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# Somali Demining Action Group

Somali Demining Action Group (SDAG) aims to eradicate anti-personnel landmines in Central and South Somalia. Statistics are provided for mine casualties in Central and South Somalia.

by Dr. Omar Mohamed, Somali Demining Action Group

## The History of Somali Demining Action Group (SDAG)

SDAG is a non-governmental organization (NGO) working and campaigning to eradicate anti-personnel (AP) landmine problems in Central and South Somalia. SDAG was established in 1992 to implement mine clearance and mine risk education activities in Central and South Somalia. SDAG is staffed entirely by Somali nationals and the Somali Diaspora. In its first two years of operation, SDAG focused on sending special training instructors to high priority mined areas to provide Somali civil society with mine risk education. SDAG is working with the Transitional National Government (TNG) in Mogadishu and Bay, Bakool, and Upper Geddo regions of central Somalia.

## Landmine Casualties and Survivor Assistance in Somalia

Landmine incidents continue, albeit often unreported. According to the U.S. Department of State, reporting on events in 2000:

“On January 20<sup>th</sup> in the Hiran region, a landmine exploded, killing at least six persons. On January 30<sup>th</sup> in the Hiran region, landmines and gun battles killed 21 persons. On January 30<sup>th</sup> near El Ali, five escorts of a food convoy were killed when their vehicle hit a mine. Also on January 30<sup>th</sup>, an aid convoy hit a landmine

while crossing the Shabelle River for the Bakool Region. The Abgal clan reportedly planted the landmine; 10 persons were killed and eight others injured. On February 5<sup>th</sup>, landmines destroyed three ‘technicals,’ combat vehicles, belonging to the Islamic Court militias near the village of Buulo Warbo, west of Qoryoley, Lower Shabelle. The explosions killed three persons and injured five others.” In July 2001, it was reported that three people lost their legs and a baby girl was killed in a mine incident, on the road between Kismayo and Mogadishu.

In northeast Somalia, according to the director of Garowe Hospital, Dr. Mohammed Hussein Arabi, since the end of the conflict, trauma cases have fallen considerably and more recently most cases have been type C, caused by handling UXO. According to UNDP Somalia, hospital statistics reported “accidents,” which include mine injuries among others, as 14 percent of all fatalities in the past year [2000]. During that year there were 101 mine incidents in northeast Somalia of which 40 percent resulted in human fatalities.

In central Somalia, statistics are available for the Bay and Bakool regions. In the Bay region, between 1995 and 2000 1,281 people were killed by mines, including 38 in 2000, a significant decrease from previous years when casualties numbered in the hundreds. A total of 1,729 were reported injured by mines between 1995 and 2000, including 49 in 2000, another significant decrease from previous years when casualties numbered in the hundreds.

In the Bakool region, 897 people were killed by mines between 1995 and 2000, including 26 in 2000. Between 1995 and

2000, 450 people were injured, including 34 people in the year 2000.

In south Somalia, Mogadishu hospital reopened in June 2000 and has 55 beds available, all for emergency surgical cases, with technical support provided by the ICRC.

In the week of March 10–16, 2001, the hospital received 70 patients, of which 33 were “weapon wounded and 32 non-weapons wounded and two were other wounds.” Thirteen of the patients died.

## Landmine Casualties and Survivor Assistance in Somaliland

Landmine Monitor learned that in 2000 regional mine officers were instructed to compile more systematic incident reports. According to statistics received from SMAC in July 2001, in calendar year 2000 there were 107 landmine/UXO casualties in Somaliland, including 73 males and 34 females, of whom 60 were children and 47 adults. Forty-eight casualties resulted from antipersonnel mines, 48 from antitank mines, and 32 from UXO.

Two decades of conflict and instability devastated Somaliland’s health care and social services infrastructure. Two NGOs based in Hargeisa provide some assistance to landmine survivors: the Somaliland Red Crescent Society and Handicap International France. Between 1993 and December 1999, the Somaliland Red Crescent Society rehabilitation center provided prostheses to 1,082 patients, of which 382 were mine victims.

Handicap International (HI) provides prostheses, crutches and wheelchairs, and runs a physiotherapy clinic for amputees and other disabled people. HI is also involved in projects assisting the social reintegration of the disabled, including mine survivors. ■

## Mine Casualties from 1995-2000: Bay region, central Somalia

Year	Mine Casualties		Vehicles Destroyed	Animals killed or injured		
	Injured	Killed		Camels	Cows	Donkeys
1995	253	370	10	17	20	8
1996	271	285	13	28	5	3
1997	182	105	18	38	12	7
1998	451	203	25	53	29	12
1999	523	280	21	85	31	19
2000	49	38	5	30	27	14
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,729</b>	<b>1,281</b>	<b>92</b>	<b>251</b>	<b>124</b>	<b>33</b>

## Mine Casualties from 1995-2000: Bakool region, central Somalia

Year	Mine Casualties		Vehicles Destroyed	Animals killed or injured		
	Injured	Killed		Camels	Cows	Donkeys
1995	62	23	4	30	12	3
1996	182	89	9	45	29	2
1997	290	115	15	89	34	10
1998	363	162	14	135	20	8
1999	46	27	6	50	18	6
2000	26	34	2	47	19	4
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>897</b>	<b>450</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>393</b>	<b>132</b>	<b>33</b>

## Casualties treated at Mogadishu hospital (June 2000–February 2001)

Month	Weapon Wounded	Mines	UXOs	Non Weapon	Total
June 2000	73	1	2	0	76
July 2000	103	1	1	0	105
August 2000	66	0	6	0	72
Sept. 2000	90	3	2	0	95
Oct. 2000	82	4	1	0	87
Nov. 2000	74	0	1	40	115*
Dec. 2000	49	0	2	44	95
Jan. 2001	75	0	1	47	123
Feb. 2001	51	1	10	32	94

## Total Number of Patients who obtained Prostheses from Hargeisa Rehabilitation Centre of Somaliland Red Crescent Society: 1994 to December 1999

	Mine	UXO/Gunshot Injury	Accident	Others	Total
Male	300	400	90	110	900
Female	58	32	8	38	136
Children	24	6	2	14	46
<b>Total</b>	<b>382</b>	<b>438</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>162</b>	<b>1082</b>

## Mine Victim Statistics/Jan–Dec 2000

Region	Type of Casualty		Type of Injury	Human Casualty				Type of Device		
	Human	Livestock		Loss of Limb	Male	Female	Adult	Child	UXO	AP
Awdal	10	14	5	10	0	2	8	2	3	9
Galbeed	11	8	6	9	2	8	3	0	8	3
Sahil	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	1	0	0
Togdeer	81	78	29	50	31	37	44	27	36	22
Sanaag	1	8	0	1	0	0	1	1	1	3
Sool	3	11	0	2	1	0	3	1	0	11
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>119</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>48</b>

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