SUDAN

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

- **Sudan should accede to the Convention on Cluster Munitions (CCM) as a matter of priority.**
- **Sudan should submit an annual voluntary Article 7 report to the CCM and should ensure that reporting disaggregates submunitions from other unexploded ordnance (UXO) and that mine action data is recorded and reported according to International Mine Action Standards (IMAS) land release terminology.**
- **Sudan should comply with its obligations under international human rights law to clear cluster munition remnants (CMR) on territory under its jurisdiction or control as soon as possible.**
- **Sudan should make every effort to address suspected CMR contamination as soon as possible and should elaborate a work plan with how this will be achieved.**

UNDERSTANDING OF CMR CONTAMINATION

At the end of 2020, Sudan had five hazardous areas covering a total size estimated at just over 0.17km^2, of which there was one confirmed hazardous area (CHA) of 0.01km^2 and two suspected hazardous areas (SHAs) of 0.16km^2.[1] An overall estimate of CMR contamination is not available as two other SHAs, in South Kordofan and West Kordofan states, are in areas not under government control.[2] Three areas totalling 171,090m^2, all located in Blue Nile state, became accessible following the peace agreement with the Sudan's People Liberation Movement-North (SPLM-N) Malik Agar group, and were added to Sudan's information management database in 2020.[3]

Table 1: Cluster munition-contaminated area by state (at end 2020)[4]

State	CHAs	Area (m^2)	SHAs	Area (m^2)	Total SHA/CHA	Total area (m^2)
Blue Nile	1	12,016	2	159,074	3	171,090
South Kordofan	0	0	1	N/K	1	N/K
West Kordofan	0	0	1	N/K	1	N/K
Totals	**1**	**12,016**	**4**	**159,074**	**5**	**171,090**

In 2017, the Sudan National Mine Action Centre (NMAC), which assumed full national ownership for implementing mine action activities upon the United Nations Mine Action Office's (UNMAO's) closure in June 2011, reported that of the nine open areas reported by UNMAO in 2011, seven were cleared in 2011–13.[5] In March 2018, NMAC informed Mine Action Review that the size of the seven areas cleared during this period totalled 15,318m^2 and that 13 PM-1 submunitions were found and destroyed during clearance.[6] In June 2018, NMAC informed Mine Action Review that it had deployed a team to address the remaining hazardous area in West Kordofan, located in Aghabish village, Lagawa locality, which it later reported was cancelled during the year as no evidence of CMR was found.[7]

In the 1990s, Sudanese government forces are believed to have sporadically air dropped cluster munitions in its civil war with the Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army (SPLM/A). Government forces were reported as having used several types of cluster munitions, including Spanish-manufactured HESPIN 21; US-manufactured M42 and Mk118 (Rockeye), and a Brazilian copy; Chinese Type-81 dual-purpose improved conventional munitions (DPICM); Chilean-made PM-1; and Soviet-manufactured PTAB-1.5 and AO1-SCh submunitions. In 2012 and 2015, use of cluster munitions was recorded in five separate attacks on villages in South Kordofan state. Each attack involved air-dropped RBK-500 cluster munitions containing AO-2.5RT submunitions.[8]

In April 2017, the African Union-UN Mission in Darfur (UNAMID) reported two AO-1-Sch submunitions in North Darfur (at Al Mengara village in Al Liet locality). The villagers stated that the bombs were dropped in 2008, had been identified by UNAMID at that time, and that the military had stated that they would dispose of the items.[9] The Sudanese Armed Forces Engineers destroyed the items in February 2018 and no further CMR were reported or identified.[10]

OTHER EXPLOSIVE REMNANTS OF WAR AND LANDMINES

Sudan also has a significant problem with anti-personnel mines, anti-vehicle mines, and UXO, primarily as a result of the more than 20 years of civil war that led to the Comprehensive Peace Agreement in 2005 and South Sudan's independence in July 2011 (see Mine Action Review's *Clearing the Mines* report on Sudan for further information).

