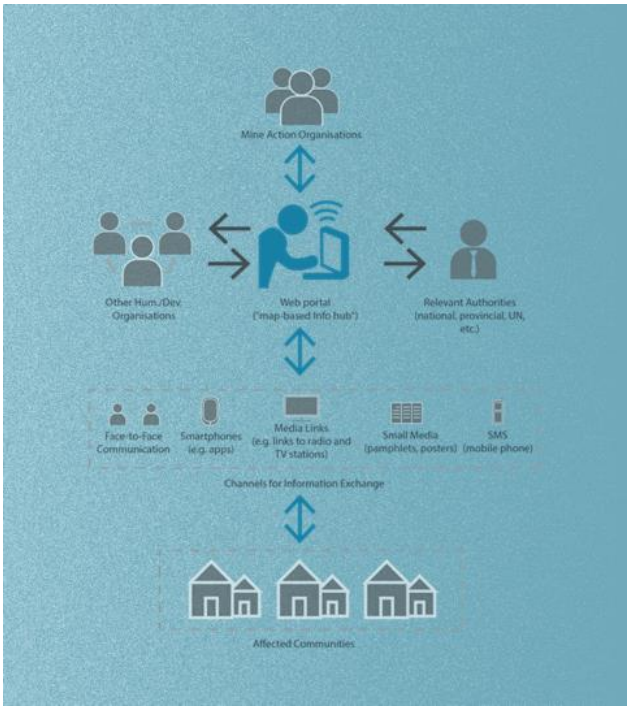
Evaluation Report:

"MApps Pilot Project, Ukraine"



Prepared for

DDG/DRC, Copenhagen, Denmark

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Acronyms

ACAPS	Assessment Capacities Project
ALNAP	Active Learning Network for Accountability and Performance in Humanitarian Action
ATO	Anti-Terrorist Operation (ATO)
CBO	Community Based Organisation
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
DDG	Danish Demining Group
DNR	Donetsk Oblast
DRC	Danish Refugee Council
EOD	Explosive Ordnance Disposal
ERW	Explosive Remnants of War
FB	FaceBook
FGD	Focus Group Discussions
GCA	Government Controlled Areas
GICHD	Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining
GIS	Geographical Information Systems
HIF	Humanitarian Innovation Fund
HMA	Humanitarian Mine Action
HRW	Human Rights Watch
IED	Improvised Explosive Devices
IDPs	Internally Displaced Persons
IM	Information Management
KAP	Knowledge, Attitudes and Practice
KEQ	Key Evaluation Questions
LNR	Luhansk Oblast
MA	Mine Action
MApps	Mine Action Applications
MRE	Mine Risk Education
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
NCE	No Cost Extension
NGCA	Non-Government Controlled Area
OECD –DAC	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development's – Development Assistance Committee
OSCE	Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe
PIN	People In Need
PR	Public Relations
SES	State Emergency Services
SES-M	State Emergency Services - Mariupol
SIMLab	Social Impact Lab
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNMAS	United Nations Mine Action Services
UNHRMM	United Nations Human Rights Monitoring Mission
UXO	Unexploded ordnance

Executive Summary

The Danish Demining Group (DDG) has been exploring the value of employing digital applications for sharing information in Mine Action (MA). The Mine Action Applications (MApps) pilot project in the Ukraine came to an end in April 2016, prompting a project review and evaluation.

The MApps project - Linking communities to Mine Action through digital platforms is a global innovative pilot project, the objective of which is to expand the experiences and insights on how the Humanitarian Mine Action (HMA) can harness the benefits of utilising digital platforms for increasing and enhancing information sharing between mines and Explosive Remnants of War (ERW)-affected populations and HMA operators. The aim of which is to increase information exchange, maximise the impact of HMA and contribute to a reduction in the number of mines and ERW victims, strengthen resilience and allow affected communities living with the hazards to better cope with ERW contamination.

The pilot project comprises of the following information system design:

- A two-way communication web portal for digital Mine Risk Education (MRE);
- A digital reporting mechanism on the web portal;
- An SMS service to support and extend the outreach of information shared on the web portal and for reporting of suspected dangerous items.
- An Android App for two-way communication

It is being implemented simultaneously in the Ukraine and in Vietnam, however this evaluation specifically focused on the Ukraine pilot project.

The evaluation was conducted through a desk review and a field visit to the Ukraine for 10days in April 2016, by an external consultant in conjunction with the MApps pilot project team. Consultations throughout the study and field visit took place with different target groups, partners and key stakeholders.

This report assesses the key lessons learnt based on the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) criteria: impact, sustainability, effectiveness, relevance and appropriateness, coverage and efficiency, which incorporate the various outcomes and outputs of the innovation.

Impact
The results of the pilot project were assessed within the wider political, social and cultural contexts that exist in the Ukraine in order to understand how the pilot project implementation has been influenced. This included the security context, and sensitivities on sharing information, whereby solutions were found to enable the innovation to be implemented; whilst other barriers that could continue to affect the MApps implementation concern the uncertainty surrounding the establishment of a national mine action centre and the legislation of a mine action bill. Key lessons learnt include: the innovation being a standalone project within the DRC/DDG programming and would have been better placed as a project under the country level management structure; in addition to relationship building with national/state authorities takes time. The DDG programme only opened up in the Ukraine in 2014, so had little to basis to go on, whilst if there already been established relationships, less time would have been spent on this, allowing more time to focus on setting up and implementing the project.

Conflict setting sensitivities and contexts can affect the realities of the platform's success or reach. For example, no conflict is the ever the same and therefore no blueprint will fit all contexts. Instead the innovation needs to have an adaptable, flexible and dynamic approach, as it is a very fluid environment and decisions made one minute can be changed the next. The ethics behind developing an innovation project during an ongoing conflict where the focus and needs of different project stakeholders is something the MApps project have battled with throughout the project cycle.

Sustainability

Local partner participation, consensus and ownership have been at the forefront of the innovation, whereby the strength of the project team and applied methodology was shown through adapting to the realities on the ground. Whilst the context of the Ukraine did not always produce the desired results, the project team nonetheless persevered and developed exit strategies in preparation for the unknown outcomes, finally to be met with the positive result of the State Emergency Services-Mariupol (SES-M) buy in, their ownership of the platform and finally a launch date in April 2016. The costs for SES to maintain the platform are seen as being minimal, due to it being hosted on a government domain and the website is free, demonstrates that the platform provides a sustainable low cost solution for the SES-M in the future.

Effectiveness

The platform was finally launched and implemented at the beginning of April 2016, over a year after the original plan for the pilot project end date. Issues that arose in the implementation period mainly came down to the reduced timeframe remaining for the pilot project. Once the SES in Mariupol, were fully on board, staff in the Information Management (IM) department were trained and equipped to be able to manage the pilot platform.

The digital platform offers the SES-M a management tool to create an internal hazard map of suspected hazardous items, a database to support analysis of time/cost benefits and a system to plan for future survey and clearance operations to assist the affected population. Evidence from the evaluation suggests that the information being received will enable the SES-M to digitise their workflow, plan the appropriate response, in addition to assessing their response capacities.

The feedback and reactions of the pilot project received by the participants in the Focus Group Discussions (FGDs); in addition to the SES conducting RE information sessions to all schools and workers of different industries, in both rural and urban areas; show that there is every possibility that there will be some degree of Knowledge Attitudes and Practice (KAP) changes in the affected population, in time as a result of the innovation.

Relevance and appropriateness

Implementing the innovation through the SES-M has enabled them to improve and modernise their emergency communications and internal workflows through the provision of equipment. The increase in an automated system was also recognised by the SES-M to improve their response time and to identify the time needed to deal with different items.

