



MAG Sri Lanka Programme Update January/February 2010



MAG Community Liaison Officers interview villagers planning to return to their homes in North Vavuniya, January 2010.

Reporting Period: 01 January – 28 February 2010

Activities & Outputs Summary:

- **Ongoing General Mine Action Assessment (GMAA), technical survey and clearance in Mannar and Vavuniya Districts** in support of the planned return of families displaced by conflict
- **Tasking received to commence GMAA in Maritimpattu DS in Mulliativu District in early March**
- **2 clearance tasks ongoing** in Periyapandivirichchan and Sinnapandivirichchan in Madhu DS Division, Mannar District
- **438 anti-personnel mines and 11 items of unexploded ordnance (UXO) uncovered**
- **Search and clearance of a total of 260,898m² of land** through a combination of manual and mechanical methods

Impact Summary:

- **2,738 IDPs (887 families)** return to villages in Mannar District where MAG has carried out survey and clearance tasks
- Non-technical survey completed at Mamadu GN Division in Vavuniya District and Devapuram village in Periyapandivirichchan GN Division, Mannar District, **releasing 11,528,250m² of land** in support of the returns process, benefitting 280 families (830 individuals)
- Creating a more secure environment for the people of northern Sri Lanka

ACTIVITIES

MAG Sri Lanka is carrying out urgent survey of priority areas in the Northern Province and clearing them from landmines, UXO and IEDs, for the return of IDPs currently being accommodated in camps around Vavuniya. According to latest figures approximately 101,000 people remain in these camps.

MAG received 3 new tasks in Vavuniya North DS Division in Vavuniya District in January. Non-technical survey is currently ongoing in 2 of these tasks in Katkulam and Paddikudiyurippu GN Divisions in addition to 2 tasks in Madhu and Periyapandivirichchan West GN Divisions in Madhu DS Division, Mannar District. Community Liaison teams completed survey in Mamadu GN Division in Vavuniya District and Devapuram village in Madhu DS Division, releasing 11,424,300m² and 103,950m² of land respectively.

Technical Survey and Clearance activities have been ongoing in Sinnapandivirichchan and Periyapandivirichchan tasks in Madhu DS Division, Mannar District, during the reporting period. 3 new mine action teams were deployed in February after recruitment and training thanks to support from CIDA. The teams consist of several IDPs and MAG Sri Lanka's first all-female team. A new Front-End Loader funded by AusAID is currently being armoured prior to deployment in early March, which will bring the programme's mechanical capacity to 7 machines.

Programme visits

Pierre Heroux, Development Counsellor for CIDA in Sri Lanka, visited MAG operations on the 21st of January.

The Mine Risk Education Technical Working Group, comprising of representatives from the Ministry of Nation Building, UNICEF, UNDP, and other agencies, also visited MAG clearance sites on 17th February.

Training

2 volunteers from the Canadian organisation Global Medic arrived on 24 February for 2 weeks to carry out First Aid training and a Training-of-Trainers programme for MAG medics.

The programme's Community Liaison Supervisor and 2 Team Leaders participated in a course on Community Participatory Assessment – Tolls and Techniques, conducted by RedR between 16 and 19 February

Future plans

MAG Sri Lanka expanded its capacity to 260 staff during the reporting period. MAG will be extending operations to Mullaitivu District in March, where the majority of the remaining IDPs are to return. Once the returns process is completed, MAG will shift its focus to enabling livelihoods activities for returnees. MAG is now actively seeking funding to continue its emergency mine action programme during the second half of 2010.

MAG would like to express its gratitude and sincere thanks to the following donors who supported the Sri Lanka programme during the reporting period:

- *AusAID*
- *CIDA*
- *Kirby Laing Foundation*
- *Stichting Vluchteling*
- *T.U.U.T Charitable Trust*
- *UK DFID*
- *US Department of State, Office of Weapons Removal and Abatement*

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