Since South Sudan's independence, new conflicts in Abyei and in Blue Nile and South Kordofan states have resulted in increased UXO contamination in Sudan.[11] The extent of mine and ERW contamination within the disputed area of Abyei and the Safe Demilitarized Border Zone (SDBZ) between Sudan and South Sudan is unknown due to security and political issues.[12]

NATIONAL OWNERSHIP AND PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

The Sudanese National Mine Action Authority (NMAA) and NMAC manage Sudan's mine action programme. Upon the independence of South Sudan, NMAC assumed full ownership of national mine action with responsibility for coordinating and supervising the implementation of all mine action activities, including quality assurance (QA), accreditation, and certification of clearance operators.

After starting an emergency programme in 2002, UNMAS re-established activities in Sudan in 2015, following an invitation from the Sudanese Government, in an advisory and support capacity.[13] As part of its mandate, UNMAS provides organisational and individual capacity development to NMAC.[14] In 2020, UNMAS supported the Information Management System for Mine Action (IMSMA) migration process; delivered training courses in quality management, project management, tasking procedures, and gender and diversity; supported the development of mine action policies; supported the review and finalisation of national mine action standards (NMAS) and the development of standing operating procedures (SOPs) based on the new NMAS; and supported the establishment of the mine action training centre and development of procedures.[15] In 2020, the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD), also supported the IMSMA migration process.[16]

In 2020, the Government of Sudan contributed a total of US$2 million to the running costs of NMAC and for demining activities. It has consistently funded the national mine action programme at this level for the past five years.[17] In addition, international donors contributed US$5.2 million through UNMAS to undertake mine action activities. UNMAS reported that, in 2020, a total of $15.8 million would be required to meet mine action needs in the country, including demining in South Kordofan and Blue Nile states and ERW response in Darfur.[18]

GENDER AND DIVERSITY

NMAC reported that it has a gender and diversity policy in place and that gender is mainstreamed in the national mine action strategic plan for 2019–23 and in the NMAS for explosive ordnance risk education (EORE), survey, clearance, and victim assistance. It stated that under those standards, all survey and community liaison teams are to be gender balanced, and that women and children are consulted during survey and community liaison activities. It said that gender is also considered in the prioritisation, planning, and tasking of survey and clearance, as per the NMAS and the new standard IMSMA forms.[19]

Mine action data are disaggregated by sex and age.[20] UNMAS reported working with NMAC and implementing partners to improve this aspect of mine action reporting and information management because sex and age disaggregated data of land release beneficiaries were not being captured in IMSMA.[21] New reporting tools were added to the system and new reporting formats were developed for the NGOs to include this information.[22]

NMAC reported that ethnic minority groups in affected communities are consulted during survey and considered during the planning of mine action activities. Survey teams are also structured to address all affected groups within a community, including ethnic minorities.[23]

NMAC says it always encourages women to apply for employment in the national programme, whether at the office level or in the field. In 2020, 30% of NMAC staff employed at the managerial or supervisory levels were women as were 20% of staff in operational positions.[24]

UNMAS reported that, as at April 2021, around 50% of the non-technical survey teams were female. UNMAS Sudan has twelve staff members, of whom two programme officers are women. In addition, in field roles with national operators contracted by UNMAS there is a female operations officer, quality assurance manager, finance manager, EORE manager, and victim assistance manager. The first woman deminer was employed in late 2019, and it is hoped that the number of female deminers will increase in the future.[25] NMAC acknowledged that there are obstacles to hiring women due to "local customs and traditions".[26]

In 2020–21 , NMAC took part in the Arab Regional Cooperation Programme (ARCP) Gender Equality and Inclusion programme run by the GICHD. Two participants from NMAC received training and guidance from experts in the Gender and Mine Action Programme (GMAP) on how to mainstream gender and diversity in all mine action activities. The NMAC then created a dedicated Gender Focal Point (GFP) who connected with other GFPs from the region to share experiences and good practice.[27]

INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING

In 2018, NMAC began upgrading the IMSMA software to the newer NG version, with assistance from the GICHD. Significant efforts to correct errors in the database were also undertaken.[28] In 2019, IMSMA training was delivered to the suboffices and operators on the new reporting system and reporting forms.[29] In 2020, GICHD and UNMAS continued to support the information management department within NMAC and it was planned that the data would be migrated to IMSMA Core but as at June 2021 this had yet to happen.[30]

PLANNING AND TASKING

In May 2021, NMAC reported that the new national mine action strategic plan for 2019–23 had been finalised but was still awaiting approval.[31] The plan aims to fulfil Sudan's Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC) obligations, and was developed in coordination with the GICHD to replace its previous national strategy for 2016–19.[32] NMAC stated that detailed annual work plans had been developed for each year under the new strategic plan.[33]

UNMAS reported that all task dossiers relating to survey and clearance are issued in accordance with agreed criteria and prioritisation. NMAC and UNMAS are working together on planning and tasking to meet the need for further development.[34] A systematic prioritisation system will be introduced as part of the new NMAS and linked with IMSMA with each SHA and CHA classified as high, medium, or low impact and prioritised accordingly.[35] This was due to be implemented in the course of 2021.[36]

In Sudan's 2018 APMBC Article 5 deadline extension request there was no specific mention of remaining CMR or plans for survey and clearance of CMR-contaminated areas. The extension request did contain a detailed work plan with annual survey and clearance projections on a state-by-state basis with a total planned release for all types of ordnance of 224 hazardous areas with a size of 26.5km^2 by 1 April 2023.[37] In 2020, in accordance with the terms of its latest APMBC Article 5 deadline extension, Sudan submitted an updated work plan for 1 March 2020–31 March 2023, though again this makes no mention of CMR.[38] This was the same in Sudan's latest APMBC Article 7 report, covering 2020.[39]

LAND RELEASE SYSTEM

STANDARDS AND LAND RELEASE EFFICIENCY

In May 2021, NMAC reported that a review of Sudan's NMAS had been completed and the revised standards have now been endorsed.[40] The NMAS were reviewed by a technical committee comprised of representatives from NMAC, UNMAS, and national operators with the support of an international expertise from UNAMID-ODO. UNMAS is working with NMAC and national operators to develop their SOPs to ensure they are compliant with the new NMAS.[41]

In 2020, NMAC completed 32 accreditations, 3 re-assessments, and 11 quality assurance visits. NMAC also took part in training of quality management systems and monitoring that was delivered by UNMAS.[42]

OPERATORS AND OPERATIONAL TOOLS

National operators that conducted demining operations in Sudan in 2020 were JASMAR for Human Security (JASMAR), National Units for Mine Action and Development (NUMAD), and Global Aid Hand.[43] In 2020, Sudan contracted two teams from SafeLane Global (SLG) whose planned arrival in March was delayed by the COVID-19 outbreak. Both teams arrived in November deploying in December 2020.[44]

According to NMAC, there was a significant increase in operational capacity from 2019 to 2020 following the addition of non-technical survey capacity in November 2019 by JASMAR and Global Aid Hand.[45] A further increase in capacity was planned for 2021 as new areas with suspected contamination from anti-personnel mines, anti-vehicle mines, and ERW have become accessible in Blue Nile and South Kordofan following peace talks with the SPLM-N. There is also a need to clear roads for the delivery of humanitarian assistance to these areas.[46]

In 2020, NMAC worked with UNMAS to develop a mechanical capacity for Sudan for road/route clearance. It is planned that this capacity would become operational from October 2021.[47]

Table 2: Operational clearance capacities deployed in 2020[48]

Operator	Manual clearance teams (MCTs)/ Multi-task teams (MTTs)	Total deminers*	Dogs and handlers	Machines
NUMAD	4 MCTs 9 MTTs	32 36	9 dogs & 9 handlers	0
JASMAR	2 MTTs	8	0	0
SLG	2 MTTs	10	0	0
Totals	**17**	**86**	**9 dogs & 9 handlers**	**0**

* Excluding team leaders, medics, and drivers.