It was too early to say if the information received through the media campaign met the needs of the target population as not very many people had at that time seen or heard the adverts for the project to know it existed. Consensus gained from FGDs that whilst many used social media such as FB, the majority used Vkontakte – the Russian equivalent of FaceBook (FB) (which was not able to be used due to political sensitivities at the time of the launch), surfing the web, SMS, word-of-mouth and phone calls to get

information on the conflict. It was also identified that very few, if any, used the radio as a means of getting information any more, as no one had one or listened to it.

Coverage

The appropriate languages for communicating the digital platform to the project primary target groups were identified through the baseline and KAP assessments as Ukrainian and Russian and the system was translated and developed accordingly. Prior to the project, the SES-M had a contract with the largest mobile network provider in the country, therefore it was a fairly straightforward process to get a number for the SMS subscription component, followed by obtaining the alpha name for the SES, in order that receivers would recognise that the SMS came from the SES and as a result take it more seriously and not consider it as spam.

Efficiency

The original timeline planned for the project was 16months from its initial start date in 2013, however despite considerable deviations to the original work plan, and delaying the final project end date, the project team used the pilot project participatory methodology to continue to work through the long and time consuming bureaucratic processes and country complexities they faced with implementing the project in the Ukraine. The lack of any DDG programming in country prior to 2014, may well have played a big role in this process as these relationships take time to build.

Conclusion

It can be said that the pilot project has against all odds, been a success especially in light of how it has been affected by significant adjustments to the original plans, ranging from the changes in pilot project locations, the political context within the sector, the security situation within the country, the slow and time consuming bureaucratic processes to navigate, establishing national and local stakeholder relationships, to the sensitivities of information being shared publicly, under which the pilot project was implemented in the Ukraine.

1. Introduction

The Danish Demining Group (DDG) has been exploring the value of employing digital applications for sharing information in Mine Action (MA). The Mine Action Applications (MApps) pilot project in the Ukraine came to an end in April 2016, prompting a project review and evaluation.

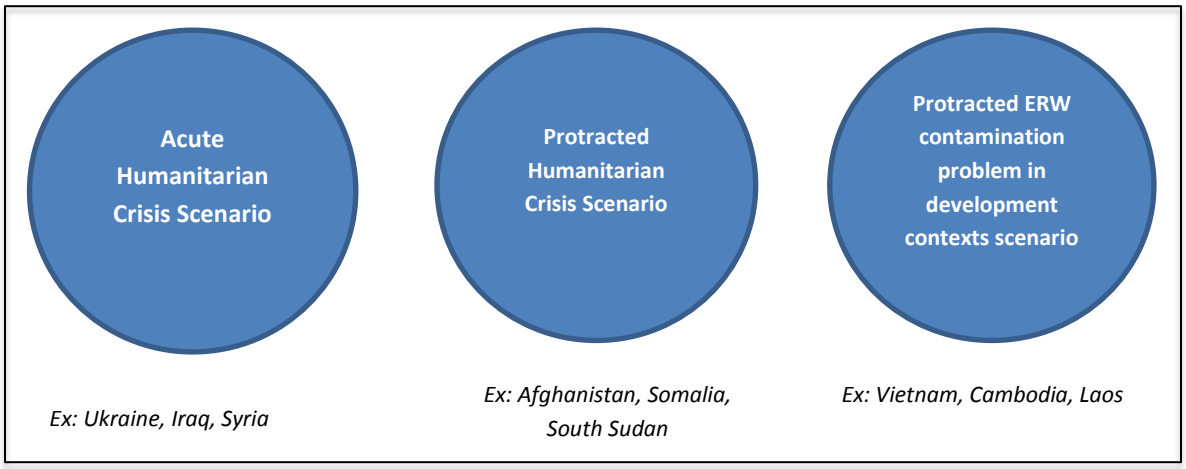
In conjunction with an external consultant, the MApps project team designed and conducted a project evaluation in order for DDG to gauge the key lessons learnt from the implementation of the pilot project to include: (i) internal learning and to inform decision making for any expansion or further implementation of the project; (ii) parallels and global reflections of the global concept note (iii) sector learning, through DDG sharing the learning from the pilot within the HMA sector; (iv) sharing with donors for the MApps project, in particular HIF, for their internal learning.

1.1 Background to the evaluation

The MApps project - Linking communities to Mine Action through digital platforms is a global innovative pilot project, the objective of which is to expand the experiences and insights on how the Humanitarian Mine Action (HMA) can harness the benefits of utilising digital platforms for increasing and enhancing information sharing between mines and ERW-affected populations and HMA operators. The aim of which is to increase information exchange, maximise the impact of HMA and contribute to a reduction in the number of mines and ERW victims, strengthen resilience and allow affected communities living with the hazards to better cope with ERW contamination.

As part of the global concept, DDG identified three different scenarios (See Figure 1. below) to implement the pilot project where ERW and landmines usually pose a hazard to civilians and where MA activities usually take place:

Figure 1: Pilot innovation contexts identified for the MApps project



The pilot project comprises of the following information system design:

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- An Android App for two-way communication

The pilot project is being implemented simultaneously in the Ukraine and in Vietnam, however this evaluation specifically focuses on the Ukraine pilot project.

In the Ukraine, this project is funded through the Active Learning Network for Accountability and Performance in Humanitarian Action (ALNAP) Humanitarian Innovation Fund (HIF), and key partners include: the Social Impact Lad (SIMLab), CartONG, Skykillers/Smartica and the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD). The primary target groups of the pilot project are: the communities at risk, to include Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs), returnees and residents; and the HMA operators, which in this case is the State Emergency Services (SES) in Mariupol.

1.2 Scope of the evaluation

The MApps pilot project is working within the thematic areas of MRE and Information Management (IM) in the Ukraine.

Information can change the fate of potential victims of these deadly hazards. Moreover, the provision of information and emergency Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) are the only tools available to humanitarian mine action responders to protect civilians until there is sufficient capacity for areas to be safely accessed for clearance. Providing better, timelier, information to conflict affected populations will be the key to saving lives and strengthening resilience of the population. Providing MA operators with information of where their assistance is needed is key for ensuring their effectiveness.

Based on the information-media baseline assessment and Knowledge Attitudes and Practice (KAP) survey, mine/ERW affected communities need to be informed about safe behaviour, how to take action, and whom to go to in this unprecedented situation. Secondly, the SES and HMA operators need citizens to report findings of suspected hazards to locate the contamination to perform emergency EOD, as well as for future survey and clearance activities, when such activities are possible.

1.3 Context of the evaluation

The Ukraine is a country affected by mines and Explosive Remnants of War (ERW) from the on-going conflict between the Government of Ukraine and separatists' movements as well as from residual contamination from the Second World War. In April 2014, the Government of Ukraine launched its so-called Anti-Terrorist Operation (ATO) to suppress pro-Russian militia movements in two eastern oblasts (regions) – Luhansk (LNR) and Donetsk (DNR) The conflict has so far resulted in 9,098 people killed and 20,732 wounded[1]. Additionally, 1.1 million people have sought refuge in neighbouring countries, while over 1.4 million people are internally displaced within Ukraine.[2]

[1] OCHA Humanitarian Bulletin, Ukraine, Issue 05:
http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/bulletin_december_2015_0.pdf
[2] HRW World Report 2016: https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2016/country-chapters/ukraine-0

The Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) has led peace negotiations between Ukrainian authorities and de facto LNR and DNR authorities, with representatives of the Russian Federation, since May 2014. A Minsk Protocol was devised in September 2014, outlining a 12-point plan for durable peace, under which a ceasefire was declared. The ceasefire collapsed in January 2015, and a second ceasefire (Minsk II) was agreed upon in February 2015. While the second ceasefire has reduced hostilities, those who remain in conflict-affected areas continue to face repeated threats to their security and rights. Reports by the OSCE and Human Rights Watch (HRW) point to evidence that several types of mines have been used by both parties to the conflict[3], including bounding fragmentation mines, directional antipersonnel mines, and anti-vehicle mines[4,5]. According to official figures presented during the Mine Ban Treaty intersessional meetings in June 2015, Ukraine asserted that approximately 8% of the territory in eastern Ukraine is contaminated with antipersonnel mines and improvised explosive devices (IED)[6]. The latter is, however, more an indicator of how little is actually known in terms of contamination hence the need for survey and accurate mapping of threats is urgent to get a better understanding of the needs on the ground. Casualty monitoring by DDG/DRC have since May 2014 till Nov 2015 reported 730 killed or wounded owing to ERW.

