

National Capacities and Residual Contamination

Mali



Geneva, February 2015

The Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD) is an international expert organisation based in Switzerland that works to eliminate mines, explosive remnants of war and other explosive hazards. By undertaking research, developing standards and disseminating knowledge, the GICHD supports capacity development in mine-affected countries. It works with national and local authorities to help them plan, coordinate, implement, monitor and evaluate mine action programmes. The GICHD also contributes to the implementation of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention, the Convention on Cluster Munitions and other relevant instruments of international law. The GICHD follows the humanitarian principles of humanity, impartiality, neutrality and independence.

© Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining

The designation employed and the presentation of the material in this publication do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the GICHD concerning the legal status of any country, territory or armed groups, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or bound.

Contents

Glossary of Abbreviations	5
Executive Summary	7
Introduction	11
Background to the study	11
Country context	11
Origin, nature and scope of the mine/explosive remnants of war (ERW) contamination problem	11
Background to the establishment of the national mine/ERW programme	14
Key actors	14
National Commission against the Proliferation of Small Arms and Light Weapons	14
The action plan presents two key factors, around which its strategic approach is based. ...	14
Malian Defence and Security Forces	14
History of Developing National Capacities.....	16
Security Sector Reform.....	16
African Union and Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS).....	16
United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilisation Mission in Mali (MINUSMA).....	16
UNMAS	17
National Commission against the Proliferation of Small Arms and Light Weapons	19
National standards on PSSM.....	19
Weapons Intelligence Teams	19
Capacity development activities.....	19
MINUSMA/UNMAS 2014 - 2015 work plan.....	20
EUTM in Mali.....	20
Key Findings: Good Practices, Main Challenges and Lessons Learnt.....	22
Good Practices.....	22
Inclusion of mine action in relevant UNSCRs.....	22
Early and inclusive training activities.....	22
UNMAS focus on capacity development and proactive approach	22
Effective coordination	22
National ownership.....	22
Main Challenges and Lessons Learnt.....	22
Training initiatives.....	22
Absorbing trained personnel.....	23
Long-term sustainability.....	23
Annexes.....	24
Annex I: Individuals interviewed.....	24

Glossary of Abbreviations

AFISMA	African-led International Support Mission to Mali
ALTF	Advanced Liaison Task Force
APMBC	Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention
AQIM	al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb
AP	Anti-personnel
ASM	Area Safety Management
AV	Anti-vehicle
CCM	Convention on Cluster Munitions
CCW	Convention on Conventional Weapons
CNLPAL	National Commission against the Proliferation of Small Arms and Light Weapons <i>Commission nationale de lutte contre la prolifération des armes légères</i>
CNITMA	National Commission for the Total Ban of Anti-personnel Mines <i>Commission Nationale pour l'Interdiction Totale des Mines Anti-personnel</i>
CPADD	Humanitarian Demining Training Centre <i>Centre de Perfectionnement aux Actions post-confliktuelles de Déminage et de Dépollution</i>
DCA	Danish Church Aid
DMHTA	Army Directorate for Equipment, Fuel and Transport, <i>Direction de matériels, des hydrocarbures et des transports des armées</i>
DPKO	Department of Peacekeeping Operations (UN)
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
EOD	Explosive Ordnance Disposal
ERW	Explosive Remnants of War
EU	European Union
EUTM	European Union Training Mission
FAMa	Malian Armed Forces
FSD	<i>Federation Suisse Déminage</i> , Swiss Federation for Mine Action
GICHD	Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining
HI	Handicap International
IATG	International Ammunition Technical Guidelines
IED	Improvised Explosive Device
IEDD	Improvised Explosive Device Disposal
IMAS	International Mine Action Standards
IMSMA	Information Management System for Mine Action
IP	Implementing Partner
MAG	Mines Advisory Group
MDSF	Malian Defence and Security Forces

MINUSMA	United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilisation Mission in Mali
MoD	Ministry of Defence
NMAA	National Mine Action Authority
PSSM	Physical Security and Stockpile Management
RE	Risk Education
SALW	Small Arms and Light Weapons
SOP	Standard Operating Procedure
TDI	The Development Initiative
ToT	Training of trainers
UNSCR	United Nations Security Council Resolution
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNMAS	United Nations Mine Action Service
UXO	Unexploded Ordnance
WIT	Weapons Intelligence Team

Executive Summary

Introduction

This case study forms part of a broader GICHD study on national capacities and residual contamination and is based on both desk-top research and findings from a GICHD mission to Mali in March 2014. A full list of meetings held during that mission is available in Annex I.

The purpose of the report is to document Mali's experience of developing national clearance capacities to address residual contamination and to identify and present good practices and lessons learnt.

Given the ongoing conflict in the northern part of the country, this case study focuses on capacity development of national mine action-related stakeholders to manage mine/explosive remnants of war (ERW) contamination more broadly, rather than on developing national capacities to manage residual contamination specifically.

As a consequence of the armed conflict that erupted in northern Mali in January 2012, Mali currently faces a contamination problem of anti-vehicle mines (AV mines), unexploded ordnance (UXO) and improvised explosive devices (IEDs). Contamination is primarily in the northern and central regions (see map below). As of March 2014 no reports have confirmed the presence of anti-personnel (AP) mines.