Table 3: Operational survey capacities deployed in 2020[49]

Operator	NTS teams	Total NTS personnel*	TS teams	Total TS personnel*
JASMAR	3	12	Clearance capacity is also technical survey capacity	
NUMAD	0	0		
Global Aid Hand	7	28		
Totals	**10**	**40**		

NTS = Non-technical survey TS = Technical survey

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND PROGRESS TOWARDS COMPLETION

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS IN 2020

No CMR-contaminated area was released through survey or clearance in 2019 or 2020.

Two submunitions were destroyed during explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) spot tasks by SLG in 2020.[50]

PROGRESS TOWARDS COMPLETION

Sudan is not a State Party to the CCM and therefore does not have a specific clearance deadline under Article 4. Nonetheless, it has obligations under international human rights law to clear CMR as soon as possible.

In May 2017, NMAC informed Mine Action Review that Sudan was "with the spirit of the Convention on Cluster Munitions" and that the national authorities were aware of the convention and Sudan's current status as not yet having joined.[51] In May 2021, NMAC stated that there had been no developments in 2020 with regard to Sudan's accession to the CCM.[52]

One of the main impediments to mine action operations is the security situation and the lack of access to most of the known impacted communities in Blue Nile and South Kordofan states.[53] During 2020, following the signature of a preliminary peace deal between Sudan's transitional government and the head of one of the two factions of the SPLM-N rebel group, NMAC in cooperation with UNMAS began to deploy teams to clear roads and other routes to facilitate the delivery of humanitarian assistance to the Blue Nile state.[54] Sudan also reported in 2020 that it was in talks with Chad to implement a joint initiative to clear the border areas between the two countries.[55]

In addition, Sudan reported that obstacles to completion include inadequate funding for mine action, rising inflation in Sudan, lack of sufficient demining equipment, the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, and the impact of climate change on extended rainy seasons. NMAC reported that the national operators were able to continue to deploy during 2020 in accordance with COVID-19 guidelines. The teams from international operator SLG were delayed but were able to deploy in December.[56]

PLANNING FOR RESIDUAL RISK AFTER COMPLETION

Sudan has a plan to deal with residual risk and liability post-completion.[57] As at May 2021, NMAC has trained a few teams to deal with any residual contamination in the eastern states. However, it is planned that in the long term Sudan will establish a sustainable national capacity within the military or police.[58]

1 Email from Hatim Khamis Rahama, Technical Advisor, 10 June 2021.

2 Email from Hatim Khamis Rahama, NMAC, 1 May 2019; and interview in Geneva, 24 May 2019.

3 Emails from Hatim Khamis Rahama, NMAC, 19 May 2021; and Aimal Safi, Senior Operations and QM Advisor, UNMAS, 12 April 2021.

4 Email from Hatim Khamis Rahama, NMAC, 10 June 2021.

5 Emails from Hatim Khamis Rahama, NMAC, 14 June 2017; and Ali Abd Allatif Ibrahim, NMAC, 18 May 2017. In June 2016, however, NMAC had reported that no CMR-contaminated areas were "recorded as remaining hazards to be cleared" and that no separate survey or clearance operations for CMR occurred in 2015 and claimed that no cluster munitions had been found in all mine action activities "to date". Email from Ahmed Elser Ahmed Ali, Chief of Operations, NMAC, 8 June 2016.

6 Email from Hatim Khamis Rahama, NMAC, 3 March 2018.

7 Emails from Hatim Khamis Rahama, NMAC, 1 May 2019 and 14 June 2018.

8 See Cluster Munition Monitor, "Country Profile: Sudan: Cluster Munition Ban Policy", updated 23 August 2014.

9 Email from Dandan Xu, Associate Programme Management Officer, UNMAS, 12 July 2017.

10 Email from Colin Williams, Deputy Programme Manager, Ordnance Disposal Office (ODO), UNAMID, 1 June 2018.

11 Human Rights Watch, "Under Siege: Indiscriminate Bombing and Abuses in Sudan's Southern Kordofan and Blue Nile States", 6 December 2012; "Unexploded Ordnance Kill 13 People in South Kordofan", All Africa, 10 August 2013; and UN, "UNMAS Annual Report 2012", New York, August 2013, p. 10.

