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des peuples
et des nations

**Project to Support Institutional Capacities Development for the
Center for Demining and Clearance of Ouidah (PARCI/CPADD)**

Between

The Governments of Benin and Japan

Final Report

ANALYTIC ACTIVITY REPORT

The convergent vision on the preservation of human security prompted the governments of Japan and the Republic of Benin to implement a Project for the Support to the strengthening of the Institutional Capacities of the PARCI/CPADD Post-Conflict Demining and Decontamination Training Centre, for the October 2010 to March 2012 period. Entirely financed by the Japanese government, the Project was implemented with the technical support of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) whose sponsorship was very practical. After an implementation period of two years, the objectives initially defined were attained with an estimated physical implementation rate of 99% and a quasi-identical financial implementation rate of 100%.

This report which summarizes the results achieved was structured as follows:

- I- Summary Description of the context;
- II- Summary Description of the Project;
- III-Analysis of the key achievements of the Project and consideration of the impacts;
- IV-Difficulties encountered and solutions applied;
- V- Lessons learned;
- VI-Follow-up Action.

I – Summary Description of the context

The analysis of the socio-political situation in Africa during the past couple of years, presented a Continent plagued with different types of violence, such as wars: conflicts between countries and internal conflicts (Sudan, Libya, Mali, etc.).

These conflicts left numerous ammunitions behind and most of the time explosives which are likely to function, even after the end of the conflicts, destroyed the foundations of progress to development and fuel other sources of violence and growing instability, thereby jeopardizing peace, the instauration of human security and the promotion of good governance.

Confronted with this situation, the United Nations established the Convention on the Prohibition of Anti-personnel Mines, which is called the Ottawa Convention to which many States are signatories. In view of the fact that human security constitutes an important component of its political vision and based on the provisions of Article 6 of this Convention, namely on its Cooperation and Assistance content, the Republic of Benin was also signatory to the Convention in order to bring its contribution to the resolution of difficulties relating to explosive waste arising from conflicts and thereby contribute to the alleviation of human hardship.

Mindful of the need to solve the problems arising from these conflicts on development, the African States Parties to the Ottawa Convention held a meeting in Bamako in February 2001. In view of its record and historically recognized reputation as a peaceful country, the Republic of Benin benefitted from the approval by its peers to host a regional Center in humanitarian demining of anti-mine action. Therefore, the post-conflict Demining and Decontamination Training Centre was established in 2003, with the objective of training an African expertise for the treatment of outcome relating to the problem of mines in the countries which were the victims of this plight.

II –Summary Description of the Project

UNDP in cooperation with the Government of the Republic of Benin and the Government of Japan (donor country) implemented for the period of 2010 to 2012 a Project for the support to the Strengthening of the Institutional Capacities of the Demining and Decontamination Training Centre (CPADD) in Ouidah. The establishment of the Project was the result of the ambitions of the CPADD to increase its hosting and intervention

capacities in order to answer many requests in the area of training coming from the sub region.

The Project was established in reaction to the urgent needs of the CPADD in the area of the development of its infrastructure and the strengthening of its technical, learning and human capacities. It contributed to enhancing the hosting capacities of the Centre through the restoration and the development plan of its buildings on the one hand, as well as road and sanitation works, the equipment of the training rooms, bedrooms and exercise rooms and furniture for the trainees on the one hand; recruitment of international expertise to guarantee training of trainees on the other hand. Therefore, it contributed to the development of capacities of the Center and the significant improvement of its operations.

The major activities undertaken within the framework of the realization of the Project were to increase the volume of its infrastructure through the rehabilitation of buildings and the construction of new ones, the acquisition of equipment as well as the organization of regular training sessions in humanitarian demining (NEDEX/EODD 3 Management) for the benefit of both military and civilian Staff involved in the demining activities, particularly within ECOWAS and ECCAS countries. The totality of this investment contributed to the strengthening of technical training capacities of the Center through recruitment of qualified Staff and high caliber expertise.

The executing agency was the Ministry in charge of National Defense which delegated Management responsibilities to the CPADD, which is placed under the authority of the Ministry. The institutional framework of the Project is broken down as follows: the national Directorate of the Project, a Management Technical Committee and a Steering Committee.