National Commission against the Proliferation of Small Arms and Light Weapons (CNLPAL)

Mali was one of the first countries to establish a National Commission against the Proliferation of Small Arms and Light Weapons (*Commission nationale de lutte contre la prolifération des armes légères*, (CNLPAL)) in 1996.¹ CNLPAL organises annual awareness missions on small arms in-country and provides training to public administration staff and civil society representatives. The CNLPAL is an inter-ministerial entity, encompassing all Malian Defence and Security Forces (MDSF) sections. It is directly under the Office of the President and this reinforces its credibility and visibility.

UNMAS

UNMAS involvement in Mali started shortly after the outbreak of armed conflict in 2012. At the request of the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO), UNMAS deployed a rapid response capacity to Mali in January 2013, in support of United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 2085. The team conducted an emergency assessment of explosive threats and requirements for ERW survey, clearance and risk education (RE).

The UNMAS Mali programme is based around three strategic areas:

1. Protecting civilians and facilitate humanitarian access.
2. Providing technical assistance to enable national capacities to mitigate explosive threats.
3. Providing technical assistance on explosive threat mitigation for the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilisation Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) within the mission area of responsibility.

¹ Creation of the Commission through Decree N°96-304/P-RM, 14 November 1996. See also, <http://www.un.int/wcm/webdav/site/mali/shared/documents/fr/discours/1164095540.pdf>.

UNMAS works in close partnership with CNLPAL, to gradually develop its capacity to take the lead in coordinating mine action activities and in complying with regional and international treaty obligations.

In relation to strategic area two, UNMAS works with several implementing partners (IPs) to reach the objectives in the three strategic areas. Activities include training in explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) and stockpile safety management, aimed particularly at MDSF personnel.

Capacity development training has also been implemented through on-the-job training. Army personnel who successfully graduated from EOD-level three training have been attached to IP teams for a minimum of three months, with each army member attached to one clearance team. This was to provide them with on-the-job training and opportunities to apply their EOD knowledge practically and to further strengthen their skills. Stockpile destruction has been the principal focus of the operations. One of the IPs, the Development Initiative (TDI), describes several benefits of this capacity development collaboration, noting that it has resulted in strengthened relationships with UNMAS and the army, as well as improved security in field operations.

The 2014-2015 MINUSMA/UNMAS work plan highlights the need to engage in further specialised training of MDSF personnel, noting that this should be done in close collaboration with the European Union Training Mission (EUTM) in Mali. The long-term plan is that the Malian EOD capacity will eventually comprise four teams from the Army Engineers (to be deployed country - wide) and one team from the civil security sector (to be deployed primarily in Bamako, in response to potential terrorist threats).

Key Findings: Good Practices, Main Challenges and Lessons Learnt

Good Practices

Several good practices can be drawn from experiences of developing national capacities in Mali, including:

Inclusion of mine action in relevant UNSCRs

Inclusion of mine action at the highest level in UNSCRs gave the sector increased visibility. This in turn paved the way for future activities and external support. Importantly, UNSCR 2100 (2013) makes explicit reference to training and support activities in mine action and weapon and ammunition management.

Early and inclusive training activities

The decision by UNMAS to start capacity development activities with the MDSF (all sections) at an early stage facilitated coordination and collaboration, while strengthening the trust between the two organisations. Early training activities sent a clear message to national partners on the commitment by UNMAS to work in close collaboration with them.

UNMAS focus on capacity development and proactive approach

The UNMAS Mali programme's focus on national capacity development from the outset of the programme served to integrate capacity development as an integral part of many activities. It further helped to emphasise the importance of working closely with key national partners. Several IPs and national actors emphasised the extent to which the proactive approach by UNMAS has served to place capacity development at the forefront.

Effective coordination

It is evident that effective, inclusive coordination between international actors (UNMAS, MINUSMA, EUTM and IPs), and also between international actors and national stakeholders, has resulted in a spirit of partnership and effective information-sharing in the Mali programme.

National ownership

Mali clearly illustrates how involving national stakeholders from the very beginning can strengthen international and national commitment to promote national ownership, including through capacity development activities.

Main Challenges and Lessons Learnt

Training initiatives

The decision by UNMAS to train several MDSF staff from the various branches in EOD served an important purpose during the early stages of the programme. It strengthened trust between MDSF and UNMAS and clearly underlined the importance that UNMAS placed on national capacity development. UNMAS made a conscious decision to invite representatives from all MDSF branches to participate. This clearly served its key purpose. However, some of the trained MDSF staff had no opportunities to apply skills gained during the training when they returned to their duties, as was the case with traffic police, for instance.

Only six out of 20 MDSF staff who attended the EOD-level 3 training in Benin successfully graduated. This suggested that the training level was too high. UNMAS is well aware of these challenges and will pay more attention to trainee profiles in the future, with long-term sustainability in mind. Another lesson learnt relates to the importance of starting with EOD-level 1 for participants with no previous experience.

Absorbing trained personnel

Several informants noted challenges related to a lack of structures to absorb/manage trained MDSF personnel.

The initial target of training and strengthening technical knowledge nationally has been achieved. The second objective of integrating EOD into a national training package, including training of trainers (ToT), was highlighted by many informants as a crucial next step.

