NIGERIA

MINE ACTION REVIEW

CLEARING THE MINES 2021

ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE: 1 DECEMBER 2021
EXTENSION REQUESTED TO 31 DECEMBER 2025

KEY DATA

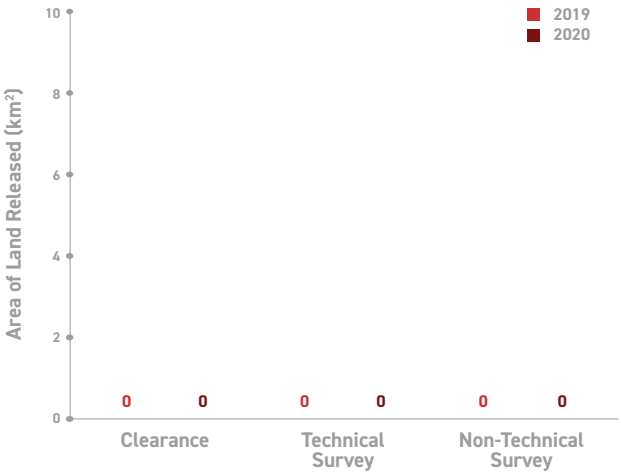
ANTI-PERSONNEL (AP) MINE CONTAMINATION:

EXTENT UNKNOWN

AP MINE CLEARANCE IN 2020
0KM²

AP MINES DESTROYED IN 2020
0

LAND RELEASE OUTPUT



CURRENT LIKELIHOOD OF MEETING 2025 CLEARANCE TARGET *(as per the Oslo Action Plan commitment)*: **LOW**

KEY DEVELOPMENTS

Nigeria experienced an increase in explosive ordnance casualties in 2020, recording 120 people killed in 2020 and 150 people injured. In November 2020, Nigeria requested a one-year extension of its Article 5 deadline until the end of 2021 and in May 2021 requested four more years until the end of 2025. Few steps have been made toward the establishment of an effective national mine action programme.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

- **Nigeria should urgently implement its stated intention of developing a national strategy harnessing the resources of security forces and humanitarian organisations to clear anti-personnel mines, including those of an improvised nature.**
- **Nigeria should establish a national mine action authority to set policy and coordinate implementation of a national mine action strategy.**
- **Nigeria should establish a central mine action database providing humanitarian agencies timely access to comprehensive data on the location, type, and extent of mine contamination. It should also develop reporting forms and procedures to ensure collection of accurate data, including explosive incidents disaggregated by device.**
- **Nigeria should encourage and facilitate the provision of assistance and expertise from humanitarian demining organisations and continue to provide risk education to the civilian population.**
- **Nigeria should submit annual Article 7 reports providing comprehensive, disaggregated data and commentary on the progress of mine action.**

DEMINING CAPACITY

MANAGEMENT CAPACITY

- No national mine action authority or mine action centre

NATIONAL OPERATORS

- Army
- Police

INTERNATIONAL OPERATORS

- Danish Refugee Council Humanitarian and Disarmament and Peacebuilding Sector (DRC) (formerly Danish Demining Group, DDG)
- Mines Advisory Group (MAG)

OTHER ACTORS

- United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS)

UNDERSTANDING OF AP MINE CONTAMINATION

Nigeria experiences heavy casualties from widespread use of improvised explosive devices, particularly mines of an improvised nature, by Boko Haram and other jihadist groups in the north eastern states of Adamawa, Borno, and Yobe. The extent of contamination is not known.[1]

Deteriorating security has prevented systematic survey of contamination and the nature of the insurgency has not yet allowed clearly delineated areas of contamination to be identified. Instead, the scale of the mine threat is measured in the number of explosive incidents rather than the size of suspected or confirmed hazardous areas (see Table 1). However, the United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS) reported "it is suspected that significant contamination exists".[2] Nigeria reports improvised mines and explosive devices affect a total of 34 Local Government Areas (LGAs) in three states, including 18 out of 27 LGAs in Borno, the worst-affected state, five of 21 LGAs in Adamawa state, and 11 out of 17 LGAs in Yobe.[3]

