



Left: Weapon Destruction operations have started this month in Kasai Oriental.

Right: A Community Liaison Officer from MAG helps to train the Humanitas Ubangi teams in GPS use during the HMA training in Gemena, Northern Equateur.

SUMMARY

Reporting Period: 01 July 2008 – 31 July 2008

Summary of outputs:

- **Search and clearance of a total of 1,750 m² of land** through a combination of hand and visual techniques
- **Removal of a total of 11,385 hazardous items** by the HMA teams
- **Destruction of 13,011 items of ammunition and 431 weapons** by the CWMD teams
- **22 Dangerous Areas identified**
- **79 Mine Risk Education sessions** conducted targeting **5,005 beneficiaries**

Summary of activities:

The first major event this month was the start of operations by the mobile Conventional Weapons Management and Disposal (CWMD)¹ teams funded by the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs. CWMD operations started on July 10 in Lufalanga close to Mbuji-Mayi, provincial capital of Kasai Oriental. 183 weapons were destroyed, and ammunition storage was re-organised with the FARDC to respect safe storage procedures following advice from MAG's Technical Field Manager. In addition, over 200 anti-personnel mines were earmarked for destruction in a later bulk demolition; more progress by DRC in respect of the Ottawa Treaty.

The second main activity was the completion of clearance and community liaison training for the MAG and Humanitas Ubangi Humanitarian Mine Action (HMA) teams this month in Gemena, Equateur Province. In total, 55 people followed the various training sessions. This training will have a significant impact on the mine action capacity in Equateur, especially through the reinforcement of the HU teams.

¹ To more accurately reflect the range of activities being implemented and types of munitions being dealt with, MAG is using the term *CWMD - Conventional Weapons Management and Disposal* rather than the *Small Arms Light Weapons (SALW)* used to date
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ACTIVITIES

Equateur

Training for the MAG clearance teams and the MAG and Humanitas Ubangi (HU) Community Liaison teams was completed at the end of July. Teams have now returned to their base. The clearance team funded by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency started working on a Battle Area Clearance task around Camp Ngashi in Mbandaka, where the arms depot of the FARDC exploded in June 2007, and recovered over 10,000 dangerous items. The community liaison team planned their deployment to the Basankusu sector in southern Equateur.

The Dutch-funded Organisational Development Adviser, working with Humanitas Ubangi to reinforce their capacity in terms of support systems, has worked with the HU team in Kinshasa this month on implementing a sound financial system and developing a funding strategy for the next two years.

Katanga

In July, the Community Liaison teams (funded by the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs and UK Department for International Development) continued working in a new area, formed by the Dubie-Mitwaba-Mwenge triangle. They prioritized Mine Risk Education (MRE) and delivered 76 MRE sessions to 4,713 beneficiaries. When MAG starts to work in a new area, MRE is crucial because it is only after people understand what UXO and mines are, and the risks they pose, that communities can start reporting dangerous areas. There is also a need to establish the population's confidence in MAG. This region was a stronghold of the Mai-Mai rebel group and during the war, any link to arms or ammunition could lead to retaliation by the army. This is not the case any more but the population is still reticent. 21 new dangerous areas were identified this month and more are expected when the teams return to the region. MRE was also given in Kampangwe to the workers of the NGO CONCERN. These staff are particularly at risk due to their work in infrastructure rehabilitation, which means they are often digging in the ground or entering destroyed buildings. The clearance teams worked in the surroundings of Pweto and removed 1,234 hazardous items. This improved access to 16 agricultural sites, 15 housing sites, 1 water source and 4 roads.

Conventional Weapons Management and Disposal (CWMD)

This month saw the start of operations financed by the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Weapon Destruction by the first team took place in Lufalanga near Mbuji-Mayi in the 5th Military Region (Kasai Oriental). In total, 183 weapons were destroyed and the team supported the FARDC to implement safe practices in the storage of ammunition. Over 200 anti-personnel mines were stored in Lufalanga and will be destroyed shortly in a bulk demolition. The second team deployed to Kindu, 7th Military Region (Maniema) at the end of the month, and ammunition destruction will start next month. The two months of training received by those teams, not only in Explosive Ordnance Disposal and weapon destruction, but also in communications, first aid and other important skills needed by staff implementing this work proved their worth, with all operations being conducted effectively and safely.

The teams funded by the United States Department of State, Office of Weapons Removal and Abatement (WRA), destroyed 12 tons of ammunition (mostly from Djolu) and 248 weapons in the 3rd Military Region (Equateur) and prepared operations in the 6th Military Region (Katanga) after the leave period at the beginning of the month.

Due to circumstances beyond MAG's control, destruction of weapons at the Central Logistics Base has been temporarily suspended, but is expected to resume shortly.

MAG would like to express its gratitude to the following current donors to the DRC programme:

- Department for International Development (UK)
- Guernsey Overseas Aid Commission
- Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
- Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- United States Department of State, Political Military Office of Weapons Removal and Abatement

For more information on this or any of MAG's programmes across the world please visit www.maginternational.org, or contact:

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