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Mozambique is a geographically vast country populated by diverse ethnic and linguistic groups. While most areas are not heavily mined, landmines and UXO continue to plague many areas across the country, affecting economic activities, such as agriculture, livestock rearing, and transport. The author discusses the past, present, and future of mine action in this country.

By Dr. Hildegard Scheu, Consulting and Training

Introduction and Background

The United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research, Geneva, commissioned three pilot studies on Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation (PM&E) of Humanitarian Mine Action during 2002. Fact-finding missions were undertaken in Cambodia, Nicaragua and Mozambique to assess the general state of play in humanitarian mine action programmes and activities, including the potential for applying participatory monitoring and evaluation techniques to humanitarian mine action. A compilation of the history and recent developments of Humanitarian Mine Action in Mozambique is summarised here.

Mozambique is a huge country with a land surface of 799,380 square kilometres and a long eastern coastline of approximately 2,700 kilometres. The population of about 18 million (2002) is composed of different ethnic, linguistic and religious groups. Mozambique is among the least developed countries in the world. It has a gross national product (GNP) of $230 per capita and a poverty level of almost 70 percent. According to 1999 figures, life expectancy is 39.8 years, the adult literacy rate is 56.8 percent, and the primary school enrolment rate is only 40 percent. HIV/AIDS is becoming a major problem with an overall adult prevalence of about 14 percent of the population above 15 years.

Mine action in Mozambique

Landmines and UXO Contamination

Landmines were first used by the Portuguese during the liberation struggle, and the FRELIMO and the Portuguese Colonial Power between 1964 and 1974. After independence in 1975, FRELIMO formed the government and followed a Marxist approach, which was soon violently opposed by the Mozambican National Resistance (RENAMO) supported by Rhodesia and South Africa. The civil war between 1977 and 1992 caused millions of people to flee their villages and live as internally displaced persons (IDPs) or refugees.

Most of the landmines laid down in Mozambique were emplaced by FRELIMO and RENAMO between 1978 and 1990. The government used landmines mainly to protect important infrastructure and strategic sites. Minefields were also laid along the borders with Malawi, Zambia, Zimbabwe and South Africa. RENAMO targeted the infrastructure, such as railroad lines, economy; roads, railways and power lines were heavily mined. Both sides were accused of having used mines to terrify civilians.

The Peace Agreement that ended the civil war was signed in Rome in October 1992, and a UN peacekeeping force, UNOMZ, was deployed to oversee the two-year transition period until multiparty elections were held in 1994. Early estimates of the magnitude of the landmine problem in Mozambique have been revised as new data has become available, and the landmine problem is now considered to be much less extensive than after the 1992 peace accord. Currently, landmines no longer figure as one of the main obstacles facing the country.

Mozambique experienced devastating floods in 2000 in the southern provinces of Gaza, Maputo and Inhambane, which caused about 60,000 people to become homeless. About 200,000 and affected the livelihood of about two million people. The country also suffered a major flood in 2001 in the central provinces of Sofala, Manica, Tete and Zambezia. After the floods, it was feared that displaced mines would pose an uncontrollable risk, but fortunately, the accident rate did not increase.

Specialists claimed that mines might have been washed into the river and into the ocean and in some rare cases might have floated to other areas, but in general this has not grown into a major problem. Most areas are not heavily mined, but the presence— or even assumed presence—of landmines and UXO remains a significant obstacle to development. A substantial demining capacity will therefore be needed for many years to come. However, the priorities will appear less pressing, and it will be necessary to re-structure organizational responses.

History of Mine Action

Mine action in Mozambique started in 1993. A preliminary plan of action was developed in January 1993, but it was approved by FRELIMO and RENAMO only in November. Its emphasis was on clearing roads to facilitate the UNOMOZ peace mission. The UNOMZ Agreement provided for the return of refugees and IDPs. The focus on emergency-oriented objectives resulted in a failure to recognize the need for long-term demining in the countryside.

In addition, little attention was placed on the needs for comprehensive data gathering and the establishment of sustainable indigenous capacities.

The United Nations wanted to establish a comprehensive demining plan, which was considered to be converted into a national capacity at the termination of the UNOMOZ mission. But donors did not support this plan and were committed to securing demining contracts for specific non-governmental organizations (NGOs) or commercial operators. The difference in approaches between the United Nations and the major donors is seen as the major obstacle in establishing a functioning coordinating mechanism.

A Norwegian People Aid (NPA) was the first organization to establish a demining capacity in Mozambique in 1993. Areas for clearance were selected on the basis of expected refugee return; priorities were set by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), which also co-financed the clearance operations.

