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U.S. Humanitarian Demining in Africa

Due to the numerous internal conflicts, crises and wars that several of the nations in Africa have faced, this region is one of the places in the world that is significantly affected by landmines. In an attempt to alleviate the suffering from landmine injuries, the United States has set out to provide humanitarian mine action assistance to many of these afflicted nations.



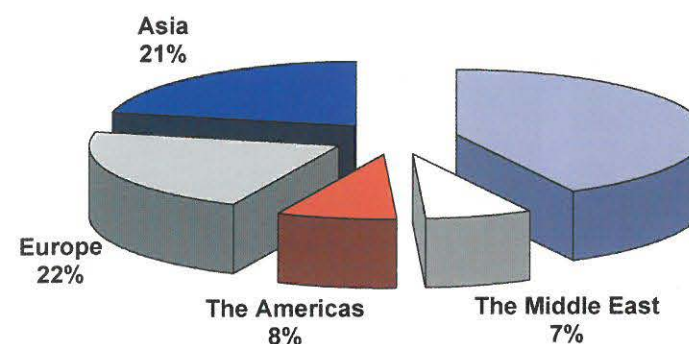
tal to worldwide mine action initiatives. In FY 2002, the United States will contribute \$8 million in humanitarian mine action assistance to Africa.

U.S. Humanitarian Demining Initiatives in Africa

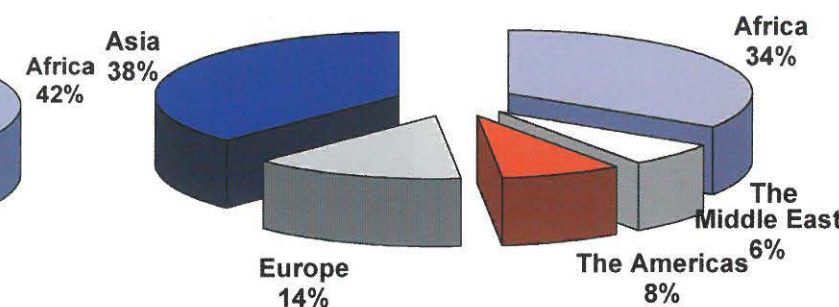
Angola

As a result of more than 30 years of internal political struggle, landmines litter Angola's provinces. The majority of landmines is concentrated in areas necessary for survival, such as agricultural land, roads, bridges, waterways, railways and health care facilities. The actual number of landmines in Angola is unknown, though estimates range up to six million. Aided by the U.S. and other donors, Angolan demining teams have cleared over nine million square meters of land, 841,887 square meters of it in 2001 alone. This cleared land allowed for increased food production and for the resettlement of many internally displaced persons (IDPs). Thanks to contributions from the U.S. Agency for International Aid's (USAID) Leahy War Victim's Fund (LWVF), Angola has a fully functioning orthopedic workshop that produces prostheses and orthoses so that landmine survivors are able to re-enter society and participate in economic activities. Since 1995, the United States has contributed a total of \$25,810,000 to the campaign to remove landmines in Angola.

U.S. Humanitarian Demining Program Funding: FY1993-FY2002



U.S. Funding for Humanitarian Demining: Fiscal Year 2002



Chad

The Libyan occupation of the northern region of Chad resulted in large (2-60km long) military minefields around key population centers, while rebellions in other regions of the country contributed a large number of smaller minefields to the landmine problem. There are an estimated 500,000 mines in Chad. Along with other donors, the United States played a pivotal role in establishing Chad's demining program. Since 1998, U.S. Special Operations Forces (SOF)-trained Chadian deminers have cleared 1,322,330 square meters of land, while destroying 3,800 mines and 148,000 pieces of UXO in the process. The United States has given \$5,011,855 in aid since 1998 and continues its commitment to demining with a contribution of \$441,000 for FY 2002.

1994 has left Djibouti with an unknown number of landmines and UXO. The U.S. has helped the government of Djibouti create a Mine Action Center and establish facilities and demining training with support totaling \$2,386,000 since FY 2000. U.S. SOF have been instrumental in training Djiboutian deminers. So far, the Djiboutian demining teams have destroyed 274 landmines and 28 pieces of UXO and cleared 5,661.6 square meters of land, which has been returned to productive use. With the current rate of progress, Djibouti should be able to declare itself mine-safe by the end of 2003.

Eritrea

Civil strife and the war with Ethiopia have resulted in a severe landmine problem in Eritrea that is concentrated around strategic military positions and around water sources in the more rural provinces. The National Demining Center in Asmara estimates that there are between 1.5 and two million landmines infesting the country. In order to help combat this problem, the United States has contributed a total of \$10,244,000 since 1994. Currently, Ethiopian deminers are clearing an average of 1,826 square meters per week. In addition, mine detection dog teams are averaging 6,255 square meters per week of area clearance. According to the UN, these operations have permitted refugees to resettle on safe land and spurred economic

growth in the region.

