Egypt

Country Profile
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T he mines and unexploded ordnance contamination in Chad is a result of decades of internal conflicts, the 1973 invasion by Libya, and fighting during the Libyan 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 Bilma region in the east. Other areas such as the Wadai Dounou Basin 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 (366 square miles), not including the Tibesti region. Chad is not known to have produced or exported anti-personnel mines and has not retained any mines for training purposes. The mine/UXO 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 shuffling of mines due to rainfall and drifts sand making mine marking and unexploded ordnance locations difficult. In 2005, 21 confirmed and three probable casualties due to mines and explosive remnants of war in Chad; seven people were killed and 25 civilians were severely injured, and one civilian was killed in a minefield. Animals are also regularly killed in minefields; in April 2005, a herd of eight camels was killed while walking into a minefield in Wadai Dounou.

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 developed with the assistance of the United Nations Mine Action Centre Phase One, completed in 2001, established the High Commission for National Demining to plan and conduct mine-action activities. A national demining capacity was developed and a national database established. Phase Two, initiated in 2002, aims to establish a mine-clearance and exploitable-ordnance-disposal capacity and complete the LIS. Due to lack of funding, only parts of Phase Two have been completed. Parts of the third phase began in 2004; this phase consists of the operational deployment of the mine-clearance/FOD capacity in areas identified as national priorities by the government. Teams have been deployed to a number of locations, including but not limited to 7 T-N'dama, Massovia, Féra Lurega, Kalai, Fada, Oumoungaba and Wadai Dounou. In 2005, Chad completed one of its obligations under the Ottawa Convention, destroying its stock of 4,470 anti-personnel mines.

Mine-action Coordination

HCND has three regional offices, located in Fada, Badi and Wadai Dounou, with a logistic center in Faya. Its role is to coordinate and plan mine-action activities and assure quality control. The organization prioritizes clearance and survey mainly according to impact scoring in the LIS, the discovery of new minefields, and the arrival of safe land. Priorities are agreed upon in consultation with local authorities and selection of survey areas is also based on developmental priorities. In 2004, HCND implemented mine-action operations through the support of the United Nations Development Programme, the non-governmental organizations HELP (Humanitarian Demining Enterprise and Landmines) and the African Union, and Mine Advisory Group, and the Egyptian government.

Successes and challenges

In late December 2005, the government announced the planned deployment of three EOD teams by April 1, 2006, but due to logistical problems and security issues, the teams have not yet deployed.

Toward A Mine-safe Future

By Megan Worth [Mine Action Information Center]

Egypt is one of the most heavily mined countries in the world. Approximately 475 tons of UXO have been destroyed; 1,658,659 square meters (409 acres) of land have cleared and returned to the community. The Convention-mandated deadline for Chad to be mine-free is November 2009; however, without additional funding and signing of the Tibeit Peace Agreement, that goal is not attainable. If donors increase funding to approximately US$20 million per year, the knowledgeable and equipped high-priority areas in the Borkou-Ennedi-Tibesti region would be cleared by the end of 2007.

To view endnotes and references for this article, visit: http://mineaction.org/journal/10/07/profile/chad/chad.htm/#endnotes.