

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

- Sudan should accede to the Convention on Cluster Munitions (CCM) as a matter of priority.
- 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 the last remaining area suspected to contain CMR as soon as possible and should elaborate a work plan with how this will be achieved.
- Sudan 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.

## UNDERSTANDING OF AP MINE CONTAMINATION

As at April 2020, Sudan's National Mine Action Centre (NMAC) informed Mine Action Review that only one area suspected to contain CMR contamination remained in Sudan.<sup>1</sup> The NMAC reported that the area, with an unknown size in South Kordofan state, was located in an area not under government control.<sup>2</sup>

The NMAC previously reported that at the end of 2017, a total of two areas suspected to contain CMR contamination remained to be addressed in Sudan, the area in South Kordofan and another in West Kordofan.<sup>3</sup> 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.<sup>4</sup>

In 2017, 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.<sup>5</sup> In March 2018, NMAC informed Mine Action Review that the size of the seven areas cleared during this period totalled 15,318m<sup>2</sup> and that 13 PM-1 submunitions were found and destroyed during clearance.<sup>6</sup> NMAC has not reported any survey or clearance of CMR since 2013. It stated that no new CMR contamination was recorded in 2016–19.<sup>7</sup>

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 AO-1-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.<sup>8</sup>

In April 2017, the African Union–United Nations Mission in Darfur (UNAMID) reported the presence of two AO-1-Sch submunitions in North Darfur (at Al Mengara village in Al Liet locality). The villagers reported 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.<sup>9</sup> The Sudanese Armed Forces Engineers destroyed the items in February 2018 and no further CMR were reported or identified.<sup>10</sup>

## 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 2020* 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.<sup>11</sup> 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.<sup>12</sup>

## NATIONAL OWNERSHIP AND PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

The Sudanese National Mine Action Authority (NMAA) and the NMAC manage Sudan's mine action programme. Upon the independence of South Sudan, the 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.<sup>13</sup> As part of its mandate, UNMAS provides organisational and individual capacity development to the NMAC.<sup>14</sup>

Sudan is part of the Arab Regional Cooperation Programme (ARPC) and as part of this programme, which is coordinated by the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD), the NMAA attend regional trainings and workshops. In December 2019, the NMAA attended the ARPC annual conference where they discussed and approved recently translated IMAS into Arabic and shared experiences of their own national mine action standards (NMAS).<sup>15</sup>

In 2019, 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 four years.<sup>16</sup> In addition, international donors contributed US\$5.84 million through UNMAS for mine action in Sudan. 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.<sup>17</sup>

In 2018, Sudan reported that as a result of enhanced cooperation, both nationally and internationally, in particular stemming from a meeting on Sudan of the APMBC's Committee on the Enhancement of Cooperation and Assistance's "individualised approach" initiative in 2017, a number of positive developments had resulted. This initiative, Sudan reported, alongside nationally convened mine action events and donor field visits to mine-affected areas, had resulted in an increase in earmarked funds to the mine action programme.<sup>18</sup>

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## GENDER AND DIVERSITY

In 2019, 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 national mine action standards. 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 taken into account in the prioritisation, planning, and tasking of survey and clearance, as per the national standards and the new standard IMSMA forms.<sup>19</sup>

Mine action data are disaggregated by sex and age.<sup>20</sup> 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.<sup>21</sup>

The NMAC says it always encourages women to apply for employment in the national programme, whether at the office level or in the field. Positively, it reported that almost 40% of NMAC staff employed at the managerial or supervisory levels are women and 50% of non-technical survey teams are female. The first female deminer has also been employed but the NMAC acknowledged that there are obstacles to hiring women due to "local customs and traditions".<sup>22</sup> UNMAS reported that, as at May 2020, around 55% of the new non-technical survey teams are female. One female deminer started in late 2019, and it is hoped to increase the number of female deminers in the future.<sup>23</sup>

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## INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING

