

The Significance of Mine Action in Post- Conflict Management: Angola and Sudan as Case Studies.

*A Research Paper Presented to
The East African School of Diplomacy, Governance and International Relations
Uganda Martyrs University – Kampala Uganda
January 2011*

*By Kilama Felix Douglas
Master of Arts in Diplomacy and International Studies*

Abstract

It is absurd that mine action often does not receive equally befitting attention like other sectors within the development sphere and yet it can be a precondition to the implementation of some key post-conflict reconstruction and development activities. On most occasions, during post-conflict reconstruction planning, other development programmes like food security, water and sanitation, health, education, trade, communication networks, and livelihoods take precedence. Some donor agencies as well as implementers of development programmes tend to view mine action as different from humanitarian, recovery and development activities, and therefore as a component that should be funded from different sources. It is apparent that other actors perceive it as less important than other components simply because they do not understand exactly what it is and therefore seldom appreciate its significance in development.

The central position of this paper is to demonstrate how mine action is critically important in post-conflict management and how appropriate attention to it subsequently leads to development. The paper points out key post-conflict activities and demonstrates with practical examples how they are dependent on mine action. This paper also pronounces that while it is cogent and logical to consider other visible challenges in a post-conflict situation for immediate intervention, it is imperative for those involved in the planning process especially in mine/explosive remnants of war ravaged countries to include strategies of addressing the impact of the ‘invisible enemy’- landmines as part and parcel of their planning processes, mindful of the fact that it possesses a vast potential to impinge on the success of other programs including the safety of lives. This paper also articulates that mine action is a precondition to post- conflict management which is a key factor in the establishment of sustainable peace in mine and explosive remnants of war affected countries. Analytically, the paper concludes by proposing the prioritization of mine action and the urgent need for its inclusion in development planning in post-war situations.

Introduction

According to the International Mine Action Standards (IMAS), the term ‘mine action’ refers to activities which aim to reduce the social, economic and environmental impact of mines and Unexploded Ordnance (UXO). It is not just about demining; it also about people and societies, and how they are affected by

landmine contamination.¹ Mine action has five major pillars: Mine Risk Education (MRE), demining, advocacy to stigmatize the use of landmines and support to total ban of anti personnel mines, stockpile destruction and victim assistance (VA) including rehabilitation and reintegration. Mine action activities carried out by non-profit making organizations are termed as ‘humanitarian mine action’ to differentiate them from those conducted by commercial companies for profit. The central focus of this paper is on humanitarian mine action (HMA) but uses the term ‘mine action’ (MA) in that regard. The objective of mine action is to reduce the risk from landmines to a level where people can live safely; in which economic social and health development can occur free from the constraints imposed by landmine contamination and in which the victims’ needs can be addressed.² Unexploded Ordnance (UXO) are weapons that have been launched, fired, thrown at a target but failed to explode due to malfunction or otherwise. UXO and other abandoned explosive devices are what constitute Explosive Remnants of War (ERW). There are also other remnants of conflicts like Improvised Explosive Devices (IED) and cluster munitions that mine actors deal with post conflicts environment.

The concept of post-conflict management in this paper is meant to include peace building and post-conflict reconstruction activities with a range of interventions that extends from the time of signing the comprehensive peace agreement by the countries in question (Angola and Sudan) to the present time. An attempt is also made to examine the contribution of mine action in the process of disarmament, demobilization, reintegration (DDR) as the first step in the transition from war to peace, and then handle reconstruction and development in these two post-conflict counties within three specific objectives.

The first objective attempts to assess the importance of mine action in DDR while looking at the role it plays under vital preconditions to DDR like; political agreement and security.

The second objective explores the role that mine action plays in post-conflict reconstruction and its contribution to development in the two countries.

