

**US Agency for International Development (USAID)**  
**USAID/Armenia**  
**Initial Environmental Examination (IEE)**

**Program/Project/Activity Data**

Activity/Project Name:		Humanitarian Mine Clearance in Nagorno Karabakh (NK)	
Assistance Objective:		Investing in People	
Program Area:		Stabilization Operation and Security Sector Reform	
Country(ies) and/or Operating Unit:		Armenia/E&E	
Originating Office:		Sustainable Development Office (SDO)	Date: August 22,2017
PAD Level IEE: Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	DCN of Original RCE/IEE:		DCN: 2013-ANK-001
Supplemental IEE: Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	DCN of Amendment(s):		DCN: 2013-ANK-002,
RCE/IEE Amendment: Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>			
If Yes, Purpose of Amendment (AMD):		Raised budget ceiling to project and additional anti-personnel mine clearance	
DCN(s) of All Related EA/IEE/RCE/ER(s):			
Implementation Start/End:		November 29, 2017 - September 30, 2019	LOP: FY18-September 30, 2019
Funding Amount:		\$3,400,894	LOP Amount: \$8,900,894
Contract/Award Number (if known):		AID-111-G-00-08-00012	
IEE Expiration Date (if any):	September 30, 2019	Reporting due dates (if any):	September 30, 2019
<b>Recommended Environmental Determination:</b>			
Categorical Exclusion: <input type="checkbox"/>		Positive Determination: <input type="checkbox"/>	
Negative Determination: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		Deferral: <input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>Additional Elements:</b>			
Conditions: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		Local Procurement: <input type="checkbox"/>	
Government to Government: <input type="checkbox"/>		Donor Co-Funded: <input type="checkbox"/>	
Sustainability Analysis (included): <input type="checkbox"/>		Climate Change Vulnerability Analysis (included): <input type="checkbox"/>	

**1. Background and Project Description**

## 1.1. Purpose and Scope of IEE

The purpose of this IEE Amendment is: (1) to increase the budget by \$3,400,894 from \$5,500,000 to \$8,900,894; (2) to revise the program description of the Humanitarian Mine Clearance program in Nagorno-Karabakh (NK). This amendment also aligns the IEE amount with the final contracted amount. With additional ceiling and duration increase, by the end of September 2019 the HALO Trust will complete demining of all 27 known mine fields of NK.

The project is currently in compliance with the original IEE and amendment (DCN: 2013-ANK-001 and 002). All conditions of the original IEE and amendment remain in effect.

## 1.2 Project Overview

The conflict over Nagorno-Karabakh stopped with a cease-fire in 1994, but left large areas of the region infested with anti-personnel and anti-tank mines, as well as unexploded ordnance. Through funding of USAID and other donors, to date 96.7% of mined areas were cleared in NK. Most of this land is fertile agricultural land that will be used for wheat planting once it is cleared; other lands pastures and/or gardens; and lands close to internal roads that will allow safe travel from village to village. If these lands are not

cleared, the risks to the population conducting normal activities such as herding animals, farming and gathering firewood are significant.

Humanitarian de-mining remains an essential task in NK as it saves lives and clears the way for agriculture, water and other essential needs. Although the trend in mine accidents has been downwards, they continue to happen in NK, killing and seriously wounding civilians, 26% of whom are children. Mine Clearance is of utmost importance to civil and agricultural use of land. Lands are not being used efficiently, as a result of the remaining mines and unexploded ordinance in the region (UXO), thus seriously reducing effective use of one of the primary sources of income for the people of NK.

### 1.3 Project Description

The aim of this program is to save lives and prevent injury via the humanitarian clearance of landmines and UXO remaining from the conflict of 1992-1994. The project will return contaminated land to the local population for productive use, in order to promote and enable subsistence living for the rural population through low-level agriculture, animal husbandry and foraging. The proposed extension to the current project will enable Halo Trust to continue its demining activities with the same pace as before and allow time for USAID to conduct in-depth demining needs assessment/verification and continue its demining activities in an efficient and sustainable manner in the future with an ultimate goal of having the Traditional NK declared as a mine free land. The project does not work in green villages by USAID funding. The “Traditional NK territory” includes the territory of the all regions of Nagorno Karabakh as defined by the Soviet-era Autonomous Oblast boundaries.

