

MASG

Mine Action Support Group Newsletter

Permanent Mission of Switzerland to the United Nations

Chairman: Amb. Jenö C.A. Staehelin

Secretary: Natalie Kohli

Tel: 212-286-1540 / Fax: 212-286-1555

MASG@nyc.rep.admin.ch

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Inside this Newsletter:

| | |
|--|----|
| 1. Unofficial Minutes: MASG-Meeting 10 March 2005..... | 2 |
| 2. Agenda for the MASG-Meeting 17 May..... | 5 |
| 3. Update from UNMAS | 6 |
| 4. Update from UNDP | 8 |
| 5. Update from UNICEF | 29 |

1. Unofficial Minutes: MASG-Meeting 10 March 2005

1. After welcoming the participants, the Chair (Ambassador Jenö C.A. Staehelin) first introduced Kathleen Cravero, the new UNDP Assistant Administrator and Director of the Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery. Ms. Cravero assumed her new position in which she has overall responsibility for UNDP's peace-building, conflict prevention, recovery and transition activities in March 2005. The Chair also welcomed Oto Jungwirth, the Director of the Croatian Mine Action Center. The Chair recalled Croatia's active role in the global effort to ban landmines for many years. At the end of 2005, Croatia is hosting the Sixth Meeting of States Parties to the Ottawa Convention in Dubrovnik.
2. In the first presentation (introduced by Ms. Cravero), Sayed Aqa (UNDP) presented the UNDP Completion Initiative. The problem outlined by UNDP is that a number of states have smaller (but equally critical) problems with landmines and ERW, yet they receive little or no assistance from the international community. The largest portion of international mine action assistance goes to countries that have recently emerged from conflict (e.g. Iraq, Afghanistan). The completion initiative aims to focus the attention of the international donor community on countries where a concerted effort and funding commitment will help them "finish the job" within three to five years. Within this time period, UNDP hopes to help participant countries accomplish two goals to which the mine-affected countries have committed themselves: 1) clearing all high and medium impact areas of mines and ERW; 2) building a residual capacity so the countries can address remaining problems with little or no assistance from the international community. Sayed Aqa emphasized that this effort does not aim to redirect funds from one mine affected country to another. Some of the benefits of the initiative are: 1) multiplier effect on the return on investment in clearing land; 2) sense of accomplishment; 3) allowing to redirect resources to the most severely affected states; 4) the initiative helps States Parties and Signatories meet their international legal obligations; 5) the initiative contributes to operationalizing donor coordination. Participant countries must have demonstrated a commitment to working with the international community and to investing national resources into mine action. The ability to finish the job in 3-5 years must also be demonstrated in a national plan. Possible participants are: Albania, Chad, Guinea-Bissau, Jordan, Lebanon, Mauritania, Senegal, Tajikistan, Uganda, Yemen, Guatemala, Malawi, Nicaragua, Tunisia, Zambia, Zimbabwe. Excellent reports have been received so far from: Albania, Guinea-Bissau, Jordan, Lebanon, Tajikistan, Yemen. These submissions are being turned into concrete "plans for completion" to be shared with donors by mid-May. Next steps: UNDP will organize a gathering on the margins of the June Intersessionals in Geneva. At that time, 3-5 countries will be selected together with interested donors for the first round of the completion initiative.
3. As the next speaker, John Flanagan from UNMAS gave a presentation on the National Plans Process. The 2004 Review Conference provided the catalyst for planning. UNMAS prepared a template on the basis of a fictional country with the following objectives for 2005-2009: 1) Identifying mined areas; 2) Survey, marking and monitoring of mined areas; 3) clearance of mined areas; 4) mine risk education. States had to give an indicative budget for meeting these objectives, including national funding availability. The aim is to produce national plans that are comparable, that establish clear priorities, that define measurable goals and communicate the commitment of the affected State. 21 countries have so far provided plans: Afghanistan, Albania, Angola, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Cambodia, Chad, Eritrea, FYROM, Guinea-Bissau, Jordan, Malawi, Mauritania, Mozambique, Namibia, Sudan, Tajikistan, Thailand, Uganda, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe. John Flanagan noted that some of these countries are also candidates for the UNDP completion initiative. 11 countries have so far agreed for UNMAS to post their plans on the E-mine website (they will be available from 14 March 2005). Future actions: Widen the process by getting more national plans, post all plans on E-mine, keep plans updated (living documents).

4. In the discussion that followed, the **Netherlands** noted that Angola was not on all lists. UNDP replied that Angola is still a huge problem, and it's unfortunately not anywhere near completion. UNMAS replied that while Angola did submit a national plan, it is still being refined and will be posted on E-mine in the future. **Norway's** concerns were that 1) there wasn't any reference made to the mine-ban Convention in the completion initiative proposal and 2) the completion had to be done according to international standards. Sayed Aqa replied that the initiative is in full support of the Convention since it represents one way of bringing the countries closer to meeting their treaty obligations. And, as far as the standards are concerned, the UN sees itself as guardian of the standards and they will of course be applied. **New Zealand** asked whether it was being considered to expand to non-signatories of the Convention, and whether there were any reactions from non-signatories. UNMAS hasn't approached them yet, but will do so in the future. Lebanon for example is a non-signatory, but it is a candidate for the completion initiative. UNMAS doesn't want to limit its focus to State parties. The **Chair** wanted to know whether the information provided for the national plans was enough for UNDP to include it in the completion initiative. UNDP replied that no, the information provided in national plans was not enough. More information was needed, including benchmarks, objectives etc. UNDP is also including signatories and non-signatories in the completion initiative. Agnes Marcaillou from **DDA** stated that countries that are concerned they can't meet their treaty obligations should be the emphasis compared to countries that haven't signed the treaty. UNDP replied that the new UN policy (to be adopted, hopefully, during the week of 14-18 March) establishes that if a country violates obligations under a treaty, the UN will only help if there is a humanitarian emergency. Lisa Gomer from **UNOPS** reiterated DDA's questions: shouldn't those countries been given preference that have signed the treaty? The representative from the **Netherlands** gave the donors' perspective: whether a country is signatory is certainly a criteria for a donor (among other criteria). The representative from **New Zealand** emphasized that the UN Secretariat has to be seen as even-handed by treating all 191 member states (the executive board of the UN) equally. Ms. Marcaillou from **DDA** replied that the Secretariat has to follow the instructions of the Secretary-General, which are to enforce the Rule of Law.
5. In the next presentation, Oto Jungwirth, the Director of the Croatian Mine Action Center (CROMAC) presented his country's program. CROMAC was established in 1998 and has 114 employees. Croatia has 1174 km² of mine suspected area, 1.1. million inhabitants live in the areas affected by mines. Most of the mines lie in forest areas (54%), but also 26% in agricultural areas and pastures. The number of mine victims has decreased from 95 in 1998 to 16 in 2004. The capacities in Croatia are: 25 commercial companies, 1 NGO (Norwegian's People Aid) and 610 deminers, 49 demining machines, 123 mine detection dogs, 677 metal detectors. Between 1998 and 2005 214 million Euro have been invested in the mine action program and 181.000.000 m² have been cleared. Over those years, the major funding sources have been: State budget (57%), public companies (16%), donations (14%), World Bank loan (13%). The State budget funds have reached a peak of 20 million Euro per year in 2003 and 2004. The national strategy for 2005-2009: The priority for clearing is the agricultural area (the total of the mine suspected area, i.e. almost 200 km² shall be cleared until 2009), as well as the areas with houses and infrastructure. The annual estimate of required funds is between 67 million Euro (for 2005) and 100 million Euro (for 2006). The total of required funds until 2009 is 442 million Euro. The sources of funding for the period 2005-2009 will be 1) State budget (300 million Euro); 2) Public companies funds (67 million Euro); 3) Local and foreign donors (46 million Euro); 4) European commission funds (16 million Euro); 5) World Bank loans (13 million Euro).
6. In the ensuing discussion, donors complimented Mr. Jungwirth on his country's achievements in the past years. The representative from **Adopt-a-minfield** as well as Earl Turcotte from **UNDP** asked how high-impact and medium-impact areas were determined. Mr. Jungwirth replied that the priorities are elaborated in a very decentralized manner, on the basis of requests by cities, municipalities, and public companies for clearance. Local authorities determine priorities on the basis of their development plans. CROMAC prepares annual plans based on these requests. The plan then requires approval by parliament. Noel Mulliner, the technology coordinator for **UNMAS** asked how the use of machines affected the cost of

clearance in Croatia. Mr. Jungwirth replied that the clearing of high-impact areas was very costly, while the cost of clearing in medium-impact areas was very low. The representative from **Germany** congratulated Croatia on the progress achieved and for being a model for the region. Germany will continue to support mine risk education in Croatia. The question of Germany was whether there were still stockpiles in private ownership. Mr. Jungwirth replied that no, there was no private ownership, this would be illegal. John Flanagan from **UNMAS** commended the toolbox approach in Croatia (machines/dogs/manual deminers). This approach (the use of different methods according to the topography) can speed the process of clearance up. Machines are good for flat topography. They can drive the costs down, whereas manual clearance is very costly. Croatia has developed machines that are being used elsewhere in the world. Sayed Aqa from **UNDP** also complimented CROMAC. The Croatian example was a very good example to highlight the transition from the UN to local authorities (the last UNDP adviser moved out of Croatia last year). Particularly impressive about the Croatian program is, according to UNDP: 1) the high degree of national ownership; 2) the link to development and tourism; 3) the extremely low cost of clearance by square meter. The representative from **UNOPS** added that the financial commitment of the Croatian government was also very impressive. At the same time donors should help where there are gaps. The **Chair** wanted to know whether the private mine clearance companies that are active in Croatia also go to other countries. Mr. Jungwirth replied that Croatia is only using 50% of the capacity of private companies. They could in other words export their services to other countries.