The Hazardous Area Life-Support Organization (HALO Trust) carried out a national and regional clearance strategy and an integrated demining program. By mid-1993, the HALO Trust had carried out a national and regional clearance strategy and an integrated demining program. By mid-1993, the HALO Trust had

The Mozambique Landmine Impact Survey (2001)

The Mozambique Landmine Survey (MLIS) was performed between January 1999 and August 2001 on behalf of the mine-action authorities of the government of Mozambique. Funding ($2.2 million) was provided by the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) as part of the Canadian Mine Action Program (CMAP). The principal findings were as follows:

• Landmines affect all 10 provinces of Mozambique and 123 out of 128 districts.
• About 1.5 million persons, representing no less than nine percent of the Mozambican population in 1997, are affected by landmines.
• Of the landmine-affected communities, 768 are classified as rural, however, to integrate overall development priorities with the mine-action strategy. The foci of the mine-action strategy remained mainly inter-national coordination bias. IND has a regional office in Nampula and one in Sofala province. A new Mine Action Plan, based on the results of the Landmine Impact Survey (LIS), was formulated in November 2001. The plan covered a period of five years (2001-2005) with annual work plans scheduled. UNDP and IND agreed on the national plan for the renewed Mine Action Programme (RMAP) for the period 2001-2005. The national plan was approved in May 2001 by the National Coordinating Committee.
Landmines in Africa

23 urban communities, including those with more than 30,000 inhabitants are also affected. A total of 1,374 Suspected Mine Areas (SMA) were identified. They cover an area of 5,324 square kilometres. Some 41 percent cover areas of less than 1,000 square metres and less than five people are larger than one square kilometre.

Nine years after the end of the hostilities, landmine accidents still occur. At least 1,415 landmine victims recorded during the MLSI had come to harm during the two years preceding 2000.

SMAs most frequently impact agricultural land, roads and non-agricultural land used for hunting, gathering, fishing, and other economic and cultural purposes. Blocked access to drinking water due to SMAs is less frequent, but it nonetheless has a serious impact.

Landmine clearing on the Mine Impact Score (MIS), 20 communities with 36,000 inhabitants are classified as high-impact, 164 communities with 393,000 inhabitants as median-impact, and 667 communities with 1.1 million inhabitants are classified as low-impact.

This classification is for priority setting for Technical Surveys (Survey II) and clearance operations in the Five-Year National Mine Action Plan 2002-2006.

Landmine Victim Data

Reliable data on mine victims is not available. Compared to other mine-affected countries, the numbers are comparatively low and definitely declining over time. A study carried out by HI in 1993 found that 50-60 percent of the mine accidents were fatal because the victims were not captured (rapid access surveys).

In 1996, HI began the systematic collecting data on mine and UXO accidents under its Project of National Coordination of Medical Activities for the Population to Prevent Mine Accidents (PEAM). Between 1996 and 2000, a total of 92,193 injuries recorded, specifically 309, men, 84 women and 17 children under 15 years old. Thirty-seven percent of all accidents occurred in the provinces of Manica, Sofala, and Nampula, and only seven percent in the provinces of Nampula, Niassa and Cabo Delgado. The majority of accidents occurred while the victims were engaged in subsistence activities. The fact that men constitute the majority of the victims may be explained by their greater involvement in economic activities like farming, hunting and transportation. An additional hypothesis is that there is also an underreporting bias in the case of women. Children become victims mainly either as a result of manipulating grenades, ammunition and other UXO or parts of UXO held by another child or when helping with subsistence tasks such as herding animals, collecting firewood, or harvesting and hunting. The study concluded that continued mine risk reduction education (MRRE) is important especially for making children aware of the dangers of mines and UXO.

The second most affected were identified by the LIS.79 identified themselves as mine-affected. Of these, 429 communities reported a total of 2,145 victims since 1964, the start of the independence struggle. This total must be considered a minimum, since 31 communities reported "known" mines, but could not give an approximate estimate. Generally, as the number of mine victims is low in both absolute and relative terms, their socioeconomic, medical, social and psychological needs do not figure prominently in social programmes in Mozambique.

The Socio-Economic Impact of Mines

While the victim rate is used as a major indicator of the socio-economic impact of mines, other aspects of impact have only recently begun to be explored in more detail in Mozambique.

