Humanitarian Mine Action in Mozambique

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**Humanitarian Mine Action in Mozambique**

Mozambique is a geographically vast country populated by diverse ethnic and linguistic groups. While most areas are not heavily mined, landmines and UXOs will still remain a large part of its population. This chapter discusses the past, present, and future of mine action in this country.

**Introduction and Background**

The United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research, Geneva, commissioned three pilot studies on Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation (PME) 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 of 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 79,380 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 65.8 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.

The traditional system of government, which the socialist Mozambique Liberation Front (FRELIMO) government sought to abolish after independence, still operates in many villages, but legitimacy, functions, and power differ from place to place. "The level of respect given to the traditional versus the government leadership seems to vary a great deal." Therefore, it is essential to study and understand the governance systems in place in a village and the complexities of community structures if HMA is to be effective and make an impact on the livelihood of those affected by mines.

**The Landmine Situation in Mozambique**

**Mine and UXO Contamination**

Landmines were first used by the Portuguese during the liberation struggle against the FRELIMO against 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 Mozambique 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 rural economy; roads, railways, and power lines were heavily mined. Both sides have been 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, the Portuguese were deployed to Mozambique (UNOMOZ), 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 modified as more data has become available, and the landmine problem is now considered to be much less severe 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 affected about 150,000 people and cost about 200,000 and affected the livelihood of about two million people. The country also suffered a 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. Mine 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 UXOs 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 restructure organisational responses.

**History of Mine Action**

Mine action in Mozambique started in 1993. A preliminary plan of action was developed in January 1993, but approved in 1995 by FRELIMO and RENAMO only in November. Its emphasis was on clearing roads to facilitate the UNOMOZ peace mission and to return the refugees and IDPs. The focus on emergency-oriented objectives resulted in a failure to recognize the need for long-term demining in the country. 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 new mine action approach that would be converted into a national capacity at the termination of the UNOMOZ mission. But donors did not support this plan and remained committed to clearing 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 central coordinating mechanism.

Norwegian People Aid (NPA) was the first organization to establish a demining capacity in Mozambique in 1993. A National Mine Clearance Commission (CNM) was established in 1995 to move strategic plans and set procedures for prioritization. CNM, however, proved unable to develop the capacity to set national priorities. After the development of the "National Mine Clearance Strategy Approach" (November 1998), following negotiations among the government of Mozambique, the UNDP and major donors, CNM was replaced by a new body with larger autonomy from ministerial control.

**Mine Action Coordination**

Since the end of the civil war, mine action operations in Mozambique, be they humanitarian or commercial, have been carried out with a minimum of coordination, coordination or planning at the national level. The establishment of relatively independent NGO capacities in Mozambique, which persists today, can largely be seen as a reaction to the slow United Nations response.

The National Demining Commission (CNDA), established in May 1995 to manage mine-mapping and marking campaigns, was supposed to coordinate operations, maintain a national database, develop strategic plans and set procedures for prioritization. CNM, however, proved unable to develop the capacity to set national priorities. After the development of the "National Mine Clearance Strategy Approach" (November 1998), following negotiations among the government of Mozambique, the UNDP and major donors, CNM was replaced by a new body with larger autonomy from ministerial control.

**Humanitarian Mine Action in Mozambique**

The Mozambique Landmine Impact Survey (2001)

The Mozambique Landmine Impact 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 Programme (CMAP). The principal findings were as follows:

- Landmines affect all 10 provinces of Mozambique and 123 out of 128 districts.
- About 1.5 million people, representing no less than nine percent of the national population, in 1997, are affected by landmines.
- Of the landmine-affected communities, 768 are classified as rural, however, to integrate overall development priorities, a five-year National Mine Action Plan, based on the results of the Landmine Impact Survey (LIS), was formulated in November 2001.

A National 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 and identified major annual work plans. UNDP and the donors hope that the national plan will lead to the development of a coordination and prioritization of operations. The Mine Action Plan recognizes the need for aggressive and sustained Mine Risk Education and marking campaigns to be re-launched. The plan also affirms UNDP's coordinating role to "develop a coherent and coordinated national Mine Action Plan."
Landmines in Africa

23 urban communities, including three with more than 30,000 inhabitants are also affected.

A total of 3,174 Suspected Mine Areas (SMA) were identified. They cover an area of 82,000 square kilometres.

Some 41 percent cover areas of less than 1,000 square metres and less than five people are greater than one square kilometre.

Nine years after the end of the hostilities, landmine accidents still occur: at least 2,145 landmine victims recorded during the MLI's had come to harm during the years preceding

SCOR (MIS), an estimated 5,620 square kilometres.