Ethiopia

The government of Ethiopia's National Demining Office estimates that 1.5 to two million landmines and large quantities of UXO persist in Ethiopia. The U.S. provided \$1.9 million in FY 2002, while total U.S. donations have reached \$10,084,000 since 1993. Efforts by U.S.-trained Ethiopian deminers have spurred increased agriculture and refugee resettlement. Two companies of manual deminers, trained and equipped by the U.S. Department of State (DOS) under a contract with RONCO Consulting Corporation, are operational and deployed to two sites in the Tigray region. Initial survey work has resulted in area reductions of more than 90 percent in targeted areas, in effect returning previously suspected mine-affected land to use. Through USAID's LWVF, the Prosthetic Orthotic Training Center of Addis Ababa provides ready-made components for International Committee of the Red Cross- (ICRC) assisted rehabilitation centers for landmine survivors.

Guinea-Bissau

Guinea-Bissau has an estimated 16,000-20,000 landmines, some laid by Senegalese forces, others remaining from the 1998-1999 military mutiny. Since FY 2000, the United States has been a primary source of assistance, providing a total of \$588,145, a significant portion of that going to the non-governmental organization (NGO) HUMAID for mine clearance operations.

Djibouti

Internal conflict between 1991 and



UXO in Chad

by Sarah E. Kindig, JMU Fellow, Office of Humanitarian Demining Programs, U.S. Department of State

Introduction

The United States government's Humanitarian Demining Program seeks to relieve human suffering while promoting U.S. interests. The Program's objectives are to reduce civilian casualties, create conditions for the return of refugees and displaced persons to their homes, reinforce an affected country's stability, and encourage international cooperation and participation.

Today, landmines or UXO affect 30 of Africa's 54 countries. Of these 30 countries, the U.S. provides 17 with humanitarian mine action assistance. Since Fiscal Year (FY) 1993, the U.S. has provided Africa with \$130 million (U.S.) while donating almost \$600 million to-

Mine-Affected Countries:

Severe	Moderate	Affected
Angola	Algeria	Republic of Congo (Brazzaville)
Chad	Democratic Republic of the Congo	Djibouti
Egypt	Guinea - Bissau	Kenya
Eritrea	Libya	Malawi
Ethiopia	Mauritania	Morocco
Mozambique	Rwanda	Namibia
Somalia	Senegal	Niger
Zimbabwe	Sudan	Nigeria (UXO)
	Uganda	Swaziland
		Tanzania
		Tunisia
		Western Sahara
		Zambia

Landmines in Africa

(Left to Right) AT mines in Ethiopia. A Zimbabwe village on the edge of a live minefield.



The remainder of the funds purchased equipment for Guinea-Bissau's Mine Action Center, which oversees demining operations. Since January 2000, Guinea Bissau deminers have cleared more than 183,200 square meters of land and destroyed over 2,400 mines and 900 pieces of UXO. In addition, 2,300 mines and 730 pieces of UXO have been cleared.

Mauritania

Mauritania's war in the Western Sahara has left between 50,000 and 100,000 landmines within Mauritania's borders. With unilateral support from the U.S., landmine casualties were reduced significantly. There was only one casualty in 2001. Mauritanian deminers have cleared 141,000 square meters of land, destroying more than 8,000 landmines and over 5,700 pieces of UXO in the process. In 2001, with support from the U.S., the Mauritanian government was able to clear 90 kilometers of roadway to permit the transport of water from the wells in Blonouar to the population of Nouadhibou.

Mozambique

Two decades of war have left Mozambique littered with landmines. Although landmines are found in all of Mozambique's provinces, there is no reliable estimate of their number or the amount of mine-affected land. The U.S. provided \$2,124,000 in FY 2002 and since 1993 has provided \$28,825,999 to support mine action in Mozambique. Thanks to the combined efforts of demining organizations, the Mozambique National Demining Institute reported that in 2001 nearly two million square meters of land were cleared and 2,727 landmines were destroyed, permitting significant economic development and allowing refugees to resettle on safe land. Presently, the U.S.

effort in Mozambique is focused on clearing the Sena rail line, which will allow the export of agricultural and mineral products. Through the LWVF, USAID has supported the production and distribution of prosthetic devices for the estimated 9,000 amputees in the country, most of whom are landmine victims.