A number of senior MDSF representatives emphasised the importance of establishing a coordination centre for EOD operations, to facilitate effective coordination and information-sharing. Several stakeholders believe that a centre could play an important role in absorbing EOD-qualified personnel. Qualified staff could also be involved in ToT activities, to promote sustainability. Several informants underlined that the coordination centre could play an important role in facilitating information-sharing, both within the MDSF and between the public and the MDSF.

Long-term sustainability

As with most capacity development activities, long-term sustainability is a challenge. Training initiatives may be of high quality but long-term sustainability depends on several factors, including available resources, opportunities to apply acquired knowledge and skills practically, and an effective chain of command. Most of these factors are beyond the control of the organisations responsible for conducting training activities, resulting in limited influence

regarding long-term sustainability. This paradox highlights a common challenge in national capacity development, one that is not unique to the mine action sector.

Introduction

Background to the study

This case study forms part of a broader GICHD study on national capacities and residual contamination and is based on both desk-top research and findings from a GICHD mission to Mali in March 2014. A full list of meetings held during that mission is available in Annex I.

The purpose of the report is to document the Mali experience of developing national clearance capacities to address residual contamination and to identify and present good practices and lessons learnt.

Given the ongoing conflict in the northern part of the country, this case study focuses on capacity development of national mine action-related stakeholders to manage mine/explosive remnants of war (ERW) contamination more broadly, rather than on developing national capacities to manage residual contamination specifically.

Country context

Mali is a landlocked country located in West Africa with a population of approximately 15 million. Ten per cent of the population lives in the three northern regions of Gao, Kidal and Timbuktu, which together represent two thirds of the entire national territory.² It is bordered by Algeria in the north, Niger in the east, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire and Guinea in the south, and Senegal and Mauritania in the west. In terms of health, education and income, Mali is ranked 176th out of 187 countries in the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Human Development Index in 2013.³ The country covers an area of 1,240,192 km².

Origin, nature and scope of the mine/explosive remnants of war (ERW) contamination problem

As a consequence of the armed conflict that erupted in northern Mali in January 2012, Mali currently faces a contamination problem of anti-vehicle mines (AV mines), unexploded ordnance (UXO) and improvised explosive devices (IEDs). Contamination is primarily in the northern and central regions (see map below). As of March 2014 no reports have confirmed the presence of anti-personnel (AP) mines.⁴

Following Mali's ratification of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC), the convention entered into force in March 1999. In 2001, Mali stated that neither the government nor the Tuareg rebels had ever used AP mines and that there was no AP mined area under its jurisdiction or control.⁵ Mali did not, therefore, request an extension to its APMBC Article 5 obligations of identifying and clearing all AP mines within ten years (no later than 1 March 2009).⁶ Mali has stated that it has never produced or exported AP mines. Its Article 7 report states that it destroyed 5,627 stockpiled AP and 4,131 stockpiled AV mines and that it kept 600 AP mines and 300 AV mines for training purposes.⁷

² See <http://www.worldbank.org/en/country/mali/overview>

³ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_countries_by_Human_Development_Index#Complete_list_of_countries

⁴ UNMAS Mali programme

⁵ Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-personnel Mine and on Their destruction, <http://www.apminebanconvention.org/states-parties-to-the-convention/mali/>

⁶ APMBC, *Ibid.*

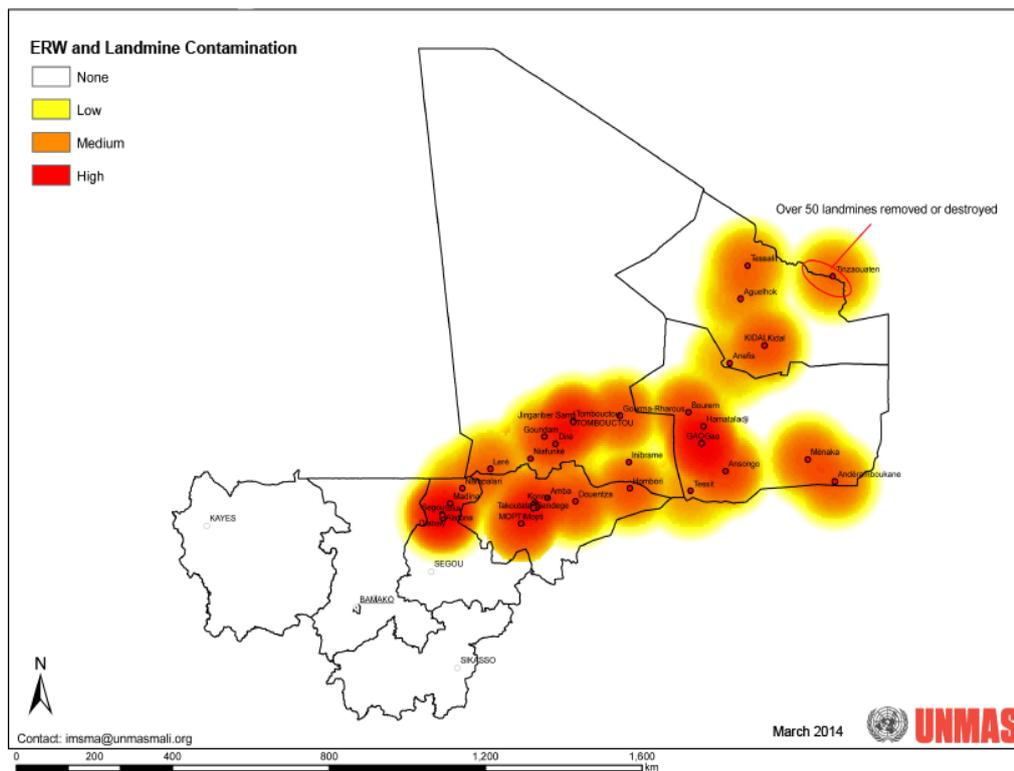
⁷ Republic of Mali (2005). Annual Report, Article 7 Transparency Report, Form D. Accessible at

