

Operational Overview

In Iraq MAG has built the largest mine action capacity in the country, with 40 teams and more than 625 national staff.

Operations include demarcation, minefield clearance, Battle Area Clearance (BAC), destruction of stockpiles of conventional weapons and Small Arms Ammunition (SAA), Community Liaison (CL), Mine Risk Education (MRE) and Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) risk education.

MAG also works in partnership with national organisations in areas of Iraq where activities cannot be self-implemented due to security reasons. This work with national partners increases the outreach of operations and contributes to building national capacity.

DOHUK SECTOR

- Four Mine Action Teams (MATs).
- Three CL teams.
- One SALW response team.

SULIMANIYA SECTOR

- Three MATs.
- Three CL teams.
- Two SALW response teams.
- One mechanical team.
- One mechanical support team.

CHAMCHAMAL SECTOR

- Ten MATs.
- Two CL teams.
- One SALW response team.
- Three Mine Detection Dog (MDD) units.
- One mechanical team.
- One mechanical support team.



Impact and Key Achievements

SUPPORTING CONFLICT RECOVERY AND DEVELOPMENT

Since 1992, areas cleared by MAG have been used to build new roads and homes, while farmers are able to work in safety in their fields, improving agricultural land use. MAG's operations also integrate with improvements to infrastructure and development, clearing land to make way for plans to build airports, recreational areas for tourists, and assist in the development of water projects.

REDUCING THE RISK OF ACCIDENTS RELATED TO SALW, MINES AND UXO

By removing stockpiles and caches of abandoned SALW, landmines and UXO, the programme contributes to the reduction of related accidents. Through clearance and risk education MAG's work reduces the threat to life and limb.

SUPPORTING NATIONAL AND REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT GOALS

MAG works closely with national and regional authorities and the United Nations to ensure the programme supports efforts to integrate mine action with development strategies, which

result in maximum impact on local communities. MAG is committed to supporting such strategies that are crucial to addressing the extent of the problem remnants of conflict cause in Iraq.

FUTURE PLANS

MAG Iraq will maintain operations in Northern Iraq, expanding where possible, and continuing to support and build the capacity of partners to

extend the influence of clearance work to the centre and south of the country. The programme will continue to work to

improve impact measurement systems in order to best demonstrate the socio-economic impact of our work and provide strategic support to national and regional authorities. Future funding is required to maintain and expand operations, looking to improve MDD and mechanical capacity and SALW operations while developing post-clearance impact assessment tools and monitoring capacity.

Since 2008 MAG Iraq has cleared more than 16 million m² of land, destroying 337,335 items of UXO and 15,549 landmines, while running 7,170 MRE sessions and benefiting three quarters of a million local people.

Returning Land to the Community

Teams of MAG deminers – funded by the US Department of State's Office of Weapons Removal and Abatement, the Dutch Government and the Belgian Government – removed more than 2,700 deadly items from 11 minefields in the Kirkuk sub-districts of Laylan, Qarahanjir, Takya Jabary, Shwan and Altun Kopri over a period of seven months. In total almost 490,000m² of land was cleared.

“On behalf of the Qarahanjir population, I would like to thank MAG for clearing these deadly minefields,” said the Mayor of Qarahanjir, Avesta Ezadeen, at a handover ceremony that saw the land officially returned to the people. “I praise MAG's quick response to our clearance requests, and all the work that MAG staff have done since 2003. I hope that MAG continues its life-saving work in Kirkuk in the future.”

He said the land would be used for farming and developing infrastructure, vital parts of life for these rural communities.

One of the cleared minefields in Qarahanjir will

host a main road project that will link Qarahanjir sub-district with Kirkuk city centre. The project had been suspended due to the presence of landmines and UXO in the area, but following the handover ceremony has now restarted.

Technical supervisor Ismaeel Muhammad, who oversees MATs in Chamchamal, explained how MAG uses integrated clearance methodologies to ensure maximum efficiency: “The use of mechanical assets such as the excavators and sifters, and mine detection dogs alongside the manual clearance teams speeds up the clearance process considerably.”

“I would like to thank MAG for clearing these deadly minefields.”
Avesta Ezadeen, Mayor of Qarahanjir

MAG's Community Liaison Coordinator at Chamchamal, Rebaz Azad, said: “The 1980-88 Iraq-Iran war, the internal conflict between the Kurdish Peshmerga and the former Iraqi military, and the most recent 2003 conflict in this region have caused widespread contamination, which is blocking access to vital agricultural land and land that could be used for development project especially infrastructure and tourism. “MAG prioritises land clearance to benefit those who need it most.”





MAG (Mines Advisory Group) is a not-for-profit humanitarian organisation, whose global operations directly reduce the devastating effects of armed violence and remnants of conflict. For more than two decades MAG has been removing deadly obstacles to reconstruction, peace and security in some of the world's poorest communities, saving lives and paving the way for safer futures.

MAG has worked in around 35 countries since 1989 and at present has operations in Angola, Burundi, Cambodia, Chad, Colombia, Democratic Republic of Congo, Iraq, Lao PDR, Lebanon, Libya, Pakistan, Republic of Congo, Sri Lanka, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan and Vietnam.

Further information on MAG's work in Iraq can be found at:

www.maginternational.org/iraq



Iraq

At a glance...

More than 30 years of unrest and conflict in Iraq has resulted in the widespread presence of landmines, unexploded ordnance (UXO) and other conventional weapons and ammunition.

These remnants of conflict cause continued devastation to communities - both through the physical danger they present and by preventing access to land, development of infrastructure and threatening the fragile security of the whole region.

MAG currently implements operations in the five northern governorate of Dohuk, Sulimaniyah, Kirkuk, Ninawa (Mosul) and Diyala, with a main base in Erbil.



MAG would like to thank the individual and institutional donors who support its work in Iraq:

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List of abbreviations

BAC - Battle Area Clearance. **CL** - Community Liaison. **MAT** - Mine Action Team.
MDD - Mine Detection Dogs. **MRE** - Mine Risk Education. **SAA** - Small Arms Ammunition.
SALW - Small Arms and Light Weapons. **UXO** - unexploded ordnance

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