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Darfur: Baseline KAPB Survey

This article summarizes the first baseline Knowledge, Attitudes, Practices and Beliefs Survey conducted in Darfur since 2003. The purpose of the survey was to gain a better understanding of the knowledge, attitudes, practices and beliefs of the at-risk population in Darfur regarding explosive remnants of war, and to evaluate aspects of transfer of knowledge, use of mass media and surveillance mechanisms.

by Beatrice Winkler and Shaza Ragab [UNAMID]

On the initiative of the African Union/United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) Ordnance Disposal Office the first Knowledge, Attitudes, Practices and Beliefs Survey since 2003 was conducted in 2011–2012 in Darfur to assist with the annual work plan. The KAPB survey was developed and implemented in close cooperation with National Mine Action Centre Sudan, UNICEF, MineTech International and the two national nongovernmental organizations, the Friends of Peace and Development Organization and JASMAR Human Security Organization (formerly known as the Sudanese Association for Combating Landmines).

The KAPB study's main purpose was to acquire a baseline and direction for the risk education program in order to better adapt risk education to the local context and needs. Under the supervision of UNAMID Ordnance Disposal Office and NMAC Sudan, a total of 1,671 persons (893 female/778 male; 745 children/926 adults) of different subgroups (students, nomads/herders, farmers, teachers, community leaders, workers, etc.) were interviewed between May and July 2012 in 29 different villages and internally displaced persons camps in North, South and West Darfur.

The results of this first baseline KAPB study provided useful information and highlighted several gaps to be addressed by risk-education stakeholders working in Darfur.

Background

In 2003, the Darfur conflict devastated western Sudan's Darfur region, an area with approximately 7.5 million people of different ethnic groups and covering about 493,180 sq km (190,418 sq mi). As a result of persistent violence and fighting, many people fled their homes; estimates indicate the number of IDPs is 2.2 million.¹ Due to ongoing fighting, explosive remnants of war continue to pose a significant threat to the safety and security of residents, displaced and returning populations.



KAPB interview in Abu Gabina, West Darfur.
Photo courtesy of Adnan Osman Hassan/JASMAR.

In Darfur, mine action work largely focuses on disposing unexploded ordnance. The changing situation of the Darfur conflict implies high risk of recontamination wherever fighting occurs regardless of previous clearance efforts. UXO, such as mortars, rockets, aerially delivered bombs and grenades, pose a high risk to the individual in terms of casualty and lethality radius due to the large amount of explosives and the fragmentation effect. The reported UXO accidents also involved children, usually boys. In 2011, 122 mine/UXO casualties (32 killed/90 injured) were reported in Sudan.²

Since 2007, risk education teams from two local NGOs, FPDO and JASMAR Human Security Organization, have worked in Darfur under the coordination of the UNAMID Ordnance Disposal Office, NMAC Sudan and UNICEF.^{3,4} They work to raise awareness of ERW dangers among communities and displaced populations by providing community and school-based risk education through various training and public-information activities.



Unexploded ordnance in Darfur.
Photo courtesy of MineTech International.

Methodology

The study took a broad approach, including not only questions regarding knowledge, attitudes, practices and beliefs, but also exploring knowledge transfer and surveillance mechanisms. The study was informed by the *IMAS Mine Risk Education Best Practice Guidebook 2 on Data-collection and Needs Assessment for MRE* and took into consideration recommendations of the *National Technical Standards and Guidelines for Mine Risk Education*.^{5,6}

The final KAPB questionnaire, which was translated into Arabic and pretested on a small sample in the El Fasher rural area and in two IDP camps, consisted of 50 questions, each with short instructions for the interviewers. The survey contained questions for quantifiable data but also left space for individual additions and comments from the respondents, allowing more flexibility and maximizing data reliability by avoiding typical and normative answers.

This research required a two-stage geographic cluster sampling approach with the selection of different subgroups according to probability proportional to size. In Darfur, children represent one of the main at-risk groups, and the population aged 16 or younger makes up 47 percent of the population.⁷ For these reasons, interviewers were encouraged to include at least as many children as adults. Other subgroups of interest for this study were men and women in general, boys and girls, religious or community leaders, teachers, nomads/herders and farmers.