Expected outcomes and results of the project:

#### MINE CLEARANCE

In total HALO’s twenty one mechanical and manual teams will aim to clear the following:

- 693,553m<sup>2</sup> of anti-personnel (AP) minefield
- 138,854m<sup>2</sup> of anti-tank (AT) minefield

USAID’s Goals and Expected Results:

The ultimate goal of the program is to declare the traditional NK territory a mine-clear zone. USAID’s stated expected results are:

- Elimination of mine and unexploded ordnance contamination in NK.
- Elimination of AT accidents by tractor drivers.
- Additional land is freed up for the planting and cultivation of wheat with an obvious positive impact on rural NK.
- Increased grape production.
- Traditional NK territory is declared a mine free zone.

In order for the above to be achieved the following tasks must be completed:

1. Clearance of all the remaining anti-personnel (AP) minefields.
2. Clearance of all the remaining anti-tank (AT) minefields.

## 2. Baseline Environmental Information

### 2.1 Locations Affected and Environmental Context

General Baseline data

Nagorno Karabakh is situated in the South Caucasus midway between Armenia’s border with Turkey and the Caspian Sea. A variety of the Flora and Fauna of the planned territory is conditioned with climatic parameters and complexity of the landscape. Skeletal mountains, cliffs, and slide rocks occupy some areas

while populated areas, gardens, agricultural areas occupy others. Its diversity is conditioned with the presence of outdone habitants, migratory and wintering types of fauna.

Nagorno-Karabakh is also one of the poorest areas in the region: the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per capita of Nagorno Karabakh is closer to that of Cambodia and Tajikistan than that of Armenia or Azerbaijan. NK is predominantly an agricultural area with a total population of 140,000 in five administrative regions. During the Soviet Union NK was predominantly an ethnic Armenian area, autonomic oblast, within the Republic of Azerbaijan. As the Soviet Union collapsed, the population of NK voted in a referendum to secede from Azerbaijan, which resulted in armed conflict during the period 1988 to 1994. This conflict erupted into full-scale war in 1992 and continued until a Russian-brokered ceasefire was agreed in May 1994. From 1988 to 1994 it is estimated that up to 30,000 people were killed, with many more injured. With both sides having access to a large range and quantity of former soviet weaponry the war was intense, with significant use of armor and aircraft: thousands of mines were laid countrywide. Nagorno Karabakh's economy is more highly dependent on agriculture in comparison to the economies of the three Caucasus countries. The nature of the fighting in the war has meant that potentially productive agricultural land on which rural Karabakhis rely for both subsistence and cash crops is contaminated with Anti-Personnel (AP), Anti-Tank (AT) mines and Cluster Munitions.

These two facts together mean that mine contamination has a proportionately large impact on NK's ability to develop and lift its rural population out of poverty. Clearance of these agricultural areas prevents accidents and allows more land to be used for agriculture.

#### Sector Specific Baseline Data

Mines were laid by both Azeri and pro-Karabakh forces during the war, with a relatively high proportion of AT mines being used in some regions, as well as AP mines throughout. There is also a lot of UXO littering the country side, ranging from mortars, grenades to rocket and air-dropped bombs: thousands of these bomblets were dropped from the air during the conflict. Today these items contaminate the ground and continue to pose a threat to the local population.

## 2.2 Description of Applicable Environmental and Natural Resource Legal Requirements Policies, Laws, and Regulations

NK is not recognized as a sovereign entity by the US, therefore NK laws and regulations are not applicable in this case. At the same time Armenian laws and regulations also are not applicable because NK is not under Armenian jurisdiction. However, the Implementer will follow International Mine Action Standards (IMAS).

