



MAG Sri Lanka Programme Update December 2008



The range of activities undertaken by MAG in 2008 is shown above: Top left a deminer marks a suspected area before clearance can be undertaken (top right); Bottom left the Bozena B4 mechanical flail helps to prepare ground and rapidly verify suspected areas. Clearance activities are supported by the Community Liaison teams, seen here providing safety messages to members of a local community (bottom right).

SUMMARY

Reporting Period:

01 January - 31 December 2008

Activities & Outputs Summary:

- **Search and clearance of a total of 2,666,625m²** of land through a combination of manual and mechanical techniques
- **Removal of 23 antipersonnel mines and 28 items of Unexploded ordnance**
- **Completed two tasks** consisting 7 hazardous areas / sectors and commenced third task of 6 hazardous areas
- **Reached 39,000 individuals** with safety briefings and other community liaisons services

Impact Summary:

MAG's principle impact was to facilitate the resettlement of internally displaced persons, supporting the safe return of families to former conflict areas and encouraging economic regeneration through access to land for livelihood activities. By clearing land, MAG meets the critical first criterion of the returns process. Furthermore, cleared land enables returned communities to engage upon livelihood support activities, such as cattle grazing and agriculture as well as traditional vocations such as cane cutting, brick building and fishing. Over the course of 2008 MAG has maintained its operational teams thereby contributing to the post conflict development of the country and supporting the peace building process.

ACTIVITIES

During 2008 all humanitarian mine action activities were undertaken from MAG's operational base in Batticaloa; MAG is currently undertaking resource planning to respond to emerging needs in other areas of the country.

Manual Clearance

During 2008 the manual teams were funded by the United States, Department of State Political Office of Weapons Removal and Abatement. In December 2008 MAG's manual teams completed clearance of 1,081m² using the raking method bringing the yearly area cleared to 29,366m². The teams also completed 351,100m² of Battle Area Clearance bringing the combined yearly total of BAC to 2,307,389m². Four items of Unexploded Ordnance were removed in December bringing the total to 26 UXO and 12 mines removed over the course of 2008.

Mechanical Clearance

The mechanical teams used Bozena B4 mechanical flails, MAG's mechanical capacity, purchased and supported by the government of Japan, in an integrated fashion with the manual clearance teams undertaking ground preparation and verification of the low risk areas. During the final operational weeks of 2008 the teams completed 8,350m², bringing the total area verified by the flails to 329,870m² during 2008. The mechanical teams identified and removed and / or destroyed 11 anti personnel mines and two items of UXO during 2008.

Community Liaison

During 2008, MAG's Community Liaison teams have been funded by Swedish International Development and Cooperation Agency, United States Department of State, Office of Weapons Removal and Abatement, and Unicorn Grocery. The teams undertook post clearance impact assessment and provided safety briefings within communities in Batticaloa District, supporting the clearance teams with data gathering. In total over 220 activities were undertaken in 2008 supporting the clearance of contaminated land and promoting safety within affected communities.

2009

MAG is in preparation in order to respond to the expected Mine and Explosive Ordnance contamination within the north of the country. In order to fully understand the threat and need within the region, a detailed yet rapid survey will be required to effectively plan the response required following the cessation of hostilities. MAG welcomes the support of the Hurvis Foundation and DfID as new donors supporting the ongoing activities of MAG in 2009, who will support the team alongside Good Gifts, Kirby Laing Foundation and the Government of Japan.

MAG would like to express its gratitude and sincere thanks to the following donors who contributed by supporting MAG in 2008 and 2009 through the Sri Lanka programme:

- *Actiefonds Mijnen Ruimen*
- *BDO*
- *DfID*
- *Good Gifts*
- *Hurvis Foundation*
- *Jersey Overseas Aid*
- *Japanese Government*
- *Kirby Laing Foundation*
- *Lloyds Trust*
- *SIDA*
- *Unicorn Grocery*
- *United States Department of State, Office of Weapons Removal and Abatement*
- *MAG America*

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

Matt Thomas (Regional Desk Officer)
MAG, 47 Newton Street, Manchester, M1 1FT, UK

e-mail: Matt.Thomas@maginternational.org
Tel: +44 161 236 4311 Fax: +44 161 236 6244