaminated land to a private investor if that investor finances the mine clearance, and if job-creating investment on the land is forthcoming after the contamination is cleared. The degree of subsidy depends on cost of clearance, intrinsic value of the land post clearance, and the value created on cleared land (e.g., jobs). The extent to which a private investor needs to cover the full cost of clearance might depend on ability to pay and could be supplemented with ODA.
31. In some cases, the investor will need support in creating jobs (e.g., agricultural extension, business and market development services, skills training), which may be funded by a donor.
32. A PPP would be low cost and high return for a government, as well as transferring risk from the government to the investor since the subsidy depends on clearance and productive use of land post-clearance. It could also secure new funding, such as from foundations, donors, philanthropic sources and corporate social responsibility (CSR) attracted by the innovative, outcomes focus.
33. To make the deal more attractive to companies, the government could also offer to transfer a different plot of land on completion of mine clearance.
34. Key considerations for a PPP to fund mine action include: land rights/tenure; conflict sensitivity (especially with involvement of private actors and increasing value of land after clearance, which might be a driver of new tensions and competing interests); remaining beneficiary-centric through consultation and participation (e.g., through recruiting local, gender-balanced community liaison teams and making sure marginalised voices are genuinely heard and needs are reflected); and, considering and putting in place mechanisms to mitigate power dynamics and exacerbating marginalisation.

Front-loading finance

35. The third innovative funding model considered during the event was front-loading. A funding mechanism would front-load finance by issuing bonds to raise funds for immediate deployment with repayment guaranteed by multi-year donor pledges. This model would have a particular benefit in supporting the accelerated completion of mine clearance in one or more regions/countries and enabling better planning by providing certainty of multi-year funding. It might also help bring in new funding for mine action as monetising future savings could bring in private sector partners.
36. However, persuading donors to make long-term pledges will likely require some policy and advocacy, and strengthening the narrative around macroeconomic benefits of mine action to secure political support. To support this, the mine action sector would need to focus on building a database that demonstrates longer term beneficial mine action outcomes. Some donors may also not be able to commit funds beyond current funding cycles, meaning a front-loading mechanism might exclude ‘traditional’ mine action donors.
37. Key considerations include: aligning stakeholders on the definition of completion; making sure the model is cost-effective and takes advantage of economies of scale; considering the sector’s capacity to respond to potentially quick and large injection of funding; and engaging with donors to understand appetite and ability to make long-term pledges and frontload funding in line with national treasury rules.

Case study 3: International Finance Facility for Immunisation (IFFIm)

38. There is one very successful and high-profile example of front loading – the International Finance Facility for Immunisation (IFFIm). IFFIm was set up in response to the urgent need to vaccinate children in low-income countries to reduce infant

mortality as traditional donor funding was not providing sufficient funding in the near term to match ambition. So, 15 years ago the UK took the lead to promote a new approach whereby future donor pledges were utilised to back current borrowing (“vaccine bonds”) to ramp up vaccinations today. One further benefit of this approach is that buying vaccines at increased scale drove the costs down significantly. Since 2006, IFFIm has provided \$3.7 billion to support Gavi’s immunisation programmes, helping immunise more than 888 million children, thus reducing child mortality by 50%.

39. More recently, IFFIm’s purpose has evolved to provide flexible financing to not only Gavi but also to the Coalition of Epidemic Preparedness Innovations (CEPI) to develop Covid-19 vaccines more quickly. It disbursed \$780 million for COVAX, to support procurement and distribution of Covid-19 vaccines to low and middle-income countries. In this circumstance, IFFIm provided Gavi with flexibility in managing funding it would not have had with traditional donor funding.
40. Implementation of IFFIm has been handled by Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance, in collaboration with UNICEF, WHO, Global Fund, and treasury management is outsourced to the World Bank Group.
41. While IFFIm did not establish a new institution for the purposes of frontloading funding, legal and transaction costs were significant, which meant that the facility had to operate at considerable scale to be efficient, get low-cost liquid financing and access low-cost vaccines. This suggests that, when considering a frontloading facility to fund mine action, a rigorous cost-benefit analysis would need to be conducted at varying scales to assess efficiency and economies of scale.
42. A key challenge for IFFIm was also that donors needed to make multi-year pledges, which, to varying degrees depending on the donor, was difficult due to budget accounting. However, IFFIm may now have set a precedent for donors, which may make funding similar mechanisms in the future easier.

Country case study 1: innovative financing in Lebanon

43. The Lebanese national mine action authority took a different approach to attracting additional funding into the sector. It partnered with a large Lebanese bank who created a “giving” card; a debit card for which 50% of transaction charges (no additional charges on customers) would be donated to mine action. The bank ran an advertising campaign, which proved very successful. The bank and the national mine authority jointly manage the fund which spends the proceeds on land release, a regional training school and risk education. The mine action benefits from additional funding, whilst the bank benefits from new customers and reputationally.