Angola and Sudan are deliberately used to assist in the development of arguments to enunciate the above objectives because of their (the two countries’) conspicuous similarities and disparities in terms of contamination, length of civil wars and post-conflict situations. Sudan is geographically the largest country in Africa with a substantial number of mine action agencies in the continent (including UN

¹ *International Mine Action Standard Standards (IMAS) 04.10*, Edition 2, 2003

² Geneva International Center for Humanitarian Demining, 2004. *A Guide to Mine Action*. Geneva: GICHD. P.20

Agencies) while Angola is considered the fourth largest country in the continent with a comparatively few mine action agencies but with the heaviest landmine and ERW contamination in Africa. Whereas the Angolan mine action program has apparently been facing significant reduction in donor funding as a major challenge, Sudan's mine action program faces formidable challenges in 2010–2011, beginning with the fallout from the outcome of the January 2011 referendum on the future status of Southern Sudan.³ There are also common challenges to mine action programs in these countries which are related to size of the country, ground distance to travel, funding, work environment, weather and capacity.

Mine Action situation and Impacts in Angola and Sudan

The Angolan government signed the Ottawa Convention (Mine Ban Treaty) on 4th December 1997, ratified 22 July 2002 and it has been a state party to the convention since 1st January 2003. Angola worked with other agencies and developed (with the help of UN and NGOs) strategies on how to rid her land of ordnances. The Landmine Impact Survey (LIS) conducted in Angola from April 2004 to May 2007, identified 3,293 suspected hazardous areas (SHAs) in 1,988 impacted communities. Accordingly, an estimated population of 2.4 million lives in these SHAs, representing 7 percent of Angolan citizens living in landmine impacted areas. The survey identified agricultural land as the most affected constituting 61 percent of impacted areas followed by roads and water and non agricultural land.⁴ In 2009, five international NGOs and National Demining Institute (Instituto Nacional de Desminagem, INAD) cleared almost 802 square kilometers of land and found 6,190 antipersonnel mines, 1,821 anti-vehicle mines, and 7,812 items of UXO.⁵

The Sudan government ratified the Mine Ban Treaty in October 2003 and became a State Party on 1 April 2004. In Sudan, LIS conducted in 16 of 25 states in an estimated 5,445 villages, identified 296 villages as impacted by landmines. The survey also identified 605 SHAs covering 106km². As of June

³ International Campaign to Ban Landmines. *Landmine Monitor Report*, 2010. <http://www.the-monitor.org/lm/2009/countries/pdf/sudan.pdf> (Viewed 16-12-2010)

⁴ National Intersectoral Commission for Demining and Humanitarian Assistance and the Survey Action Center, 2007. *Landmine Impact Survey, Republic of Angola*

⁵ International Campaign to Ban Landmines. *Landmine Monitor*, 2010. http://www.the-monitor.org/index.php/cp/display/region_profiles/theme/459 (Viewed 16-12-2010)

2010, through clearance and cancellation, the number of SHAs from the LIS had been reduced to 314 estimated to cover 46km². Reports and surveys from operators have identified a further 500 SHAs.⁶ In Red Sea, Kassala and Gadaref in eastern Sudan identified 16 mine impacted communities among a total of 1,072 communities studied in the three states. This represents 1.5% of all communities in eastern Sudan. There are approximately 61,000 people living in those 16 communities, or 1.6% of the approximately 3.7 million people living in eastern Sudan.⁷

As is the case with Angola, many NGOs in Sudan like MAG, NPA, DCA, together with other commercial companies, local and national organizations are engaged in mine action activities. These actors are coordinated by the United Nations Mine Action Office (UNMAO). Landmine Monitor reported in 2010 that verification and clearance of roads was a major focus of the mine action program in Sudan and in 2009 alone, a linear total of 7,152km of roads were opened. As of June 2010, UNMAO had assessed 36,915km of roads and verified a further 5.25km. According to UNMAO, 95% of the major roads have been opened.⁸ These roads were opened to facilitate different actors that are taking parts in peace building, recovery, rehabilitation and development activities in the country.