Ananda S. Millard from the Assistance Project of Mozambique and the Project at the International Peace Research Institute of Oslo (PRIO), conducted an impact study in three mine-affected communities in Mozambique in 2001.80

Mine clearance operators work on the premise that the occupation of mines will have an "automatic impact," which is not always the case. Also, there may sometimes be negative effects. In Mozambique, Inhambane and Sofala, and only seven percent in the northern provinces of Nampula, Niassa and Cabo Delgado. The majority of accidents occurred while the victims were engaged in subsistence activities. The fact that men constitute the majority of the victims may be explained by their greater involvement in economic activities like farming, hunting and transportation. An additional hypothesis is that there is also an underreporting bias in the case of women. Children become victims mainly either as a result of manipulating grenades, ammunition and other UXO or parts of UXO held by another child or when helping with subsistence tasks such as herding animals, collecting firewood, or harvesting and hunting. The study concluded that continued mine risk reduction education (MRRE) is important especially for making children aware of the dangers of mines and UXO.

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Handicap International (HI)

In 1990, HI started the Inhambane Mine Clearance Project (IMCP) in Inhambane province. It recruited and trained four teams of 56 deminers. In 1999, HI employed four teams of 12 deminers each, one team of 22 deminers, and one team of eight people for technical surveys. It also hires dogs with their handlers. Efforts are concentrated on those small areas that are in close proximity to settle-
ments in order to meet the needs of district and provincial populations. "Proxi-
imity demining" also refers to the close con-
tact maintained between the demining teams and the affected population.

HI selects potential sites for demining on the basis of priority, local needs, emergency situations, local plans, potential rehabilitation funding, national and international input from other organisations. Priorities are set in consultation with the provincial and distric-
t administrative officers. Close contacts are established with the local communities at demining sites.

People Against Landmines (Menschen gegen Minen)

Menschen gegen Minen (MgM) is a German NGO that has been working in humanitarian mine clearance since 1988. After the floods at the Limpopo river in 2000, MgM humanitarians helped with mine clearance tasks. Currently it is working on a mine-
suspected area along the railway line in the Limpopo Valley in Gaza province. Manual demining teams, two dog teams and mechanical equipment are used. The demining teams also assist the local popula-
tion in clearing singular landmines and UXO when called upon.

Commercial Companies

In 2000, the U.S. State Department provided $3,14 million for demining to RONCO, an American company. The company employs about 100 Mozambican deminers in eight teams with mine de-
tection dogs. One major task in the clear-
ance of the Senna Railway line, RONCO also provides support to INR to train their personnel and improve the database.

Handicap International (HI)

HI began Mine Awareness Educa-
tion Programmes for remaining refugees at the request of UNHCHR in 1993. Key personnel on HI's proposal has been accepted by the National Institute for the Development of Education. The process of revising the school curriculum began in 2001, and the new curriculum is to be introduced in 2003.

GTZ/MineTech

GTZ began to collaborate with the Mozambique's Mine Action Committee (Minists) in 1994, when, on behalf of UNHCHR, it carried out the demining of the area around the Mozambique and referred mines. Fielden collected examples of landmines around villages, schools, health posts and other vital infrastructure in the two provinces of Manica and Sofala, where GTZ sup-
pports rural reconstruction and develop-
ment cooperation projects, GTZ and the Mozambique Mine Action Committee (CMAD) concept.

Armed Forces of Mozambique

In 2000, the United States State Department provided the Mozambican military (PAM) with demining equip-
ment and vehicles as well as funds for demining. Until 1999, the Mozambican Department of Defence supported mili-
ant demining efforts, while also included the delivery of demining equipment. The military runs a demining school in coordination with inter-
national standards. Though military demining units were involved in mine clearance along a power line from South Africa to Maputo as well as other tasks, they are not considered to be a major role in hu-
manitarian demining.

The military was in charge of the landmine stockpile destruction in Sep-
tember 2001, when about 600 anti-per-
sontal mines were destroyed. FADM has submitted a detailed workplan and bud-
dget to INR for the destruction of the exis-
ting 37,500 anti-personnel mines in its possession through 2003. The govern-
ment of Mozambique is committed to ful-
fil the obligations of stockpile destruc-
tion as per Article Four of the Ottawa Mine Ban Convention, which Mozambique has signed and ratified.

Mine Risk Education

Handicap International

Handicap International (HI) has been working in Mozambique since 1990. HI has had a strong presence in the country, and its work has focused on providing assistance to landmine victims. HI has implemented a range of programs aimed at addressing the needs of landmine victims, including financial assistance, counseling, and physical rehabilitation services. HI has also worked on landmine risk education and awareness campaigns to reduce the risk of further injuries. HI's efforts have been instrumental in raising awareness about the dangers of landmines and in advocating for the rights of landmine victims. HI's work has contributed significantly to the reduction of landmine-related injuries in Mozambique. HI has been working closely with other organizations, including the National Mine Action Centre, to implement programs that support landmine victims. HI's work has been supported by numerous international donors, including the European Union, which has provided significant funding for HI's programs in Mozambique.
landmine victims accounted for 29 percent of mine victims in 1997, they accounted for only nine percent in 2000. POWER still provides technical support to the MINSAU for running the orthopaedic services.