As at April 2020, NMAC informed Mine Action Review that it was using the IMSMA legacy version in parallel a newer version: IMSMA New Generation (NG).<sup>24</sup> In 2018, NMAC began a process of 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.<sup>25</sup> In 2019, IMSMA training was delivered to the suboffices and operators on the new reporting system and reporting forms.<sup>26</sup>

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## PLANNING AND TASKING

In May 2019, NMAC reported that a new national mine action strategic plan for 2019–23 had been finalised and was awaiting approval. The plan aims to fulfil Sudan's APMBC obligations, and was developed in coordination with the GICHD to replace its previous national strategy for 2016–19.<sup>27</sup> NMAC stated that detailed annual work plans had been developed for each year under the new strategic plan.<sup>28</sup> As at April 2020, the strategic plan was still awaiting approval.<sup>29</sup>

In Sudan's 2018 APMB 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<sup>2</sup> by 1 April 2023.<sup>30</sup> In 2020, in accordance with the terms of its latest APMB Article 5 deadline extension, Sudan submitted an updated work plan for 1 March 2020–31 March 2023, though again this make no mention of CMR.<sup>31</sup> Sudan reported to Mine Action Review that clearance of remaining CMR contamination would be possible by 2021 if there was a change in the security situation and the last known registered cluster munition-contaminated area was under Sudanese Government control.<sup>32</sup>

## LAND RELEASE SYSTEM

### STANDARDS AND LAND RELEASE EFFICIENCY

In May 2019, NMAC reported that a review of Sudan's NMAS had been completed and the revised standards were awaiting endorsement.<sup>33</sup> As at August 2020, this was still the situation.<sup>34</sup>

During 2019, NMAC completed 46 accreditations and 33 QA visits. During 2019, the accreditation of Global Aid Hand was reviewed and survey and explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) were added to their existing explosive ordnance risk education (EORE) accreditation.<sup>35</sup>

### OPERATORS AND OPERATIONAL TOOLS

In 2019, no international NGOs were demining in Sudan. National operators are JASMAR for Human Security (JASMAR), National Units for Mine Action and Development (NUMAD), the Friends for Peace and Development Organization (FPDO), and Global Aid Hand.<sup>36</sup>

**Table 1: Operational clearance capacities deployed in 2019<sup>37</sup>**

Operator	Manual clearance teams (MCTs)/ Multi-task teams (MTTs)	Total deminers*	Dogs and handlers	Machines
FPDO	2 MCTS	16	0	0
NUMAD	4 MCTs	32	9 dogs & 3 handlers	0
	5 MTTs	20		
JASMAR	3 MTTs	12	0	0
<b>Totals</b>	<b>14 teams</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>9/3</b>	<b>0</b>

\* Excluding team leaders, medics, and drivers.

**Table 2: Operational survey capacities deployed in 2019<sup>38</sup>**

Operator	NTS teams	Total NTS personnel*	TS teams	Total TS personnel*
JASMAR	3	6	Clearance capacity is also technical survey capacity	
NUMAD	0	0		
Global Aid Hand	7	14		
<b>Totals</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>20</b>		

NTS = Non-technical survey TS = Technical survey

\*Excluding team leaders, medics, and drivers

According to the NMAC, there was no change in operational capacity from 2018 to 2019 until November when additional non-technical survey capacity was deployed by JASMAR and Global Aid Hand.<sup>39</sup> According to UNMAS, the MCTs and MTTs were not only working on anti-personnel mine clearance but also on priority areas contaminated with anti-vehicle mines and ERW. This is because most of the anti-personnel mined areas are located in Sudan People's Liberation Movement-North (SPLMN)-controlled areas.<sup>40</sup> The clearance capacity was not all operational throughout the year with the FPDO deployed only until May 2019. In addition, two of the NUMAD MTTs were tasked with investigating residual risk in Kassala state, which was announced free from known mined areas and ERW in 2018. Some of the teams only became operational in October 2019 as the season in most of Sudan, especially in South Kordofan and Blue Nile states, runs from October to June the following year.<sup>41</sup>

# LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND PROGRESS TOWARDS COMPLETION

## LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS IN 2019

There was no reported survey or clearance of CMR-contaminated areas conducted in 2019. In 2018, one recorded area of suspected CMR contamination in West Kordofan was cancelled by NUMAD after no evidence of cluster munitions was found in the area.<sup>42</sup>

## 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.<sup>43</sup> In April 2020, NMAC stated that there had been no developments with regard to Sudan's accession to the CCM in 2019.<sup>44</sup>

The main impediment 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.<sup>45</sup> During 2019, access to South Kordofan and Blue Nile improved, which allowed for roads to be assessed and cleared opening access for humanitarian assistance and population movement. It is hoped that with the establishment of the transitional government and the onset of peace talks between government and opposition groups this may lead to a comprehensive nationwide peace agreement.

In June 2020, Sudan's transitional government and the head of one of the two factions of the rebel group, Sudan People's Liberation Movement-North (SPLM-N), signed a preliminary peace deal. The transitional government and rebel groups have until February 2021 to finalise a comprehensive deal.<sup>46</sup> This would improve accessibility for the mine action programme but, Sudan reports, it would also pose a challenge as roads and other routes will need to be cleared before people can move safely and humanitarian assistance can be provided and Sudan does not currently have the capacity to do this.<sup>47</sup>

In addition, Sudan reported that obstacles to completion include: inadequate funding for mine action, outdated demining equipment that is not fit for purpose, poor infrastructure which also impedes access, and difficult climatic conditions.<sup>48</sup> A further significant impediment to progress is the lack of clearance capacity formerly provided by international operators. Sudan has made numerous requests for technical and logistical support and appeals for international operators to return.

1 Email from Hatim Khamis Rahama, Technical Advisor, NMAC, 9 April 2020.

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

3 Email from Hatim Khamis Rahama, NMAC, 3 March 2018; and interview in Geneva, 24 May 2019. NMAC previously reported to Mine Action Review that each area had an estimated size of 1km<sup>2</sup>. In May 2019, it clarified that this had been a reporting error.

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

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 and 3 March 2018 and 9 April 2020; and from Ali Abd Allatif Ibrahim, NMAC, 18 May 2017.

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: [bit.ly/2Y3IDUg](http://bit.ly/2Y3IDUg).

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

15 Email from Hayder AlShakeri, Programme Officer, GICHD, 13 August 2020.

16 APMBC Article 7 Report (covering 2019), Form F.

17 UNMAS, "Sudan (excluding Darfur)", Updated March 2019.

18 Statement of Sudan, APMBC 17th Meeting of States Parties, Geneva, 28 November 2018.

19 Emails from Hatim Khamis Rahama, NMAC, 9 April 2020; and from Aimal Safi, UNMAS, 31 May 2020.

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

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

22 Email from Hatim Khamis Rahama, NMAC, 1 May 2019 and 10 September 2020.

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

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

25 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.

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

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

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

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

30 2018 Article 5 deadline Extension Request Detailed Narrative, 17 August 2018, Table 14, p. 18.

31 *Ibid.*, p. 21.

32 Emails from Hatim Khamis Rahama, NMAC, 9 April and 24 August 2020.

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

34 *Ibid.*, 9 April 2020.

35 Email from Aimal Safi, UNMAS, 11 August 2020.

36 Article 7 Report (covering 2019), Form F.

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

38 *Ibid.*

39 *Ibid.*

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

41 Email from Aimal Safi, UNMAS, 7 September 2020.

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

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

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

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

46 Al-Jazeera, "Sudan's government signs initial peace deal with rebel group", 25 June 2020, at: [bit.ly/3192XoV](http://bit.ly/3192XoV).

47 Sudan Multiyear Operational Plan 2020 to 2023, p. 36.

48 *Ibid.*