The KAPB questionnaire was administered in the three states of North, South and West Darfur, in six different localities (El Fasher, El Geneina, Jebel Moon, Kass, Marshang and Sirba) and 29 different cluster locations. In Darfur, 50

percent of the population is living in the triangle comprised of El Fasher, Nyala and El Geneina, and this area contained most of the clusters. However, interviews conducted in IDP camps managed to capture data from many different locations that might be ERW-affected.⁷ The interviews in El Fasher ZamZam IDP camp for example were conducted in the clusters of new arrivals from heavily ERW-affected areas such as Shangil Tobay, Dar al-Salaam, Tukumare, etc. In this way, teams gathered information from a wider area than just the El Fasher locality.

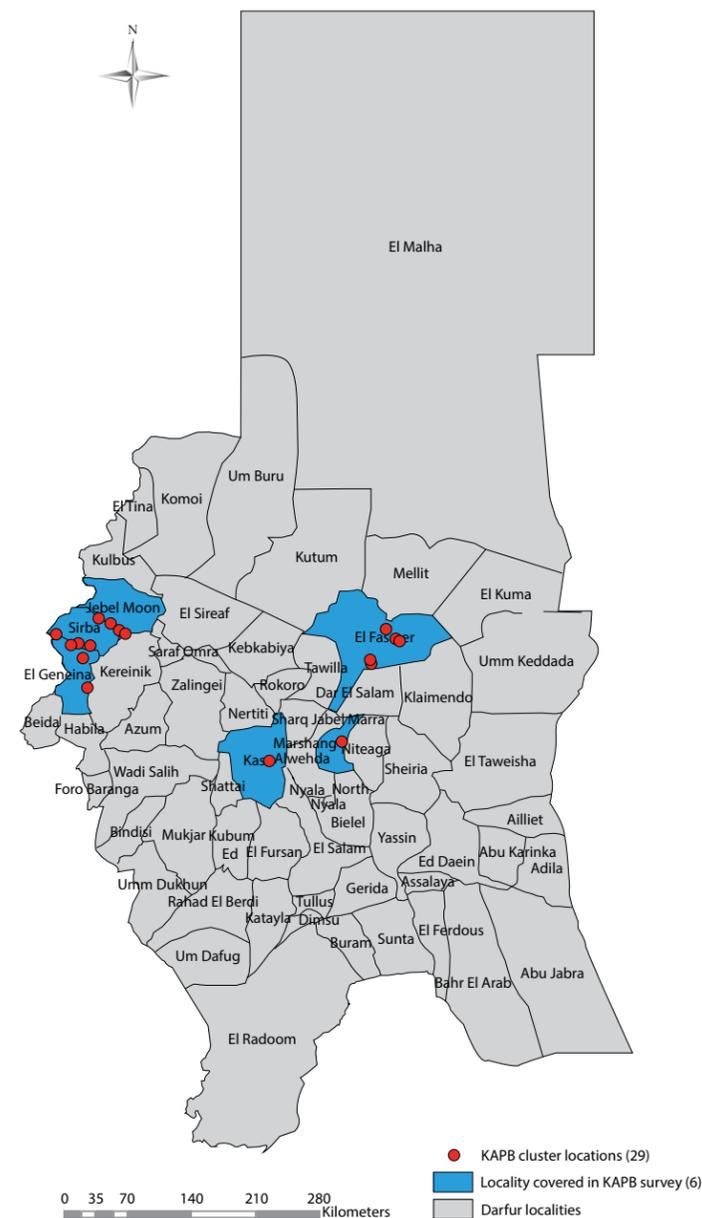
Prior to data collection, all survey workers received a two-day training in data collection for KAPB survey, enabling workers to practice and gain a good understanding of the survey's purpose, the data-collection tool and interview standards. After the training, a short two-week pilot was conducted in North Darfur with IDPs in the ZamZam IDP camp. The pilot information and methodology was then revised to support better conduct of the survey.

Findings

All Sudanese residents, but especially those from West Darfur, perceive ERW as one of the main problems facing their communities. The real threat present in the survey locations and the people's knowledge of ERW seemed to influence overall attitudes. Respondents in West Darfur felt the worst affected: 38.7 percent considered ERW to be one of their main problems, 74 percent indicated the presence of ERW in their village and many people explicitly requested clearance of their villages and surroundings. People interviewed in IDP camps did not seem to face ERW threats, and as they tend to stay there for long periods (6–10 years on average in South Darfur), some respondents suggested focusing risk-education activities more on ERW-affected villages than IDP camps.