http://www.apminebanconvention.org/fileadmin/pdf/other_languages/french/MBC/clearing-mined-areas/Art7Report-Mali-2005-fr.pdf

In September 2009 and in September 2010, Mali reported 80 mined areas in the northern regions of Timbuktu and Kidal. Despite repetition of the existence of these mined areas, the exact extent of the contamination is reportedly not defined.⁸

Mali is also a States Party to the Convention on Cluster Munitions (CCM), which entered into force in December 2010. It has also ratified the Convention on Conventional Weapons (CCW) and signed CCW's Amended Protocol II and Protocol V.⁹

ERW casualty numbers sharply increased, reportedly as a result of ERW, with the most heavily affected towns being Diabaly, Douentza, Konna and Gao.¹⁰ There have been reports of AV mine-laying, around the town of Gao, supposedly emplaced by al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM).¹¹ In March 2013, the United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS) stated that it had received reports of AV mines being cleared in the Kidal region.¹² While several threats from IEDs and AV mines have been reported by the UN, there is no evidence of cluster munitions.¹³



Map of AT mine and ERW contamination in Mali, shared by UNMAS¹⁴

⁸ ICBL & CMC (2013a).

⁹ http://www.the-monitor.org/index.php/cp/display/region_profiles/find_profile/ML/2014

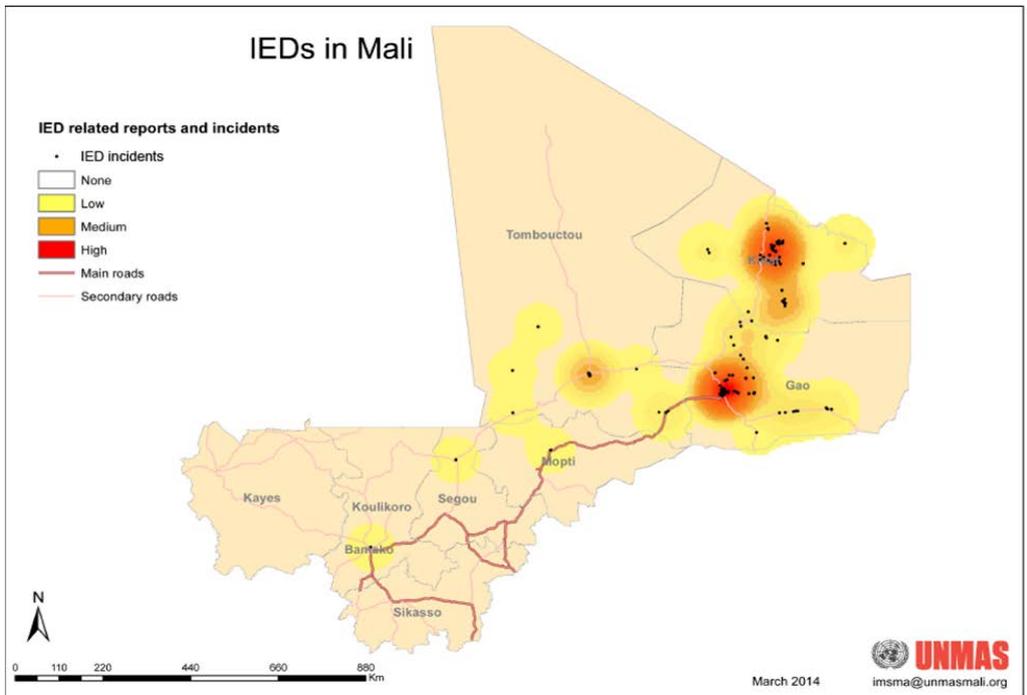
¹⁰ ICBL & CMC (2013a).

¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹² *Ibid.*

¹³ (As of March 2013) *bid.*

¹⁴ Map shared by UNMAS Mali programme, 27 March 2014



Map of IED reports and incidents in Mali¹⁵

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

Background to the establishment of the national mine/ERW programme

Key actors

National Commission against the Proliferation of Small Arms and Light Weapons

Mali was one of the first countries to establish a National Commission against the Proliferation of Small Arms and Light Weapons (*Commission nationale de lutte contre la prolifération des armes légères*, (CNLPAL)) in 1996.¹⁶ CNLPAL organises annual small arms awareness missions in-country and provides training for public administration staff and civil society representatives. CNLPAL is an inter-ministerial entity, encompassing all Malian Defence and Security Forces (MDSF) sections. It is directly under the Office of the President and this reinforces its credibility and visibility.