The main threat is posed by improvised mines on roads. UNMAS recorded 186 incidents of improvised explosive devices placed on roads in 2020, 59% more than the previous year. It recorded another 105 road incidents in the first three months of 2021.[4] UNMAS determined that more than 100 devices placed on roads in 2019 were victim-activated, including by pressure plates. The few pressure-plate devices that were inspected were capable of being detonated by the weight of a person, meaning that they are covered by the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC).[5]

The findings were consistent with the results of a scoping mission by UNMAS to assess explosive threats in Adamawa, Borno, and Yobe states in 2017. It noted widespread use of pressure-plate devices along the main supply routes which were configured to detonate from the weight of a person and function as very large anti-personnel mines.[6] Borno state was the most severely impacted. Civilians reported the presence of victim-activated devices in 76% of LGAs in Borno; 59% of LGAs in Yobe; and 52% of LGAs in Adamawa.[7]

UNMAS has found no evidence of jihadist groups using industrially manufactured anti-personnel mines.[8] Boko Haram and other armed groups emplace mines of an improvised nature and other devices on an ad hoc basis particularly targeting key roads such as the Maiduguri-Konduga-Bama axis and the Bama-Banki or Bama-Pulka-Gwoza roads as well as some villages and water points.[9]

As a result of operations to counter the insurgency, Nigeria reports that, in addition to improvised mines, the northern BAY states are also affected by unexploded air-dropped bombs, grenades, rockets, mortars, artillery, and tank shells.[10]

Table 1: Explosive ordnance incidents in north-east Nigeria (2016–20)[11]

Year	Road Planted IED	Person Borne IED	Vehicle Borne IED	Other IED	ERW	Total incidents
2016	42	56	1	0	0	99
2017	165	211	4	1	0	381
2018	149	99	10	0	9	267
2019	117	32	4	4	32	189
2020	186	23	5	2	31	247

NATIONAL OWNERSHIP AND PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

Nigeria is in the process of creating a national mine action programme. In 2020, it set up an inter-ministerial committee to lead the process, including the Ministries of Defence, Foreign Affairs, and Humanitarian Affairs, the Office of Disaster Management and Social Development, the National Emergency Management Agency, the Northeast Development Commission, and the National Commission for Refugees, Migrants and IDPs. In 2021, Nigeria said it would expand the inter-ministerial committee to include the Police, the National Security and Civil Defence Corps, and the Federal Ministry of Education.[12]

The committee met for the first time in April 2021 when members travelled to Borno state capital Maiduguri to meet mine action stakeholders. The mine action community, however, has little information about the frequency or substance of the committee's meetings and little evidence, as of June 2021, that it had made progress in developing a national mine action programme.

A key objective of Nigeria's Article 5 deadline extension request is creating a national mine action centre to develop and coordinate a comprehensive response to the threat from mines and explosive devices and strengthen cooperation with implementing partners.[13] Nigeria envisages the NMAC will employ about 50 people with responsibilities that include developing a strategic plan; coordinating survey, clearance, and risk education; managing a national database; quality control, monitoring, and evaluation; capacity building; and victim assistance.[14] By June 2021, participants in the mine action sector said authorities had yet to move beyond a statement of intentions.[15]

UNMAS has worked in Nigeria since 2018 providing training and technical support to strengthen explosive hazard management, collect data on explosive incidents. In 2020, UNMAS provided explosive ordnance awareness training to national authorities and humanitarian agencies as well as explosive ordnance risk education (EORE) to populations affected by conflict and training to strengthen explosive hazard management capacity. This included first-responder training to 117 National Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC) frontline officers, and first aid and emergency trauma training for 247 the National Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC) and police explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) officers. UNMAS also conducted Geographic Positioning System training for EOD police and EORE training for 32 members of the National Emergency Management Agency.[16]

A Mine Action Working Sub-group (MAWSG) co-chaired by the Ministry of Reconstruction, Rehabilitation and Resettlement and UNMAS, met at least once a quarter, attended mainly by MAG, DRC, and Youths Awaken Foundation, and occasionally attended by other participants. Meetings paused for several months in 2020 because of the COVID-19 pandemic but later resumed in a virtual format and by the autumn was meeting in person again. The group supported preparation of Nigeria's Article 5 deadline extension request, collating data on types and location of contamination, casualties and EORE activities.[17]

After delays due to the pandemic, UNMAS conducted an assessment of training needs for the Nigeria Police Force in Borno and Adamawa states in October 2020. A training officer deployed to Maiduguri trained 26 police EOD personnel in improvised explosive device disposal (IEDD). The course covered scene management, questioning of witnesses, how to handle a witness, risk assessment, render-safe procedures, suicide vehicle/suicide bomber situation management, and a refresher training regarding conventional munitions and IED components.