7. Under AOB the Chair gave an update on the Fieldtrip to the Sudan: The deadline to sign up is 15 March. Participants were asked to submit names, titles and contact information to Natalie Kohli. The final list was needed as soon as possible so that UNMAS can make the necessary arrangements in the Sudan. The Chair also reminded donors that the seats on the chartered plane were limited and that participants had to cover their own costs. A revised program (including practical matters) as well as a list of possible flight connections was circulated.
8. The Chair then gave the floor to John Flanagan from UNMAS to comment on the monthly Portfolio Updates (the charts were subsequently distributed to all members via e-mail). The Chair also mentioned that the UNOPS terminal report on its mine action program in Northern Iraq was available on CD, as well as the GICHD/UNDP publication called "A Guide to Socio-Economic Approaches to Mine Action Planning and Management".
9. At the end of the meeting the Chair recalled the presentation of German artist Lukas Einsele about his project, "One Step Beyond" that took place at the December MASG meeting. While at that time everybody agreed that Mr. Einsele's exhibit should be brought to the UN Secretariat in New York in 2005, no donor has unfortunately come forward so far to help cover the costs of setting up the exhibit. Lukas Einsele has updated the project description and has added a detailed budget (both documents were circulated). The Chair encouraged donors (especially Germany) to consider once more supporting the project.
10. Because of the Fieldtrip, there will be no MASG-meeting in April. The next meeting takes place on **17 Mai (new date!)**.

The meeting was closed at 11.50 am

2. Agenda for the MASG-Meeting 17 May

MASG Meeting **17 May** 2005 (*new date!*)

10am-12pm at the Swiss Mission
633 Third Avenue, 29th Floor

Agenda :

1. Welcome address by the Chair
2. Adoption of the agenda
3. Thematic Presentation on Mine action and Non-state actors: Elisabeth Reusse-Decrey, President of Geneva Call
4. Discussion
5. Country Briefing: Somalia (UNDP)
6. Discussion
7. AOB

***Please note:
Because of the MASG-fieldtrip to Sudan (24-29 April),
there will be no MASG-meeting in April.***

3. Update from UNMAS

POLICY, TREATY IMPLEMENTATION, INFORMATION AND RESOURCE MOBILIZATION

Policy Coordination

The Chief of Policy, Information and Resource Mobilisation, Ilene Cohn, participated in the Donor Retreat on the Consolidated Appeal Process (CAP) and Coordination in Humanitarian Emergencies, from 24-25 February in Montreux, Switzerland. UN departments and agencies represented in the CAP were represented. Mine action projects are included in eight CAPs for 2005. Discussions focused on improving the quality of the consolidated appeals and donor engagement in their production and funding. Valuable ideas that can contribute to improvements in the Portfolio of Mine Action Projects emerged. Ms. Cohn also met with donor representatives in Stockholm, Helsinki and Berlin.

Gender

The Gender Guidelines for Mine Action Programmes have been completed, and are available in printed or electronic versions. The Guidelines have been translated into French, Spanish, Arabic and Russian and will be available shortly on the emine website (www.mineaction.org).

A distribution and implementation strategy has been developed for the Guidelines, where the document will be presented to UN headquarters and field staff, as well as to Government representatives and mine action partner organizations. As one component of this effort, an initial pilot visit to Afghanistan was carried out. The Guidelines were presented to UN staff in Afghanistan, with the aim of developing a country-level strategy for implementation.

In addition, a panel discussion on Gender and Mine Action was organised as part of activities related to the 49th session of the Commission on the Status of Women. The panel discussion was organized by UNMAS, in cooperation with the Australian NGO, International Women's Development Agency (IWDA). It featured presentations by Comfort Lamptey, DPKO Gender Advisor; Bob Eaton of the Survey Action Center; Rashida Al-Hamdani of Yemen's National Mine Action Centre; and UNMAS Planning Officer, Justin Brady. The event was chaired by Suzette Mitchell of IWDA.

Victim Assistance

The UNMAS Victim Assistance Officer visited the Mine Action Coordination Centre in the DRC to assist in identifying victim assistance needs and in drafting a national victim assistance strategy. Meetings with the Ministry of Health, UN agencies, the ICRC and international and local NGOs, highlighted the need to foster government commitment to mine action. Guidelines were drafted in consultation with the victim assistance associate to ensure: 1) coordination of victim assistance, 2) collection of mine victim data, 3) advocacy for the rights of landmine survivors, and 4) resource mobilization.

New pledges and contributions in the VTF (covering the period 1 to 28 February)

Contributions Received:

| | | | |
|------------|----------------|--------------|----------------------------|
| 16/02/2005 | Canada | \$67,160.00 | Sudan (P04-SU06) |
| 15/02/2005 | UAE | \$310,000.00 | Lebanon (P04-LE04) |
| 14/02/2005 | Canada | \$50,000.00 | HQ Coordination (P04-GL01) |
| 07/02/2005 | New Zealand | \$249,180.00 | Sudan (TBD) |
| 03/02/2005 | UK | \$470,800.00 | Sudan (P04-SU08/P05-GL01) |
| 03/02/2005 | Roots of Peace | \$ 40,000.00 | Afghanistan (P04-AF04) |

DEVELOPMENTS IN UNMAS-MANAGED PROGRAMMES

AFGHANISTAN

The Government of Afghanistan hosted a Strategic Planning Workshop from 23 to 26 February aimed at shaping a plan for the future of mine action in the country. The consultative process brought together representatives from key government ministries, the United Nations family from the field and HQ, NGO implementing partners, and the international donor community. The resultant strategic direction forms the basis for future three-year plans which are linked to the Mine Action Public Investment Programme for the implementation of tasks at the national level, as well as the development of annual operational workplans.

The Mine Action Programme has assisted the emergency response to the significant snowfall of the last months, as well as to the investigation team working on the Kam Air crash site near Kabul. Other operational activities have been maintained throughout the country, except where extreme weather conditions have made it impossible.

The "Mine Action for Peace" DDR programme site at Paghman concluded its first 12-month rotation of former combatants with over 120 ex-fighters completing the process and rejoining their communities. Activities continue in three other sites in Parwan, Kandahar and Mazar, with over 640 participants.

SUDAN (UNAMIS)

The UNAMIS Deputy SRSG and the Minister of Humanitarian Affairs met to discuss the future mine action structure as it relates to the implementation structures of the Permanent Ceasefire Agreement of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA). The CPA stipulates that the Government of Sudan (GoS) and the Government of South Sudan (GoSS) each establish a demining authority "...that shall work together and coordinate their demining activities and work jointly in close cooperation with UN Mine Action Office."

Demands for route verification and clearance in South Sudan have increased, largely due to the return of refugees and IDPs, the expansion of humanitarian assistance, and the planned deployment of the new UN mission. MECHEM route verification teams continued operations in Yei and Kayala, and also verified the site in the Juba airport for the future UN mission deployment. DCA, FSD and NPA continued to conduct survey and clearance of high impact communities.

On 23 February, a military ammunition dump exploded in Juba town, resulting in more than 30 deaths (including a UNHCR staff member), 70 injuries and the burning of two villages. UN mine action staff conducted a rapid assessment of UN premises, and FSD, DCA and RONCO teams stayed on standby to assist.

4. Update from UNDP

The following is a summary of key achievements, challenges, objectives, and funding issues for UNDP-supported country programmes, presented by region:

AFRICAN REGION

Chad

Key Achievements

- Clearance operations began in Wadi Doum on December 27, 2004, as prescribed in the contract signed by the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS), the National High Commissioner for Demining (HCND), and Mines Advisory Group (MAG). The results of the demining/explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) activities between December 2004 and February 2005 are summarized in the table below.

| | |
|--|-------------------------------|
| Mine clearance | 76,003 (m²) |
| Battle area clearance | 10,000 (m²) |
| Anti-personnel mines destroyed | 373 |
| Anti-tank mines destroyed | 184 |
| Unexploded ordnance (UXO) destroyed | 45,999 |
| Fragments found | 1,300 |
| Total weight | 60,022 (tons) |

- In December 2004 a feasibility-study for victim assistance was carried out under the auspices of the US-Chad Bilateral Programme. The results of the study are currently being analyzed and will be transmitted to all partners in the next few weeks.
- In February 2005, UNICEF began the process of recruiting an international consultant who will support the HCND Mine Risk Education Department. This position was made possible thanks to Canadian funds received in 2004 through UNICEF.
- Between December 2004 and February 2005 a study was conducted under the auspices of the US-Chad Bilateral Programme to determine the feasibility of a technical survey. The results of this study will be available by mid-March.

Key Challenges

- Inclement weather, primarily sand storms, has caused unfortunate delays in carrying out scheduled demining activities.
- In Wadi Doum the MAG team has faced serious difficulties resulting from a broken water well, resulting from malfunctioning solar panels that power the well's pump.
- The Medevac plane normally available in Wadi Doum has been in the shop since the end of February for maintenance.
- The contract of the Swiss in-kind Advisor for Information Systems, Technology and Databases terminated at the end of January 2005. A replacement is currently being sought.

