



Community Liaison Officers gathering survey data from villagers in Vavuniya District, Northern Sri Lanka, September 2009

Reporting Period: 01 - 30 September 2009

Activities & Outputs Summary:

- **Rapid village assessment operations ongoing in Vavuniya and Mannar Districts**
- **Ongoing General Mine Action Assessment (GMAA), technical survey and clearance in Mannar District**, in support of the planned return of families displaced by conflict
- **135 anti-personnel mines and 282 items of unexploded ordnance (UXO) uncovered**
- **Search and clearance of a total of 1,745,098m² of land** through a combination of manual and mechanical methods
- Closure of the operations base in Batticaloa in the east, with all teams redeployed to the north to support the priority return of IDPs

Impact Summary:

- Survey and clearance in support of IDP returns
- Creating a more secure environment for the people of Sri Lanka
- Building safer communities and working to improve the futures of people affected by explosive remnants of conflict
- Contributing to national reconstruction, economic growth and stability by freeing up land for essential livelihood activities

ACTIVITIES

Northern Sri Lanka

The programme is working in support of efforts to declare villages safe for the return of IDPs currently being housed in camps around Vavuniya. Approximately 250,000 IDPs from across the Northern Province of the country remain in camps. MAG is currently working in support of this initiative by undertaking survey and clearance to support the return of IDPs to Mannar and Vavuniya Districts, and will be seeking to expand the area of operations over the coming months.

MAG Community Liaison (CL) teams completed General Mine Action Assessment (GMAA) in two villages in Manthai West Division of Mannar during the month – Alkadaveli and Vanakulam. Due to the identification of suspected hazardous areas, technical survey and clearance started later in the month in both villages. GMAA work also started in Madhu Division of Mannar District late in the month. In addition, CL teams conducted Rapid Village Survey of 7 villages in Vavuniya South Division and 8 in Vengachedikulam Division, both within Vavuniya District. This was done in conjunction with the District Mine Action Office in Vavuniya and the Sri Lankan Army.

Technical Survey and Clearance were undertaken in Pallaikuli, Alkadaveli, Karunkandal and Vannakulam in the Manthai West Division of Mannar District during the month. A total of **135 anti-personnel mines** and **183 items of UXO** were found in and around Pallaikuli village alone during September, with a further **99 items of UXO** found in the other villages. The clearance tasks in and around these 4 villages are expected to be completed during October, with IDP returns scheduled for the end of the month.

Eastern Sri Lanka

MAG completed its work in the east of Sri Lanka for the time being, with the focus from now on entirely on the priority survey and clearance of land for IDP returns in the north. The remaining teams were transferred to the programme in the north at the end September.

GMAA was completed in 3 villages in Batticaloa District during the month – Vittpanaimadhu, Puludamonaddai and Aliodai – all in Eralaikulam Division. Confirmed and / or suspected hazardous areas were identified in each of the villages, which will require clearance in future. Clearance work was completed at Kajuwatta North, in the north of Batticaloa District. **794m²** were cleared manually and **2,445m²** mechanically during the month. **26 anti-personnel mines** and **10 UXO** were found in total since clearance started at this site.

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- *Embassy of Japan, Colombo*
- *Stichting Vluchteling*
- *UK Department for International Development (DFID)*
- *US Department of State, Office of Weapons Removal and Abatement*

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