Cooperation Among Mine-affected Countries

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In recent years, key stakeholders have increasingly recognized the importance of promoting cooperation among mine-affected countries.

UNDP Involvement

The concept of promoting cooperation among developing countries emerged in the 1970s.

The international community recognized the need to increase horizontal exchanges among developing countries (south-south cooperation) to complement traditional vertical north-south exchanges.
**Background**

- **General Assembly Resolutions (1973-1977):** Several GA resolutions adopted calling upon the international community and UN to *increase technical exchanges* among developing countries.

- **UNDP Resolution (1975):** UNDP adopted a resolution calling for increased emphasis on *government-execution of development projects* and for *south-south cooperation* in the implementation of technical cooperation programmes.

- **UN Conference on Technical Cooperation Among Developing Countries (1978):** Set out a comprehensive framework for promotion of cooperation.
UN Commitment to Promoting Cooperation Among Mine-affected Countries

- The UN regards promotion of cooperation among mine-affected countries as one of its highest priorities.
- This commitment is reflected in the UN Five-year Mine Action Strategy, which provides strategic direction to UN efforts to promote cooperation among mine-affected countries.
Why Cooperation Among Mine-affected Countries?

- **Affected Countries Share Similar Challenges:**
  - resumption of normal life
  - repatriation of refugees and IDPs
  - rehabilitation of affected communities
  - reconstruction and development of affected communities

- **Information Sharing:** Exchanges of views about how individual countries have been affected by mines, and how they have tackled their mine problems, can be valuable to other mine-affected countries.
Why Cooperation Among Mine-affected Countries?

- Every national mine action programme has its unique strengths and opportunities for improvement.

- Individual lessons learned complement the more traditional means of technical assistance that the international mine action community provides.
Potential Areas of Cooperation

- **Exchanging technical materials.**
- **Sharing trials, research and training facilities.**
- **Pooling technical equipment on a regional basis** may increase economies of scale and returns on investments.
- **Sharing experiences and expertise on general approaches to implementing** mine action programmes.
- **Demonstrating how countries with similar histories and backgrounds** are tackling the mine problem on a human, rather than purely technical, level.
Practical Steps to Promoting Cooperation Among Mine-affected Countries

Mine Action Exchange Programme (MAX)

- Provides a practical means of fostering cooperation among mine-affected countries.
- Provides a mechanism for the staff of mine action programmes to undertake short assignments to other programmes or mine action organizations.
- Seeks to develop and strengthen relationships among indigenous mine action programmes.
- Share different perspectives on mine action.
Mature programmes share lessons learned with new programmes on how to avoid costly mistakes.

New programmes share lessons learned with mature programmes on systems and approaches that may differ from more traditional approaches.

MAX Participants to Date: Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Croatia and Mozambique.

Planned 2003 Exchanges: Albania, Cambodia, Somalia and Yemen.
How the Concept Can Further be Promoted?

- Develop an information system that provides relevant details about different mine action programmes.
  - Create an inventory of expertise and support that programmes are willing to offer each other.
  - Identify potential areas of cooperation and specific areas of need when formulating mine action plans.
- Ensure that national mine action policies encourage cooperation among affected countries.
- Engage donors to support south-south cooperation.
Conclusion

✓ Cooperation among mine-affected countries is an **important complement** to more traditional types of technical and financial support.

✓ UNDP regards cooperation among mine-affected countries as an **integral part of its programme activities**.

✓ UNDP will continue to **expand the MAX programme**.
Increase Senior Political Engagement

- UNDP has been approached by some mine affected countries to assist with a mechanism to bring together mine-affected countries at a higher political level.
- Such a forum would help strengthen technical cooperation among mine affected countries.
- They would also provide an opportunity to strategize with the donor community on the types of assistance required in the field.

*We look forward to working with you on these initiatives.*
Thank You