



NPA Mine Action Sudan – First Quarter 2008 (01 January to 31 March)

Introduction

The first quarter to 2008 has brought renewed efforts in all recovery activities in Sudan. In the UN and Partners WorkPlan for 2008, the Mine Action sector reports that demining activities have opened up vast areas of Southern Sudan and in combination with infrastructure development have generated a significant growth in economic development and enabled the mobility of return programmes. UNHCR and partners have reached the milestone of 100,000 persons who have now made voluntary repatriation. The accident rate within Sudan has fallen from 92 in 2006 to 72 in 2007 although there is no room for complacency.



Deminer at SS431, Kenyi Payam, Lanya County

The security situation has impacted on operations across the Equatoria region however NPA Mine Action has adjusted accordingly in order to maintain operations and productivity.

The programme strategy for the period 2008 to 2011 has been reviewed and updated. Having been established in 2004, the programme now enters a second 4 year period which leads to the critical year of 2011. A consistent focus will be given to Capacity-Building, Productivity and Land Release. According to the programme Logical Framework Approach (LFA), the long term objective for the programme is to assist the South Sudan Demining Commission (SSDC) in meeting its obligations under Article 5 of the Mine Ban Treaty (deadline 01 April 2014).

NPA Mine Action Sudan has taken a more ambitious approach to operations in 2008 – teams have conducted operations in the states of Central Equatoria (survey, clearance and EOD/BAC), Western Equatoria (survey and EOD) and Jonglei (emergency survey and EOD).

Stakeholders



Visit of Peter Villano and Derek Kish, USDoS to BAC team, 12 March

NPA Mine Action Sudan hosted a 'Familiarisation Course' for 12 SSDC staff during 04 to 15 February. Students were introduced to the operational departments of the programme: Survey, EOD/BAC, Manual and Mechanical.

The QA officer, Ramba Joseph, has been successful in passing interviews for an Operations/QA Assistant position at UNMAO Juba. NPA congratulates Ramba on this achievement.

Visits were made to the programme by United States Department of State (Messrs. Peter Villano and Derek Kish) and the German Federal Foreign Office (Mr Christian Resch) – both were considered by the programme to have been a great success.



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Operational deployment and productivity

NPA Mine Action Sudan has for the first time, since the inception of the programme, established operations in 3 states. This has challenged the programme in terms of operational and supply management but it is considered to have been a success and teams have responded well to working in new locations and environments.

Central Equatoria

Clearance operations in Central Equatoria remain the core activity of the programme. Manual and Mechanical (Reduction) capacities recorded 11,107 m² and 293,500 m² respectively. 43 x AP and 22 x AT were found and destroyed during operations.



Senior Technical Adviser (STA) at BAC task SS 355 at Limbe, Lanya County

The BAC team is near to completion of SS 355 at Limbe in Lanya County – surface search of 64,641m² and sub-surface clearance of 81,875 m² was recorded.

Western Equatoria

Survey and EOD teams deployed to W. Equatoria during the first quarter. The extent of the deployment was limited by the security situation however 11 Dangerous Areas (DAs) were recorded in the Mundri East and West. 420 x UXO were destroyed (including Mvolo County).



Dangerous Area recorded by NPA Mine Action Sudan on Poktap-Ayod route, Jonglei State

Jonglei

WFP-GTZ is constructing the last link in the national route – Mabor to Malakal. NPA Mine Action Sudan has deployed teams in support of this (Ayod to Doleib Hill) and has recorded DAs accordingly. EOD follow-up has destroyed 248 x UXO, 4 x AP and 1 x AT. In general, Jonglei is a challenging place to work against the background of insecurity, planned disarmament and a wider humanitarian need.

NPA Task Impact Assessment (TIA)

The volume of Phase 1 (Pre-clearance) assessments is now reducing as the scale of the mine/UXO problem is more widely known and recorded. The emphasis is now switching towards to Phase 2 (during clearance) and Phase 3 (post-clearance), particularly in Central Equatoria. Phase 2 is important because it means that post-clearance activities can be confirmed and task handovers can be arranged. A recent Phase 3 assessment has confirmed that the return process at Bungu Payam has now commenced which is excellent news for the programme – 260 x households are now returning. In addition, the local community has identified another area of contamination in the locality – this will now be incorporated into the Clearance Plan for Central Equatoria.

Completions of SS 430, 429 and 356 at Mile 38 in Juba County have been conducted (including external QA by UNMAP) so the Mile 38 task is now 66% complete – the intention is to complete before the rainy season.



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Support Operations

The programme has improved on both international supply and on field supply from base location to the field camps. The Logistics Department is now working according to a strict system of routine orders for bulk procurement, stock control and reporting.

The Medical Department resumes another year with emphasis on on-the-job training. Programme medics will undergo a distance-learning package for Medicine (general) with AMREF.

An aero medevac exercise was conducted for the Jonglei teams – an exercise patient was evacuated from Mabiör in Twic County, Jonglei to Juba for subsequent treatment. The exercise was a successful revision for Ops Room and field staff in applying correct procedures. Air support was provided by WFP and UNHAS.



Aero medevac training exercise, Jonglei-Juba



ICT Technical Adviser with students

Capacity-building, Training and Personnel

The Capacity-Building Plan for 2008 is now underway. In summary this will see a reduction in the number of expatriate staff; the strengthening of programme administrative, financial and logistical capacity; improvements to the Operations Room IT and GIS capacity; consolidation of internal quality management; development of Team Leaders and Site Managers; and lastly, assistance to UNDP in the capacity-building of SSDC.

Training packages will be targeted at the Supervisor and Site Manager level. ICT skills will be taught to all relevant staff.

Two new survey teams have been established – one is fully staffed by female staff which includes team leader, assistant, medic and driver.

Programme staffing as at 01 April is 261 national staff and 11 international staff.

Conclusion

In summary, the first quarter has been a busy period for the programme. Looking ahead to the next quarter, the operational strategy will be to complete all dry season tasks prior to the onset of the rains. Operations will continue in the 3 states of Central and Western Equatoria and Jonglei.

An event of note is the national Census which is scheduled for 15 April. NPA Mine Action Sudan looks forward to this key date in the political calendar for Sudan and will assist its staff in meeting their obligations under the Census.

NPA Mine Action Sudan will retain its emphasis on Capacity-Building, Productivity and Land Release.



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NPA Mine Action Sudan thanks its donors for the 2008 funding period:



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US Department of State

NPA Mine Action Sudan Partners:



South Sudan Demining Commission



United Nations Mine Action Office Sudan

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