12 UNMAS, "2019 Portfolio of Mine Action Projects, Sudan".

13 UNMAS, "Sudan (excluding Darfur)", Updated March 2019, at: http://bit.ly/2Y3IDUg.

14 Email from Aimal Safi, UNMAS, 31 May 2020.

15 Emails from Aimal Safi, UNMAS, 12 April 2021; and Hatim Khamis Rahama, NMAC, 19 May 2021.

16 Email from Hatim Khamis Rahama, NMAC, 19 May 2021.

17 Ibid.

18 UNMAS, "Sudan (excluding Darfur)", Updated October 2020, at: http://bit.ly/3c7Lb9y.

19 Emails from Hatim Khamis Rahama, NMAC, 19 May 2021.

20 Email from Hatim Khamis Rahama, NMAC, 9 April 2020.

21 Email from Aimal Safi, UNMAS, 31 May 2020.

22 Email from Aimal Safi, UNMAS, 22 July 2020.

23 Email from Hatim Khamis Rahama, NMAC, 19 May 2021.

24 Ibid.

25 Email from Aimal Safi, UNMAS, 12 April 2021.

26 Emails from Hatim Khamis Rahama, NMAC, 1 May 2019 and 10 September 2020.

27 Email from GICHD, 29 June 2021.

28 Emails from Ahmed Elser Ahmed Ali, NMAC, 9 May and 8 June 2016; and Third APMBC Article 5 deadline Extension Request, March 2018, pp. 37–38.

29 Email from Hatim Khamis Rahama, NMAC, 10 September 2020.

30 Emails from Hatim Khamis Rahama, NMAC, 19 May 2021; and Aimal Safi, UNMAS, 30 June 2021.

31 Ibid.

32 Emails from Hatim Khamis Rahama, NMAC, 1 May 2019 and 13 May 2018.

33 Email from Hatim Khamis Rahama, NMAC, 1 May 2019.

34 Email from Aimal Safi, UNMAS, 31 May 2020.

35 Sudan Multiyear Operational Plan 2020 to 2023, p. 14.

36 Email from Aimal Safi, UNMAS, 12 April 2021.

37 2018 Article 5 deadline Extension Request Detailed Narrative, 17 August 2018, Table 14, p. 18.

38 Ibid., Table 14, p. 21.

39 APMBC Article 7 Report (for 2020).

40 Email from Hatim Khamis Rahama, NMAC, 19 May 2021.

41 Email from Aimal Safi, UNMAS, 12 April 2021.

42 Email from Hatim Khamis Rahama, NMAC, 19 May 2021; and APMBC Article 7 Report (for 2020), Form 2.2.

43 Email from Hatim Khamis Rahama, NMAC, 19 May 2021.

44 Ibid.

45 Email from Hatim Khamis Rahama, NMAC, 9 April 2020.

46 Emails from Aimal Safi, UNMAS, 12 April 2021; and Hatim Khamis Rahama, NMAC, 19 May 2021.

47 Emails from Aimal Safi, UNMAS, 12 April and 30 June 2021; and Hatim Khamis Rahama, NMAC, 19 May 2021.

48 Emails from Hatim Khamis Rahama, NMAC, 19 May 2021; and Aimal Safi, UNMAS, 30 June 2021.

49 Ibid.

50 Email from Hatim Khamis Rahama, NMAC, 19 May 2021.

51 Email from Ali Abd Allatif Ibrahim, NMAC, 18 May 2017.

52 Email from Hatim Khamis Rahama, NMAC, 19 May 2021.

53 Sudan Multiyear Operational Plan 2020 to 2023, p. 14.

54 Statement of Sudan on Article 5, 18MSP, 16–20 November 2020.

55 Statement of Sudan on Cooperation and Assistance, 18MSP, 16-20 November 2020.

56 Email from Hatim Khamis Rahama, NMAC, 19 May 2021.

57 Email from Hatim Khamis Rahama, NMAC, 9 April 2020.

58 Email from Hatim Khamis Rahama, NMAC, 19 May 2021.