Mines and booby traps strategically block access to essential infrastructure as well as forested areas where people gather wood to heat their homes. Important infrastructure across the Donbas region, one of Europe's most heavily industrialized areas, is contaminated, slowing repairs and reconstruction around power stations and water-treatment facilities, and seriously affecting the local population. Similarly, cluster munition use in urban and rural areas block access to family allotments and farms.

The United Nations Human Rights Monitoring Mission (UNHRMM) in Ukraine continues to emphasise the urgent need for extensive mine clearance and mine awareness actions in order to stem rising casualties from ERW/IED accidents as internally displaced persons (IDP) begin to return home[7]. In February 2016, a UN Joint Assessment Mission (United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and United Nations Mine Action Services (UNMAS)) reaffirmed the need for more systematic coordination of mine action through improved information sharing. It also called for the rapid stepping up of humanitarian mine action activities, including mine risk education, identification of dangerous areas, demarcation, and clearance, as well as a comprehensive approach to support victims of mine-related incidents. It has been noted by the Assessment Capacities Project (ACAPS) in their 09th - 15th March 2016 Global Emergency Overview that heavy fighting continues in eastern Ukraine and that the number of civilian casualties doubled from January to February 2016[8].

[3] Human Rights Watch (HRW), "Landmines in Ukraine: Technical Briefing Note," 6 April 2015.
[4] OSCE, "ERW clearance in a conflict setting," presentation by Anton Shevchenko, 18th International Meeting of Mine Action National Programme Directors and UN Advisors, Geneva, 16 February 2015.
[5] Human Rights Watch, "Landmines in Ukraine: Technical Briefing Note," 6 April 2015.
[6] Statement of Ukraine, Mine Ban Treaty Intersessional Meetings (Cooperative Compliance Committee), Geneva, 25–26 June 2015.
[7] UN Human Rights Monitoring Mission in Ukraine
[8] http://geo.acaps.org/

1.4 Pilot project location

The pilot project is being implemented in Mariupol city; it's district and the neighbouring district in the Donetsk region (GCA) of the Donetsk region. Mariupol is a city of approximately 400-500,000 people and is situated approximately 25 km from the current contact line. Mariupol city was not severely affected by the armed conflict however it continues to host a great number of IDPs, who fled the conflict from neighbouring districts. The south-eastern part of Donetsk oblast (north-east of Mariupol) was, however, severely affected by the armed conflict and MRE is repeatedly seen as a great need. According to assessments made, it is further reported that often the people remaining in the conflict-affected areas close to the contact line have little or no means for attending face-to-face MRE sessions. This has therefore provided an opportunity for the pilot project to provide digital MRE to these communities at risk[9].

Figure 2. Map of pilot project location.[1]

1.5 Report Structure

The DAC criteria and evaluation framework (Annex 7) have guided the content of the report, and is structured as follows:

1. Introduction: this provides a background on the pilot project, the scope and country context and a brief description of the pilot project location.
2. Methodology: this provides the overview of the DAC criteria and how the evaluation was conducted, through consulting different target groups, partners and key stakeholders.
3. Findings and Analysis: this uses information gathered during the field visits to respond the DAC questions combined with the analysis in terms of what went well and what didn't go so well.
4. Conclusion: this section summarises the overall lessons learnt and provides recommendations.

[9] DDG MApps Pilot Project document v5, 2016

2. Methodology

2.1 Evaluation criteria and questions

DDG's MApps pilot project in the Ukraine is funded by the Humanitarian Innovation Fund (HIF) which base their monitoring, evaluation and learning frameworks developed by The Active Learning Network for Accountability and Performance in Humanitarian Action (ALNAP) using the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development's – Development Assistance Committee (OECD-DAC) criteria.[10] These same criteria also form the basis of the Social Impact Lab (SIMLab), involved in developing the Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E) framework for the MApps project, with a focus on the technical areas to be assessed.

The design of the evaluation matrix was based on and integrated into the MApps M&E framework to incorporate the various outcomes and outputs of the innovation. The following OECD-DAC criteria that guided the evaluation are as follows:

- **Impact** – measures if the project outcomes led to overall goals being achieved and effects of project beyond those originally planned for. Encompasses the wider effects of the project e.g. social, economic, technical, environmental on individuals, gender/age groups, communities and institutions etc.
- **Sustainability** – the degree to which local ownership and continuation of the project occurs after the pilot.
- **Effectiveness** – the degree to which the project achieves its stated objective in a timely manner.
- **Relevance and appropriateness** – assess whether an intervention is in line with the needs and priorities of the intended end-users/beneficiaries
- **Coverage** – measures the degree to which the project reaches the highest proportion of those who need it and ensures that priority of access based on needs.
- **Efficiency** – a measure of the quality and/or number of outputs compared to the inputs (time/money) required

The revised evaluation matrix (Annex 7) provided the framework for the evaluation, but it was limited in its extent due to the digital platform only having been recently launched prior to conducting the evaluation.

2.2 Data collection methods

The evaluation used a combination of both desk and field research, as follows:

Desk Review
The first part was dedicated to a desk review of various MApps project documents, the M&E framework, interim donor reports, the DDG baseline and KAP assessments in addition to other relevant secondary documentation. This provided an overview of the pilot project and the context of the Ukraine.

The desk review was followed by a start-up workshop in Copenhagen with the innovation project team members, whereby the pilot project was discussed in further detail. Using the project M&E framework, the HIF criteria and ALNAP guidelines an evaluation matrix and work plan were designed to guide the evaluation and the corresponding data collection process. Prior to the field visit, the initial evaluation matrix needed to be revised to adapt to the realities of the delays in the progress of the pilot project.

[10] http://www.elrha.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/HIF-MEL-Note.pdf

Field visit

Due to the delays in the implementation of the pilot project, the evaluation mainly focused on collecting qualitative data in order to gauge the learning and reflection at the organisational, primary target group and innovation levels. Data was collected through conducting interviews with key informants (KIIs) and Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) with the affected local population groups. (See Annex 1: Evaluation Field Visit Plan).

KIIs: Semi-structured open-ended questions based on the evaluation matrix were used to guide the discussions with key informants. These interviews were conducted with the project partner staff at the SES in Mariupol, in addition to other stakeholders and pilot project partners including CartONG, SIMLab, the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD), Skykillers/Smartica Group and DDG staff. (See Annex 2 for list of Stakeholders consulted).

FGDs: These were organised through the national project manager and evaluation officer in preparation for the field visit, by selecting active Community Based Organisations (CBOs) in the local cities in Mariupol and the surrounding districts working with the affected population target groups (local residents, IDPs and returnees) in Mariupol and other districts of Donetsk Oblast to include Volnavohka, Slovianysk and Kramatorsk. Open-ended questions were formulated to guide the conversations in the FGDs in order to assist the participatory process. A total of four FGDs were held with the participation of 53 people, of which 79% were women (42) and 20% men (11) ranging in age from under 18 to over 60 years. A total of 39% were local residents, 50% were IDPs, and 9.4% were returnees. (See Annex 3 for list of Focus Group Discussion participants and Annex 4 for the FGD question guideline).