The findings indicated that mostly boys, farmers, herders/nomads, and to a lesser extent men and people collecting water or wood, go to ERW-affected locations, therefore exposing themselves to risks. The finding that boys constitute the primary at-risk group is further confirmed by the responses on ERW incidents, which showed that most casualties involved boys (58.5 percent) and happened while they either tended animals (35.8 percent) or tampered with UXO (34.1 percent). A high number of children interviewed are out of school, especially in West Darfur, and they work mostly as herders and farmers. For this reason, complementary to school-based risk education, targeted risk education activities need to be provided to out-of-school youth.

With regards to the most appropriate channels for providing risk education, the results show that people in Darfur,



KAPB survey locations.
Figure courtesy of Beatrice Winkler/MineTech International/UNAMID ODO.

both children and adults, generally acquire new information through community leaders, radio, family and friends, and circulate it within their community, mainly among friends, family and neighbors. Television is not a main source of information (only 7.8 percent), nor are newspapers (2.7 percent). Around 62.7 percent of all respondents listen to the radio at different

frequencies, mostly in the morning and evening. The most popular radio station in Darfur is Omdurman radio. El Fasher radio is the most popular station in North Darfur, Nyala radio in South Darfur and El Geneina radio in West Darfur. Dabanga is also very popular in all three states, whereas respondents only seldom listened to Al Salam radio, the shortwave channel UNAMID radio

uses. Possibilities should be further explored to use the most popular radio channels for dissemination of risk education messages.

Another clear finding this study highlighted is the need for a strong focus on community liaison. Community and religious leaders, especially sheikhs and umdas play a very important role in the transfer of knowledge.⁸ These leaders receive information first and constitute one of the main two sources of information for the communities. They are widely trusted and are the best-informed (besides military and police) about ERW presence, accidents and victims. Of the 1,671 respondents, 165 mentioned that they would prefer to get awareness messages from sheikhs/umdas and suggested that the teams work more closely with them.

Information about UXO dangers was considered very useful by a vast majority of people whom previously received such information through different means (36.9 percent of the whole sample previously received information mostly through posters, briefings and presentations, etc.). Most beneficiaries indicated a subsequent change of behavior as a result of the information received: They now mainly stay away from ERW (49.5 percent) and avoid dangerous areas (42.8 percent). Despite possible courtesy bias, this shows that risk education messages have had a positive impact. Direct presentations and materials were also considered appropriate ways for raising awareness. However, due to rather high illiteracy rates (38.8 percent of the whole sample, 92.5 percent of nomads/herders, 50.2 percent of all women interviewed), risk education materials used in Darfur should consistently provide clear visual messages.

In terms of ERW knowledge, the findings point out that the majority of respondents—adults and children,



Young boys constitute the primary at-risk group in Darfur. Photo courtesy of MineTech International.

female and male—are mostly aware of the danger of ERW (92.8 percent) and know that an explosion may lead to death (81.7 percent). However, in most cases this knowledge is not complete enough to allow for full risk-minimization. After having received awareness messages in different ways, less than 40 percent of children and adults knew the most common events that cause an ERW to detonate. Of those who received risk education messages, 13.8 percent still thought carefully picking up an ERW was safe, and 48 percent of the children who had previously received risk education messages did not know that tampering with an ERW could lead to an explosion. These findings illustrate that risk education messages need to include more complete, clear and precise information on what leads to ERW explosions and the potential consequences of explosions to humans, as well as information about safe and dangerous behaviors.

The findings also demonstrate that more than just a lack of knowledge leads to dangerous risk behaviors. Well-intended efforts to eliminate dangers for others by burying UXO result in dangerous risk-taking. Furthermore, a number of persons—14.9 percent of all respondents—in 25 survey locations also showed intentional exposure to UXO through the following activities:

- Collecting ERW for future use and income generation
- Using ERW for distraction (making fireworks with ERW, using ERW as toys for kids)
- Substituting ERW for certain items, such as school bells⁹
- Using parts as bracelets, necklaces, kitchen tools, agricultural tools, including using warheads of rocket-propelled grenades as bells and jewelry for animals (especially in West Darfur)

