



## MAG DRC Programme Update April 2008



*Left: Mine Risk Education session in Mulonde, 20km from Moba, Katanga.  
Right: Clearance diving team leader completing a quality control dive, Mbandaka, Equateur*

### SUMMARY

**Reporting Period:** 01 April 2008 – 30 April 2008

#### Activities & Outputs Summary:

- **Search and clearance of a total of 499 m<sup>2</sup>** of land through a combination of hand, electronic, and visual techniques
- **Removal and destruction of a total of 1,474 hazardous items by the HMA teams**, including 89 items of UXO, 1,384 items of small arms ammunition, and 1 anti-tank mine
- **Destruction of 434 weapons and 6,116 hazardous items by the SALW teams**, including 2 MANPADS, 1 anti-personnel mine, 19 anti-tank mines, and 6,094 items of ammunition
- **96 Dangerous Areas identified**
- **14 MRE sessions conducted targeting 4,604 beneficiaries**

#### Impact Summary:

Two events have marked MAG's activities in DRC in April. First, the team of divers has completed the clearance of the harbour of Mbandaka, provincial capital of Equateur. This will allow the reconstruction of the port which had been halted because of UXO contamination. Once the port re-opens, it will make a significant contribution to socio-economic development and conflict recovery in the province. It was the first time MAG has undertaken underwater clearance and, following this success in Mbandaka, more is planned for the near future. For further information, please see the article about clearance diving in Mbandaka on MAG's website, [www.maginternational.org](http://www.maginternational.org).

A second major event this month was the opening, with funding from the Royal Government of the Netherlands, of the MAG base in Mbuji-Mayi to support SALW activities in the Kasais and Maniema. New teams have been recruited and training started at the end of the month.

## ACTIVITIES

### Equateur

The team of clearance divers completed the clearance of the harbour of Mbandaka. Over the project period, 18 items of UXO and 17,000 items of small arms ammunition were removed and destroyed and 1,460 square meters were cleared at the bottom of the Congo River to enable rehabilitation of the port. Following completion of the work, the rest of April was devoted to internal Quality Control and to supporting the external Quality Assurance mission. The clearance phase is now finished and the reconstruction of the port should be completed at the end of the year, thus supporting the revival of trade in the region. Rebuilding economic linkages is crucial for socio-economic development to support conflict recovery. This project was the first time MAG has undertaken underwater clearance and MAG DRC hopes to repeat the success shortly in Moba, Katanga, where a port used for the repatriation of refugees by UNHCR is also contaminated by UXO.

The project funded by the Royal Government of the Netherlands to build the capacity of the local NGO Humanitas Ubangi continued with the Community Liaison Manager deploying in Gbadolite and Gemena, Northern Equateur, to conduct the assessment of Humanitas Ubangi's Community Liaison teams. The end goal of the project is to contribute to the development of a national mine action capacity through technical and organizational support to Humanitas Ubangi.

Finally, at the end of the month, MAG welcomed the visit of a Desk Officer for the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) to the MAG base in Mbandaka, established with support from Sida. Funding from Sida in Equateur will resume on May 1 after a three month pause during the Mbandaka harbour project, contributing significantly to the impact which MAG's work is able to make in the province.

### Katanga

In April, clearance and community liaison operations by the teams funded by the Royal Government of the Netherlands and UK Department for International Development took place in the vicinity of Kyemia, Kirungu, Kibanda, Kisande and Misongo. The community liaison teams conducted 14 MRE sessions with 4,604 beneficiaries whilst the clearance teams removed 88 UXO and 184 miscellaneous items improving access to 39 agricultural sites, 5 housing sites, 3 water sources, one medical facility and one road.

### Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) Destruction Project

With funding from the United States Department of State, one SALW mobile team deployed to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Military Region (Bas-Congo) destroying a total of 6,116 items of ammunitions in stockpiles located in Matadi and Kitona. This included, of particular significance, 2 MANPADS tubes, 19 anti-tank mines, and 1 anti-personnel mine. A second mobile team conducted an assessment mission for stocks in Kolwezi, 6<sup>th</sup> Military Region (Katanga). In addition, 434 weapons were destroyed in Pweto. Due to difficulties experienced by the Military Regions in sending their weapons stocks to Kinshasa, destruction of weapons at the Central Logistics Base has been temporarily suspended, but is expected to resume shortly.

Thanks to funding from the Royal Government of the Netherlands, MAG has opened a new base in Mbuji-Mayi to support SALW operations in the Kasai Occidental, Kasai Oriental and Maniema. Training of the teams started at the end of the month with operations to commence shortly.

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MAG would like to express its gratitude and many thanks to the following current donors to the Democratic Republic of the Congo programme:

- *Bureau de Coordination de Marches d'Infrastructure* (BCMI) / World Bank
- Department for International Development (UK)
- Guernsey Overseas Aid Commission
- Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
- Royal Government of the Netherlands
- United States Department of State, Political Military Office of Weapons Removal and Abatement

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