2.3 Evaluation constraints

The field visit to the Ukraine was successful and the digital platform, despite only just being launched, received a very positive reaction to its purpose and functions from the different primary target groups. However, certain constraints limited the extent of the evaluation:

- The timing of the evaluation shortly after the platform launch date gave a very short timeframe to gauge the reception of the innovation project from all primary target groups.
- Significant revisions were made to the initial evaluation design prior to the field visit to reflect the delays in the platform launch to ensure the field visit was as successful as possible. However, even these revisions were over ambitious and as a result the findings from the evaluation is much less than anticipated.
- The categorisation of the affected population as the primary target group for this pilot project includes local residents, IDPs and refugees. However in the Ukraine, both IDPs and returnees are categorised as IDPs. When conducting the different FGDs, as only a small number participated in each one, a list of participants was collected at the time of the meeting. In order to be sensitive to people's situation and prevent any confusion at the time of the meeting, the organiser informed us the different categories of the affected population that had attended.
- The FGDs were organised according to where the radio adverts were launched (Volnavokha and Kramatorsk), and where the CBOs had been informed about the pilot project. However no one participating in these meetings had heard the advert on the radio as few, if any, listened to or had access to the radio, nor had many people heard about the MApps pilot project. Limited information was collected for the evaluation as a result and instead more information was provided to FGD participants raise awareness on the pilot project.

- The original versus actual timeframe for conducting the evaluation, meant there was a considerable gap between the preparatory stages to conducting the field visit and drafting the report, which caused a lack of continuity in gaining a good overview of the project as part of the evaluation process.

In order to minimise the influence of these constraints on the evaluation findings, multiple sources, individuals and groups were consulted so that information could be verified and triangulated accordingly. Effort was made to become familiar with the specific context of the cities to better understand the impact the conflict has had on daily life.

3. Findings and Analysis Section

The revised evaluation matrix (Annex 7) provided the framework for the evaluation. In order to structure the focus of the evaluation, different levels to include organisational, primary target group and innovation were used within each OECD-DAC criteria. These form the structure of this section, which is then followed by an analysis sub-section.

3.1 KEQ1 - Impact

Organisation:
Finding 1.1 - What are the key drivers and barriers affecting the implementation and results of the MApps project?

The results of the pilot project need to be looked at in the wider political, social and cultural contexts that exist in the Ukraine in order to understand how the pilot project implementation has been influenced:

1. Political context: currently, there is no national mine action body in the Ukraine. Operational and emergency Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) clearance and some MRE activities rest with three bodies: the State Emergency Service (SES), Ministry of Defence and Ministry of Internal Affairs.

For over a year now, the Ukrainian Government has been in the process of establishing which Ministry should have key responsibility to oversee a national mine action centre to coordinate mine action activities within the country. At one point it appeared that the SES would be likely be elected, but political fighting stalled the decision-making process. At the time of writing there had not been any conclusion on this, and it is unlikely there will be any progress within the next year or so.[11]

In addition, a mine action bill was drafted for legislation, but has not yet been adopted. However, even when and if it this bill is brought into legislation, it doesn't currently cover public information sharing, which are necessary for MRE activities and therefore creates many uncertainties in how this will affect INGOs working in the MA sector.

2. Security situation: the conflict-affected areas in eastern Ukraine are divided into Government Controlled Areas (GCA) and the Non-Government Controlled Areas (NGCA) and up until early 2015 INGOs were able to operate on both sides without too many restrictions. However, as a result of intensified fighting, the separatists increased their positions and introduced a separate NGO registration legislation in the NGCA. This affected DRC and DDG, in terms of not being able to operate in the NGCA and whilst the pilot project didn't fall under the NGCA, all non-food aid and non-food items projects were to be carried on with extreme caution or paused all together. As a result the pilot website was forced to be made publically inaccessible late August of 2015, until DRC/DDG as an organisation had clarity of the situation in the NGCA.[12]

Other areas for concern included the sensitivities surrounding the reporting and sharing of information on mine/ERW contamination, in particular the heat map element of the innovation, which was planned to share and provide this information with the public. From the perspective of the Ukrainian government this was seen to pose risks of damaging their reputation and loss of control by displaying the geographic location of

[11] Notes from interview with Inna Cruz, GICHD
[12] DDG MApps 6th interim narrative report, Sep 2015

contamination in their country. Other associated risks included: the assumptions that areas not on the map are safe, when it may just be a case that no ERW items had been reported there yet; in addition to the perceived risk of being targeted by the government or anti-state forces for reporting on contamination. This heat map was consequently dropped from the digital platform, as it was seen by the DDG country team that this component could potentially threaten their longer-term relationship with the SES.[13]

Finding 1.2 - What are the main lessons for a potential scale up of the innovation? Were the project outcomes reflected in the global pilot concept dependent on the context, and how might this affect the replication of impact in other situations?

Main lessons:
Firstly, the innovation is a standalone project within the DRC/DDG programme in the Ukraine. It fell between the existing country level management structures and therefore it's relevance and purpose was not always visible to field and programme staff.

Secondly, is that whilst relationships with national/state authorities take time to develop, the DRC/DDG programme only commenced in 2014, and as such there was no real basis for the pilot project to build on and these relationships had to be built from scratch.

Context specifics:
It is fair to say that conflict setting sensitivities and contexts can affect the realities of the platform's success or reach. For example, no conflict is the ever the same and therefore no blueprint will fit all contexts. Instead the innovation needs to have an adaptable, flexible and dynamic approach, as it is a very fluid environment and decisions made one minute can be changed the next.

Primary Target Group: *Finding 1.3 - How has crowdsourced data since it's launch increased the amount of actionable or relevant reports to the day-to- day response capacity of the SES-M?*

At the time of the evaluation, only one report had been submitted using the new reporting system through the SMS platform. The exact details couldn't be shared due to the sensitivity of the information, however from an in-depth interview with the IM staff in the SES, the item was reported in the Mariupol area, verified by an SES EOD team and dealt with accordingly by the SES.

Analysis:
Whilst solutions were found to enable the innovation to be implemented in consideration of the security context, and sensitivities on sharing information, other barriers could continue to affect the MApps implementation with regards to the uncertainty surrounding the establishment of a national mine action centre and the legislation of a mine action bill.

Lessons Learnt
As a standalone pilot project within DDG programming, it would have been better placed within the country programme as a project under the Country Director/Programme Manager (CD/PM). The project would then have had more options to look at the synergies and compatibility within the existing MRE programme activity, which then could have added an element of monitoring to the project after it's pilot without having

[13] ALNAP-HIF (2016) case studies on successful innovation draft, April 2016

the onus being on the SES to report to DDG after the pilot phase. It would also have assisted with continued relationship building between DDG and SES, in addition to seeing the potential for the sustainability of the project. Furthermore, this would have been a way to demonstrate how the innovation can complement existing/traditional mine action activities to other stakeholders in the sector and interested donors.

Relationship building with national/state authorities takes time, and the DDG programme had only just opened up in Ukraine in 2014. Other project locations initially identified by DDG were in countries where DDG had been present for some time, and therefore had some basis to go on prior to the decision making process to implement in those countries. This would have meant that some degree of relationship building would still have been required to enable the project to go ahead, but there would have a stronger basis to go on in terms of how to navigate the country specific procedures reducing the timeframe focused on these aspects and allowing more time to focus on getting the project up and running.

Context specifics:
The ethics behind developing an innovation project during an ongoing conflict where the focus and needs of different project stakeholders is something that the MApps team have battled with throughout the project cycle. The global concept for this innovation was based on DDGs previous experiences in different contexts where they have operated. As already identified in the ALNAP case study, it would have been a useful exercise to have drawn some lessons learnt from these contexts to create different scenario plans for the project to take on board from the outset. In addition, it is unknown from the DRC SMS text project what lessons were learnt internally in order to influence the MApps pilot project.