The donor interest in mine action has significantly reduced in recent years and mine action agencies are finding it very difficult to sustain their personnel and continue to carry out their activities at the same pace to make post conflict countries mine-free within the time stipulated by the Ottawa Convention. The Norwegian People's Aid (NPA) precisely observed how funding is decreasing in her mine action program review and appraisal in Angola, "from the relatively high levels of funding in 2004-2006 and the financial basis for the NPA MA program declined by some NOK 20 million in 2007. This was related partly to a generally declining interest for MA from the main donors"⁹. Even when priority is being given to reducing the impact of landmines on livelihoods, the sector still receives less attention from the donor community. Donors tend to look at mine action as separate from other development or

⁶ Landmine and Cluster Munitions Monitor, 2010
http://www.themonitor.org/custom/index.php/region_profiles/print_theme/615

⁷ Survey Action Center and Mines Advisory Group, 2007. *Landmine Impact Survey Sudan; Kassala, Red sea, Gadaref and Sennar States*. http://www.sac-na.org/pdf_text/sudan/ES_Report_Sep07.pdf (Viewed 24-12-2010)

⁸ International Campaign to Ban Landmines. *Landmine Monitor*, 2010. http://www.themonitor.org/index.php/cp/display/region_profiles/theme/615. (Viewed 16-12-2010)

⁹ NPA Mine Action in Angola, Review 2004-2007, Appraisal 2008-2010. http://www.norad.no/en/_attachment/119734/binary/7591?download=true (Viewed 14-12-2010)

humanitarian activities. Consequently, interaction between mine action and other humanitarian, recovery or development activities has been limited. This hinders the fusion of mine action and development because even the donors themselves tend to consider mine action funding separately from the mainstream development/humanitarian program. Since implementers have contractual obligations to follow what their donors require of them or what they have agreed upon (this is in exceptional cases), they also tend to exclude mine action in their programming even in situations where they are aware of the threats.

Reduction in funding has far-reaching effects both on mine action agencies and landmine affected communities. The results have always been; scaling down mine action activities coupled with personnel cuts and in some cases, the closing down of operational and programme activities. This has more effects on mine/ERW affected communities because they are forced to live amidst risks or in most cases to pursue risky activities in dangerous areas because they have no alternatives. As an example in case, the Landmine Monitor report of 2010 mentioned that the “decline in international funding since 2008 resulted in two international demining NGOs closing their operations and the five remaining ones — DCA, HALO, MAG, MgM, and NPA reducing the number of their clearance teams”.¹⁰ Dan Church Aid (DCA), Halo Trust (HALO), Mines Advisory Group (MAG), Norwegian People’s Aid (NPA) and Menschen gegen Minen (MgM) are among humanitarian mine action organizations working in Angola that all scaled down both their activities and teams on the ground due the dwindling of donor funding of the mine action sector.

The problem is not affecting the demining pillar only but also other components like MRE and VA. For instance, “two community-based rehabilitation projects were closed in Gabela, Kwanza Sul province and Viana, a town outside Luanda, because of a lack of funds.”¹¹ This is because other activities had been given priority over mine action yet landmine did not only pose a major threat to lives but also hindered reconstruction and development efforts. The indirect impacts of contamination may result in increased poverty and food insecurity because access to arable land is blocked, or in the spread of infectious

¹⁰ International Campaign to Ban Landmines, *Landmine Monitor Report, 2010*. http://www.themonitor.org/index.php/cp/display/region_profiles/theme/459 (Reviewed 16-12-2010)

¹¹ International Campaign to Ban Landmines, *Landmine Monitor Report, 2010*. http://www.themonitor.org/index.php/cp/display/region_profiles/theme/460 (Viewed 16-12-2010)

diseases due to the inability to provide public health services in regions isolated by contamination.¹² In situations where there are few or no mine action organizations in post-conflict communities, emergency and development agencies have had to readjust or redirect their budget to cater for mine clearance before they could begin their primary interventions. Sometimes when the presence of the threat is known but the particular perimeter of the suspected area is unknown, reconstruction or development projects is delayed or stalled/ halted due to the fear for the safety of personnel.

