MAG DRC Programme Update May 2009

Left: The Manual Clearance Team leaving Mbandaka on deployment to Ikela, Equateur
Right: Battle Area Clearance being conducted in Kenge, Bas Congo Province

SUMMARY

Reporting Period: 01 – 31 May 2009

Activities & Outputs Summary:

- **Search and clearance of a total of 10,637m^2** of land through a combination of hand, electronic, and visual techniques
- **Removal and destruction of a total of 3,579 hazardous items** by the Humanitarian Mine Action (HMA) teams
- **103 Dangerous Areas identified**
- **183 MRE sessions conducted** targeting **7,085 beneficiaries**
- **Destruction of 543 weapons** and **4,579 kg of ammunition**

Impact Summary:

MAG DRC commenced its longest ever deployment this month, which will involve both the Mbandaka-based Community Liaison Team (CLT) and the Manual Clearance Team (MCT) travelling to Ikela, in Equateur Province, for a period of three months. The length of this deployment is due to the extreme isolation of the target areas and the operation will involve travelling around 600km by boat, in a journey lasting over a week.

Also in Equateur the Humanitarian Mine Action (HMA) Technical Operations Manager (TOM) conducted a visit to Gemena, and Mine Risk Education (MRE) was provided to UN personnel in the MONUC (UN mission in DRC) base there. With the commencement of new funding from UNICEF this month, MAG's local partner NGO Humanitas Ubangi, under a sub-grant channeled through MAG, opened a new base in Gbadolite and recruited and trained two new Community Liaison Teams.

The Emergency Response Team deployed to Kenge in Bandundu province to clear an area heavily contaminated with Unexploded Ordnance (UXO). The team was accompanied by two consecutive Community Liaison deployments (one CL team deploying with them each week); the first of which was made up of two Community Liaison Officers (CLOs) based in Pweto (Katanga), the Community Liaison Technical Adviser (CLTA), and the Kasai Oriental Base Manager/Community Liaison Manager (BM/CLM). The Katanga Base Manager also accompanied this team in order to create a photographic reportage of the activities now available on the MAG website. The CLT second deployment, the following week, involved two CLOs normally based in Gemena (Equateur) and the Kasai CLM/BM.

Equateur

Both the Community Liaison Team (CLT) and the Manual Clearance Team (MCT) based in Mbandaka, and financed by the Swedish International Development and Cooperation Agency (SIDA), deployed to Ikela, with the CLT leaving at the beginning of the month and the MCT following at the end of the month after a period of leave. This deployment, which will also reach areas around Boende and Bokungu on the way, will be the longest ever undertaken by MAG DRC and is planned to last around three months. In Gemena, MAG DRC's HMA TOM visited the MCT and CLT financed by the Dutch Government. He conducted training for four newly recruited Community Liaison Officers (CLOs) and oversaw the provision of Mine Risk Education (MRE) to UN personnel in the MONUC base in Gemena. The CLT (minus two CLOs who had been reassigned to support operations in Kenge) then deployed to Akula and Dondo, while the MCT conducted clearance operations around Gemena and deployed in the Gbadolite-Businga-Kalawa areas.

Katanga

The MCTs financed by the UK's Department for International Development (DfID) and the Belgian Government completed clearance work which they had commenced the month before near Lubumbashi, on a site used for mining purposes. The medic of one of the teams conducted a successful emergency medical intervention for two people injured by an exploding grenade near where MAG's operations were taking place (although outside the operational area and not connected with MAG's intervention). Meanwhile, the CLTs financed by DFID and the Belgian Government (minus the CLOs supporting the Kenge operation) deployed in the Moba-Kasenka-Mpala-Kala zone before taking annual leave.

Emergency Response Team (based in Kasai Oriental)

The Emergency Response Team was deployed for most of the month in Kenge, in Bandundu province, where they conducted Battle Area Clearance of a heavily contaminated area. Following this they returned to Mbuji Mayi, at the request of the Governor of Kabinda, to conduct emergency clearance operations in that region.

Conventional Weapons Management and Disposal (CWMD) Project

The CWMD TOM undertook a preliminary visit to Lubumbashi and Bukavu, in order to prepare for upcoming deployments there of the mobile CWMD teams. Over the course of the trip, he met with local civil and military authorities.

The first mobile CWMD team completed its deployment in Mbakana (Bas Congo - 2nd Military Region) at the beginning of the month, destroying a final 110 items of ammunition weighing 1,897 kg before going on leave for the rest of the month. The second team also completed the deployment it had started the month before, this time in Kamina, in the 6th Military Region, where it dealt with Air Force ammunition stocks and destroyed a remaining 100 items weighing 2,682 kg. Following this it deployed to Bukavu, where it has completed preparatory work and is ready to begin demolitions in June. Weapons destruction at the Central Logistics Base has continued as normal and 543 weapons were destroyed there this month.

In total MAG DRC has to date destroyed 2,006,130 items of ammunition weighing 416 tons, as well as 86,529 weapons.

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

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

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Leen Noltes (Regional Desk Officer)
MAG, 47 Newton Street, Manchester, M1 1FT, UK
e-mail: Leen.Noltes@maginternational.org
Tel: +44 161 236 4311 Fax: +44 161 236 6244