Furthermore, project beneficiaries in humanitarian contexts often suffer from survey fatigue, where their input of time and effort to provide the necessary information in prospective project assessments are outweighed by the lack of projects being realised. The success of projects takes up a lot of time and energy, not only to build relationships but also to get buy-in on these projects. One way of assisting this process could be by establishing what type of projects were or still are in the pipeline, in case there are some similarities, to better understand the position of prospective stakeholders to assist with the successful implementation of the project.

3.2 KEQ2 - Sustainability

Primary Target Groups:
Finding 2.1 - What degree of local partner participation has taken place in the platform prior to, during and following the launch?

Throughout the pilot project phases local partner participation and consensus has been at the forefront of its implementation. Whilst the initial main focus was at the SES national level in Kiev and at the local level in Slovianysk, the relationships built were those under duress of dealing with an ongoing conflict, the lack of resources and capacity to deal with the needs of the local population, let alone the involvement in an innovation project. Whilst the innovation project team adapted to these circumstance with great flexibility and adaptability it didn't always produce the desired results. As a result of the continued delays in project implementation, the HIF suggested to DDG that they should propose exit strategy scenarios dependent on the level of engagement received by the SES. Two were proposed, one based on SES buy in finally being accomplished, whilst the other looked at closing the pilot if SES engagement didn't come into fruition. However, once the pilot location was shifted to Mariupol, the level of partner engagement by the SES and

existing capacities within the unit exceeded the progress the project had achieved until that point, with a tight turnaround timeframe for development, testing the system in Feb – March, with its launch in early April.

Ownership of the digital platform was given to the SES in Mariupol at an early stage of the implementation, and following the launch of the system in early April, the costs for SES to maintain platform were seen as being minimal, as the domain name for government is free, as is the hosting of the website. The main area where cost implications will occur is for the SMS subscription line after the pilot project money will run out at the end of 2016. In addition, whilst there will be free voice calls allowed on the phones, the problem will remain with having credit for the internet. Currently there is restriction from the Ukraine Government for adding credit to networks used for work purposes, and a solution for the mobile application to be utilised will need to be found. One option could be that if positive feedback from all sides on system is gained and the SES EOD teams can demonstrate the credit is being used effectively, efficiently and for it's intended purpose there might be an opportunity to propose to the Ministry of the SES to assist with financial support in the future. There are plans to distribute the MApps material through regional departments in all cities and also to increase visibility and promotion of the website on booklets handed out at SES RE information sessions by stamping the website on whatever booklets are used.

Additionally, the Ministry of SES/Department of Demining Unit has been presented with the system and website and are all very receptive to it's purpose. At the time of the evaluation there were plans to post an advert about project website on the SES Ministry website (mns.gov.ua) which receives >60,000 visitors/day). The SES also plans to share the system with other partners, such as the 0629 platform for Mariupol, and other similar related city websites. [14]

Organisation/Innovation

Finding 2.2 - What are the possible obstacles/reasons at this stage for not continuing the implementation of the innovation after the pilot phase?

As already mentioned in the previous sub-section (*KEQ 1: Impact - Finding 1.2*), the innovation was a standalone project within the DRC/DDG programme in the Ukraine. Since the end of the project in April 2016, no dedicated project DDG staff remains to oversee the project and therefore the momentum of how the SES continues with the system will not be easy to track or demonstrate to others.

In addition, the lack of a centralised IM system or an established mine action centre or authority existing in the country fails to demonstrate how this pilot project, regardless of the involvement of GICHD in the initial and future stages of the project in terms of its compatibility with IMSMA Core, can be used on a wider scale within the country and complement mine action activities to the rest of the sector.

Analysis

Local partner participation, consensus and ownership have been at the forefront of the innovation, whereby the strength of the project team and applied methodology was shown through adapting to the realities on the ground. Whilst the context of the Ukraine did not always produce the desired results, the project team nonetheless persevered and developed exit strategies in preparation for the unknown outcomes, finally to be met with the positive result of the SES-M buy in, their ownership of the platform and finally a launch date in April 2016. The fact that the costs for SES to maintain the platform were seen as being minimal, by it being

[14] Notes from interviews with CartONG, SES –M; MApps Exit Strategy document; ALNAP case study draft, March 2016

hosted on a government domain and the website is free, demonstrates that the platform provides a sustainable low cost solution for the SES-M in the future. The only financial cost implications, which may cause a problem in the long term, are those linked to using the mobile application, but there are hopes that these can be resolved once the system is fully in place and the SES-M is in a position to demonstrate the needs of this application to the Ministry of the SES, to request further funding. Further constraints, include a lack of monitoring system for DDG to oversee the project following it's launch, whilst those outside of the control of the project, are reflected in the lack of a centralised IM system within the country, and how this digital platform will if at all, feed into it and complement mine action activities in the country.

3.3 KEQ3 - Effectiveness

Primary Target Groups*:*
Finding 3.1 - Has the launch of the pilot project increased KAP of the affected population?

Very few people met during the field visit had actually heard about the project prior to the FGD discussions. However, once the pilot project was explained in detail in the different locations, there was a lot of engagement, positive reactions and interest towards the system.

From all FGDs held, participants said they "would recommend the service to their friends and relatives after the meeting". In Slovianysk, where access to the internet was possible to show participants the website during the meeting, the participants liked that the website contained all the information on the different signs of danger and how to act when in danger; a few exclaimed "that they had seen the signs but did not know what they meant" and asked for further clarification on them there and then. There were also a lot of participants who were very keen to learn about the section providing information to adults on how to teach their children. In Volnavakha, a few people active on FB had seen the advert one of which had reposted and their friends had shared and liked the post. The same young man had also heard the advert on the radio so far but hadn't yet subscribed, but they had shared information with their family and friends. They promptly subscribed immediately in the meeting! Following the presentation of the project in the different FGDs, approximately a further 5-10 people, also checked the website on their mobile phones for further information.[15]

At the time of the field visit, the SES- Mariupol (SES-M) had commenced RE information sessions to all schools within the Oblast, which were also planned to be conducted alongside information sessions to universities and company workplaces in urban areas, after which their focus would shift to providing MRE sessions to farmers and agricultural workers in rural areas prior to the cultivation season. Leaflets were also distributed at the time of the sessions providing information on the signs of danger and how to behave safely for future reference.[16]

Finding 3.2 - Has the set-up of the innovation assisted the SES-M in receiving better information to plan and prioritise HMA activities?

Effective mine action operations in post conflict or on-going conflict contexts depend a great deal on the type and quality of the information received from different informants. This however, can vary greatly dependent on the situation as it tends to be a continuously changing environment. The needs assessment conducted for

[15] Notes and observations from evaluation FGD in Volnavakha, Slovianysk, Kramatorsk and Mariupol
[16] Interview with SES –M, Head of PR, April 2016

the MApps project by DDG identified that the SES-M depended a great deal on citizens to report on the locations of hazardous items in order to perform emergency EOD, and plan for future clearance activities. It was seen that the digital platform would be able to provide the SES-M with the opportunity to produce an internal hazard map of known suspected hazardous items, create a database to support analysis of time/cost benefits and plan for future survey and clearance operations[17].

Evidence gathered from the SES–M during the evaluation field visit suggests that there have been some improvements in their workflow, with the production of online operator reports to send to the EOD teams in question. No internal SES-M mine/ERW map had yet been set-up but it was recognised that this will greatly assist the SES with analysing information and understanding in order to plan the appropriate response. A database of suspected dangerous items also hadn't been started, but there are plans to do this once the system is used more in order to assess the time and money spent on reporting and the verification process in order to see how to improve their response capacities.[18]

Innovation:

Finding 3.6 & 3.8 - To what extent was the innovation successfully implemented? To what extent did general technical issues hinder successful implementation?