Country case study 2: innovative financing in Cambodia

44. Cambodia has some significant advantages for piloting innovative finance for mine action, including effective ownership of mine action by the Royal Government (RGC), with a strong coordination body supported by key ministries, strong national QA capacity, existence of technical working groups (e.g., on national land release standards and gender), and a focus on mine action as a priority pillar of the country’s economic and social development.
45. There is a significant need for further funding for mine action in Cambodia. This is despite progress towards the vision of a mine-free Cambodia in 2025 and strong national ownership of mine action, including local engagement through the minefield village mechanism. Mine action activity in Cambodia has released 2,000km² for productive use, and reduced annual casualties from 4,000 in 1998 to 44 in 2021, but there are approximately 2,000km² of contaminated areas remaining, which will cost over \$300 million to clear. In the last 4 years, however, Cambodia has only received 56% of total budget required to progress towards completion in 2025.

46. There is already a very successful Impact Bond in Cambodia for water and sanitation, implemented by iDE, where The Stone Family Foundation provided up-front investment and USAID was the outcomes funder. This was the first DIBin the sanitation sector and was designed and launched in record time. Having three partners, two of whom had an existing strong relationship, proved to be one of the key success factors for the Impact Bond, reducing transaction costs and time needed to design the programme. Furthermore, there was only one outcome metric that triggered payment (1,600 villages open defecation free by 2023), which further simplified the design and implementation of the DIB. A key advantage from using the Impact Bond approach, was that IDE had more freedom to pivot and adapt.
47. Another example of innovative finance in Cambodia is the Cambodia Revenue Finance Facility, which provided \$10 million in patient, flexible capital to 25 private water operators across Cambodia through revenue finance (linking repayments to revenues, and therefore performance, as opposed to using a fixed interest rate).
48. Both examples above were supported by strong leadership by the RGC, an advanced water and sanitation sector, relatively well-resourced government structures at the commune, district and province level, and a good enabling environment (strong banking sector, high levels of human capital, existing institutional and legal structures).
49. The outcomes-based PPP approach might be a promising model for Cambodia to explore further, where RGC transfers ownership of a plot of contaminated land to a private investor upon successful mine clearance financed by that investor. There are precedents for this approach – the RGC already provides long-term payment-free leases on some land to investors who commit to using it for social or development purposes, and the Cambodian Mine Action Authority (CMAA) is piloting a model where it would make a deal with an investor (US and Korean companies in initial pilots) to clear land at CMAA's expense in return for subsequent productive investment on the land. There may also be potential to link this approach to eco-tourism e.g., a project clearing mines around a heritage temple.
50. Alternatively, RGC and CMAA might explore a DIB for mine action. Under either mechanism, there would need to be careful consideration of the potential unintended consequences of opening up new areas of land, e.g., the use of unsustainable or polluting agriculture practices, clearing of forests and wildlife removal and overall acceleration in carbon emissions. These impacts could be considered, and mitigated, within the overall design of the financing instrument.
51. Any innovative financing mechanism should build on existing mine action structures in Cambodia, in particular taking into account the role of CMAA and ensuring this is strengthened, rather than undermined or circumvented, and working with Mine Action Planning Units (MAPU) to engage communities and mitigate potential negative effects.

Conclusion

Discussions during the conference highlighted the need to adapt any innovative financing mechanism to the problem it is seeking to solve and context in which it is applied. Given the sensitivity in many contaminated areas, particularly humanitarian and/or conflict contexts, innovative finance might be more appropriate for relatively stable areas with legacy contamination. Areas with legacy contamination also receive less ODA funding through traditional pathways.

Innovative finance only makes sense if it is more cost-effective than other interventions. Therefore, conducting cost-benefit analyses will be important to better understand the suitability of any innovative financing mechanism for mine action, and to convince donors and other partners of value for money, given the costs to structure and implement these

mechanisms. Importantly, innovative financing should also be additional financing, rather than taking away from existing mine action funding.

Maintaining a problem-centric – rather than an intervention-centred – approach and clarity of purpose when considering innovative financing is also vital, recognising that innovative finance has potential to fund and enhance efficiency and effectiveness of mine action in many settings, but that it is not a panacea.

Participants emphasised the need for a collaborative approach to push forward innovative finance for mine action, both across the sector to improve coordination and data collection, as well as between donors to consider pooling funds for a pilot project, given potentially high transaction costs and additional expertise and capacity needed to manage a project funded through innovative finance. Capacity development of national authorities should also be central to any programme funded through innovative financing.

Breakout sessions to design projects utilising innovative finance mechanisms yielded different innovative financing models. One breakout group looked at front loading, noting its potential attractiveness to the sector (e.g., to support countries close to landmine free get over the line and/or contaminated State Parties which don't normally attract significant funding) but also the high level of political commitment that would be required to make it work. Another considered the potential utility of an Impact Bond to deliver positive climate change impact. This breakout group noted the need to focus on sustainability and resilience as well as rural income when considering future uses for cleared land. It saw a potential overlap between mine action and the climate change development agenda (and funding) where contaminated agricultural land was situated in an area vulnerable to negative climate change impact.

Participants welcomed the conference as a forum to dig deeper into the pros and cons of different innovative finance options, and as a means of forging new links between the mine action sector and development financiers. Suggested next steps included:

- Further socialising of the information and discussion shared during the event;
- Increased collaboration between those who wished to take the innovative finance agenda forward;
- Further research into the feasibility of different innovative finance mechanisms for the mine action sector;
- Small group consideration of an innovative finance pilot project(s) – “learning by doing”.

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