GENDER AND DIVERSITY

Nigeria, lacking a mine action programme, has not taken up gender in the context of mine action.

The UN humanitarian response programme for 2019–21 unveiled in December 2018 said all groups living in, or potentially returning to, areas suspected or known to be contaminated with mines or other explosive devices would be involved in all stages of mine action programming. It called for "age- and gender-appropriate risk education activities to minimize loss of life and injuries as a result of explosive remnants of war", targeting 200,000 girls, 178,000 boys, 51,000 women, and 45,000 men.[18]

MAG employed 12 women in its overall staff of 26 and reported that seven community liaison teams conducting risk assessment and explosive ordnance risk education were gender balanced, comprising one female and one male member of staff. By 2021 it had one woman team leader and said it aimed to increase the number of women in supervisory roles.[19]

UNMAS trained 16 women and 16 men as Emergency Trauma Management trainers for the NSCDC.[20] It also commissioned a gender baseline assessment to identify ways of strengthening the EOD capabilities of security service providers, notably the Nigeria Police Force and the NSCDC, in north-east Nigeria. The assessment conducted between August 2020 and February 2021 found the security services had not embraced gender mainstreaming. It called for more women officers and the changing of obsolete recruitment practices and discriminatory regulations, and said UNMAS should engage with both organisations on the need for gender parity.[21]

INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING

Nigeria does not have a national information management system or database recording hazardous areas or explosive incidents. UNMAS manages an Information Management System for Mine Action (IMSMA) Core database that collects data from mine action stakeholders and humanitarian organisations on explosive incidents, the results of surveys, and EORE beneficiary data.[22] The planned NMAC would be the custodian of the national database for mine action, responsible for maintaining it accurately and up to date.

UNMAS and its mine action partners, MAG and DRC, reviewed IMSMA victim forms in 2020 and adopted a version updated by MAG which collects information such as the victim's population group, place and nature of injury, occupation, age group, gender, the activity the victim was engaged in when the incident happened, if the area was known as a dangerous area, if the victim had received risk education in the past, and the medical facility where the victim received treatment.[23] In late 2020, however, DRC and MAG were discussing with UNMAS the way the information is used and shared.[24]

PLANNING AND TASKING

Nigeria did not have any mine action institutions or plans in 2020. In a request for an extension to its Article 5 deadline submitted in May 2021 Nigeria proposed to:

- establish a National Mine Action Centre to address the threat;
- develop National Mine Action Standards;
- strengthen the coordination and delivery of EORE;
- continue to collect information on the threat posed by anti-personnel mines; and
- develop a national mine action strategy and a work plan for implementation.[25]

The request indicates that the establishment of a national mine action centre, development of National Mine Action Standards, and a study visit to another mine action programme are all planned for 2021 to 2022. The national mine action strategy will be developed "within 2022" when Nigeria proposes to convene a strategy and prioritisation workshop with participation by the inter-ministerial committee, the Nigerian Police EOD unit, UNMAS, national and international NGOs, and civil society organisations.[26]

LAND RELEASE SYSTEM

STANDARDS AND LAND RELEASE EFFICIENCY

Nigeria does not have national mine action standards and has identified development of NMAS as an objective in its Article 5 extension request which it expects to address in 2021 and 2022.[27]

The extension request said Nigeria would release land through non-technical and technical survey, by clearance and by cancellation, referring to a process that apparently would be applied before survey. The process draws attention to a concern that communities may exaggerate the extent of contamination and their reports will be subjected to "an integrity test". If they fail the test, the area would be cancelled for purposes of survey. More controversially, the request says such areas would also be declared safe.[28] The comment underscores the challenge Nigeria faces building up credible baseline contamination data at a time when access by trained survey teams is severely curtailed by insecurity.

