



Using data collected with the Global Positioning System (GPS), surveyors complete a minefield survey report back at camp.

Mark Yarmoshuk/DND

Canadian Forces technical advisors assist Mozambique demining program

A Canadian Landmine Fund initiative at the Accelerated Demining Program (ADP) in Maputo, Mozambique has provided \$120,000 in high-tech survey and mapping equipment and three Canadian Forces experts to develop a local capacity to use it.

Captain Mark Yarmoshuk, Master Warrant Officer Luc Lorrain and Warrant Officer Roger Landry of the Canadian Forces arrived in Maputo in

April 1999 for a one-year assignment. Their task was to develop the ADP's capability to manage minefield related information and use it to plan mine clearance.

Mozambique's deminers are among the most highly skilled in the world, but careful prioritization and planning is crucial to ensure the maximum benefit to the affected population.

The project has purchased satellite based positioning

equipment capable of recording minefield locations to an accuracy of less than one metre as well as database and mapping hardware and software.

Lorrain and Landry spent much of their year in Mozambique working at minefield sites to improve the technical and leadership skills of the ADP's minefield survey teams. Yarmoshuk was responsible for implementing the minefield database and geo-



Master Warrant Officer Luc Lorrain demonstrates GPS equipment in the field.

graphical information system (GIS), and ensuring that the project at ADP was well integrated with other Canadian sponsored mine action initiatives. These include a country wide Level One Socio-economic Impact Survey and assistance to the National Demining Institute.

With this new GIS equipment the ADP now has one of the most advanced integrated survey, database and mapping capabilities in Mozambique. This is good not only for mine action, but will also strengthen national capacity in survey and mapping for other development purposes.

During Mozambique's flood disaster in March and April 2000, the ADP was the only Mozambican organization able to collect infor-

mation related to infrastructure damage, relief camp locations and flood levels. ADP merged the information with existing databases on minefield locations, health posts and schools to produce maps showing the current flood situation. In the early weeks of the international response to the floods, the ADP acted as one of the primary suppliers of mapping information for the flood-affected regions.

Following the flood Yarmoshuk and Lorrain's assignments were extended for three months. They returned to Canada at the end of July confident that they had helped build a solid capability to record minefield locations accurately and use the resulting data to plan clearance activities more effectively. ●

IMPROVING MINE ACTION IN MOZAMBIQUE: CIDA aids coordination efforts

The Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) has been working with the Mozambique Government to improve the country's capacity to address its landmine problem.

In June 1999, Mozambique established a new and independent national mine action co-ordinating body, changing the status of the Comissão Nacional de Desminagem (CND) to the Instituto Nacional de Desminagem (IND), or National Institute for Demining. The move was aimed at developing an institution capable of coordinating and assisting mine action in Mozambique – one of the world's most mine affected countries – and to ensure that current and future efforts would meet the country's long-term requirements.

IND faced major challenges from its inception. Apart from the need for gathering financial and technical sup-

port, it had to cope with the harsh realities of setting up a coordinating body responsible for overseeing a series of crucial tasks ranging from highly technical mapping surveys to life-threatening demining operations.

In March 2000, Canada provided the services of consultant Georges Focsaneanu to reinforce the Institute's planning and strategic capacities. In April 2000, Focsaneanu organized a workshop of key Mozambique mine action players to ensure their participation in the development of a strategic plan. After his six-week mission, Focsaneanu left IND with a roadmap which will help it carry out its mandate and ensure proper levels of donor support.

CIDA will continue to work with Mozambique to ensure that mine action activities contribute to reconstruction and sustainable development in that country. ●