The MIS is a standardized ranking and scoring method for minefields. The MIS was developed by the LIS in 1997.

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The MIS is a standardized ranking instrument approved by the Survey Working Group. It reflects three aspects of the mine situation as it affects a given community:

- The type of landmines, UXO and munitions
- The categories of land, infrastructure and service areas to which landmines or UXO are blocking access
- The number of landmine victims of landmines or UXO in the two years preceding the group interviews of the (LIS).17

Landmine Victim Data

Reliable data on mine victims is not available. Compared to other mine-affected communities, the numbers are comparably 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 children.

In 1996, HI began the systematic collecting data on mine and UXO accidents under its Project of National Coordination of Educational Activities for the Population to Prevent Mine Accidents (PEAPM). Between 1996 and 2000, 10,721 victims were recorded, specifically 303 men, 84 women and 171 children under 15 years old. Sixty-seven percent of all accidents occurred in the provinces of Niassa, Manica and Zambézia.

The majority of accidents occur

- A large area, which is not always the case. Also, there may sometimes be negative effects. In the absence of any economic activity, because of the positive side of minefields and the potential to find answers to a number of questions, such as: How will the resources freed by demining affect the deprivation of wealth in a community? How do mines affect power relationships among the population? Who will benefit from demining?

Operators should establish knowledge of land rights, land ownership and local land tenure systems prior to clearance. Similarly, knowledge and understanding of local leadership structures is essential, as local leadership structures may be explained by their greater involvement in economic activities like farming, hunting and transportation. An additional hypothesis is that there is also an understanding having in the case of women. Children become victims mainly either as a result of manipulating grenades, ammunition and other UXO or parts of mines. If one or more than one environments, such as hunting, fishing and transportation. An additional hypothesis is that there is also an understanding having in the case of women.

Amada Millard from the Assistance and Demining Services Project at the International Peace Research Institute of Oslo (PRIO), conducted an impact study in three mine-affected communities in Mozambique in 2000.18

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training, and survey courses for survey team commanders. Deminers from NPA and HALO Trust were also trained here.

Norwegian People Aid

NPA operated in the central provinces. NPA employs approximately 570 staff and uses both manual demining units (nine) and mine detection dogs (eight) to work with Mozambican deminers and dog handlers.

One objective of the clearance project is to encourage maximum local participation in fighting the landmine problem in an environmentally conscious manner. In areas where demining is undertaken, NPA also cooperates with Mozambican government agencies to provide community and primary health care.

NPA cooperated with the AMAC project (based at PRIO) in the Manica pilot study mentioned earlier. After the AMAC project, the government requested NPA to train three deminers to create an training assessment unit. The goal of this unit is "to prepare NPA Mozambique field units with a unit with information on socio-economic impact at the micro-level."[46]

HALO Trust

HALO Trust operates in the northern provinces of Cabo Delgado, Nassa, Nampula, and Nampula. In 2000, HALO had 125 employees and a budget of $1,055,426.

Priorities for clearance are set in coordination with the responsible provincial Governor, who gives his priority ranking to a list with surveyed areas given by HALO. The Governor can be compared against HALO's own ranking. A final decision is made jointly. A socio-economic impact assessment prior to operations is performed.

HALO's "simple mission statement—getting mines out of the ground, now and in the future—is reflected in the way it operates: establishing communication, creating rapport and building confidence with the community in proximity of the clearance, and not as an explicit part of their mission."[47]
Landmines in Africa

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 IAP / Limb Campaign (JLC), established an orthopaedic centre in Manica area 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. 10 HI, POWER and other donors support the Ministry at various levels in the implementation of the policy. But a lot has still 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 Ambos. ADEMO runs a community school for disabled children in Mupano and is developing a plan for vocational training (bakery, metal works, carpentry and probably leather works 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 2003, mine action funding totalled some $17 million in 2000. Of this, $6.6 million was allocated to the UNM, and $1.6 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 directly as follows:

Community Liaison in Mine Action: Partnerships for Growth

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 interview at the May International Standing Committee 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 presents 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 the process of prioritisation as an integral part of an integrated mine action response.

What seems clear to us is that mine action is not and should not be allowed to remain a "stand-alone" discipline. Mine action is an integral part of wider rehabilitation and development. As the opening quote says, we have to deal with the impact of mines on people. In this case, the impact of mines and UXOs is most often to be considered within a wider context of economic, social and political recovery from conflict. Prioritisation and appropriate action are therefore to be 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 problems. This human subject—the communities that live in mined areas or that have been driven from mined areas and wish to re-turn—become key players within the prioritisation process. This is good developmental practice 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 scheme 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, working