Mali's national strategy on the fight against the proliferation of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) is based around a 'combined effort of coercion and awareness-raising'. The Ministry of Customs and the Malian Armed Forces support these efforts in the framework of their mandates.¹⁷

The national action plan on the fight against the proliferation of SALW 2014 – 2018¹⁸ (the action plan) stipulates that CNLPAL's mission is to assist the President in creating and implementing a national policy against the proliferation of light weapons. The action plan notes that ammunition safety management (ASM) remains a great challenge in Mali and it states that insufficient administrative and technical control and oversight of the legal framework have further allowed the proliferation of weapons. A review of the legal SALW framework is currently underway (as of February 2015).

The action plan presents two key factors, around which its strategic approach is based.

1. Responding to the required norms in the field of the fight against the proliferation of light weapons.
2. Combining the national, regional and local commitments and aspirations.

Malian Defence and Security Forces

The MDSF consists of seven security agencies:

1. Police
2. Armed Forces
3. Customs
4. Gendarmerie
5. National Guards
6. Civil Protection
7. Water and Forest.

The Army Directorate for Equipment, Fuel and Transport, (*Direction de matériels, des hydrocarbures et des transports des armées*) (DMHTA), which falls under the Malian Armed

¹⁶ Creation of the Commission through Decree N°96-304/P-RM, 14 November 1996. See also, <http://www.un.int/wcm/webdav/site/mali/shared/documents/fr/discours/1164095540.pdf>.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁸ Drafted with support of United Nations regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa (UNREC).

Forces (FAMa), is the MDSF's logistics base. DMHTA is a key national actor, in charge of Area Safety Management (ASM) and physical security and stockpile management (PSSM). DMHTA is the central weapon planning and purchasing entity and it distributes equipment to other MDSF branches. It also stores explosives and ammunition.

UNMAS has recognised the importance of coordinating PSSM activities and sharing information. It has established a 'standing working group', with a focus on PSSM-related issues. The group, which includes all seven MDSF branches and UNMAS, meets on a monthly basis.

The 2014 – 2015 PSSM action plan, approved by the Ministry of Defence (MoD), includes the following activities:

- destroying expired stockpiles of weapons and ammunition;
- rehabilitating armouries;
- constructing ammunition depot;
- training MDSF; and
- developing standards.

History of Developing National Capacities

Security Sector Reform

Significant security sector reform (SSR) processes are currently underway in Mali. Several international actors are working closely with the Malian state in an effort to strengthen the state apparatus. They are promoting key SSR principles, including accountability, transparency and national ownership. Capacity development activities targeting MDSF, implemented by UNMAS and EUTM are contributing to broader SSR activities in Mali.

African Union and Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)

UNSCR 2085 (2012), which mandated the African-led International Support Mission in Mali (AFISMA), led by the African Union and ECOWAS, authorised the deployment of AFISMA for an initial period of one year. UNSCR 2085 includes one explicit reference to mine action:

*12. Requests the Secretary-General to provide, as and when requested by the Malian authorities, support in critical areas that will be required to accompany or follow a military operation in the north of Mali, with respect to the extension of the Malian State authority, including rule of law and security institutions, mine action, promotion of national dialogue, regional cooperation, security sector reform, human rights and the initial demobilization, disarmament and reintegration of former combatants.*¹⁹

United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilisation Mission in Mali (MINUSMA)

MINUSMA took over from AFISMA on 1 July 2013. They were mandated by UN Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 2100 of April 2013 to support the political process and carry out a number of security-related stabilisation tasks, with a focus on:

- major population centres and lines of communication;
- protecting civilians;
- monitoring human rights;
- creating necessary conditions for the provision of humanitarian assistance and the return of displaced persons;
- strengthening the state authority; and
- preparing the ground for free, inclusive and peaceful elections.²⁰

With regard to MINUSMA's mandate in mine action, UNSCR 2100 (2013) stipulates:²¹

Article 16.

(a) Stabilization of key population centres and support for the reestablishment of State authority throughout the country.

(iv) To assist the transitional authorities of Mali, through training and other support, in mine action and weapons and ammunition management.

¹⁹ UN Security Council resolution 2085 (2012):

<http://unowa.unmissions.org/Portals/UNOWA/Security%20Council/Resolution%202085.pdf>

²⁰ <http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/missions/minusma/background.shtml>

²¹ *Ibid.*

Article 28.

Calls upon the transitional authorities of Mali, with the assistance of MINUSMA, consistent with paragraph 16 above, and international partners, to address the issue of the proliferation and illicit trafficking of small arms and light weapons in accordance with the ECOWAS Convention on Small Arms and Light Weapons, Their Ammunition and Other Related Materials and the United Nations Programme of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons, in order to ensure the safe and effective management, storage and security of their stockpiles of small arms and light weapons and the collection and/or destruction of surplus, seized, unmarked or illicitly held weapons and further stresses the importance of the full implementation of its resolution 2017 (2011)

UNSCR 2164 (2014) of June 2014, extends MINUSMA's mandate to 30 June 2015. The UNSCR makes explicit references to the importance of rebuilding the Malian security sector (article 13 c, ii), and assisting the Malian authorities, through training and other support, in the removal and destruction of mines/ERW, weapons and ammunition management (article 13 c, iii).²²

As of 31 August 2014, MINUSMA had a total of 9,298 uniformed personnel (8,324 military personnel and 974 police), 490 international civilian personnel, 409 local civilian staff and 96 UN volunteers.²³

UNMAS

UNMAS involvement in Mali started shortly after the outbreak of armed conflict in 2012. At the request of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO), UNMAS deployed a rapid response capacity to Mali in January 2013, in support of UNSCR 2085.²⁴ The team conducted an emergency assessment of explosive threats and the requirement for ERW survey, clearance and risk education (RE).