## 2.3 Country/Ministry/Municipality Environmental Capacity Analysis

The rapid development of the mine clearance program in NK has led it to become the focal point of information and expertise for mine related issues in the territory. Within this program, a Mine Action Center (MAC) was created to consolidate all relevant information. The MAC coordinates the de-facto administration's ministries and departments, all other NGOs and local communities; the Center maintains maps and a database covering the following:

- All suspect areas surveyed.
- All areas cleared of mines and UXO.
- Locations of all mines and UXO accidents.
- A full record of all Mines Risk Education given.

This information is "public" information in that it is available to anyone in NK who asks: private individuals who wish to check that there is no mine threat in a certain area are able to see maps without restriction.

The MAC coordinates with the NK Rescue Services (RS) department, which is a cross between a Civil Defense department and an emergency service. RS has a handful of qualified staff, but no capacity to conduct full-scale clearance. The de-mining program coordinates its activities with RS, with relevant information being passed between the two organizations. RS has representatives based in each region of NK, and are therefore often the first point of contact when people find suspicious items. The local RS representative is always invited to take part in the handover of any completed task within their region.

#### 2.4 Climate Change Vulnerability Analysis and Climate Risk Screening

<b>Mine Clearance</b>	<b>Potential Climate Risk</b>	<b>Climate Risk Rating*</b>
Clearance of the remaining known anti-personnel (AP) minefields	Cleared land will be handed over to local population for agricultural purpose	Low
Clearance of the remaining known anti-tank (AT) minefields.	Cleared land will be handed over to local population for agricultural purpose	Low

See Annex 1 of this IEE for further details of the climate risk screening for the activity..

### 3 Analysis of Potential Environmental Impact

Pursuant to 22 CFR 216.3(a)92)(iii), the originator of the proposed project has reviewed the potential environmental impacts of the action summarized in the foregoing IEE. De-mining is anticipated to have only beneficial effects on the living conditions and environment in NK. Given the unique nature of de-mining efforts, it would not be appropriate for USAID to establish special environmental guidelines, additional to those standards followed by the experts in this field. In particular, USAID requires that the Implementer follows the principles and respective guidance on the implementation of the International Mine Action Standards (IMAS) approved by the UNMAS and/or the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD). Guidance on protection of the environment is given in [IMAS 10.70](#). As the IMAS are subject to regular review and revision, the Implementer should consult the IMAS project website in order to verify its status at <http://www.mineactionstandards.org> (IMAS 10.70 Safety & Occupational health – Protection of the environment <https://www.mineactionstandards.org/fileadmin/MAS/documents/imas-international-standards/english/series-10/IMAS-10-70-Ed1-Am3.pdf>), or through the UNMAS website at <http://www.mineaction.org>.

#### 3.1 MINE CLEARANCE

<b>Defined/Illustrative Activities</b>	<b>Potential Impacts</b>
Mine Clearance Activities: 1. Clearance of the remaining known anti-personnel (AP) minefields. 2. Clearance of the remaining known anti-tank (AT) minefields.	De-mining is anticipated to have only beneficial effects on the living conditions and environment in NK.

## 4 Recommended Environmental Actions

### 4.1 Recommended Mitigation Measures

#### Negative Determination with Conditions

Pursuant to 22CFR 216.3(a)(2)(iii), Negative Determination with Conditions is recommended for the Activities 1 and 2 of the NK de-mining operations. The condition is that the implementer follows the requirements of the respective International Mine Action Standards (IMAS) as available and notified on <http://www.mineactionstandards.org/>, or through the UNMAS website at <http://www.mineaction.org>