Nigeria's extension request noted the need for a comprehensive programme of capacity building for its security services and national commercial operators. It said the capacity of the Nigeria Police Force (EOD Unit) was "far from adequate to address our current needs" and called for training and supply of modern equipment.[29]

OPERATORS

All clearance of explosive ordnance is conducted by the Nigerian army and police with support from paramilitary groups.[30] The IEDD capacity of the Nigerian security forces is not known. After conducting a needs assessment with police commanders in Borno and Adamawa states, UNMAS organised an IEDD course for security forces in Maiduguri in October 2020 that provided training for 26 operators.[31] It also provided training in non-technical survey and EORE to 14 members of the Youths Awaken Foundation, a national NGO.[32]

MAG started working in Nigeria in 2016 focusing at that time on arms management and destruction. In 2020, it employed 26 staff (5 international and 21 national). Working from a head office in Abuja and a field office in the Borno state's capital Maiduguri, it operated seven teams conducting risk assessments and delivering EORE, mainly in Borno state LGAs Bama, Damboa, Dikwa, Gwoza, Jere, Mafa, and Maiduguri, and Adamawa state LGA Madagali. MAG expected to expand capacity in 2021.[33]

DRC's Humanitarian and Disarmament and Peacebuilding Sector programme (formerly DDG) operated with 57 staff, of whom four were international staff, conducting a mixture of remote survey and EORE as part of a wider programme of humanitarian assistance. In addition to DRC's head office in Abuja, the demining programme worked from Maiduguri and six other offices in Borno state, four offices in Adamawa state, and five offices in Yobe state. DRC also puts emphasis on training community focal points building community awareness of explosive threats and seeking to increase community reporting on explosive incidents and contamination. DRC has also provided EOD Levels 1 and 2 training for Nigerian police. [34]

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND ARTICLE 5 COMPLIANCE

SURVEY IN 2020

MAG conducted 21 non-technical surveys in 2020 as a result of which it confirmed seven hazardous areas. Access to many areas of the three north-eastern states was blocked by insecurity so MAG conducted Remote Contamination Baseline Assessments (RCBAs). These consist of focus group interviews in camps for internally displaced persons, usually with five to twelve participants from the same community facilitated by MAG's community liaison teams. The interviews, based on a standardised list of questions collect data on types of conflict experienced, the types and impact of explosive ordnance encountered, and incidents causing casualties. Information provided by participants is cross-checked against secondary testimony of accidents or recorded findings of explosive items.[35]

MAG said it conducted 372 RCBAs between mid-November 2019 and early-December 2020 and from 251 of them concluded the presence of contamination in particular locations with "high confidence".[36] DRC conducted 238 non-technical survey assessments and was considering adopting the RCBA approach to get round the constraints on access to communities.[37]

CLEARANCE IN 2020

No record exists of clearance conducted by Nigerian security forces and paramilitary groups.

ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE AND COMPLIANCE

APMBC ENTRY INTO FORCE FOR NIGERIA: 1 MARCH 2002

↓

ORIGINAL ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE: 1 MARCH 2012

↓

FIRST EXTENSION REQUEST DEADLINE (ONE YEAR): 31 DECEMBER 2021

↓

SECOND EXTENDED DEADLINE SOUGHT (4-YEAR EXTENSION REQUEST): 31 DECEMBER 2025

↓

ON TRACK TO MEET ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE: NO, EXTENSION REQUESTED TO 31 DECEMBER 2025

LIKELIHOOD OF COMPLETING CLEARANCE BY 2025 (OSLO ACTION PLAN COMMITMENT): LOW

Under Nigeria's original Article 5 deadline, Nigeria was required to destroy all anti-personnel mines in mined areas under its jurisdiction or control as soon as possible, but not later than 1 March 2012. At the Eleventh Meeting of States Parties in November 2011, Nigeria declared it had cleared all known anti-personnel mines from its territory.[38]

In November 2020, prompted by the growth of jihadist insurgency making extensive use of improvised mines in northern states, Nigeria requested and received a one-year extension until 31 December 2021 in which to prepare a detailed assessment of contamination and propose steps to mitigate it. UNMAS, in consultation with MAG, DRC, and Youths Awaken Foundation prepared an initial draft which was first reviewed by the APMBC Implementation Support Unit and then forwarded to the Ministry of Defence to provide government input.[39]

Nigeria submitted a follow-on request in May 2021 asking for a four-year extension until 31 December 2025. It acknowledged that insecurity prevented comprehensive survey or a determination of the extent of contamination. Nigeria proposed to use the time to create the framework and institutions for a national mine action programme, including a national mine action authority, national mine action standards and a mine action strategy.[40] It did not provide any estimate of costs of a mine action programme, plans for resource mobilisation or the results of engagement with potential donors.