Key Objectives

- Because mine-action efforts in Chad face serious financial constraints, resource mobilization remains the most important short-term objective, both in terms of obtaining governmental funds and acquiring resources from the international donor community.
- Once sufficient funds have been obtained, the programme aims to expand mine-action operations to the regions in and around Fada.
- Using the feasibility study carried out by MAG between December and February in the Borkou and Ennedi regions, a technical survey is scheduled to begin in March 2005.

Funding Update

- Currently, the only amount guaranteed for mine-action activities is the US\$2,073,095 given for 2004. These funds, however, have already been used, and as of yet there are no resources available for 2005.
- The renewal of the MAG contract for Wadi Doum in April 2005 will depend on the availability of new funds.
- The start-up of the operations in Fada depends on the availability of funds, which would allow the signing of a new contract among UNOPS, HCND, and MAG.

Ethiopia

Key Achievements

- The Ministry of Finance and Development of Ethiopia (MoFED) advised the Senior Technical Advisor (STA) on 28 January that they are happy with the project document for the period 1 January to 31 December 2005 and will arrange for signing soon.
- Mr. Alistair Craib of the Department of International Development (DFID) visited for three days for meetings with the STA and the Ethiopian Mine Action Office (EMAO). He invited the EMAO to send a proposal to his department by the end of February. The German Foreign Ministry

has requested a proposal for 2005 to fund operations. Two delegations from Norwegians People's Aid (NPA) visited for meetings with the STA and EMAO to discuss possible options for future NPA involvement in Ethiopian mine-action operations.

- The STA is meeting weekly with the EMAO to work through the government of Ethiopia's strategic planning format. The format is very detailed and will result in a document of at least 50 pages. EMAO has been given until the end of March to complete the first draft.
- Ethiopian Bozena operators were accredited between 26 and 28 January. The operators enhance the ability of a survey team to get into the dangerous area and make a valid assessment.

Key Challenges

- The memorandum of agreement for mine-risk education (MRE), which was produced by the United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE) and EMAO, has been stalled until EMAO opens a bank account.

Key Objectives

- Signing of the project document and finalizing the EC contribution of Euro 8 million. The contribution may require a separate project document to take effect 1 January 2006.
- Continue resource mobilization with Canada, Germany, the Netherlands, and DFID.
- Continue Strategic Planning with EMAO.
- Continue capacity development of the local quality assurance (QA) monitors.
- Accept and sign the Project Document by UNDP/MoFED.
- Meet and discuss 2005-2006 resource mobilization requirements with donor embassies.
- Assist with the UNMEE–EMAO memorandum of agreement (MOA) for the MRE process.
- Assist EMAO with strategic planning.
- Accredite Ethiopian Bozena operators.
- Recruit the Ethiopian Recovery Programme Management Unit (ERPMU) Contract Manager as soon as possible.

Mozambique

Key Achievements

- Mozambique completed the destruction of its mine stockpiles in 2003, thus fulfilling one of its major obligations under the terms of the Ottawa Convention.
- Since January 2005, UNDP Mozambique has been working with the government, donor community, and other partners to carry out a comprehensive review of more than ten years of support for mine action. Four consultants from the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining have been undertaking this review.

- This review process aims to ascertain lessons learned, assess the capacity developed since the programme's inception, and, most importantly, determine a strategic direction for mainstreaming mine-action programmes into the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

Key Challenges

- Mozambique still has great strides to make with respect to mainstreaming mine action into its development priorities.
- Because the G15 donor group has decided to provide assistance directly to national budgets and not through individual programmes and/or projects, a new funding mechanism must be developed.

Key Objectives

- The objectives of the current National Strategic Plan for Mine Action will be overridden by findings of the Mozambique Mine Action Review, which was recently completed by the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining.
- Among the Review's major recommendations for short to medium-term objectives will be:
 - the consolidation of the national mine-action entity;
 - the establishment of an indigenous demining capacity;
 - a technical survey (resurveying all high to medium-impact areas).

Funding Update

- There is a significant funding shortfall for demining activities in Mozambique.
- The Accelerated Demining Programme, the major national demining capacity, may be forced to cease operations because of its very limited budget.

ARAB STATES REGION

Iraq

Key Achievements

- A seminar on the partnership of the donor community and UN agencies in mine action was held in Amman on 16 February 2005. The event was chaired by the Director General of the National Mine Action Authority (NMAA), and attendees included the Iraqi Environmental Minister, donor representatives, UN agencies (including the UN Mine Action Cluster Manager), and a representative from the US Department of State. The Minister of Planning and Development Cooperation delivered the introductory message. Specifically, the seminar was designed to address the possible impact of Explosive Remnants of War (ERW) on the reconstruction of Iraq, to explain the NMAA strategy to address the problem, and to highlight funding shortfalls. The seminar identified several key areas in need of support, including

institutional development of the NMAA and the development of a national capacity in mine/UXO clearance, mine risk education, and mine victim assistance. The monthly Mine Action Coordination Meeting took place in Amman-Jordan on 17th February 2005, chaired by the Director General of the NMAA, attended by UNDP, UNICEF and representatives from the US Department of State/RONCO.

- Technical Advisors (TAs), funded by UNDP through Vietnam Veterans of America foundation (VVAF), were deployed inside Iraq and have commenced their tasks to support the National Mine Action Authority in the fields of mine action operations management and capacity building, mine risk education, victim support services, public relations, multimedia/information technology, and finance/audit. The needs analysis for each NMAA function being supported has been completed and the development of a plan of action has begun.
- Minetech International (MTI) continued the UN-supported development of 15 local clearance teams in the Basrah area, despite the unstable security situation. The EOD teams undertook sub-surface clearance and a total of 288,750 square meters were cleared, 207 items of explosive ordnance were destroyed, and 3,472 items of explosive ordnance (weighing 5,157 kilograms) were cleared and recovered to the Central Disposal Storage area. The cleared sites directly affected some 144 people dependent on the land for grazing purposes and indirectly affected an additional 760 people who regularly travel through the area.
- The development of a local clearance NGO in Basrah by Danish Demining Group, as contracted by UNDP, continues. The goal is to train and equip one Iraqi clearance NGO, consisting of a national management structure and 10 multi-purpose ERW clearance teams. An area of 136,650 square meters has been cleared of 88 items of explosives ordnance during the second half of the month. Beneficiaries of this area consist of 17 farmers using the land for grazing purposes and the cultivation of tomatoes. The estimated annual tomato yield of the cleared land is 32,000 kilograms, also providing employment to 9 farm workers.
- The Landmine Impact Survey Team, contracted by UNDP, completed its survey of Dahuk and Erbil governorates in the north and Basrah governorate in the south. Work is continuing in Sulaymaniya governorate in the north and Muthanna governorate in the south. As soon as the security situation improves, work will be starting in the central part of the country.

Key Challenges

- The security situation continues to be a challenge towards conducting effective mine-action activities in the greater part of Iraq. All Cluster 7 operational activities inside Iraq are continuing, although it is not always possible to work in the high-priority areas.

Key Objectives

- Continue to provide management and technical advice to the NMAA and other stakeholders.

- Mission of mine-action and capacity-building Technical Advisors to Kuwait and Basra (meeting with mine-action agencies/implementing partners for UNDP-funded clearance activities).
- Conduct Mine Action Coordination Meeting with NMAA on 22 March 2005.

Funding Update

- US\$300,000 is needed to continue supporting the activities of the LIS team.
- Institutional development and support for the foreseeable future will require an additional US\$2.5 million.

Jordan

Key Achievements

- The Minecat II was recently successfully deployed in the Jordan Valley. The project, funded by Norway, has focused on refurbishing the Minecat to work under the extreme environmental conditions experienced in Jordan. Training of 13 members of the Royal Engineers Corps (RCE) on both the operational and maintenance aspects of the Minecat has been provided by a British-based firm, Cleared Ground, which will be attached to the project until August 2005.
- Cleared 100,000 square meters of land in fertile Jordan Valley.
- The Chair, HRH Prince Mired Bin Raad, met with all eight key ministries and 17 ambassadors to discuss the role of the National Committee for Demining and Rehabilitation (NCDR), the National Plan, and the immediate needs of Jordan in the context of meeting its 2009 treaty deadline.
- The Information Management System for Mine Action (IMSMA) was installed at the NCDR, and the first round of training was provided by the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining.
- NCDR and the Ministry of Education began work on a joint pilot MRE project in mine-affected communities in the Jordan Valley.
- France turned over prosthetic equipment and provided training to the Royal Medical Services to better serve landmine survivors in Jordan.

Key Challenges

- Finalizing the National Plan is paramount to Jordan. Two senior planners will be hired in March to help with this process and to ensure that the plan is framed within the context of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the Jordan Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP). Both the government and the international community eagerly await the plan as they believe that given Jordan's fragile ecological situation the impact of mine clearance in the country will be substantial. Working groups at the Secretary-General (Deputy Minister) level have been established, and the final draft of the plan will be presented on 31 May 2005.

- Discussions on undertaking a truncated landmine impact survey (LIS) have commenced. It is believed that the LIS will provide the necessary baseline socio-economic data needed to measure the change brought about by the clearance of mines in land-poor Jordan.
- Currently, the RCE is the only mine-clearance operator in the country. Authority has been granted to establish a national company, which would focus on mechanical and mine-detection dogs (MDD) clearance. There is an untapped wealth of local skills and know-how that has left the Army and that remains underemployed. The new company would help to increase production rates, particularly by concentrating on area reduction.

Key Objectives

- Completing an analysis of Jordan's PRSP, the MDG targets and the Ministerial National Plans, and finishing the outline of the National Mine Action Plan.
- Establish a national demining company.
- Move ahead on the structuring of a landmine impact survey.
- Work towards establishing new Jordan Mine Action Standards.