Defined/Illustrative Activities	Potential Impacts	Mitigation Measures	Recommended Threshold Determination
Activity 1: Clearance of the remaining known anti-personnel (AP) minefields.	De-mining is anticipated to have only beneficial effects on the living conditions and environment in NK.	Pursuant to 22CFR 216.3(a)(2)(iii), Negative Determination with Conditions is recommended for de-mining operations. The condition is that the implementer follows the principles and respective guidance on the implementation of the International Mine Action Standards (IMAS) approved by the UNMAS and/or the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD). Guidance on protection of the environment is given in IMAS 10.70. As the IMAS are subject to regular review and revision, the Implementer should consult the IMAS project website in order to verify its status at <a href="http://www.mineactionstandards.org/">http://www.mineactionstandards.org/</a> , or through the UNMAS website at <a href="http://www.mineaction.org">http://www.mineaction.org</a> .	Negative Determination
Activity 2: Clearance of the remaining known anti-tank (AT) minefields.			

### 4.2 Recommended Environmental Determination:

#### Negative Determination with Conditions:

Under §216.3(a)(2)(iii), a negative determination with conditions is recommended for activities 1 and 2 within the de-mining operations. Specific terms and conditions are presented below in Section 4.3.

### 4.3 Terms and Conditions:

The implementer should follow the latest editions of the International Mine Action Standards (IMAS) approved by the UNMAS as notified on the IMAS project website at <http://www.mineactionstandards.org/>, or through the UNMAS website at <http://www.mineaction.org>

### 4.4 USAID Monitoring and Reporting

4.4.1 The AOR/COR, with the support of the MEO, is responsible for monitoring compliance of activities by means of desktop reviews and site visits.

4.4.2 If at any time the project is found to be out of compliance with the IEE, the AOR/COR or MEO shall immediately notify the BEO.

4.4.3 A summary report of Mission's compliance relative to this IEE shall be sent to the BEO on an annual basis, normally in connection with preparation of the Mission's annual environmental compliance report required under ADS 203.3.8.5 and 204.3.3.

4.4.4 The BEO or his/her designated representative may conduct site visits or request additional information for compliance monitoring purposes to ensure compliance with this IEE, as necessary.

#### 4.5 Implementing Partner (IP) Monitoring and reporting

4.5.1 The originator of the proposed project has reviewed the potential environmental impacts of the action summarized in the foregoing IEE. De-mining is anticipated to have only beneficial effects on the living conditions and environment in NK. Given the unique nature of de-mining efforts, it would not be appropriate for USAID to establish special environmental guidelines, additional to those standards followed by the experts in this field. In particular, USAID requires that the Implementer follows the guidelines of the International Mine Action Standards (IMAS) approved by the UNMAS as notified on the IMAS project website at <http://www.mineactionstandards.org/>, or through the UNMAS website at <http://www.mineaction.org>

4.5.2 IPs shall report on environmental compliance requirements as part of their routine project reporting to USAID.

#### 5. Mandatory Inclusion of Requirements in Solicitations, Awards, Budgets and Workplans

5.1 Appropriate environmental compliance language, including limitations defined in Section 6, shall be incorporated into solicitations and awards for this activity and projects budgets shall provide for adequate funding and human resources to comply with requirements of this IEE.

5.2 Solicitations shall include Statements of Work with task(s) for meeting environmental compliance requirements and appropriate evaluation criteria.

5.3 Environmental mitigation and monitoring requirements, when available, shall also be included in solicitations and awards.

5.4 The IP shall incorporate conditions set forth in this IEE into their annual work plans.

5.5 The IP shall ensure annual work plans do not prescribe activities that are defined as limitations, as defined in Section 6.

5.6 The USAID Mission will include an indicator for environmental compliance as part of the project's performance monitoring plan.