Mine Action and Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration

Disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) aim at restoring security and stability by disarming warring parties, improving and maintaining restored security conditions. These are realized through voluntary discharge of combatants and subsequently socio-economic reintegration of ex-combatants back into civilian life. DDR is only plausible and executed in the context of; a ceasefire, a negotiated settlement or a peace agreement.¹³

In the context of agreement, DDR reinforces cease fire by guaranteeing security and building confidence. The primary stakeholders in this case are: the warring parties, the affected civilian communities who could be living within the conflict areas, internally displaced people or those who have fled to other safer countries (refugees). It is often during the cease fire or agreement period that mine action activities are essential to open routes for ex-combatants to return to their communities and to facilitate movements of various stakeholders in the agreement including aid/humanitarian workers, peace observers and civil society organizations. The restoration of security can be jeopardized by the presence of landmines which hinders free movement and also creates fear amongst societies and may force ex-combatants to return to war because they may tend to view the restriction on free movement as a deliberate plan orchestrated by their enemies to take advantage over them and the situation. Mansfield (Mansfield, 2002:60) rightly points out that, “by obstructing mobility, the presence of landmines,

¹² Geneva International Center for Humanitarian Demining, 2004. *A Guide to Socio- Economic Approaches to Mine Action Planning and Management*. Geneva: GICHD. Pp.10-11

¹³FUSATO, A. ‘Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration of Ex-combatants’. *CRInfo: The Conflict Resolution Information Source*. July 2003. <http://crinfo.beyondintractability.org/essay/demobilization/?nid=1376> (Viewed 13-12-2010)

disrupts the crucial peace building stages of post war societies and threatens a return to violent conflicts.”¹⁴

Normally after comprehensive peace agreements, refugees who fled to neighboring countries and internally displaced persons (IDPs) begin returning to their original places of habitation. This can be in an organized way or facilitated through repatriation with the aid of United Nations agencies like United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) or/and the International Organisation for Migration (IOM). In some cases, however, refugees have apparently trickled back to their original homes of habitation on an ad hoc basis without the help of humanitarian agencies¹⁵. In such situations it is important for deminers to clear routes for refugees’ passage and also conduct Mine Risk Education (MRE) activities – creating awareness of the threats, safe paths and safe behavior. They (MRE Teams) should inform refugees about the location of dangerous areas in places they are returning, make them know the threats, how they look like, their impacts on them, and how to avoid the risk of getting killed or injured by them but most importantly how to live with them without coming in contact with them.

The presence of landmines and explosive remnants of war hinders return and settlement of people in their original homes of habitation. Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS) reported in their September 2004 issue of the newsletter that, “in 2003, one of the first convoys leaving Zambia with refugees was halted because of the discovery of a landmine on a section of the route previously declared safe.”¹⁶ A situation like this did not only slow down the return process but also created fear among refugees. The reparation agency can abandon the repatriation plan due to landmines. It would unquestionably not be appropriate to consider repatriating refugees under such circumstances, given that the repatriated refugees travel in fear of the silent killer that lies ahead of them.

In the same newsletter, Jesuit Refugee Service presented substantial practical problems related to refugee resettlement in a condition where mine action activities especially clearance lacked. Efforts to resettle internally displaced persons, reach remote communities, supply food to vulnerable populations,

¹⁴ MANSFIELD I, 2002. Landmines, Reconstruction and Development. *International Aid and Trade Review*. P. 60. http://www.gichd.org/fileadmin/pdf/about_gichd/staff_statements_articles/MAI/AidandTrade-Mansfield-Jan2002.pdf (Viewed 13-12-2010)

¹⁵ The researcher’s personal experience when he was working with Humanitarian Mine Action organizations in the Nuba Mountains – Sudan and Moxico Province – Angola between 2007 and 2010.