The platform was finally launched and implemented at the beginning of April 2016, over a year after the original plan for the pilot project end date. Issues that arose in the implementation period mainly came down to the reduced timeframe remaining for the pilot project. Once the SES in Mariupol were fully on board, staff in the IM department were trained and equipped to be able to manage the pilot platform.

There was a lot of back and forth between the SES, DDG and the developers, on different aspects of the website, the system was still launched at a similar time as planned, it was just the timeframe to get everything in place was drastically reduced. Initial field-testing took place in January with focus groups held with the project target groups and this feedback was, as with SES feedback, used to adjust pilot platforms and content. The pilot team and SES also conducted internal testing of the systems to identify any bugs and other technical challenges.

Analysis

As a result of the short timeframe between the project launch and the evaluation it was difficult to attribute any change in the KAP of the affected population as a result of the innovation. However, the feedback and reactions received by the participants in the FGDS; in addition to the SES conducting RE information sessions to all schools and workers of different industries, in both rural and urban areas; there is every possibility that there will be some degree of KAP changes in the affected population, in time as a result of the innovation.

The digital platform offers the SES-M a management tool to create an internal hazard map of suspected hazardous items, a database to support analysis of time/cost benefits and a system to plan for future survey and clearance operations to assist the affected population. Whilst these weren't fully implemented at the time of the evaluation, there was evidence to suggest that the information being received will enable the SES-M to digitise their workflow, plan the appropriate response, in addition to assessing their response capacities.

[17] DDG MApps Pilot project document v5, 2016

[18] Notes from interview with Maksym Ischuk, Head of IT at SES-M, April 2016

In the implementation stages, there were a lot of back and forth, on different issues and aspects of the website, with some delays experienced at both ends. However, a positive element throughout all of this was the good communication that the DDG project team was able to maintain between both the developers and the SES-M. As a result, the system was still launched at a similar time as planned, it was just the timeframe to get everything in place was drastically reduced. It was felt by the SES-M, the developers and DDG staff that had there been more time, a full field-testing of the system would have been more preferable to ensure the effectiveness of the digital platform when fully implemented.

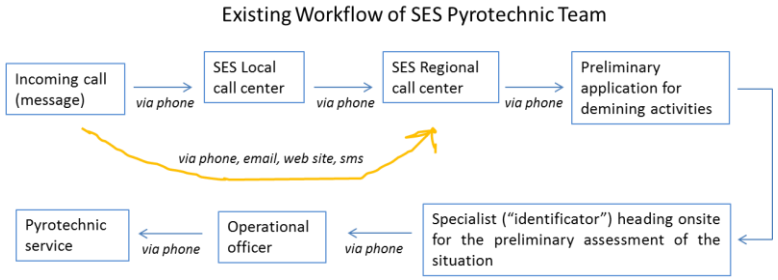
3.4 KEQ4 - Relevance and appropriateness

Innovation:

Finding 4.1 - To what extent does the innovation enhance existing SES-M workflows and allow for organisational development.

An area that the SES-M was keen to improve, identified during the baseline assessment conducted by DDG[19], involved their emergency communications and internal workflow patterns. Figure 3. below, indicates how the reporting system prior to the platform being introduced could be improved - which mainly consisted of line of numerous phone call communications. The yellow arrow demonstrates steps that would be improved with the implementation of the pilot project.

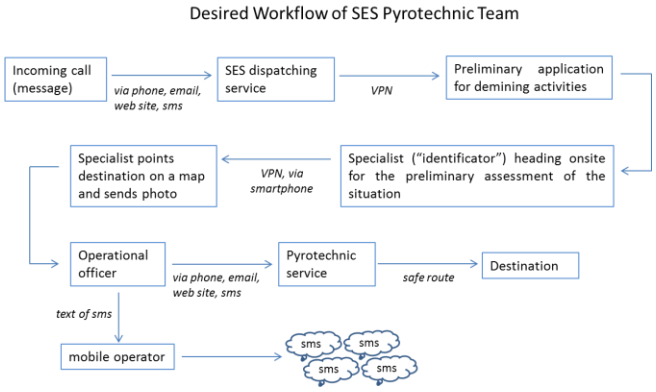
Figure 3: SES workflow prior to MApps



It was identified that the provision of equipment to modernise their internal communications and workflow would then enable the SES-M to receive more timely, actionable and structured information from the local population, in order to better assist those affected. Figure 4. below shows the SES workflow, following the implementation of the pilot project

[19] DDG MApps Pilot Project Document v5, 2016

Figure 4. SES workflow following the implementation of MApps



According to the Head of IT, the "the '101' hotline operators at SES are online 24/7, and when an item is reported, an online form is now filled in to create this report and sent to the EOD teams. This increase in using an automated system will enable an increased response time and also able SES to identify the time needed for clearing different items."[20]

Organisation

Finding 4.4 - Were the platforms designed adequately for the skill level of the intended users (SES-M, IDPs, returnees and local people)?

As part of the development of the pilot project platform, user cases and personas were designed and developed in April/May 2015 following the analysis of the baseline assessment conducted by DDG in late 2014. These were then used to identify the specific characteristics of each user group, to include their motivations, expectations and goals for interacting with the digital platforms. Throughout the duration of the pilot project, these were continuously updated to ensure relevance and to maximize the learning of the platform from the perspective of each intended user, in order that their respective skill levels were appropriately met.

Primary Target Group:

Finding 4.5 - Was the information relevant to the needs of the target population? Was message content worded in a way that was locally and culturally appropriate?

The pilot project platform media campaign used a combination of methods to include: an advert on social media (FB and Google campaign), stickers, radio broadcast on two radio stations in two different locations, SMS subscription, reporting SMS and web platform, and a YouTube video. There were initial plans for a TV advert however the costs for were too high for the purpose of the pilot project. The communications strategy also included other means of visibility and dispersion of the pilot project including an advert on Russian social

[20] Interview with Maksym Ischuk, Head of IT, SES-M

networks (Vkontakte). However, the Russian adverts were pulled out from the campaign by SES-M, after 1-2 days of the campaign going live, so as not to cause political issues.[21]

Consensus gained from FGDs that whilst many used social media (mainly Vkontakte – the Russian equivalent of FB), surfing the web, SMS, word-of-mouth and phone calls to get information on the conflict, it was also identified that very few, if any, used the radio as a means of getting information any more, as no-one had a radio device or listened to it. Recommended alternatives by participants included those already in the campaign, such as stickers and leaflets, but perhaps more awareness and visibility could have been raised about the project if more had been produced and distributed.

Analysis

As a result of implementing the innovation through the SES-M, it has enabled them to improve and modernise their emergency communications and internal workflows through the provision of equipment. Once fully implemented, the digital system will enable the SES-M to receive more timely, actionable and structured information from the local population, in order to better assist those affected. The increase in an automated system was also recognised by the SES-M to improve their response time and to identify the time needed to deal with different items. The addition of an android/smartphone application developed for EOD/demining systems for internal use within SES was also seen as a way to speed up the process of reporting and verification, with a photo of the item reducing the chain of communications currently in existence. The main concern here though was that the use of this application on a mobile phone, could result in the phones not being used for their intended purposes.[22]

At the time of the evaluation, the only intended user of the platform was the SES-M. It was recognised within the SES that the use of the platform requires a certain level of IT skills, for example the Head of PR, wasn't able to update the news feed without the support of IM staff. This was something that the Head of IT identified could be easily resolved with some training from the IM department on how to use it, which demonstrates the internal capacity of the SES-M to manage the platform after the end of the pilot project period.

