Chad
Country Profile
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The mine and unexploded ordnance contamination in Chad’s war-ravaged decades of internal conflicts, the 1973 coup, and the independence and fighting during Libya’s occupation of the Azawad Strip in the north from 1984 to 1987. Most of the known mined areas are in the Borkou-Ennedi-Tibesti region in the north and the Bida Oa, J Beach, in the east. Areas such as the Wadai Duma Mines Base are also contaminated with abandoned mines, munitions and other explosive remnants of war.

Chad signed the Ottawa Convention on May 6, 1999, and became a State Party Nov. 1, 1999. A Landmine Impact Survey conducted from December 1999 to May 2001 identified 249 mine-affected communities in 23 of the 28 departments surveyed and a total contamination of over 1,000 square kilometers (386 square miles), not including the Tihesti regions. Chad is not known to have produced or exported anti-personnel mines and has not retained any mines for training purposes.

The UNGPDM and contamination directly interferes with the livelihood and safety of over 280,000 Chadians, blocking access to water, pasture, agricultural land, roads and trails. A lack of comprehensive records and the shifting of mines due to rainfall and drifting sand makes marking mine and unexploded ordnance locations difficult.

Toxin’s 12 cases of major injuries and 357 casualties due to mines and explosive remnants of war in Chad; seven people were killed and 252 were wounded. In 2005, a UN expert was killed by a mine as he was filming for a documentary in the north of the country. Animals are also regularly killed in minefields, in April 2005 a herd of eight camels was killed and 300 more were walking into a minefield in Wadai Duma.

Mine-action Strategy

In conjunction with the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Office for Project Services and the Chadian government, the mine-action program has been run by Chad’s National Committee for Mine Action (CNPMI) and the Chad Mine Action Centre (CNPMI) as outlined in Phase One, completed in 2001, entitled the High Commission for National Demining and the mine-clearance activities. A national demining capacity was developed and a national database established. Phase Two, initiated in 2002, aims to establish a mine-clearance and explosive-ordnance-disposal capacity and complete the LIS. Due to lack of funding, only parts of Phase Two have been completed.

In 2004, the UNGPDM implemented mine action operations through the support of the United Nations Development Programme, the non-governmental organizations HELP Chad, and Mines Advisory Group, and Chad’s Chadian Army. Several deminers resigned in 2004 due to apparent funding problems; deminers were not being assigned demining tasks and thus not getting paid. There were also delays in paying salaries, and some stations in Chad started through a United Nations Office for Project Services contract in 2000 with HELP which was the only provider.

Survivor assistance varies for civilian and military casualties. While there are military hospitals in Chad, civilian health services remain insufficient for civilians.

Although the mine action program has been slow, the increase in population and limited non-desert residential area means Chad is facing the pinch of growth. In light of this fact, demining will likely be an increasing high priority for the government. Mine Clearance/Landmines/UXO also stand in the way of land needed for agriculture and water, blocking thousands of square hectares of valuable land and 300 million cubic meters (392 million cubic yards) of underground water.

As Egypt is a quickly developing and growing country, land will become increasingly scarce and competition for it will increase.

Facing the Future

Egypt faces competing issues of security, which may determine future programs made in the mine action sector. More funding is needed for economic growth and national development within the country, yet Egypt’s refusal to sign the Ottawa Convention may prevent the country from adequately addressing these key questions: Who pays for and is responsible for Egypt’s ordnance disposal? Can Egypt actively join the movement towards mine-free countries and security when there is still political and military instability in the Middle East?

In the future, the International Conference for Development and Landmine Clearance in late December 2005, organized by the National Committee for Human Rights, highlighted the gravity of Egypt’s landmine problem to the world. It ended with participants urging two things: that Egypt reconsider its position on international conventions concerning landmines and that the international community offer Egypt funding and technical support even if Egypt is not a State Party to the Minamis.

To view endnotes and references for this article, visit http://mijnacta.mna.org/journal/10/1/profile/egypt/egypt.htm.

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