¹⁶ Jesuit Refugee Services, 2004. Towards a Universal Ban on Landmines. Servir. No.32. p. 5 <http://www.jrs.net/Assets/Publications/File/serv32en.pdf> (Viewed 9-12-2010)

demobilize and reintegrate ex-combatants and their families were all severely hindered by the pending need to clear mines and unexploded ordnances. The threat of landmines on repatriation processes is further explained by Mansfield (2003: 36); “landmines prevent repatriation by blocking routes of return and rendering normal habitation impossible by their presence in homes, schools, fields and watering points”.¹⁷ Reintegration of war affected communities namely refugees, ex-combatants, child soldiers, landmine survivors and war injured persons back into their societies to resume normal life are not only difficult but also expensive in mine and explosive remnants of polluted countries. Alexandra Kuan (Kuan, 2008:23) in her research paper for UNHCR contends that the landmine problem has been the most distressing challenge to reintegration of returnees in Angola. She stressed out that one of the most devastating consequences of the conflict has been landmines. Not only were landmines used to defend strategic towns and infrastructure during the war, they were also aimed at cutting access routes and preventing populations from reaching important resources such as water or agricultural fields. Landmines have presented a significant risk to returnees as they seek to re-establish themselves in remote areas.¹⁸ Mine action activities were and are vital for the returnees in the process of re-establishing themselves back into their former villages.

In Moxico province of Angola, MAG opened operations bases in Luau town on the D.R. Congo/Angola border, Kazombo and Lumbala Nguimbo towns, close to the Zambia/Angola border to support the UNHCR repatriation process with Mine Risk Education for returnees, mine/ERW clearance and marking suspected hazardous areas. These activities were vital since the refugees were returning from mine-free areas to one of the most heavily mined countries of the world. It was therefore very important and urgent that adequate support was provided to ensure that risks were minimized and information about the mines/ERW was passed on to the refugees and the agencies supporting them. The repatriation which saw the return of up to 1,200 refugees per week from refugee camps in Zambia, D.R. Congo and Namibia was partly successful due to their (MAG Mine Action Team) timely and adequate intervention. MAG says when the UNHCR repatriation process was finally completed in early 2007, a total of

¹⁷ MANSFIELD I, 2003. The Role of the Military in Mine Action. *United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research, Disarmament Forum*. no.3. p. 36. [//www.unidir.org/pdf/articles/pdf-art1956.pdf](http://www.unidir.org/pdf/articles/pdf-art1956.pdf) (Viewed 9-12-2010)

¹⁸ KUAN, A., 2008. ‘When the displaced return: challenges to reintegration in Angola’. Policy Development and Evaluation Service United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. Research Paper no.152. p. 23

409,450 individuals had returned.¹⁹ During this period (of repatriation), the organization cleared refugee reception centers, health facilities, settlement areas including areas where aid/relief agencies established their operational offices in Luau and Alto Zambeze to facilitate repatriation and reintegration in Moxico province.

The organization (MAG) also had to clear the road from Luena which is the capital of Moxico province to Lumbala Nguimbo – a town near the borders of Angola and Zambia to facilitate the UNHCR repatriation program that commenced in July 2003. This road was heavily mined during the civil war that took almost three decades. Prior to the clearance, however, Lumbala Nguimbo was cut off from Luena the provincial capital. Travel was only possible by air and those who risked using the road did it on foot or bicycles – a trip that could take more than 3 days riding or a week or more on foot but even then, the probability of arriving safely without mine related accidents was less than a half.²⁰

Mine action remains a critical factor in supporting transition from war to peace by ensuring a safe environment, access routes and facilities necessary for communities after conflict in the situation where there is a comprehensive peace agreement (CPA). The CPA signed between the government of the republic of the Sudan and the Sudan People Liberation Movement/Army (SPLM/A) in January 2005 also recognizes its importance. The cease fire arrangements for the CPA permitted activities seeking to alleviate the effects of the war on the civilian and war affected areas to galvanize popular support. The first activity stated under these permitted activities in the transition process was mine action. Article 9.1 of the CPA states that: “Demining and decommissioning of military hazards (this shall be done in collaboration with other bodies referred to in 8.6 herein, according to agreed time tables and mechanisms, and under UN monitoring).”²¹ The outcome of road verification/assessments and clearance that were conducted by mine action agencies was safe return of internally displaced persons (IDPs) and refugees to their countries and remote settlement areas of habitation. Road clearance also substantially reduced the risk and cost of transport in delivering humanitarian aid where it was needed. The