The UNMAS Mali programme is based around three strategic areas:²⁵

²² UNSCR 2164 (2014),

[http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/RES/2164\(2014\)&referer=http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/missions/minusma/facts.shtml&Lang=E](http://www.un.org/en/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=S/RES/2164(2014)&referer=http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/missions/minusma/facts.shtml&Lang=E)

²³ MINUSMA website: <http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/missions/minusma/facts.shtml>

²⁴ UN Security Council Resolution 2085 (2012), http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BFCF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/s_res_2085.pdf

²⁵ UNMAS Mali slide shared by UNMAS programme officer, March 2014

UNMAS INTERVENTION: 3 STRATEGIC AREAS

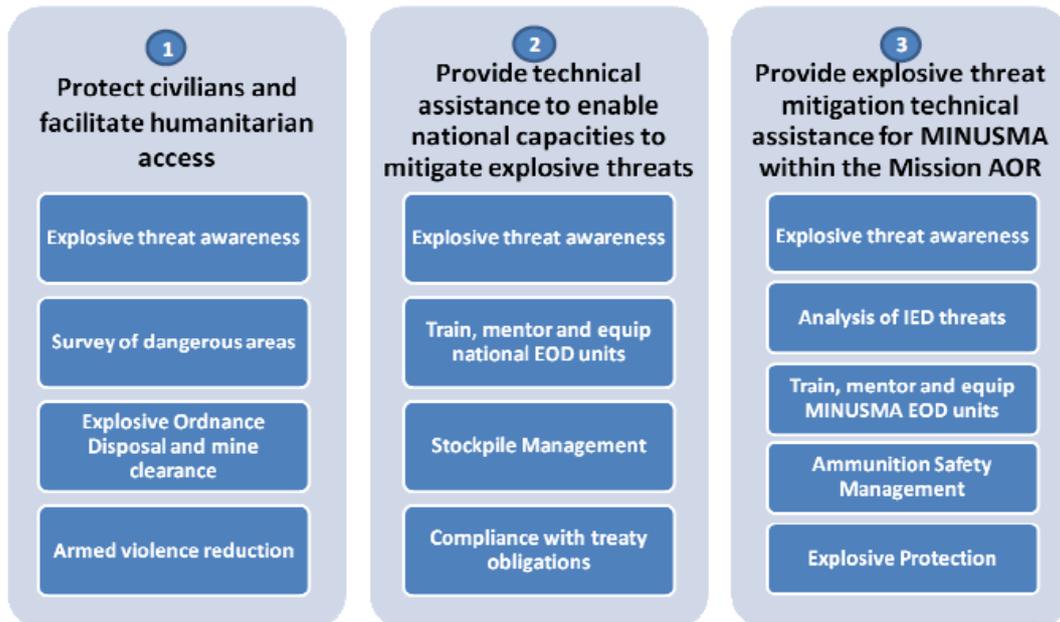


Figure 1 UNMAS strategic areas²⁶

With regard to the first strategic area, UNMAS participated in MINUSMA mission planning and the subsequent mission implementation. It has also provided mine awareness and explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) training to MINUSMA peace-keeping troops. In the second strategic area, providing technical assistance to enable national capacities to mitigate explosive threats is of particular relevance and interest to this case study. It will be elaborated upon in further detail below.

In the third strategic area, UNMAS organised the launch of survey and EOD activities with implementing partners (IPs) MSB and The Development Initiative (TDI). The number of IPs has since increased to include Mines Advisory Group (MAG), Swiss Federation for Mine Action (FSD) and Danish Church Aid (DCA).

In terms of direct support to MINUSMA, UNMAS has provided significant assistance, including:

- provision of essential explosive threat mitigation support for the mission;
- delivery of explosive awareness training for 1,379 uniformed personnel from AFISMA²⁷/MINUSMA and 705 UN personnel;
- provision of specialised technical assistance, equipment and mentorship in EOD and counter-IED to incoming EOD companies and combat engineering units; and
- provision of technical expertise to MINUSMA for safe handling, storage and disposal of weapons and ammunition during the course of forthcoming disarmament events (as required).²⁸

²⁶ Diagram shared by UNMAS Mali programme, March 2014

²⁷ African-led International Support Mission to Mali

²⁸ *Ibid.*

National Commission against the Proliferation of Small Arms and Light Weapons

UNMAS works in close partnership with CNLPAL, aimed at gradually developing its capacity to take the lead in coordinating mine action activities and in complying with regional and international treaty obligations.

National standards on PSSM

UNMAS recognises the lack of standards and Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) guiding PSSM activities and, as a result, supports MDSF with developing national standards on PSSM. These feature two main parts:

1. Organisational text / framework - roles and responsibilities
2. Best practice guidelines – procedures and systems.

Best practice guidelines were developed based on the International Ammunition Technical Guidelines (IATG), adapted to the Mali context. The focus of UNMAS on structures and procedures corresponds to standard organisational development, acknowledging the importance of both.