Funding Update

The following are immediate funding gaps not expressed in the *Portfolio of Mine Action Projects*:

| | Activity | \$US |
|----|---------------------------|------------------|
| 1. | Landmine Impact Survey | 200,000 |
| 2. | Mechanical Mine Clearance | 750,000 |
| 3. | Mine Detection Dogs | 250,000 |
| | TOTAL | 1,200,000 |

Lebanon

Key Achievements

- The month of February has been a busy and significant month for mine action in Lebanon. The National Demining Office (NDO) completed the 2005 Integrated Work Plan for Mine Action in Lebanon and the 2004 Annual Report for Mine Action in Lebanon. The 2005-2009 Long Term Plan was also completed and is in the process of final editing prior to issue in March 2005.
- Training of Lebanese Armed Forces engineer personnel on minefield survey and area reduction techniques continued throughout the month of February. The training is sponsored by the United States Department of Defense and will be completed by early March. After completion of this training, the Engineer Regiment of the Lebanese Armed Forces will have a

survey capability of six teams, providing the basis of the National Technical Survey that is planned to start in 2005.

- The Mine Risk Education campaign for Lebanon premiered a children's play at the end of January and an informative movie during the month of February. These were sponsored by UNICEF with contributions from Norwegian People's Aid (NPA) and the World Rehabilitation Fund (WRF). The play will be enacted until the end of the academic year, and the movie will be distributed to the 600 most-affected communities in Lebanon. If funding can be found, the movie will be made available to the remainder of the affected communities in Lebanon and an additional 2,500 taped copies of the movie will be produced.
- Mr. Chip Bowness, the regional Chief Technical Advisor (CTA), arrived in Beirut for a week of discussions with the Lebanese Mine Action Authority, key UN personnel, and other mine-action interlocutors in Lebanon. Mr. Bowness also took the opportunity to conduct a handover with the new UNDP CTA, Mr. Allan Poston, who arrived in late January.

Key Challenges

- The annual International Support Group (ISG) meeting, originally scheduled for 23 February 2005, was postponed due to the political changes occurring in Lebanon. An alternative date for the ISG has yet to be confirmed and it is hoped that donor support will not be affected due to this postponement.

Key Objectives

- Short-term objectives for mine action in Lebanon (next 12 months) include the commencement of the national technical survey of all mine-affected communities as detailed in the Lebanon LIS as a method of providing area reduction and detailed planning for future demining activities.
- Capacity-building documents and policies to be developed include a resource mobilization strategy that will portray the shift in mine action from humanitarian to developmental, thereby enabling Lebanon to properly forecast mine-action activities and identify funding shortfalls; and a National Demining Office (NDO) policy document to formalize the NDO institution.

Funding Update

- The Mine Action Coordination Centre–South Lebanon (MACC-SL) continued preparations for the completion of the Area 6 demining project while the NDO has been enabling a resource mobilization plan for this project. To date, no donor has yet been identified.

Somalia

Key Achievements

Somaliland (NW Somalia)

- The programme in Somalia is going well, with over 19,000 items destroyed since 2002 by the Police EOD Teams.
- The main item to report is that the technical survey of high impact communities from the LIS Phase 1 for Togdheer, Galbeed, and Sahill is complete.
- The collective summary for the 2004 Technical Survey conducted by DDG is as follows:

| Parameter | 2004 | Mined Roads | Mined Areas | UXO/BAC | Totals |
|--|------|-------------|-------------|-----------|-----------|
| High Impact LIS Communities Visited | 30 | | | | |
| Suspected Hazard Areas Surveyed | 95 | | | | |
| High Priority Clearance Tasks Identified | | 2 | | 3 | 5 |
| Medium Priority Clearance Tasks Identified | | 7 | 3 | 2 | 12 |
| Low Priority Clearance Tasks Identified | | 56 | 2 | 0 | 58 |
| Sites Disqualified From Data Base | | 8 | 4 | 8 | 20 |
| Totals | | 73 | 9 | 13 | 95 |

- The HALO Trust is conducting the technical survey in Awdal region and has to date surveyed 5 sites:
 - » 3 mined roads remain high impact
 - » 1 mined road reclassified as medium impact
 - » 1 mined road reclassified as low impact
- HALO has agreed that it will also survey the high impact suspected hazard areas that were not already surveyed in addition to the medium impact suspected hazard areas for this year.
- DDG is now surveying the medium priority sites in Galbeed, Sahill, and Togdheer.

Puntland (NE Somalia)

- The LIS Phase 2 is ongoing and North Mudug was completed at the end of February. The survey will move to Bari region for the next phase of the survey.
- Puntland Mine Action Centre (PMAC) is functioning well and is now working on the tasking of the newly graduated Police EOD Team to spot clearance tasks identified in Mudug during the LIS.

- It is hoped that a second EOD Team will graduate later in the year using men injured in a Road Traffic Accident (RTA) in 20 December 2004. This will require an additional vehicle, and the EC has indicated that it would be allowable to purchase such a vehicle using contingency funds from the ongoing EC-funded project.

South and Central Somalia

- UNDP mine action has joined with the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) and is assisting in the creation of the relocation plan based on Police EOD Teams in the 6 identified Police Training centres. Funding for this programme is urgently required.
- The new Jowhar Police EOD Team completed training on February 14 and became operational as of March. At this time they are only awaiting arrival of their vehicle.

Funding Update

- The Somaliland MAC has no funding as of the end of February. Proposals for support are currently with the German, Canadian, and UK governments.
- Except for UNDP TRAC funding from the country office, mine action in Somalia is in urgent need of support for all its proposals in the mine-action programme and consolidated appeals process. Furthermore, plans are being developed for a national mine action center and funding will be required for two more regional offices and a central MAC in Mogadishu.
- UNDP is supporting the use of the new Somalia military for national mine clearance with equipment, training, and operational assistance, based on the Yemen model. Funding for these efforts is also required.

ASIA PACIFIC REGION

Cambodia

Key Achievements

- Significant progress has been made by the Cambodian Government over the past few months to reform the management of the mine-action sector (especially mine clearance) and to put in place an institutional framework better suited for Cambodia's needs.
- Following the establishment of provincial mine-action committees in October 2004 and the Government-Donor Technical Working Group on Mine-Action in November 2004 (both with UNDP support), the Government of Cambodia is now preparing proposals for a reform of the Cambodian Mine Action Authority (to be presented to donors by the end of March).

Key Objectives

- The ultimate goal of the government with the aforementioned reforms is to provide a reliable structure for a bottom-up selection and prioritization of clearance tasks, based on local and

national development priorities. Donor funding could then be allocated in support of these priorities, thus reinforcing government coordination mechanisms and the integration of mine clearance in development plans and programmes.

- UNDP is providing advisory support for this reform process, and consultations have been initiated with donors regarding future funding mechanisms, including incentives for cost-efficiency, strengthened quality control, and better linkages to national and local development programmes.

Funding Update

- The Cambodian Mine Action Centre (CMAC) has made significant progress in reducing costs over the past 18 months and anticipates a 50 percent increase in clearance productivity (total 16 million square meters) with a stable annual budget.
- The budget shortfall for 2005 currently stands at US\$2.6 millions out of a total 2005 budget of US\$10 million. This shortfall corresponds to the clearance of over 400 hectares of land, primarily for resettlement and agriculture purposes.

EUROPE & THE CIS REGION

Albania

Key Achievements

- On February 7, 2005, the US and Dutch Embassies in Tirana hosted the worldwide charity event, 'The Night of a Thousand Dinners,' to raise money for mine-victim assistance in Albania. The event was attended by representatives from the Albanian Government, the international community, Albanian businesses, and NGOs; and a documentary on the global landmine problem, produced by the US Embassy and the International Trust Fund (ITF), was shown. More than 40 individuals attending the event donated over US\$10,000 in support of the medical treatment of sight-impaired mine victims and for the educational reintegration of child victims.
- The Minister of Defense (MoD) agreed to provide support to the clearance operations during 2005 through provision of explosives and Medevac service.
- The mine/UXO clearance priorities for 2005 have been updated in accordance with the updated General Demining Plan and the National Strategy and have been distributed to the local authorities for approval.
- MRE activities were limited during this period in mine-affected villages due to very bad weather conditions.
- The bidding procedures for the new Technical Survey and Clearance Project, funded by the European Commission, were concluded in February, and Danish Church Aid was selected as the implementing organization of the project. The duration will be 10 months with the aim of

clearing high and medium-impact priority areas in accordance with the National Clearance Plan. Another objective of the project is to contribute to the establishment of a national demining capacity.

- A new Quality Management Adviser, an in-kind donation from the Swiss General Staff, was deployed in February in the Kukes Regional Office to assist the Albanian Mine Action Executive (AMAE) quality monitors teams with quality control and quality assurance operations.
- The Otto Bock Equipment for the Prostheses Repair Workshop Project, funded by the UK Department of International Development (DFID), was delivered to Kukes Regional Hospital, and preparations were made to rehabilitate the workshop.
- The Albanian Article 5 Plan under the Ottawa Convention was updated and is now in line with UN suggestions gathered during the Nairobi Summit and fully oriented towards the approach of the "Completion Initiative" launched by the UNDP Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery.
- The Rapid Rural Assessment report conducted by the UNDP Local Governance Programme in cooperation with AMAE in eight mine-affected villages was finalized, and its findings will be used to prioritize upcoming development projects in accordance with the identified immediate needs of these communities.