Two years after its launching it should be worth mentioning the key achievements of the Project.

III - Analysis of the key achievements of the Project

They could be classified in three categories and according to the three areas the Project is concerned with:

➤ ***Relating to the strengthening of the infrastructure of the institution***

It should be stressed the rehabilitation/construction of the main building which culminated in multiplying by two the housing capacity of bedrooms and classrooms (48 fully equipped and air-conditioned bedrooms were built 04 classrooms were built and equipped) therefore offering the possibility to organize many simultaneous training sessions (Annex 2). Paving of the internal roads should also be stressed, which added value to facilitate the internal traffic within the Center.

➤ ***In relation with the acquisition of materials and equipment***

These material and equipments could be classified in 3 categories as follows: Two (02) vehicles 4x4, an air-conditioned 30-seater bus, improving thereby the transportation capacity of trainees, electrical energy equipment (one 150 KVA generator, with a provision of 7000 liters of gasoil) and the establishment of an autonomous SBEE electrical network, through acquisition of a 100 A trunk, thereby reducing the impact of untimely power cuts, which caused intermittent stoppages and disturbances of training sessions, the acquisition of computer hardware and software (13 laptops and personal computers, 01 server and 02 video projectors) and related equipment, many other computer and electronic equipment and office automation applications, and the Internet connection. Furthermore, the implementation of the Project made it possible to obtain the Internet networking of the Center in order to facilitate communication, not only between the demining structures in terms of exchange of views, but also with institutions of different types. Repair of all the old vehicles of the Center (02 old pick-ups, 2 heavy truck vehicles and a saloon car) facilitated the increase of the vehicle pool, with the impact of increasing the capacities of the Center, and therefore its performance. The acquisition of numerous learning equipment (See Annex 2) was also one of the key achievements realized by the Project.

➤ ***Relating to the strengthening of Training***

Many African Experts were trained in different sessions, including:

- ***Training in Management of demining Centers***

Nine (09) directors of demining centers or related centers coming from the following countries: Benin, Guinea Bissau, Mali, Niger, Democratic Republic of Congo, Burundi, Senegal and Mauritania benefitted from this training session.

- ***Training in Survey and Explosive Ordnance Disposal Level 3 (NEDEX3)***

Eleven (11) Experts coming from 07 countries, namely: Benin, Niger, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Mauritania, Senegal, Burundi, Congo Brazzaville took part in this training session.

Judging from the added value of all these training sessions, it could be deducted that the Beninese trainees strengthen the capacities of the CPADD and train Benin soldiers who are involved in peace keeping operations in the DRC and in Côte d'Ivoire as part of the United Nations contingent. It should be emphasized that apart from Benin, all the other participating countries are infested by mines.

As for the two (02) Mauritians, one of them supervised operations after demining by military Engineers' unit and the NPA (Norwegian People Aid) NGO; the other one was the Head of Operations at the PNDHD (National Programme for Humanitarian Demining and Development, in charge of approval of training of demining experts and rapid intervention Team Leader in case of any accident.

As for the Democratic Republic of Congo, the trainer who was trained transferred training in his country by training 43 persons by province out of a total number of 11 provinces, (or $43 \times 11 = 473$ persons). As at now his intervention covered the Eastern and Western Kasai.

As for those who participated in the second training session, they were coordinators of demining action centers. As such, they centralized all activities pertaining to humanitarian demining. Since their countries were

affected by the scourge of mines, their contributions to the implementation plans and strategies for the reconstruction and development of their countries were highly appreciated, because in order to use the lands for their development actions, they should primarily make them safe and rid them of all potential lethal dangers, moreover they should demine them.

Apart from training of these African Experts, trainers from the Center participated in seminars whose objectives were to enable them update their knowledge regarding the rapid development of themes relating to mines and explosive devices. Three (03) seminars could be referred to. The first one related to the restoration of land held from 18 to 22 April 2011 and which witnessed the attendance of eleven (11) participants all of them from Benin; the second one relating to the relationship between management of the proliferation of small arms and light weapons, especially in the area of destruction and humanitarian demining, held from 06 to 09 July 2011, and which saw the participation of ten (10) béninois; and finally the workshop on adapting the training sessions to the development of Standards.