6. Limitations of the IEE: This IEE does not cover activities (and therefore should changes in scope implicate any of the issues/activities listed below, a BEO-approved amendment shall be required), that:

6.1 Normally have a significant effect on the environment under §216.2(d)(1) [See [http://www.usaid.gov/our\\_work/environment/compliance/regulations.html](http://www.usaid.gov/our_work/environment/compliance/regulations.html)]

6.2 Support project preparation, project feasibility studies, engineering design for activities listed in §216.2(d)(1);

6.3 Affect endangered species;

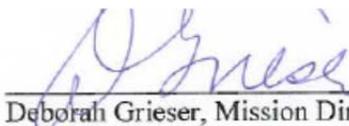
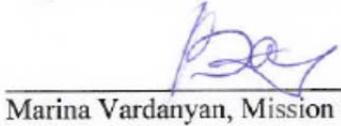
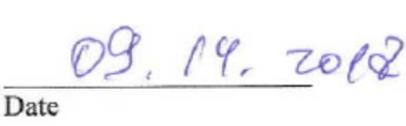
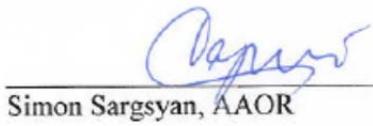
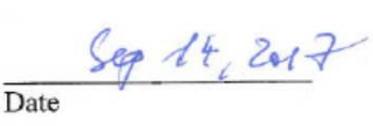
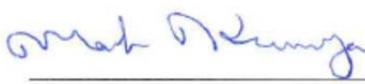
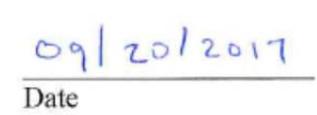
6.4 Result in wetland or biodiversity degradation or loss;

- 6.5 Support extractive industries (e.g. mining and quarrying);
- 6.6 Promote timber harvesting;
- 6.7 Provide support for regulatory permitting;
- 6.8 Result in privatization of industrial or infrastructure facilities;
- 6.9 Lead to new construction of buildings or other structures;
- 6.10 Assist the procurement (including payment in kind, donations, guarantees of credit) or use (including handling, transport, fuel for transport, storage, mixing, loading, application, cleanup of spray equipment, and disposal) of pesticides or activities involving procurement, transport, use, storage, or disposal of toxic materials and /or pesticides (cover all insecticides, fungicides, rodenticides, etc. covered under the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act); and
- 6.11 Procure or use genetically modified organisms.

## 7. Revisions

Under §216.3(a)(9), if new information becomes available that indicates that activities covered by the IEE might be considered major and their effect significant, or if additional activities are proposed that might be considered major and their adverse effect significant, this environmental threshold decision will be reviewed and, if necessary, revised by the Mission with concurrence by the BEO. It is the responsibility of the USAID COR/AOR to keep the MEO and BEO informed of any new information or changes in the activity that might require revision of this IEE.

8. Recommended Environmental Threshold Decision Clearances:

Approval :	 Deborah Grieser, Mission Director	 Date
Clearance:	 Marina Vardanyan, Mission Environmental Officer	 Date
Clearance :	 Simon Sargsyan, AAOR	 Date
Concurrence:	 Mark Kamiya E&E Bureau Environmental Officer	 Date

**Distribution:**

IEE File

MEO (to also provide a copy to AOR/COR)

Annex 11.1: Defined or Anticipated DOs, IRs, or sectors: Mining sector	1.2: Timeframe *	1.3: Geography	2: Climate Risks*	3: Adaptive Capacity*	4: Climate Risk Rating of DO or IR* [Enter rating for each DO or IR* High, Moderate, or Low]	5: Opportunities	6.1: Climate Risk Management Options	6.2: How Climate Risks Are Addressed in the Strategy*	7: Next Steps for Project and/or Activity Design*	8: Accepted Climate Risks*
Activity 1: Clearance of the remaining known anti-personnel (AP) minefields.	November 29, 2017 through September 30, 2019.	Within the Traditional territory of NK	N/A	N/A	Low	Schedule demining in a way to avoid severe weather events	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Activity 2: Clearance of the remaining known anti-tank (AT) minefields.	November 29, 2017 through September 30, 2017	Within the traditional territory of NK	N/A	N/A	Low	Schedule demining in a way to avoid severe weather events	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A