Key Challenges

- Conduct resource mobilization for demining and capacity building for 2005.
- Signing the Memorandum of Agreement between UNDP and the Albanian Government on the future contribution of the Albanian Government to the Mine Action Programme.
- Finalize and present to the Albanian Government the draft National Mine Action Legislation.

Key Objectives

- Approval of the mine/UXO clearance priorities for 2005 by the local and central government.
- Recruitment of quality management operators and refresher training for the AMAE quality monitors teams.
- Accreditation renewal of the local and international organizations working in mine action in Albania.
- Coordinating with the local authorities and community for an effective restarting of clearance activities in northeast Albania.
- Signing of the contract between UNDP and Danish Church Aid for the implementation of the Technical Survey and Clearance Project.
- Continue the development of a Community Based Rehabilitation Network in northeast Albania.
- Select sight-impaired mine/UXO survivors and arrange their treatment at the private eye clinic in Tirana with funds collected through the Night of a Thousand Dinners.

- Liaise with the National Prosthetic Center (NPC), Ministry of Health (MoH), MoD and Special Fund for Disabled for the reconstruction of the NPC.
- Make presentations to current and potential donors on the progress of the AMAE in 2004 and the needs for 2005.

Funding Update

- The annual budget for 2005, including mine clearance, coordination, and monitoring, is US\$4,219,419. Of this, US\$3,213,444 has been pledged so far. The MRE budget for 2005 is US\$124,290, of which US\$106,290 has already been secured by the US State Department and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC).
- Previous and current donors include UNDP, EU, DFID, ICRC, UNICEF, US State Department through the ITF, and the Canadian, Czech Republic, Danish, German, Swiss, Turkish, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg and Italian governments.

Armenia

Key Achievements

- UNDP Mine Action Advisor Mr. Mohammad Younus visited Armenia to undertake discussions with the government on the establishment of civilian oversight of mine action.
- A senior staff training session, sponsored by VVAF, was held for the UNDP Armenia Mine Action Project and respective personnel at the Armenian Humanitarian De-Mining Centre (AHDC).
- A training session for data collectors, which will be conducted by VVAF, has been planned for mid-March.
- Information Management System for Mine Action (IMSMA) was installed and updated by the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining.

Key Challenges

- Some of the supplies needed to conduct the LIS have not been obtained; it is expected that these supplies will be procured by the end of March.
- Civilian and military officials within the Armenian Government still consider the landmine issue a military matter as opposed to a humanitarian challenge; they mistake the LIS for a technical survey.

Key Objectives

- The AHDC aims to complete its training for senior staff, data collectors, and IMSMA technicians.
- The AHDC plans to pretest, pilot, and launch the LIS.

Funding Update

- At present, Armenia has no specific shortfalls, though the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) has expressed an interest in contributing to the Armenian mine-action efforts; possible areas where OSCE funding could be used remain to be discussed.

Bosnia and Herzegovina

Key Achievements

- Bosnia and Herzegovina's national Mine Action Strategy has been revised following a six-month analysis. The revised strategy seeks to resolve the mine threat at the community level by implementing mine-action activities, such as mine clearance, technical survey, permanent marking, mine-risk education, and landmine victim assistance, in an integrated manner. This mine-action planning model was presented and hailed at the Nairobi Summit for a Mine Free-World 2004 as the way forward in mine-action planning. The integrated community mine-action planning foresees the inclusion of local communities as decision-making partners in project design rather than as mere beneficiaries. As a result, targets are adjusted to reduce mine risks to acceptable levels rather than to eliminate them completely, which is both difficult and time consuming.
- In October 2004, UNDP launched mine-clearance operations, within the framework of UNDP's Integrated Mine Action Programme (IMAP), with an official ceremony in Buturovic Polje near Konjic. Over a period of five years IMAP will clear 4 million square meters of mine contaminated land that is of significance for development in Bosnia and Herzegovina. From the start of mine clearance operations in October 2004 through December 2004, IMAP cleared over 270,000 square meters. The total cost for these activities was US\$600,000, made possible through financing by the governments of Sweden and Canada.
- In February 2005 the Direct Demining Project (DDP) Phase III commenced, with training being provided to local deminers. During the previous two years the DDP cleared and returned to use an area of nearly 210,000 square meters that is of socio-economic significance. The project has been fully funded by the Government of Italy, which contributed €500,000 for the activities in 2005.
- In January 2005, UNDP promoted a website (www.mine.ba) designed to increase awareness and improve the flow of information among donors and the public at large on mine-action issues in BiH. The site provides information about ongoing mine-action activities, plans and progress achieved as well as publications, news, calls for assistance, and stories told by citizens who are directly exposed to the mine threat.

Key Objectives

- Mine clearance and technical survey activities in the scope of IMAP and DDP will continue in 2005 as soon as weather conditions allow it. The activities will be again implemented in areas of socio-economic significance, selected in accordance with priorities defined by BiH's mine-action authorities.
- Since the adoption of the Bosnia and Herzegovina Demining Law in 2002, the mine-action environment in the country has evolved considerably, and it has become necessary to revise the existing law in order to take into account new developments. It is expected that the revision will be completed during the first half of 2005.
- Assistance will be provided to the Bosnia and Herzegovina Armed Forces (AFBiH) in order to enable the full establishment and functionality of a joint demining military unit. As a result, the participation of the AFBiH in mine-clearance operations throughout the country will be significantly increased.

Funding Update

- The IMAP is a five-year project. Contributions received to date from the governments of Canada (US\$3.3 million over five years), Sweden (SEK 15,000,000 over three years), the Netherlands (US\$555,000), and the United Kingdom (US\$150,000) amount to approximately 50 percent of the total planned budget, which is US\$11,826,500. In order to secure the full implementation of the IMAP activities, further support from international donors is required.

Azerbaijan

Key Achievements

- During December 2004-February 2005, eight staff members of the Azerbaijan National Agency for Mine Action (ANAMA) attended and successfully graduated from the Middle Management Training Course in Tbilisi, Georgia. The training, organized by Cranfield University–Mine Action (UK), Georgian Technical University, the Center for Management Development and Training at the faculty of Economics in Ljubljana, and the International Trust Fund (ITF) for Demining and Mine Victims Assistance, was held for mine-action programmes within the South Caucasus region. The training provided ANAMA with a unique opportunity to share its experience with other mine-action programmes in South Caucasus. In addition, ANAMA representatives gave a presentation of the Azerbaijan mine-action programme to the participants, covering major demining aspects in the country. ANAMA trainees obtained all managerial skills required for daily use in field operations.
- On 21 February 2005, prior to resuming field operations, ANAMA organized a day of refresher training and physical testing for field personnel, based on the National Standards. This training

covered the Aghjabedi (SW), Fizuli (SW), and Terter (NW) districts, where ANAMA conducts demining operations.

- On 24 February 2005, the Operations Manager and UXO officer of ANAMA visited Agstafa district (NW) to organize tentative arrangements for the forthcoming UXO clearance operations. During the visit they met with local villagers who expressed their willingness to take positions of UXO operators in ANAMA and further participate in UXO clearance operations at the former Soviet ammunition warehouse (NATO/NATO Maintenance and Supply Agency (NAMSA) project) in Saloglu village of Agstafa district.
- On 14 February 2005, all the efforts aimed at facilitating the Saloglu project were brought together at NATO Headquarters in Brussels. Turkey, the lead nation in this effort, signed the Financial Management Agreement for the project at a special ceremony involving the NATO Secretary-General, Mr. Jaap de Hoop Scheffer, and representatives of contributing countries.
- Mr. Abid Sharifov, Deputy Prime Minister of the Azerbaijan Republic, has been recently assigned to act as focal point for financial and other government related issues of the project.
- On 18 February 2005, the President of the Baku Premier Rotary Club (BPRC), Mr. Ali Musayev, and the President of the Baku International Rotary Club, Mr. Jeffrey Farrow, visited ANAMA Headquarters where they met with ANAMA Director Mr. Ismaylov. Rotary representatives expressed their desire to begin to work with ANAMA; and they noted that Rotary International is very supportive of mine action, having established a "Rotarians for Mine Action" movement in 2002. Furthermore, Mr. Musayev, on behalf of BPRC, expressed his desire to start a MRE/Mine Victims Assistance (MVA) pilot project in Terter. Mr. Ismaylov, in his turn, expressed the willingness of ANAMA to contribute to the implementation of that joint project.
- The Mine Victim Needs Assessment Survey was an integral part of the overall EC project, *Support to Azerbaijan Mine Action Programme*, and aimed at achieving the specific objective of establishing an extensive database, well-articulated strategy, and an effective network with relevant stakeholders on mine/UXO victims assistance. The survey was performed June-October 2004 and was implemented by the International Eurasia Press Fund (IEPF), an NGO, using the methodology tools, survey questionnaire, interview techniques, various other report forms, and a special MS Access add-on to IMSMA developed by ANAMA.
- Project proposals have also been developed by ANAMA and submitted to the European Commission within the EC strategy for the years 2005-2007. Proposals cover area marking and fencing and MRE/MVA.
- The production of textbooks for children and manuals for teachers has been completed, and these have been distributed to all project-targeted schools. MRE is currently ongoing in 320 schools of frontier and borderline districts in Azerbaijan.
- On 8 February 2005, the ICRC representatives, headed by Mr. Herbi Elmazi, visited the ANAMA office and met with officers responsible for MRE/MVA. It was clear from Mr. Elmazi's

introductory remarks that the purpose of the visit was the coordination of future activities within ICRC's Safe Play Areas Project. This project seeks to create mine/UXO-free play areas for children within mine-affected districts or particular villages. It was agreed that further consultations are required, and the LIS data should be used to select communities for that project.