In the absence of any baseline estimate of contamination or any mine action strategy, Nigeria's extension request did not set out timelines for clearance. It also did not offer clarity on how it would be able to develop systematic survey or clearance in the face of deteriorating security which prevents access to many affected communities. Instead, it said it will "continue to assess the situation on the ground in terms of accessibility and would liaise with partners to carry out survey and clearance once the affected areas are accessible".[41]

The access challenge raises doubts about how far Nigeria will be able to progress in even establishing a contamination baseline and, in a context of escalating conflict in the BAY states, and left a strong possibility that Nigeria will not achieve completion by 2025 and will need to request a further extension to its Article 5 deadline.

1 2021 Article 5 deadline extension request, p. 4.

2 Email from Harshi Gunawardana, Programme and Communications Officer, UNMAS, 7 May 2021.

3 2021 Article 5 deadline extension request, p. 24.

4 Email from Harshi Gunawardana, UNMAS, 7 May 2021.

5 Emails from Lionel Pechera, Programme Coordinator, UNMAS, Nigeria, 11 March and 20 July 2020.

6 UNMAS, "Mission Report: UNMAS Explosive Threat Scoping Mission to Nigeria 3 to 14 April 2017", p. 3.

7 Email from Lionel Pechera, UNMAS, 25 June 2019.

8 Email from Lionel Pechera, UNMAS, 11 March 2020.

9 See, e.g., "Six killed in Nigeria by land mine planted by suspected jihadists", *Agence France-Presse*, 27 September 2019.

10 2020 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 11.

11 Email from Harshi Gunawardana, UNMAS, 7 May 2021; Article 5 deadline extension request, May 2021, p. 11.

12 2021 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 15.

13 Ibid.

14 Ibid., pp. 28–31.

15 Email from mine action stakeholder, 24 June 2021.

16 Emails from Harshi Gunawardana, UNMAS, 7 May and 17 August 2021.

17 Email from Pierluigi Candier, Country Director, MAG, 24 June 2021.

18 UN, "Humanitarian Response Strategy January 2019 – December 2021", December 2018, pp. 43, 48.

19 Email from Pierluigi Candier, MAG, 24 June 2021.

20 Email from Harshi Gunawardana, UNMAS, 17 August 2021.

21 UNMAS, "Summary of Gender Baseline Assessment", May 2021.

22 Emails from Harshi Gunawardana, UNMAS, 7 May 2021; and John Sorbo, DRC, 3 July 2021.

23 Email from Pierluigi Candier, MAG, 24 June 2021.

24 Email from John Sorbo, Head of Programme, DRC, 3 July 2021.

25 2021 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 8.

26 Ibid., p. 32.

27 Ibid., p. 33.

28 Ibid., p. 25.

29 Ibid., p. 31.

30 Email from Lionel Pechera, UNMAS, 11 March 2020.

31 Email from Harshi Gunawardana, UNMAS, 7 May 2021

32 Email from Harshi Gunawardana, UNMAS, 17 August 2021.

33 Email from Pierluigi Candier, MAG, 24 June 2021.

34 Email from John Sorbo, DRC-HDP, 3 July 2021.

35 Emails from Pierluigi Candier, MAG, 24 June 2021. MAG's RCBAs in 2020 covered 11 local government areas in Borno State: Abadam, Bama, Dikwa, Gwoza, Jere, Konduga, Kukawa, Madagali, Mafa, Marte, and Ngala.

36 Email from Pierluigi Candier, MAG, 24 June 2021.

37 Email from John Sorbo, DRC-HDP, 2 July 2021

38 Statement of Nigeria, APMBC 11th Meeting of States Parties, Phnom Penh, 29 November 2011.

39 Email from Harshi Gunawardana, UNMAS, 7 May 2021.

40 2021 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 8.

41 Ibid., p. 24.