¹⁹ MAG Angola in Depth. <http://www.maginternational.org/where-we-work/where-mag-works/mag-angola/> (Viewed 25-12-2010)

²⁰ Information acquired by the researcher during a case study research in Lucusse Municipality of Moxico province on Friday 14th, May 2010

²¹ The Comprehensive Peace Agreement Between The Government of the Republic of the Sudan and The Sudan People’s Liberation Movement/Sudan People’s Liberation Army, January 2005. <http://www.aec-sudan.org/docs/cpa-en.pdf> (Viewed 17-11-2010)

multiplying factors of reduction in transport cost are numerous and some of the direct results include low administrative and implementation cost for humanitarian and development agencies. International Campaign to Ban Landmines (ICBL) Landmine Monitor confirms this important advantage to United Nations Mission in Sudan (UNMIS) and other agencies in post war Sudan thus:

...travel is safer, faster, and less costly, and the cost of delivering humanitarian aid, still the primary international aid effort in Sudan, has significantly decreased for UNMIS and the World Food Programme, compared to transporting aid by air. For UNMIS alone, the savings are said to have equaled US\$150 million, approximately the equivalent of the cost of the mine action component of UNMIS over the same period. In 2009, routes opened to Boma, one of the major corridors for refugees from Ethiopia and the Juba-Kajo Keji road opened to facilitate the resettlement of IDPs and refugees in Central Equatoria state.²²

Some development/humanitarian, intergovernmental agencies and governmental organizations who have practically witnessed the vital role mine action plays in facilitating implementation of their activities acknowledge its value to lives and daily businesses in areas of their jurisdiction. They appreciate how MRE influenced them to adopt safe behaviors in mined countries, how Victim Assistance (VA) helped to reintegrate survivors in their communities and how demining of roads dramatically reduced the costs of relief and service. Aid agencies working in post conflict Africa and other mined countries of the world give testimonies of how demining boosted trade and enabled relief workers access places that were not accessed before to deliver the aid. A study conducted by the World Food Program (WFP), illustrates how its combined demining and road rehabilitation program has yielded significant socio-economic benefits. Clearing roads has reduced travel time by 50% and the cost of transportation by 40%. In one location, the WFP noted a 65% increase in the number of businesses following the opening of a road. It has also greatly reduced the WFP's costs for moving food. According to the study, opening

²² International Campaign to Ban Landmines. *Landmine Monitor*, 2010. http://www.the-monitor.org/index.php/cp/display/region_profiles/theme/615. (Viewed 16-12-2010)

up the major roads to traffic, commerce, and the return of refugees is mine action's signal achievement in Sudan.²³

Mine Action and Post- Conflict Reconstruction

Post-conflict reconstruction aims at achieving key objectives that are crucial for recovery and eventual development of post war communities. It can target infrastructural rehabilitation to facilitate recovery in areas like: markets, health facilities, water systems, transport and telecommunication systems, schools, housing for settlement, livelihood support, hydro and thermal power plants. This paper will attempt to tackle the role that mine action played and indeed still playing in the resuscitation of above mentioned sectors in Angola and Sudan giving specific examples for these post-conflict countries.

As mentioned earlier in the introductory part, freedom of movement is important for personnel of organizations working in post-war situations.²⁴ People should have the liberty to travel safely, transport goods and others logistics to assist in restoring public services and rehabilitate infrastructures. It is only possible with the help of deminers, explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) teams or Battle Area Clearance (BAC) teams to guarantee this situation in mined and ERW contaminated countries.