- On 22 February 2005, a meeting was held with the Deputy Chairman of the Republic Children Fund to discuss their project, a children's painting contest and exhibition entitled "Give Us the World Without Mines!" The project will be implemented with the close involvement of ANAMA MRE officers.

Key Challenges

- Demining operations were suspended 4–21 February 2005 due to bad weather conditions.

Funding Update

- Space imagery for map update. In field use, the general staff maps, issued mainly in the 1970s and 1980s and digitized and geo-referenced for use in IMSMA GIS 1:50,000-scale maps, have been adapted only for the Aghdam region. Shortfall: US\$50,000.
- Enhancement of measurement capacity. Lack of technical equipment for accurate field measurements. Shortfall: US\$150,000.
- UXO clearance project in Saloglu village of Aghstafa district. Joint project of the Government of Azerbaijan and NATO/NAMSA. Total duration of the project is 16 months (2005-2008) at a cost of US\$1.5 million. Shortfall: US\$800,000.
- Further integration of MRE into the school curriculum in targeted districts. Shortfall: US\$133,000.
- Establishment of sampling capacity to ensure quality of monitoring and training team (6 persons) and deminers currently available. Shortfall: US\$90,000.
- Mechanical demining capacity. (Currently only one Bozena-4 mini flail system is available. A medium flail machine and integration and testing of the RHINO Earth Tiller are scheduled for 2005. Shortfall: US\$300,000 for maintenance and human capacity expansion.

Tajikistan

Key Achievements

- Four staff members are receiving training on Microsoft Office and Microsoft Excel.
- Two staff members are receiving English language classes each day at the Tajikistan Mine Action Center (TMAC) with an externally-contracted teacher.
- A course will be held, probably in Geneva, during 2005 for operators and users of the Information Management System for Mine Action (IMSMA). A request will be made to send at least two persons from TMAC to this course.

- Two instructors, seconded from the French Army, have arrived and are now employed in running a course for quality assurance monitors at the TMAC. This course will provide a qualified TMAC monitor, who will be part of the quality management system, which we aim to implement and develop this year.
- Eighteen students are being trained on a three-week course conducted by the Swiss Foundation for Mine Action (FSD) in order to identify twelve individuals who will become the next group of demining medics. They will be employed with the new survey and clearance teams, which will begin training next month, weather permitting.

Key Challenges

- Tajikistan continues to experience landmine casualties. On 6 January, a man from Lakkon Jammouat, Isfara district, was gathering wood on the border with Uzbekistan when he stepped on an anti-personnel mine and was killed. On 24 January, a teenager from Kuprukbooshi village, Puntuk Jammouat, was grazing his cattle along the border and stepped on an anti-personnel blast mine, which injured his left leg. On 10 February, seven adults from Dahana village, Puntuk Jammouat, were grazing cattle along the border when they detonated a bounding fragmentation mine. Three persons were killed and four were injured.
- A mission to Afghanistan to confirm the lease or purchase of mine-detecting dogs (MDD) from that country was unsuccessful as it was discovered that the Afghanistan mine-action programme does not have sufficient dogs to maintain their own plans. Although they have offered the possibility to procure and train dogs on our behalf, this probably means that a dog project in Tajikistan will not become a reality in 2005. Other avenues are being explored and it may be that the Marshall Legacy Institute in Virginia, US, will help by providing dogs to help get the project started, possibly in 2006.
- Approximately 100 more people plus 13 supervisors and managers are required to be trained to staff FSD's one survey and two clearance teams. Basic training will start soon (probably March/April, depending on the weather and completion of associated training courses). This means a total requirement of about 200 persons, with at least 12 months residual military service, will be required to staff the entire field operation. It remains unclear as to whether these people will be provided entirely by the Ministry of Defense (MOD) or if other ministries will be involved. Confirmation or news about availability of human resources will be requested from the MOD, but any other news on this subject would be welcome.
- Approximately 20,000 square meters will be needed to train, test, and maintain up to ten mine-detecting dogs (i.e., four teams of two dogs each, plus spare capacity for two more dogs). Preferably, all areas should be situated close to the Engineer Battalion barracks at Leninsky, within walking distance.

Key Objectives

- Continue increasing the training of the mine-action staff.
- Create an MDD capacity for Tajikistan.
- Create an accreditation system and accredit FSD's operations. It is planned that this will be achieved before the arrival of good weather and prior to restarting FSD's work in the field.
- Draft national mine-action standards. This is an ongoing project and the aim is to complete one section each month, thereby completing the entire series by the end of the year.
- Implement quality assurance (QA) and quality control systems. QA inspector training has already begun, and reporting and recording systems are being developed at the same time as the development of a capacity for inspection of mine-action operations.
- Develop techniques for assessment of priorities/planning and coordination.
- Phase out the international advisor by the fall of 2005.
- Successful completion of the QA Monitor training course.
- Conduct a Mine Awareness Working Group (MAWG) meeting on 29 March to coordinate and inform agencies and organizations involved in MRE and victim/survivor assistance projects about 2005 activities.
- Continue development and planning to produce a 20-minute film this year about mine action in Tajikistan. This will be implemented as part of our advocacy, education, and victim assistance projects and will be produced in Tajik, Russian, and English (in DVD and VHS formats), for distribution on national television and use in MRE presentations and at international events and conferences.

Funding Update

- Although plans have been made, no money has yet been donated or earmarked for the MDD project. A three-year proposal for C\$490,000 has been shared with the embassies of Japan and Canada, the Mine Action Support Group, and the International Trust Fund. No responses have yet been received.
- The EU/OSCE will continue to fund Survey Team Nos. 1 and 2. OSCE donations to the FSD project are uncertain, and it is understood that only 25 percent of budgets are currently being paid, the remainder being withheld pending confirmation of Russia donations to the OSCE.
- Japan will pay for 700 warning signs for use on the Tajik/Afghan border. Japan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) in Tokyo is likely to approve the project for hazardous area warning signs. A contract signing ceremony for the project will be arranged this month.
- The US has agreed to refurbish a covered motor-pool area, build non-climate controlled structures to store and secure equipment, build kennels for up to nine working dogs and a classroom/barracks facility for personnel, all to be used by the Tajik national demining programme in one location at the Leninsky Engineer barracks.
- The following donations are pledged, but not yet confirmed:

- UK to continue funding for FSD Emergency Response Team No 3.
- UK to provide running costs for FSD Emergency Response Team No 4.
- Germany to provide equipment costs for Emergency Response Team No 4. (approx. US\$131,000)

LATIN AMERICA

Colombia

Key Achievements

- In the Meta region 20 municipal human rights and mine-action committees have been consolidated and trained. The departmental mine-action committee has begun developing specific action plans for humanitarian emergencies and victim assistance. For the implementation of these plans, the departmental government has committed US\$80,000 to complement funds provided by UNDP.
- In Antioquia the 2005 Action Plan was approved by the departmental mine-action committee during February. With support from UNDP, the departmental government team carried out a second training of mine-action promoters. The departmental government mine action has established a system for providing continuous information, support, and guidance in relation to the rights of landmine victims.
- In Montes de Maria the draft regional mine-action plan has been circulated and discussed with all 16 municipal authorities and civil society actors. The plan will be launched during the second week of March.

Key Challenges

- Because of difficulties in the institutional strengthening of the National Landmine Observatory, the CTA has resigned from his post. The UNDP strategy for continuing to strengthen the Observatory is unclear. An inter-agency mission (UNDP/UNMAS) is planned for the end of March to make recommendations with respect to a new strategy.
- In addition to building institutional capacity, UNDP has identified an urgent need to support and strengthen civil society organizations working with mine action in Colombia. Specific projects are being developed.
- During February the ELN guerrilla group cleared approximately 15 kilometers of a road in South Bolivar. Should the Colombian Government decide to carry out a verification/quality control process, it would be necessary to provide both financial and technical support to this process.

Key Objectives

- Redefine the UNDP strategy for consolidating the National Landmine Observatory as the principal technical and coordinating body for mine action in Colombia.
- Continue to create and strengthen local capacities for mine action, including the implementation of the departmental and regional mine-action plans.
- Strengthen civil society capacity for mine action.

Funding Update

- With current funding, UNDP can only partially support the implementation of the three regional mine-action plans. Moreover, only limited resources are available to strengthen the civil society actors. For these activities, an additional US\$50,000 would be needed over the coming six months.
- An additional US\$50,000 would be needed should the government request support from UNDP for the verification/quality control process of the road cleared by the ELN in South Bolivar.

5. Updates from UNICEF

Angola

UNICEF's Mine Risk Education (MRE) Programme in Angola focuses on the preparation of policy and guidelines, and on the implementation of MRE activities throughout the country. Through training of teachers, the programme ensures that MRE is delivered in schools, and that NGOs have the capacity to provide effective MRE as part of an integrated mine action response. The ultimate aim is to reduce the number of mine accidents in Angola. UNICEF continues to provide technical, financial and logistical support to the National Commission for Demining and Humanitarian Assistance (CNIDAH). With its government counterparts, UNICEF Angola is currently preparing an annual work plan.

In February, CNIDAH organised the annual national MRE Meeting with the participation of CNIDAH Liaison Officers from 17 provinces, national and international NGOs and the National Institute of Demining (INAD). The meeting gave all partners the opportunity to evaluate the 2004 activities; to share information and consolidate results on two of the main activities carried out during the year – the training of community-based mine committees and the National ERM Campaign for Drivers.