Weapons Intelligence Teams

As a result of prominent IED threats, UNMAS has promoted the establishment of four-member weapons intelligence teams (WITs), to enable a rapid response to deal with IEDs. It is hoped that the teams will be operational in 2015, and to have one WIT in each region (Timbuktu, Gao, Kidal and Bamako). UNMAS noted that the long-term goal is to include MDSF staff in these WITs.

Capacity development activities

UNMAS works with several IPs to achieve the objectives of the three strategic areas.

MSB conducted two five-week intermediate level explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) training courses for a total of 63 MDSF personnel. 20 of them later attended an eight-week EOD training course (IMAS level 3) at the Humanitarian Demining Training Centre²⁹ (CPADD) in Benin from September to October 2013. A total of six MDSF personnel successfully passed the course.

These EOD training initiatives respond to explicit requests from the Malian authorities, with the long-term aim of establishing an operationally independent national EOD and bomb disposal capacity in Mali.

In its capacity as UNMAS IP, FSD has been involved in MDSF capacity development since September 2013, focusing its training on stockpile safety management. In 2013, FSD organised a three-and-a-half month warehouse management training, producing 57 storekeepers, 21 depot managers and 19 inspectors from the various branches. In 2014, FSD organised a PSSM inspector training, for 19 pre-selected representatives from all MDSF branches. FSD noted that pre-selecting training participants resulted in better training results. The level of commitment among these participants was high, evident in the fact that all 19 successfully graduated. FSD adopted a 'broad focus,' assessing MDSF's strengths and weaknesses, an approach that allowed the training to be better targeted. This approach was highly successful and appreciated by MDSF as the training better responded to identified needs.

²⁹ <http://www.cpadd.org/spip.php?rubrique5>

The TDI, also acting as UNMAS IP, has mainstreamed capacity development activities in its ongoing operations. The six army personnel that successfully graduated from the EOD-level three training in Benin have been attached to TDI teams since August 2013. Following discussions with UNMAS, TDI invited these six army staff to join their clearance teams for a minimum of three months, with each army member attached to one clearance team. This was to provide them with on-the-job training and opportunities to apply their EOD knowledge practically and to further strengthen their skills. Stockpile destruction has been the principal focus of TDI's operations. TDI describes several benefits of this capacity development collaboration, noting that it has resulted in strengthened relationships with UNMAS and the army, as well as improved security in field operations.

MINUSMA/UNMAS 2014 - 2015 work plan

The MINUSMA/UNMAS 2014-2015 work plan highlights the need to engage in further specialised training of MDSF personnel, noting that this should be done in close collaboration with EUTM in Mali. The long-term plan is that the Malian EOD capacity will eventually comprise four teams from the Army Engineers (to be deployed country - wide) and one team from the civil security sector (to be deployed primarily in Bamako, in response to potential terrorist threats).

The intention is to continue adopting a broad approach, including training courses related to IED disposal and post-blast investigation.

In addition, UNMAS plans to continue its work on evaluating weapon and ammunition stockpiles and in providing support on immediate threat reduction measures, physical refurbishment and ASM training to MDSF personnel and MINUSMA. Stockpile management support will range from refurbishing armouries of rural police stations to rebuilding national ammunition depots to recognised safety standards.³⁰

The work plan further highlights continued UNMAS support to CNLPAL, with a view to further strengthening of the commission's capacity to gradually take the lead in coordinating the mine action programme.

EUTM in Mali

Following an official request from the Malian government, and in accordance with UNSCRs 2071 and 2085, the European Union (EU) launched the EUTM Mali within the framework of the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP).³¹

The EUTM includes 550 military personnel from more than 20 European nations working together to rebuild the FAMa.

Established in January 2013, EUTM provides assistance at two levels:

- advisory support designed to support FAMa's rebuilding; and
- training of FAMa's combat units.

EUTM also provides support with renovating the Koulikoro military training camp. As well as the transfer of military knowledge (infantry, armoured combat, engineering, artillery, logistics), EUTM places a strong emphasis on ethics, including cohesion, discipline and respect for international humanitarian law. EUTM-organised training includes EOD components.

³⁰ MINUSMA/UNMAS 2014-2015 work plan

³¹ *Ibid.*

The Advanced Liaison Task Force (ALTF) forms one component of the EUTM. ALTF is composed of a multidisciplinary team of military advisers, with a mission to support the Malian authorities in rebuilding Mali defences.

