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Ethiopia

Country Profile
CISR
Eritrea
by Megan Wertz
[Mine Action Information Center]

Eritrea’s landmine and unexploded ordnance contamination problem began during World War II when British and Italian forces fought on Eritrean soil. A long struggle for independence (1962–1991) and a border war with Ethiopia (1998–2000) followed, exacerbating the problem. Eritrea has never produced or exported anti-personnel mines; all mines used in the past were stolen from Ethiopian forces from minefields or storage facilities during the War of Independence. There are no mine stockpiles except for 21 mines retained by the Eritrean Demining Authority National Training Center for training and development. Eritrea accessed the Ottawa Convention in Aug. 27, 2001, and it entered into force on Feb. 1, 2002.

Extent of Contamination
The Landmine Impact Survey, completed in June 2004, found 481 of 4,176 communities affected by mines and UXO, with 33 communities considered high impact, 100 medium impact and 348 low impact. According to the LIS, there are 914 suspected hazardous landmine and UXO-contaminated sites. Although the problem is nationwide, the Shendi area (Gash Barka region in the southwest) is the most mine-affected area. The mine- and UXO-contaminated areas affect over 655,000 people in Eritrea. The hardest hit populations of the mine crisis are rural inhabitants, ethnic minorities, miners and their families, internally displaced persons and refugees. Refugees and IDPs are often prevented from returning home due to the threat of mines in IDP- and refugee-camp areas and in their home communities.

Humanitarian Challenge
Food security is questionable because much of the agricultural land is contaminated with mines. The problem has also led to building social support systems for the most vulnerable population groups and creating linkages with recovery, reconstruction and development. The scattered nature of the mines and UXO, combined with changes in weather patterns and seasonal activities, puts the civilian population at particular risk. During the harvest season (April–May) or periods of drought and dramatic crop failure, civilians often migrate far from local areas seeking food and water into areas that may have unmarked mine fields. Due to the extent of the mine contamination, the country is unable to expand its road and transportation network, other mine action projects and the tourism industry.

Government Mine Action
In 2000, the United Nations Mission in Eritrea and the Eritrean Mine Action Coordination Center was established. The Center’s mandate is to provide humanitarian mine action assistance to the mine-affected population in Eritrea. The Center has also undertaken a comprehensive national impact survey and mine risk education campaign.

Landmine/Explosive Remnants of War Action
After the end of the recent conflict, with Eritrea in 2000, the government of Eritrea verified the Ottawa Convention Dec. 17, 2000. The Eritrean government developed a national capacity for mine action assistance to establish regular humanitarian mine action activities based on the International Mine Action Standards.

EMAO. The Eritrean Mine Action Office was established in 2001 to implement humanitarian mine action, as well as mine awareness and coordination. The government has established a national mine action capacity and is currently operating at 15% of the required capacity. The Eritrean Mine Action Office is supported by UNICEF.

Landmine/EOD Operations in 2005
In 2005, EMAO managed a new mine clearing initiative in the Gedaref and Kassala regions, with the goal of clearing 250 km of roads. In early 2006, EMAO trained over 70 deminers in both mine awareness and mine clearance.

EMAO is also developing a national mine-action strategy for the Ministry of Mines and Natural Resources.

In 2005, the MAMC allocated 6,282,083 square meters (square miles) for mine action activities in the north of the country, 16,000 square miles (104,000 square kilometers) for road and de-mined 348 mines and 11,109 pieces of UXO. In the same year, there were 45 casualties and 10 people killed within the field of the landing zone.

Minerals & Industry
Eritrea is a leading producer of gold and titanium, with leading mining companies operating in the country. In 2005, EBMCo., a joint venture between Eritrea’s national mining company and Palladium International, began exploration of a titanium deposit in the Assab area. In mid-2006, EBMCo. announced plans to spend $120 million to develop the mine, which is expected to produce 100,000 tons of ilmenite per year.

Eritrea’s mining industry is expected to remain the country’s largest export sector, with gold and titanium as the principal exports.

Environmental Impact
Eritrea’s mining industry has had minimal environmental impact. The government has implemented a series of measures to ensure that mining activities do not harm the environment, including regulations on waste disposal and reclamation. The government has also established a regulatory framework to ensure that mining companies comply with environmental standards.

Challenges and Hopes
Eritrea has a number of important development challenges, including rapid population growth and limited access to basic services. The country’s small size and isolation have also made it difficult to attract investment and to access international markets. Despite these challenges, Eritrea has made significant progress in recent years, including progress in poverty reduction and human development.

The government of Eritrea is committed to addressing these challenges and to improving the lives of its citizens. The country has made substantial progress in reducing poverty, improving access to basic services, and promoting economic growth. The government has also taken steps to strengthen its governance and institutions, and to promote social cohesion.

Ethiopia
by Daniele Ressler
[Mine Action Information Center]

Ethiopia’s 70-year history of internal and international armed conflicts has left a legacy of landmine and unexploded ordnance contamination. Ethiopia is one of five countries in the world that are heavily affected by landmines, with the government estimating it will take decades to clear all landmines. The government is committed to clearing all landmines, as a major impediment to the development of the country.

Landmine/Explosive Remnants of War Action
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Libya is a significant landmine problem area. It has a large landmine problem and attracts significant attention from the international community. The Libyan government has made efforts to reduce the number of landmines in its territory to hand over the mines. However, the Libyan regime has been accused of not fulfilling its international obligations.

The situation in Libya is complex, and the country is divided between the government and the opposition. The government has signed international agreements on landmine clearance, but progress has been slow. Libya has also been criticized for not providing adequate assistance to landmine victims.

The international community has been involved in efforts to remove landmines in Libya. Several organizations, including the Mine Action Information Center (MAIC), have been working to clear landmines in the country. The UN has also played a significant role in supporting these efforts.

However, the challenges of landmine clearance in Libya are substantial. The country has a significant number of landmines, and the process of clearing them is slow and costly. The risk of landmine explosions remains a major concern, and efforts to remove landmines must be done cautiously.

In conclusion, while progress has been made in Libya, much more needs to be done to effectively and safely remove landmines from the country. The international community must continue to support these efforts to ensure the safety of the Libyan people.

Somalia

Somalia is not known to have produced or exported anti-personnel landmines. However, it is known to have received landmines from other conflict areas, including from Somalia's neighbors, Ethiopia and Eritrea. The use of landmines in Somalia has resulted in significant casualties and has contributed to poverty by denying access to already limited resources in communities affected by the conflict.

As a result of the prolonged conflict, landmine clearance efforts in Somalia have been severely hindered. The government of Somalia has not taken steps to address the landmine problem, and landmines continue to pose a significant threat to civilians and aid workers.

In conclusion, landmine clearance efforts in Somalia have been hindered by the ongoing conflict and the lack of government support. The international community must continue to support efforts to remove landmines in Somalia to ensure the safety of its people.