Namibia

Namibia declared mine-safe status last year when it completed the clearance of its ten known minefields and 410 electric power pylons. Nevertheless, there are reports that rebel forces of the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA) have crossed over from Angola and have planted mines in the Kavango and Caprivi regions. Namibia has received almost \$9 million in U.S. demining assistance since 1994, including \$88,000 in FY 2002. Namibia's 1,000 deminers, trained by U.S. SOF have cleared over 1,000,000 square meters of land and removed over 5,000 landmines and 1,300 UXO.

Nigeria

Following the explosion of a military ammunition depot in Lagos in January 2002, the U.S. Department of Defense (DOD) responded by providing a team of Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) experts. The U.S. Department of State has committed over \$1,500,000 to provide for an additional period of clearance through its commercial contractor, RONCO Consulting Corporation. By the middle of April 2002, 39,800 pieces of UXO had been cleared from the site and subsequently destroyed.

Senegal

An almost two-decades-long conflict in the Casamance region of Senegal, located

in the southwest part of the country, sandwiched between Gambia and Guinea Bissau, has left an unknown number of AP and AT mines in the ground there. These mines have adversely affected the population, agricultural activities and tourism. In July 2001, USAID's LWVF began providing money to the NGO Handicap International to support its program to assist landmine survivors in Senegal and to raise the population's awareness of the risk of landmines through mine awareness education efforts.

Rwanda

Rwanda emerged from civil war with an estimated 100,000-250,000 landmines in its soil. Many of Rwanda's roads were mined, cutting off entire regions and hindering the flow of humanitarian aid and commodities. Rwanda's demining program is currently in the sustainment phase, and Rwanda expects to declare itself mine safe in early 2004. Deminers have cleared more than seven million square meters of land, which is currently being cultivated for agricultural use. The United States committed \$350,000 in FY 2002 to the demining program, while Rwanda has received \$11,399,999 from the U.S. since the program's inception in 1995.

Somalia

The Somaliland Mine Action Center has confirmed the presence of at least 28 mined roads and 63 known and 17 suspected minefields as a result of past military conflicts. The greatest concentration of mines is in Somaliland in the northwest region of the country. Through February 2002, the demining effort in Somaliland has cleared 19,663,265 square-meters of land and destroyed 1,333 mines and pieces of UXO. The cleared land has enabled

refugees to return to their homes. To continue this effort, the United States is contributing approximately \$1.2 million in FY 2002. Since 1995, the U.S. DOS has provided nearly \$5.5 million for mine and UXO clearance in Somaliland.

Sudan

To support the Nuba Mountains Ceasefire Accord the U.S. DOS deployed its Quick Reaction Demining Force to Sudan in April 2002 to conduct mine clearance operations, coordinating its efforts with the UN's Mine Action Service and the Joint Military Committee (JMC). Clearance operations began in May. The government of Sudan estimates that between 1989 and 2001, 1,135 persons became mine victims in the Nuba Mountains, while Save the Children USA believes that an additional 25 mine related incidents have occurred in these mountains between December 2001 and February 2002.

Swaziland

Swaziland has one minefield located along its border with Mozambique. Since 1998, the United States has contributed \$1,046,000 in assistance. U.S. SOF trained Swazi military forces to conduct demining operations, and the DOS provided funds to procure demining equipment. U.S.

humanitarian demining assistance to Swaziland has ended.

Zambia

While the government of the Republic of Zambia (GRZ) cannot estimate the number of landmines on its territory, it believes land affected by landmines measures approximately 2,500 square kilometers. Zambia is currently in the process of being trained by U.S. SOF in mine risk education and is developing an indigenous humanitarian demining capacity. The United States donated approximately \$800,000 in FY 2002 to support Zambia's program. Since the program's inception in 2001, the U.S. has contributed a total of \$1,792,000.

Zimbabwe

Zimbabwe has an estimated 2,500,000 landmines buried within its territory. The U.S. has supported the humanitarian demining program in Zimbabwe since 1998 through training and equipment donations. Zimbabwe's demining program has cleared 800,000 square meters of land, allowing large parts of Victoria Falls to be opened for tourists and the Zambezi Valley to become safe for resettlement. Currently, Zimbabwe's demining efforts are in the sustainment phase. Since the beginning of the pro-

gram in 1998, the United States has funded \$6,749,000 in an effort to help Zimbabwe rid itself of mines.

Conclusion

Assistance from the United States and other donors to mine-affected African nations has helped to increase the quality of life in these once war-ravaged countries. That assistance has also helped open countless kilometers of road to humanitarian aid organizations to reconstitute infrastructure necessary to sustain economies and to provide holistic health care to thousands of landmine survivors. Their fear has been replaced by hope. ■

* All photos courtesy of Office of Humanitarian Demining Program.

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Demining electric power pylons in Namibia.