EUTM Mali is one element of a programme that aims to rebuild the Malian state. This mission is part of the overall approach led by the EU to strengthen security in Mali and the Sahel region.³² The Comprehensive Approach Regional Strategy is the overarching framework for the EUTM.³³

MINUSMA's mandate, resolution 2100 from April 2013, welcomes EUTM Mali's mission for capacity building and assisting the FAMA '*contributing to strengthening civilian authority and respect for human rights*' (Art. 22).³⁴

Regarding training targeting the FAMA, it has been pointed out that: '*...the cohesion, the discipline and the culture of respect to human rights and to the civilian authorities are aspects to continue working on to improve the FAMA, while enhancing the training in technical and tactical aspects, the command and control capabilities and the logistic support.*'³⁵

³² EUTM Mali

³³ Strategy for Security and Development for the Sahel, 2011:

³⁴ UN Security Council Resolution 2100 (2013):

http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/missions/minusma/documents/mali%202100_E_.pdf

³⁵ Juan Carlos Castilla Barea, The Malian Armed Forces Reform and the Future of EUTM,

http://www.ieee.es/en/Galerias/fichero/docs_opinion/2013/DIEEEO93-2013_EUTM_Mali_CastillaBarea_ENGLISH.pdf

Key Findings: Good Practices, Main Challenges and Lessons Learnt

Good Practices

Several good practices can be drawn from experiences of developing national capacities in Mali, including:

Inclusion of mine action in relevant UNSCRs

The sector gained visibility from inclusion of mine action at the highest level in UNSCRs. This in turn paved the way for future activities and external support. Importantly, UNSCR 2100 (2013) makes explicit reference to training and support activities in mine action and weapon and ammunition management.

Early and inclusive training activities

The decision by UNMAS to start capacity development activities with the MDSF (including all sections) at an early stage facilitated coordination and collaboration, while strengthening the trust between UNMAS and MDSF. Early training activities sent a clear message to national partners on the commitment of UNMAS to working in close collaboration with them.

UNMAS focus on capacity development and proactive approach

UNMAS Mali programme's focus, from the start, on national capacity development allowed the integration of capacity development into many of the activities. It also helped to emphasise the importance of working closely with key national partners. Several IPs and national actors emphasised the extent to which the UNMAS proactive approach has served to place capacity development at the forefront.

Effective coordination

It is clear that effective and inclusive coordination between international actors (UNMAS, MINUSMA, EUTM and IPs), and between international actors and national stakeholders has resulted in a spirit of partnership and effective information-sharing in the Mali programme.

National ownership

The Mali case clearly illustrates how involving national stakeholders from the very beginning can strengthen international and national commitment to promoting national ownership, including through capacity development activities.

Main Challenges and Lessons Learnt

Training initiatives

The decision by UNMAS to train several MDSF, staff from the various branches, in EOD served an important purpose during the early stages of the programme. It strengthened trust between MDSF and UNMAS and clearly underlined the importance UNMAS placed on national capacity development. They made a conscious decision to invite representatives from all MDSF branches to participate. This clearly served its key purpose. It also meant, however, that some of the trained MDSF staff had no opportunities to apply skills gained during the training when they returned to their duties, as was the case with traffic police, for instance.

Only six out of 20 MDSF staff who attended the EOD-level 3 training in Benin successfully graduated. This suggested that the training level was too high. UNMAS is well aware of these challenges and will pay more attention to trainee profiles in the future, with long-term sustainability in mind. Another lesson learnt relates to the importance of starting with EOD-level 1 for participants with no previous experience.

Absorbing trained personnel

Several informants noted challenges related to lack of structures to absorb/manage trained MDSF personnel.

The initial target of training and of strengthening technical knowledge nationally has been achieved. The second objective of integrating EOD into a national training package, including training of trainers (ToT), was highlighted by many informants as a crucial next step.

A number of senior MDSF representatives emphasised the importance of establishing a coordination centre for EOD operations, to facilitate effective coordination and information-sharing. Several stakeholders believe that a centre could play an important role in absorbing EOD-qualified personnel. Qualified staff could also be involved in ToT activities, to promote sustainability. Several informants underlined that the coordination centre could play an important role in facilitating information-sharing, both within the MDSF and between the public and the MDSF.

Long-term sustainability

As with most capacity development activities, long-term sustainability is a challenge. Training initiatives may be of high quality but long-term sustainability depends on several factors, including available resources (financial, human and technological), opportunities to apply acquired knowledge and skills practically, and an effective chain of command. Most of these factors are beyond the control of the organisations responsible for conducting the training activities, resulting in limited influence regarding long-term sustainability. This paradox highlights a common challenge in national capacity development, one that is not unique to the mine action sector.

Annexes

Annex I: Individuals interviewed

Name	Title	Organisation
General Brigader Coulibaly Kani Diabate	President	National Commission Against the Proliferation of Small Arms and Light Weapons
Colonel Major Nana Tiémoko Traore	Director	Direction du Génie Militaire
General Brigader Didier Dacko	Etat Major General des Armees	Ministry of Defence
Marlène Dupouy	Capacity Development Analyst/PSSM Project Coordinator	UNMAS
Charles Frisby	Programme Manager	UNMAS
Marc Vaillant	Programme Officer	UNMAS
Joseph Huber	Chief of Operations	UNMAS
Donat Blugeon	Counter IED Officer	UNMAS
Eric Boulin	Training Officer	UNMAS
Etienne Huber	PSSM Officer	UNMAS
Adrian Hunt	Deputy Head of Mission	British Embassy
Robb Jones	Project Manager	TDI
Jimmy Jean Chehab	Project Manager	FSD
Marcel Vachez	Technical Advisor/Trainer PSSM	
Jean Pierre Thouvenin	Technical Advisor/Trainer PSSM	
Tobias Siepenkothen	EOD trainer	EU Training Mission (EUTM)