During the meeting, the national MRE guidelines were also presented and discussed. In addition, guidance was given on how to complete the new forms for the Information Management System for Mine Action (IMSMA), a database that seeks to collate MRE and Mine Accident data.

Mine Risk Education in schools

As part of the ongoing national teacher training programme, 20,000 newly trained teachers received specific training on MRE. Meanwhile, a range of new didactic materials for use in schools is under preparation. This material will be ready for delivery to teachers expected to be trained later in the year across 15 provinces: Bengo, Uige, Kwanza Norte, Kwanza Sul, Huila, Huambo, Benguela, Malanje, Bie, Moxico, Luanda, Lunda Norte, Lunda Sul, Kuando Kubango and Cunene.

National MRE Campaign for Drivers

"Stay on the Safe Path" (October 2004–March 2005), the National mass-media and social mobilisation MRE campaign targeting drivers and passengers is about to finish. The results of the campaign have been positive, with active engagement of a range of partners beyond traditional partner NGOs and the national demining institute. Government and different partner organisations present at the national annual MRE meeting recognised that the success of the campaign was due to good coordination with institutions such as the national police, the Angolan armed forces, scouts, and others. These different groups were able to follow up on activities and ensure overall continuity to the initiative. To date, it is estimated that, through social mobilisation activities, the nationwide campaign for drivers has reached approximately 20,000 drivers and 100,000 passengers. Three TV spots and 3 radio spots on international (RTP Africa), national and local channels continue being aired. In addition to Portuguese, the radio spots were produced in seven national languages, English and French for returnees coming back from neighbouring countries such as Zambia, DRC and Namibia. A marked reduction in the number of mine accidents on the roads during the rainy season has been registered – with 2 mine accidents resulting in 11 dead and one injured during the course of this year's rainy season compared 52 mine accidents killing 40 people during the same period the previous year.

Field-based MRE Activities

UNICEF continues to provide financial and technical support to seven national NGOs implementing MRE in eight of the most mine-contaminated provinces of Angola. In addition, UNICEF continued to provide technical support and training to both national and international NGOs setting up or

undertaking MRE programming, plus the provision of information, education and communication (IEC) materials. Throughout February, UNICEF continued to advocate for civil society involvement in mine action programmes through the provision of training and support to provincial and municipal authorities to establish and support community-based mine action committees. Since June 2004, formation and support (supervision) has been provided to 79 community-based mine committees, created together with national NGOs in order to maintain local knowledge on mine safety, collection of data regarding location of mines, and other related activities. UNICEF technical support has been pivotal in ensuring that regular field visits are conducted to supervise and provide orientation to partners.

In January and February, UNICEF continued to engage with partners in need of technical and other support for MRE activities. A number of projects are under development with the following organisations: INTERSOS, MAG, Trinidad and OHI (national NGOs), all pending completion by the organisations.

A field visit to the province of Huambo for the United Kingdom Committee for UNICEF took place at the beginning of the month. The objective was to support a major fund-raising initiative consisting of a letter that will be sent from Angola to the UK public seeking financial support. One day of the three-day visit was spent on mine action activities, observing field activities of the national NGO Grupo de Apoio a Crianca, visiting the hospital and speaking with children survivors of mine accidents.

The Angola MRE programme is funded by UNICEF, funds raised by a number of UNICEF National Committees, and bilateral donors including the Governments of Italy, Canada, the United States and Norway. Currently, funds are being sought for 2005 to ensure that programmatic activities can be continued.

Bosnia and Herzegovina

UNICEF Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) continues to provide technical, financial and logistical support to the BiH Mine Action Centre (BHMAC) and to implementing agencies involved in MRE and Landmine Victim Assistance (LMVA).

In February 2005, the BHMAC finalized the MRE operational plan for 2005. The plan includes MRE agencies' plans for 2005, available resources, and an overview of the funding available. The plan has been forwarded to the Demining Commission for endorsement. The MAC has also finalized the 2004 MRE annual report. In addition, the MAC provided technical support to various NGOs implementing MRE in the country and reviewed proposals and plans from 2 agencies interested in becoming involved in MRE, issuing technical recommendations.

Two MRE courses for field workers were held by the Civil Protection, one in January and one in February.

The UNICEF-supported local NGO 'Genesis Project' continued with the implementation of school-based MRE activities, holding 108 workshops for 417 peer educators and 20 training sessions for school teachers.

UNICEF's partner, the local NGO 'AMI', organised meetings with local authorities and representatives in the municipalities of Brcko, Orasje, Pelagicevo, Celic and Lopare to monitor the implementation of action plans that had been developed by those municipalities and affected communities. The communities had been involved in the training that took place at the end of 2004. In addition, Ami introduced municipality and community representatives with their draft plans for 2005 and assessed needs and opportunities of collaboration, consistent with the local capacities. The results of the meetings provided the baseline on which AMI's new project plans were further developed. In parallel, Ami is finalizing the internal evaluation of the completed project phase.

AMI is also involved in a research project that aims to develop a planning model for MRE/Mine Action at community level. More specifically, the AMI team field tested the data collection and analysis methodologies developed by the consultants, focusing on risk assessment, vulnerability and capacity analysis and prioritization of target groups. The team is now testing the development of the actual community mine action plans. Despite harsh weather conditions that disrupted the schedule of activities, the research is going on well, and will lead to the development of Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) for planning MRE at community level. The SOP will be completed during the first half of 2005, as stated in the country annual plan.

The Italian NGO INTERSOS continues the implementation of MRE activities targeting men and women of working age in rural areas, either belonging to vulnerable groups or employed in private and public companies whose activities expose workers to mine/UXO risk (mainly in forestry, agriculture and construction).

In January, UNICEF's partner INTERSOS, continued liaison and community participation activities through round tables, meetings and workshops. Round tables and Operative Meeting sessions were concluded by mid-month. Lead by INTERSOS, with the presence of Local Civil Protection, regional BHMAL, IRC, and the European Union Force in BiH, the round tables introduced authorities and representatives of risk categories (public and private companies, associations of independent workers, citizen's associations, local community –MZ- representatives and other community leaders with the concept of mine action, its strategy for 2005-2009, the resources available, as well as with the specific priorities of intervention planned for 2005 by BHMAL.

In the operative meetings, INTERSOS presented the results of the previously conducted field assessments to present community leader and representatives of at risk companies the dimension and details of the mine problem in their local communities. An open discussion followed on how the problem could be solved with the contribution of the local community either financially (municipality budget for marking, company investments in clearance of valuable areas, fund raising), or through involvement of the local community (training of community representatives, public information, community liaison, advocacy etc.). The participants identified those who are going to be trained as community representatives.

From mid-January until the end of March, workshop activities were held in six target municipalities. After the presentation of an example of an integrated mine action plan, participants (community leaders and working sector leaders) had the opportunity to work in groups composed of those representing villages or operating in villages that are often on two sides of the former front line, planning on their own territory an example of intervention that included all mine action components and indicate possible target groups.

Workshop activities will be completed by mid-march, then selected community leaders and security managers of private and public companies will be trained as MRE community representatives. INTERSOS tutors will assist community representatives in developing and implementing a plan of action in their territory for public information, urgent and permanent marking, and advocacy, among other activities.

UNICEF Bosnia and Herzegovina's Mine Action programme activities in February 2005 have been supported by contributions from the Government of Italy, the UNICEF National Committees of Ireland and Austria, and the Government of Canada.

A considerable constraint to the implementation of UNICEF's Mine Action Programme for 2005 and beyond is the current shortfall in funding, which puts the programme in jeopardy. To be able to maintain its support to mine action in BiH, UNICEF BiH urgently requires USD500,000 for 2005.

Eritrea

UNICEF continues to provide overall coordination, technical support and capacity building initiatives for MRE activities for the Mine Action Programme in Eritrea.

February was dedicated to an integrated approach to Mine Action focussing on 18,600 IDPs from Adi Keshi IDP Camp and their return to 22 villages of origin. The Eritrean Demining Operations (EDO) and the UN Mine Action Centre (UNMACC) teams targeted all IDPs in the 13 highly mine/UXO affected villages. Together with demining and explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) teams, the EDO and UNMACC mine risk education teams reached 18,600 IDPs in the area of Shilalo. This integrated approach assists the populations in understanding the steps and processes of mine action, and ensures that high risk groups in mine-affected areas receive safety messages through a variety of mechanisms within the communities and a well-defined Mine Action network.

Also during February, UNICEF, in collaboration with UNDP and counterparts from the Eritrean Demining Authority (EDA) and the Ministry of Labour and Human Welfare (MLHW), continued to develop the training on the referral structure for landmine survivors to the network of orthopaedic workshops. This structure is being set up in relation to Proclamation 123 that defines the roles and responsibility of the EDA and the MLHW regarding victim support. The training will be held at the end of March for approximately 25 people, mainly MRE staff from the EDO, UNMACC and the Red Cross Society of Eritrea. The objectives of the training will be to provide landmine survivors with access to orthopaedic rehabilitation services; and to undertake capacity development efforts through training toward the establishment of a referral system between MRE staff and the EDA for landmine survivors to access the orthopaedic workshops based on Proclamation 123.