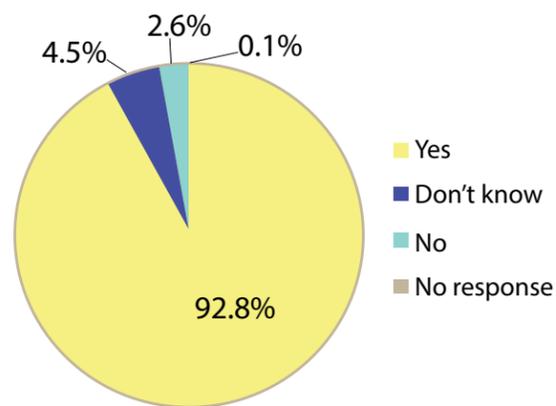
Despite known local marking signs and methods, the findings showed that marking is not broadly practiced. Especially in West Darfur, people mentioned that marking would attract people to the ERW instead of protect them from it. They preferred to bury the UXO, a dangerous practice that just recently resulted in a deadly incident, killing a farmer.

The fact that incidents were mentioned in 28 out of 29 cluster locations confirms the assumption that the number of ERW deaths and injuries is actually much higher than recorded in the Information Management System for Mine Action due to lack of direct reporting of ERW presence and incidents to NMAC, U.N. bodies or national risk education teams.^{8,9} NGOs working in risk education were only rarely informed of incidents, making it all the more important to build strong links with the communities for better surveillance and victim assistance. In response to incidents, risk education teams mainly conducted awareness sessions and did not systematically collect information about the incidents. As part of their community liaison efforts and for the benefit of the other pillars of the mine action program, risk education teams should put more emphasis on collecting information about incidents and the victims.

Conclusion

Most people in Darfur are aware of ERW dangers, but their level of knowledge often does not suffice for full risk minimization. Communities that had previously received awareness information generally considered risk education very useful. Direct community or school presentations were broadly accepted and considered appropriate ways for raising awareness.

The study showed that there is still potential for better outreach to at-risk communities by using more appropriate channels, better targeting the activities to affected areas and at-risk



Survey results indicating percentage of people who consider unexploded ordnance dangerous in Sudan. Figure courtesy of UNAMID ODO.

groups, and providing more complete, precise and suitable messages. Reinforcing community liaison and broadcasting radio messages via the most popular radio stations seem to bear great relevance in the search of higher risk education impact in Darfur.

Since UXO are used as substitutes for everyday items, and everyday items are even available in the shape of ERW—in El Fasher markets, cigarette lighters in the shape of hand grenades were found in the period of data analysis—traditional message-based approaches alone may not be sufficient to achieve behavior change. Risk education messages should be communicated with pertinent materials and a range of activities addressing the underlying vulnerabilities which lead to such voluntary exposure to UXO risks.^{10,11}

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Beatrice Winkler was risk education coordinator for MineTech International within the UNAMID Ordnance Disposal Office in Darfur, Sudan from July 2011 through October 2012. She has experience in the fields of humanitarian assistance, communication and protection. She worked for local NGOs and international organizations, including the International Committee of the Red Cross and also started up a freelance project for young women in Syria. Winkler holds a degree in translation and cultural studies from Zurich University of Applied Sciences, Switzerland and a master's degree in international humanitarian assistance from the Universidad de Deusto, Bilbao, Spain.

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News Brief

Grenade Depot Blast Kills 25 in Turkey

Examiners continue investigating the 6 September 2012 blast that killed 25 soldiers and injured four more at a Turkish ammunition depot in the western province of Afyonkarahisar, Turkey.¹ The Minister of Forestry and Water Affairs, Dr. Veysel Eroglu, ruled out terrorism as a motive and said that a hand grenade was likely accidentally dropped as soldiers conducted a stock check at the depot, causing the explosion and ensuing blaze.²

The blast shattered windows in nearby homes, and civilians were encouraged to stay away from the area. Emergency services initially found it difficult to access the scene due to scattered unexploded ammunition and a large fire that burned at the depot for several hours. The military also needed to carry out controlled explosions and cordon off areas for safety purposes before emergency services could reach the scene.^{1,3}

Haldun Solmazturk, a retired military officer, commented that the stock check should not have been conducted at night and that the number of soldiers who participated seemed higher than the number needed for a standard stock-checking procedure.¹ President Abdullah Gul called for a full investigation into the incident.²

Those wounded in the blast were sent to a military hospital, while a local school set up facilities to assist families and residents of the affected area.² The blast occurred late Wednesday evening, and the area was safe for residents to return to the next morning.

~ Elisabeth Reitman, CISR staff
See endnotes page 65



Map of Turkey. Courtesy of CIA World Factbook.