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Female and Integrated Demining Teams: Past, Present and Future

Over the past few years, demining has evolved from being a man's occupation to a unisex occupation. In many countries, females now work alongside mine-clearance teams, removing landmines and unexploded ordnances. With every generation, the roles of men and women have become more equal.

The Sudan program has achieved a 25 percent female staffing ratio across the program—excluding two out of eight mine clearance demining teams. During 2017 and 2018, the female teams were deployed at Mile 36 in Juba Country, one of the most heavily contaminated areas in South Sudan.

A total of 201 anti-personnel mines and 98 anti-tank mines have been cleared by the female team from roads linking Uganda to the city of Juba. ‘Lado Vector’ from NPA says, “women learn demining techniques as quickly as men but follow procedures more rigorously. The only complication to using female deminers is pregnancy.” To counter this, there are additional female deminers within the program to allow for maternity leave.

Employing female deminers is part of NPA’s commitment to gender equality and gender mainstreaming. NPA has no plans to recruit more female teams because there is no need to recruit mine clearance teams currently working in South Sudan, in the female teams alone work equally with their male counterparts. The two most important reasons are as follows:

1. Both men and women benefit from the improved socioeconomic opportunities created by mine and UXO removal.

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