Although the two wars in Angola and Sudan took places due to different reasons and contexts, they had/ still have similar effects in terms of destruction to lives, infrastructures, social and cultural systems. In terms of infrastructures, a considerable number of roads and bridges were destroyed in the countries with numerous landmines and other explosive remnants of war spread in the countries, restricting access to basic social amenities, other provinces, trade and development.²⁵

Landmines and ERW affect the accomplishment of reconstruction and development projects. In situations when reconstruction projects are supposed to be implemented in contaminated or suspected

²³ International Campaign to Ban Landmines. *Landmine Monitor*, 2009. http://www.the-monitor.org/index.php/publications/display?act=submit&pqs_year=2009&pqs_type=lm&pqs_report=sudan (Viewed 24-12-2010)

²⁴ MANSFIELD I, 2002. Landmines, Reconstruction and Development. *International Aid and Trade Review*. P. 61. http://www.gichd.org/fileadmin/pdf/about_gichd/staff_statements_articles/MAI/AidandTrade-Mansfield-Jan2002.pdf (Viewed 13-12-2010)

²⁵ Mines Advisory Group, Angola Review 2008. <http://www.maginternational.org/silo/files/angola-review-2008.pdf>(Viewed 14-12-2010)

hazardous land, implementers have to deal with the question of mines/ERW before commencing their work. This is especially when the project involves movement through mined areas, construction involving excavation or cultivation. Agencies faced with such situations often have to appeal to demining organizations to clear the areas before initiating projects. In 2009, the provincial government of Moxico through the Inter-sectoral Commission on Demining and Humanitarian Assistance (Comissão Nacional Intersectorial de Desminagem e Assistência Humanitária, CNIDAH), formally requested key demining organizations operating in Moxico province to clear areas around Sinai Novo before government could start constructing houses for the provincial government workers. Consequently, DCA, MAG, INAD and FAA (Angolan Armed Forces) were allotted tasks to clear Sinai Novo for the construction. The issue of beginning the construction depended on clearance work carried out by the mine actors.²⁶

The existence of landmines in an area creates a psychological fear, doubts, risks and the general atmosphere of insecurity in the minds of project personnel. This can lead to resignation of personnel, disenchantment and loss of interest in the project work. Some projects in this context may be delayed due to uncertainty about the safety of staffs creating unexpected additional costs. Delays and additional cost may bring about withdrawal of funding by the donor when objectives are not achieved and targets not met within a specified period of time. For instance in early 2008 the Chinese constructors who were rehabilitating the railway lines from Luena to Luau temporarily abandoned the work after two of their staff members were killed by landmines when they were working near Luena city in Angola. There are also documented cases in which donors, NGOs and UN agencies completely withdrew from post conflict countries due to the fear of mines. Evans, writing in a Humanitarian Exchange Magazine in March 2002 reported that, “the start of widespread seeding of landmines by the MFDC (Movement of Democratic Forces in Casamance) in 1997 provoked the withdrawal of a number of key donors from the Casamance, including the Food and Agriculture Organization, the African Development Fund and, most importantly, USAID. Their departure abruptly ended a number of large projects, especially in agricultural development”²⁷. Such withdrawals can lead to undesirable effects on the population. For instance; wide spread famine with its associated consequences, endemic outbreak of diseases, death,

²⁶ Interview with Evaristo Cambembe, Community Liaison Supervisor with Mines Advisory Group-Angola. 11-02-2010

²⁷ Evans, M., March 2002. The Casamance conflict: out of sight, out of mind? *Humanitarian Exchange Magazine*. Issue 20. <http://www.odihpn.org/report.asp?id=2408> (Viewed 22-12-2010)

violence emanating from the struggles for the access of meager resources or even return to fully flagged war, hence, retarding development processes.

In Angola, Médecines Sans Frontières activities of provision of medical services were affected in Cuando Cubango and Mavinga provinces when the vehicle they were traveling in detonated an anti-vehicle mine killing Six staff members of their vaccination team plus a child and injured six others in November 2002.²⁸

In August 2010, INAD reported that all the major roads that were identified as contaminated by landmines in LIS have been cleared and were being paved with asphalt as planned by the Ministry of Public Works and Road Institute of Angola, who are responsible for the road project. Road networks are very important in the development of a country. It allows people to access other regions flow of goods and services form one part of a country to another. In 2008, Angola reported that 423km of road had been cleared or verified by the end of 2008, and in 2009 94km of road in three provinces was verified.²⁹