During all these training sessions and seminars Experts from different fields of competence were invited (excluding CPADD trainers): Benin (03); France (03); England (01); Senegal (01); India (01).

In view of the dynamic development of the subjects, exchange of expertise and particularly networking are highly recommended and useful in terms of capacity building. In that respect, three (03) trainers of the Centre, spent fifteen (15) days in Senegal (in Casamance), in order to contribute to a demining programme, in a real context of mine fields.

Moreover, financial resources placed at disposal since the inception of the Project facilitated contribution to training, apart from the above-mentioned twenty (20) trainers and initially planned in the project, eighty one (81) trainees. (Refer to Annex 3).

To this, we could add several participations in Statutory Meetings in order to materialize the presence of the Centre within the International

Community for action against mines and whose outcome contributed to the strengthening and updating of techniques, information, and even practices in the area of humanitarian demining as were implemented at the CPADD.

We should finally note that the quality of trainers placed at disposal by the UNDP was very useful. As a matter of fact, the result-based management and the procedures of the institution, the trainers, the highly appreciated support of the members of the Steering Committee, the follow-up of stakeholders from Ministries involved in the management of the Project, facilitated efficient management of resources placed at disposal in order to obtain satisfactory results: a physical implementation rate estimated at 100% was attained with a quasi-identical financial implementation rate of 99%.

IV - Difficulties encountered and solutions applied

Despite these positive and encouraging results, some difficulties were observed in the implementation of tasks on the field. These difficulties were encountered in the following areas:

- The successful bidder for the construction of the main building had some organizational weaknesses;
- From the military Engineering side there were some weaknesses in the administrative follow-up, and delay in the adherence to the planning.

All these difficulties extended the implementation deadlines. Therefore, works initially expected to be completed by end of May were finally delivered in October, which disturbed resumption of training sessions in September-October 2011.

The other difficulties encountered related to:

- The scarcity on the market of qualified francophone trainers, particularly African trainers;
- The unpreparedness of Anti-mine action Centers to welcome trainers, namely those based in the DRC and Mauritania, despite many weeks of advance notice and preparation.

V – Lessons learned

Apart from these physical realizations, PARCI represented for the CPADD Staff responsible for its implementation a source of experience and inspiration.

- Organization of collective review of the governance component to which the Project is related contributed to the improvement of the implementation of the Project, which led to success; this monitoring should be maintained for the management of other projects.
- For projects of a similar scope, it should be advisable to open up the tender procedures to foreign construction companies in order to guarantee quality implementation;
- The unavailability and scarcity of francophone expertise in the area of demining and decontamination techniques suggests that steps should be taken well in advance in the preparation of dossiers for the recruitment of support trainers.

VI – Follow-up Action

The CPADD reports to the Minister of National Defense and is housed within the premises of the Directorate of the General Chief of Staff Schools. This location, although offering some possibilities and facilities for the realization of certain tasks, does not facilitate openness to larger multilateral cooperation. It appears like an obstacle to the creation of collaboration relationships with many potential partners. In reaction to this concern, many scenarios were examined in order to relocate the Centre within a more appropriate institutional arrangement. The Ministry for Administrative and Institutional Reform (MRAI) was entrusted with the task of proposing the more appropriate institutional framework which will be submitted to the visa of the competent authorities.

Conclusion

To the satisfaction of the Government of the Republic of Benin, the Training Centre for post-conflict demining and decontamination Action, in its

quest to become the reference Centre for anti-mine action all over the African Continent, saw its capacities being strengthened significantly because of the support of the Japanese Government. From the resources already mobilized, new possibilities are offered to ensure simultaneous conduct of many teaching activities. A record of more than 100 specialists have already benefitted from training within the framework of the renovated Centre.

The performance achieved in the implementation of the project honored all the stakeholders, whether they are donors, managers of credit or monitoring/evaluation organs. For the assets of the project to be sustainable, investment mobilized should be enhanced, within the framework of strengthened international cooperation.