Also during the reporting period, UNICEF, together with the EDA national training centre's MRE instructors, trained 21 out of 35 community volunteers in different areas of MRE. Among other topics, the training included instruction on IMSMA data gathering and reporting in order to widen the reporting system's capacity. The EDO MRE teams maintain the data on mine/UXO victims, incidents, and locations on an ongoing basis to feed into the IMSMA database. All of the instructors/volunteers are either community elders, teachers, or were chosen by Baitos and/or sub zobas administrations. The community volunteers have been deployed to their communities and have started practicing MRE together with their colleagues from the EDO MRE teams. The remaining 14 volunteers will be recruited as soon as the present petrol situation improves.

Ethiopia

The Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD) has facilitated a workshop for the development of national MRE standards. The workshop was successful and all of the MRE actors participated in the development of the national MRE standards. The national standards are presently with the Ethiopian Mine Action Office (EMAO), who will release the final document to the MRE actors when the standards come into force.

UNICEF, the EMAO, the Rehabilitation and Development Organisation (RaDO), and regional counterparts have commenced inputting data into IMSMA. The data consists of the villages where RaDO and the regional government have established voluntary rehabilitation task forces, whose main focus is MRE. Once input into the system, the information will assist the MRE staff in prioritising their work.

UNICEF has recruited the GICHD to conduct an external evaluation of the MRE programme in Ethiopia. The results will assist UNICEF, the EMAO, and the MRE counterparts in planning for the future.

Russian – North Caucasus

According to information provided by the Government of Chechnya, in March 2005 two teams (consisting of robot-technicians and sappers) are due to arrive in Grozny to start mine/UXO clearance on selected agricultural areas, as well as on the territory of Grozny's Chemical Plant. The decision, which marks the beginning of humanitarian mine/UXO clearance in Chechnya, has been taken as a result of an agreement between the Prime Minister of Chechnya and the head of the Federal Ministry of Emergencies (EMERCOM). The urgent need to launch humanitarian mine/UXO clearance in Chechnya has been an important UNICEF priority.

A rapid evaluation of UNICEF's MRE activities in Chechnya, conducted by an independent consultant in January, has stressed the relevance and appropriateness of the strategy followed by UNICEF and its implementing partners, and has also provided useful recommendations to further strengthen the programme's effectiveness. The evaluation was possible through financial support from ECHO, the European Commission Humanitarian Aid Office.

As part of its community-based MRE campaign, UNICEF has met with the Government of Chechnya, with a view to undertaking a joint planning exercise. Representatives from 14 different districts of Chechnya shared their views on the mine/UXO situation in the Republic, as well as suggested ways to contribute more effectively to minimizing the threat to the population. It has been decided to create 10 focus groups in 10 highly-impacted areas, which will act as MRE agents in the communities, as well as to create 15 'letter boxes', which will take over the existing data gathering activity.

Mine Risk Education (MRE)/Community Liaison

UNICEF's partner 'Let's Save the Generation' (LSG), in a joint effort with the Chechen State Drama Theatre, organised MRE presentations for 380 children and adults residing in Grozny and in the village of Orekhovo (Achkhoy-Martanovskiy district) in Chechnya. The information flow was enhanced by the distribution of MRE materials, which were printed with ECHO support: 200 posters, 420 booklets, 420 notebooks and 12 T-shirts. With funding assistance from the Government of Germany, ECHO and the Dutch National Committee for UNICEF, one new MRE 'drama circle' has been established in the secondary school in Orekhovo, where acting techniques have been duly transferred to local children by the professional actors from the theatre. UNICEF's partner, the Voice of the Mountains (VoM), has also continued to monitor the work of six leisure centres in Grozny, Achkhoy-Martan, Shali and Shatoy, which are regularly attended by children and adolescents from the neighbourhoods. UNICEF and VoM are currently planning the establishment of six new centres in other mine and UXO-affected districts of Chechnya.

Survivor Assistance

In the framework of a project for the provision of psychosocial assistance to mine/UXO-affected children and young people, as well as their caregivers, LSG has conducted an assessment aimed at identifying the number of mine/UXO-affected children and young people currently residing in Grozny. As of 24 February 2005, 119 children and young people affected by mines/UXO have been registered as currently residing in Grozny; 40 of them with limb amputations, 64 have shrapnel wounds and 15 are affected by cerebral traumas and burns.

In an effort to promote the further transition of its prosthetics-orthotic project from Vladikavkaz (North Ossetia) to Grozny (Chechnya), UNICEF held a number of meetings with the Grozny Prosthetic Workshop, during which it has been decided to trigger a one-month pilot project – with the objective of providing at least 15 below – and above-knee prosthetic devices to child survivors. The prosthetic-orthotic programme is supported by UNICEF with funds from the Governments of Germany and the Netherlands as well as from the Dutch National Committee for UNICEF.

Two football teams of mine/UXO-affected children and adolescents, which are supported by UNICEF, participated in a football tournament organised by UNICEF's partner VoM in Grozny. The

tournament aimed at identifying the most skilled players who will be participating in the national championship for the disabled, to be held in Volgograd on 8 April 2005.

Sri Lanka

UNICEF continues to support the organisation of the MRE Technical Working Group where MRE agencies meet to discuss technical issues related to MRE. February's meeting in Vavuniya included sessions on community liaison, and children's MRE programmes and the link between community based MRE and school based MRE. Approximately 26 participants from NGOs and government organisations participated. The Mines Advisory Group (MAG) gave a very good presentation of their community liaison activities. Also for the first time, representatives from the Director of Education of Vavuniya and Trincomalee attended the meeting.

To keep the attention of targeted audiences on MRE messages, new communication tools need to be developed regularly. For this reason, two workshops took place in February in Batticaloa for the staff from UNICEF's partner 'Sarvodaya' Ampara and Batticaloa. The Sarvodaya Ampara field officers received training on MRE messages and communication tools (community mapping, drama, songs). The Sarvodaya Batticaloa staff were trained on theater and drama performances.

An important activity of the MRE NGOs in Sri Lanka is to conduct regular training and monitoring visits to communities' MRE volunteers. Sarvodaya-Batticaloa has trained 12 village volunteers on street drama. The volunteers were able to conduct 24 dramas in February. UNICEF's partner, Community Trust Fund, has also trained 25 village volunteers in Trincomalee.

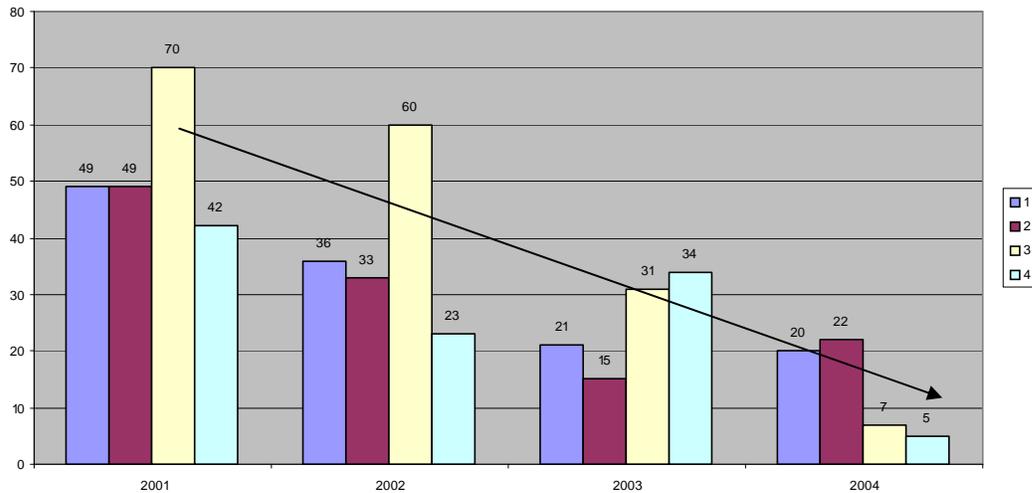
Mine Risk Education week and reduction of casualties

Preliminary information received from the IMSMA database concerning the number and period of casualties for 2004 shows a general decrease in accidents, which may be attributed to various factors such as reduction in movement of displaced populations and the intensification of mine action activities in general.

There is an usually high number of landmines/UXO casualties during the third quarter, which may be attributed to seasonal harvest activities. However in 2004, the pattern changed dramatically. This could be explained also by the intensive operation of "MRE week" throughout the north and east in 2004, prior to the third quarter. Because of this data, we will suggest organising in June 2005 a mine action week instead of just a MRE week.

| Total number of landmines/UXO victims for 2004 (preliminaries figures from IMSMA database) | | | | |
|---|----------|-----------|----------|-------------|
| Age Group/ Gender | | | | |
| | Female | Male | Unknown | Grand Total |
| A: 0-9 | | 1 | 1 | 2 |
| B: 10-17 | 1 | 5 | | 6 |
| C: 18-45 | 3 | 23 | | 26 |
| D: 46- | 2 | 4 | | 6 |
| Unknown | 1 | 12 | | 13 |
| Grand Total | 7 | 45 | 1 | 53 |

Total number of casualties per year by the quarters



School based MRE program

Following the tsunami and the beginning of the new school year, 1,000,000 mathematic's multiplication tables were disseminated in the northeast containing MRE messages that focus on reporting new mines/UXO.

Survivor Assistance

Forty-eight prosthetics were produced and fitted during the month of February in the Mannar orthopaedic centre, run by Valvuthayam.

White Pigeon staff from Killinochi received the following training in first aid techniques, basic rehabilitation skills, learning techniques, and report writing.

In Jaffna, the Jaiput foot centre carried out 50 physiotherapy sessions during the month.

Family Rehabilitation Centre (FRC) visited 20 individuals with disabilities including mine/UXO survivors for counseling sessions and referral to other services.