It was too early to say if the information received through the media campaign met the needs of the target population as not very many people had at that time seen or heard the adverts for the project to know it existed. Consensus gained from FGDs that whilst many used social media such as FB, the majority used Vkontakte – the Russian equivalent of FB (which was not able to be used due to political sensitivities at the time of the launch), surfing the web, SMS, word-of-mouth and phone calls to get information on the conflict, it was also identified that very few, if any, used the radio as a means of getting information any more, as no-one had one or listened to it. Recommended alternatives suggested by participants in FGDs to using radio, in addition to the leaflets and stickers already produced, was to promote the project through posters, billboards in public buildings, on public transport, and anywhere people had to wait.[23] These suggestions have since been passed onto the in-country DDG MRE Manager, to assist with developing an appropriate communication strategy. Furthermore, the digital platform will continue to be promoted through the SES-M website, alongside conducting RE information sessions and distributing the website links with RE leaflets.

[21] Interview with Kostiantyn Gomma, Skykillers/Smartica
[22] Notes from interview with Maksym Ischuk, Head of IT, SES-Mariupol 18.04.16
[23] Notes from evaluation FGD in Volnavakha, Slovianysk, Kramatorsk and Mariupol

3.5 KEQ 5. Coverage:

Innovation:

Finding 5.3 - Is the platform available in the necessary languages? Does the platform function well with existing mobile and other networks?

The appropriate languages identified during the needs assessment and KAP study to be used for the digital web platform included both Ukranian and Russian language versions (with English for an overview only), which have been successfully implemented.

Prior to the project, the SES in Mariupol already had a partnership with one of the biggest national mobile phone operators (LifeCell), therefore as a result the project was able to build on using this service eliminating previous issues with service providers not wanting to work with DDG directly, as a result of strict data protection acts and the mine action bill not being brought into legislation. [24]

The mobile network chosen for the platform was as a result of the coverage within the region and the best price for the service. LifeCell acts as a host to send SMS to all other operators covering all GCA and Non-Government Controlled Areas (NGCAs) in Ukraine. Initially it was hoped everyone could be reached through the SMS service, however, as pointed out by Maksym, the Head of IT at the SES – M "this was calculated as being to costly to send to everyone even if not subscribed. For example, 1 SMS cost 25kopiyok (approx. 1 cent) and the population alone in Mariupol and surrounds is more than 500,000 people, so a subscription service was introduced instead"[25]. SMS messages will be in Ukrainian, but at the time of the evaluation no SMS's had been sent by SES from the subscription number, despite tests being undertaken in preparation for it's launch. The subscription number itself, was seen as being too long to remember, whilst a shorter number such as "101" (the SES hotline number) would have been more appropriate, however there were problems with DDG/DRC requesting short number as only the SES can have this number, and even an Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between DDG and SES was not enough to change to a shorter number. However, one downfall identified with free subscriptions and a short number is that the end user has to pays to receive the SMS. Despite this, the "alpha name" which is the name of the sender on SMS messages, from this subscription number is now entitled as the SES-M, which will help subscribers associate these with the SES in Mariupol, and will therefore consider these messages as important and less likely to consider them as spam.[26]

Analysis

The appropriate languages for communicating the digital platform to the project primary target groups were identified through the baseline and KAP assessments as Ukrainian and Russian and the system was translated and developed accordingly.

As the SES-M already had a contract with the largest mobile network provider in the country, it was a fairly straightforward process to get a number for the SMS subscription component, followed by obtaining the alpha name for SES, in order that receivers would take the SMS more seriously and not consider it as spam. A downfall of the subscription number is that subscribers have to pay to sign up, and the number is not as easy to remember as the SES hotline number '101'. However, it proved difficult for the DDG project team to

[24] DDG MApps 7th Interim narrative report, Dec 2015
[25] Interview with Maksym Ischuk, Head of IT at SES-M, April 2016
[26] Notes from interviews with the SES, FGDs, DDG HQ and the National Project Manager, April 2016.

obtain a shorter number, despite having a MoU with the SES-M. This is perhaps something the SES-M could look into at a later date, however, the downfall of free and short numbers is the subscribers have to pay to receive the SMS, so difficult to tell which would be seen to be most beneficial option to the affected population in the long run.

3.6 KEQ6 - Efficiency

Organisation:
Finding 6.1. To what extent did the project roll out as planned?

The original timeline planned for the project was 16 months from its initial start date in 2013). Deviations to this original work plan occurred for several reasons, with the final project end date pushed back to 30th Nov 2015, then to 31st March 2016, and finally to 30th April 2016. (See Annex 5 for the pilot project timeline, and how it shifted over time). The main reasons for these changes to the project roll out plans are as follows:

1. Changes in pilot project location:
The first pilot project location outlined in the initial project proposal was identified through an assessment carried out in Somalia through interviews with key DDG staff deployed in Somali communities. The need for this innovation was apparent, as mines and unexploded ordnance (UXO) still represent a significant danger to the population and access to accurate and timely information about risks is extremely limited. However, due to the volatile context and related difficulties in terms of access and safety, the project team decided against Somalia as the first choice to develop the pilot.
The next location that was looked into was the Syrian borders, where the present exodus of 2.5 million Syrians travelling to neighboring countries through UXO contaminated areas, demonstrated that the needs existed for such a project. However, working with border zones was identified as posing infrastructural difficulties and sensitivities regarding information sharing so it was not seen as a viable option for the pilot project location.

Subsequently, DDG chose Vietnam where mines and ERW contamination continue to pose significant hazards to the population. The initial assessment conducted with the in-country DDG team confirmed that Vietnam would be good location to conduct the pilot.

However, not only did the change in project location affect the first phase “Analysis and Design phase” in the work plan in the project work plan, it was further compounded by the fact the HIF rejected Vietnam as the proposed pilot location for the project.[27] Despite this, DDG carried on the pilot project in Vietnam through a self-funding mechanism within DRC for innovation projects.

Eventually, in the autumn of 2014 HIF accepted DDG’s request to use the Ukraine as the pilot project location. This resulted in a further setback in the progress of the work plan, due to modifications of the concept from Vietnam to fit the new context. The timeline was updated and a first no-cost extension (NCE) amendment request was made and accepted by the HIF for the project end date to be extended by 6 months to 30th Nov 2015.[28]

[27] MApps 2nd interim narrative report, Aug 2014
[28] MApps 3rd interim narrative report, Nov 2014

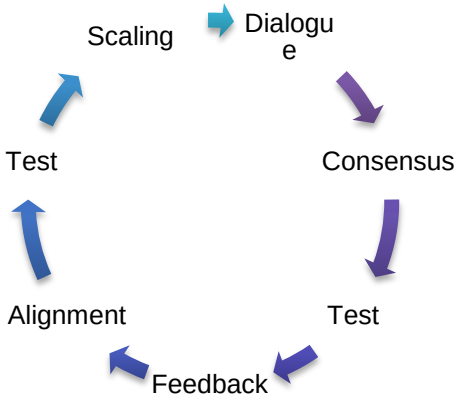
Another two NCE requests were made and approved by HIF for the project end date to be postponed[29] The first was due to the delays in the development and planning phases for the implementation of the project due to a change in the political climate, where by the pilot website was forced to be made publically inaccessible in August 2015 and subsequently the pilot project location in-country was changed from Slovianysk to the city of Mariupol.

The second was as a result of the formalising of the partnership with SES in Mariupol taking more time than anticipated and the process of re-adjusting pilot products to the SES workflow. These were also affected by the sudden changes in agreements with the SES, with elements initially agreed upon, were to only be changed again the following week.