The Mozambican Red Cross, in cooperation with Jaipur Limb Campaign (JLC), established an orthopaedic centre in Manica-Sul district, Gaza province, in 2000. Most beneficiaries are victims of landmines. A plan for a mobile centre could not yet be implemented for lack of funds.

The Ministry for Women and the Coordination of Social Action developed a Policy for Disabled Persons, which was approved by the Council of Ministers and published in 2000. Hi, POWER and other donors support the Ministry at various levels in the implementation of the policy. But a lot still has to be done to reach the objective of social and economic integration of disabled persons.

Complaints about the lack of concern regarding victim assistance on the part of the government and government employees were rampant.

POWER is working closely with local disability organisations, specifically with the Association of Disabled People of Mozambique (ADEMO), the main association for disabled Mozambicans. ADEMO runs a community school for disabled children in Maputo and is developing work programmes for social training (bakery, metal work, carpentry and probably leather work at a later stage) as well as a pilot project to provide rural disabled people with disability cars as an alternative means of transport in order to enhance their mobility and livelihood.

Mine Action Funding

According to the Landmine Monitor Report 2001, mine action funding totalled some $17 million in 2000. Of this, $6.6 million was allocated to the IND, and $10.6 million was provided to mine clearance organisations.20

Major donors are the UNDP with funds from Canada, Sweden, Denmark, Switzerland, Germany, and Ireland, as well as the individual countries of Canada, Norway, Germany, Austria, the Netherlands and the United States, which fund mine action activities directly.

Conclusion

Although most areas in Mozambique affected by landmines and UXO are not heavily mined, the presence of mines and UXO continues to represent an impediment to development. Landmine action in the country is primarily carried out by a number of foreign humanitarian NGOs and a host of different commercial companies contracted by donors and international humanitarian agencies. The military plays a very limited role.

Although precise data on mine victims in Mozambique is not available, their numbers appear to be comparatively low with falling over time. It seems relatively clear that the needs of mine victims are poorly attended to and that even demining programmes do not proceed heed to the requirements of the local population concerned.

Due to limited resources and a challenging socio-economic environment, the adoption of participatory monitoring and evaluation approaches would not be an easy task. The most promising line of approach is the introduction of pilot participatory monitoring and evaluation projects in partnership with institutions on the ground.

Endnotes

1. The author received permission to interview players in Mine Action and related institutions in Mozambique between 22 December 2000 - 3 January 2001. A detailed study was made with Mozambique International (MI) on the evaluation of their programme in the Provinces of Gaza and Inhambane.


10. "Returning home after doing the family washing in the Luena river. Before MAG's intervention, a road to either side of the path was mined, three people had been injured."

Using a Community Liaison (CL) model that emphasizes community participation, Mines Advisory Group (MAG) prioritises minefield clearance to lessen landmines' impact on communities in Angola.

by Tim Carstairs, MAG

A recent intervention at the May International Standing Committee of Experts (ISCE) meeting in Geneva was paraphrased in this way: "The humanitarian impact of landmines must guide the priorities of donor countries." This statement made by the representative of Norway goes directly to the point and provides us all with the real problem of ensuring that our resources are used most wisely and effectively to address these needs. This article seeks to briefly explain how MAG conducts an evaluation of the practical capacity associated with each mine action response.

As the title suggests, it is obvious that the mine action response is not one that may be assessed in a simple, straightforward manner. Mine action is an integral part of wider rehabilitation and development. As the opening quote suggests, we have to deal with the impact of mines on people. In this case, the impact of mines and UXO is most often to be considered within a wider context of economic, social and political recovery from conflict. Prioritisation and appropriate action are therefore taken at the same level. Furthermore, the individuals and groups in the equation are not passive and helpless but active parts of the process and worthy of respect.

In the mid-1990s, MAG developed the practice of applying a CL model to mine action situations in Angola. We believe in working together with all actors to find the best solutions to our problems. The human subjects—the communities that live in mined areas or that have been driven from mined areas and wish to return—become key players within the prioritisation process. This is a good developmental process that has been encouraged since the late 1980s. The concept of CL is being mentioned more frequently now in relation to mine action, and we hope that this short article will help explain how we understand it.

The Global Impact Survey process enables us to understand the impact of landmines and UXO on basic human needs and on the longer-term developmental process and economy and thus is a factor in establishing the long-term priorities for humanitarian mine action. That being said, the survey process is not designed to cope with the immediate needs of communities faced with life-threatening mine/UXO contamination. We also need to provide mine action to those that need it now, at the same time placing that action firmly within the development sphere.