2. Project methodology

DDG's methodology for this project was based on the consensus with key identified stakeholders relying heavily on the engagement of the target audiences: the affected communities, the local authorities and the mine action community. The methodology applied is illustrated as a circular process (See Figure 7 below) that builds on dialogue, trial and improvement:

Figure 7: MApps methodology applied by DDG



This process enables all key stakeholders to engage in dialogue and lessons learned process, as well as sharing experiences regularly throughout the pilot project period. However, initial discussions were seen as a bit abstract as the portal was developed based on stakeholders, input from the SES and through community consultations, with no tangible product to demonstrate for their buy-in.[30] Furthermore, coordination with the different stakeholders in the Ukraine was a very drawn out, time consuming and bureaucratic process.

Despite this, buy-in and ownership was eventually achieved at the regional level of the SES. In addition to input from local communities, the national and regional SES, the pilot project received much interest and eventual buy-in throughout it's roll-out, ranging from the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), People In Need (PIN), feedback and input from partners Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD), SIMLab, CartONG, organisations attending the Geographical Information System (GIS) and Information Management seminar and workshop in France, 2014; BBC Ukraine, Humanitarian Exchange,

[29] HIF NCE Amendment requests, Aug 2015, Dec 2015, Feb 2016
[30] ALNAP study draft, April 2016

ALNAP etc.[31] The project on the HIF website through the monthly blogs. In addition, DDG planned to hold in-house workshops for DDG and Danish Refugee Council (DRC) colleagues to share the ideas of pilot project as well as to get input to the design and development.

Finding 6.2 - To what extent was training effective and SES-M buy-in achieved? Deviations? Why they occurred and how were they dealt with?

The SES is currently the only civilian capacity on the ground responding to the removal of Explosive Remnants of War (ERW) for humanitarian or civilian purposes. From the pilot project outset, DDG defined the SES as a key project beneficiary and partner in the project and active collaboration at both the central (Kiev) and local level (Slovianysk) has been key to the success of the pilot project.

However, the SES's role in the pilot project stalled at the local level in mid-2015, and they relinquished their interest in partnering with DDG in the pilot project as a result of being overwhelmed to adequately respond to the needs of civilians in the ongoing conflict. It was perceived by DDG that this might have been something to do with the fact that at the local level, the department may not have much prior experience or strategy for working with survey or information management. Despite this, SES at the central level were in the process of trying to change the focus of the SES at the local levels from being reactive to becoming proactive.[32]

At the same time the decision was made to relocate the pilot project location to Mariupol, in the GCA, where the DRC/DDG project office was located as a result of the risks associated with continuing the project in Slovianysk, following concerns being raised in FGDs by the local population of facing political repercussions for reporting ERW items, due to it being part Government Controlled and part Non-Government Controlled. The idea to relocate the pilot project was supported by the SES in Kiev and was received with great interest and support from SES in Mariupol in the planning of systems design, development and implementation. All the tools and platforms that had already been developed were adjusted to the new setup in SES-M. The web portal and SMS service were given full ownership to the SES from the outset to ensure they were completely tailored to their needs and current practices. This would then ensure full relevancy of the pilot products and maximize the sustainability of the innovation.[33]

Analysis

The original timeline planned for the project was 16months from its initial start date in 2013, however despite considerable deviations to the original work plan, and delaying the final project end date, the project team used the pilot project participatory methodology to continue to work through the long and time consuming bureaucratic processes and country complexities they faced with implementing the project in the Ukraine. The lack of any DDG programming in country prior to 2014, may well have played a big role in this process as these relationships take time to build.

A setback in the reception of the project by the SES in Slovianysk in mid-2015 was soon changed when DDG informed SES in Kiev that they had resources to strengthen their capacity and support information management activities; alternatively this may have happened at a time when internal SES policies had changed their focus. Either way, this assisted with the SES national level buy-in and ownership was eventually

[31] DDG MApps 3rd interim narrative report, Nov 2014
[32] DDG MApps 5th interim narrative report, Jun 2015
[33] DDG MApps 7th Interim narrative report, Dec 2015

achieved at the regional level of the SES in Mariupol. The innovation also continued to receive much interest and throughout its rollout, from other stakeholders both nationally and internationally.

4. Conclusions

It can be said that the pilot project has against all odds, been a success especially in light of how it has been affected by significant adjustments to the original plans, ranging from the changes in pilot project locations, the political context within the sector, the security situation within the country, the slow and time consuming bureaucratic processes to navigate, establishing national and local stakeholder relationships, to the sensitivities of information being shared publicly, under which the pilot project was implemented in the Ukraine.

In terms of the objectives of this evaluation, the following were identified and recommended as follows:

i). Internal learning and to inform decision making for any expansion or further implementation of the project:
As a standalone pilot project within DDG programming, it would have been better placed within the country programme as a project under the Country Director/Programme Manager (CD/PM). The project would then have had more options to look at the synergies and compatibility within the existing MRE programme activity. This then could have added an element of monitoring to the project after it's pilot without having the onus being on the SES to report to DDG after the pilot phase. It would also have assisted with continued relationship building between DDG and SES, in addition to seeing the potential for the sustainability of the project. Furthermore, this would have been a way to demonstrate how the innovation can complement existing/traditional mine action activities to other stakeholders in the sector and interested donors.

In terms of relationship building with national/state authorities, it takes time to develop these, and the DDG programme had only just opened up in 2014. Other project location/countries initially identified by DDG were where they were currently operating, and therefore had some basis to go on prior to the decision making process to implement in those countries. This would have meant that some degree of relationship building would still have been required to enable the project to go ahead, but there would have a stronger basis to go on in terms of how to navigate the country specific procedures reducing the timeframe focused on these aspects and allowing more time to focus on getting the project up and running.

Whilst the delays in the pilot project timeline, didn't affect the final end and launch date of the digital platform, it affected the extent to which the project was implemented by the time an evaluation was conducted. Ideally this should have taken place after a decent amount of time had elapsed, to get a better overview from all primary target groups, and also to gauge how this innovation compares to traditional RE liaison with communities. Furthermore, the delays in the launch should have been ironed out prior to organising an evaluation in order to have better traction for carrying out the evaluation between start-up meetings and the field visit.

ii). Parallels and global reflections of the global concept note
Conflict setting sensitivities and contexts can affect the realities of the platform's success or reach. For example, no conflict is the ever the same and therefore no blueprint will fit all contexts. Instead the innovation needs to have an adaptable, flexible and dynamic approach, as it is a very fluid environment and decisions made one minute can be changed the next.

The global concept for this innovation was based on DDGs previous experiences in different contexts where they have operated. The ethics behind developing an innovation project during an ongoing conflict where the focus and needs of different project stakeholders is something that the MApps team battled with throughout the project cycle. It would have been a useful exercise to extrapolated some lessons learnt from these contexts to create different scenario plans for the project to take on board from the outset. In addition, it is unknown from the DRC SMS text project what lessons were learnt internally in order to influence the MApps pilot project.

iii). Sector learning, through DDG sharing the learning from the pilot within the HMA sector
In terms of the HMA sector, it will be useful to see how this two –way innovation can be integrated into HMA activities and how it compares to traditional RE and community liaison. It also demonstrated that participatory approaches still play a major role in working with key stakeholders in order to produce project results. Unfortunately the political situation of the sector in the Ukraine doesn't currently offer the option to see how the platform can assist with information management activities at a national level, however this may well change over time. The combined evaluation of the MApps pilot project in Vietnam, in addition to the one in the Ukraine, will provide a more contextual overview of how this innovation can operate in different settings, which is often where different operators find themselves.

iv). Sharing with donors for the MApps project, in particular HIF, for their internal learning.
The key element here, is finding a donor with more than one specific focus area, funding different contexts and of course having a flexible and adaptable approach to fit the nature and contexts faced by the implementation of an innovation. Without this, and some extra internal funding, DDG would have had difficulties in shifting pilot project country locations, keeping their participatory methodology at the core of the project, delaying the launch date to fit the context and a successful implementation altogether.