MAG in her 2008 review for Angola, noted how the “direct result of road clearance and verification undertaken by the organizationmade it possible for the first time in decades to travel safely on 250km of a primary road.”³⁰ On Sudan, ICBL stresses that, the “clearance of the Kauda-Talodi road and the Kalkada to Tumbera route in Southern Kordofan, allowed communities in the surrounding areas to have better access to services provided by the government and international organizations.”³¹ DCA also cleared the road linking Kuada to Kadugli. This facilitated access to health and education facilities for communities in Kadugli. Before clearing this road DCA socio-economic impact assessment report found that, “more barriers to health treatment were experienced in contaminated areas compared to mine free

²⁸ *IRIN*. 10 December 2002. Angola: MSF mourns loss of life in Angola land mine incident. <http://reliefweb.int/node/115011> (Viewed 22-12-2010)

²⁹ International Campaign to Ban Landmines. *Landmine Monitor*, 2010. http://www.the-monitor.org/index.php/cp/display/region_profiles/theme/459 (Viewed 16-12-2010)

³⁰ Mines Advisory Group, Angola Review 2008. <http://www.maginternational.org/silo/files/angola-review-2008.pdf> (Viewed 14-12-2010)

³¹ International Campaign to Ban Landmines. *Landmine Monitor Report*, 2010. http://www.the-monitor.org/index.php/cp/display/region_profiles/theme/615.(Viewed 16-12-2010)

areas”³² in the Nuba Mountains. There were also barriers to education, access to safe drinking water and other socio economic entities. This road also enabled humanitarian/development agencies based in Kadugli to access remote communities in the south. These areas could not be accessed by the communities before clearance yet it was a key route linking the Sudanese refugees from Kenya to other parts of the Nuba Mountains region.

Reports and statistics for mine action related activities in Angola and Sudan show that mine action has vital out comes for not only on infrastructural rehabilitation but also improving health and sanitation conditions of the people. Before clearing mined areas around the only water source that supplies the population in Luena city of Moxico province, people were using contaminated water that they fetched from rivers. This situation predisposed them to health hazards that exacerbated living conditions in this place. It is noted in MAG’s review that prior to organization’s clearance of the mined area surrounding the city’s Bairro Bomba water plant, Luena’s 300,000 population had been forced to use contaminated water direct from the local river for drinking, bathing and cooking purposes, resulting in high rates of diarrhea and other waterborne diseases.³³ It is important to note that this water source could only be rehabilitated after the area has been cleared of mines. Availability of safe drinking and running water does not only reduce the risk of water borne diseases but also enhances sanitation and hygiene issues in a community. Presently, the only water filtering, storing and pumping system in the city provides the whole of Luena with filtered drinking water, filling three large water tanks with 150,000 liters of water twice daily. The filtered water is pumped into the water piping system where it comes out of taps in connected houses.³⁴

Demining, mine risk education and survivors’ assistance are significant factors in establishing safe and peaceful environment which is a prerequisite for sustainable development. Landmines and explosive remnants of war (ERW) are serious obstacles to trade, tourism, wild life and development in some post-

³² DanChurchAid, 2005. *Socio-economic Baseline Survey, Nuba Mountains - Sudan*. Final Draft Report. http://www.gichd.org/fileadmin/pdf/ma_development/database/Socio_economic_baseline_survey_Nuba_Mountains_Sudan.pdf (Viewed 14-12-2010) p. 50

³³ Mines Advisory Group, Angola Review 2008. <http://www.maginternational.org/silo/files/angola-review-2008.pdf>(Viewed 14-12-2010)

³⁴ Mines Advisory Group, Angola Review 2008. <http://www.maginternational.org/silo/files/angola-review-2008.pdf>(Viewed 14-12-2010)

conflict countries. In relation this mine threats to wild life it is noted in the 2010 Landmine Monitor Report that the mine contamination in Kuando-Kubango province of Angola was cited among the barriers to creating the new Kavango Zambezi Transfrontier Conservation Area which is the world's largest game park on the borders of Angola, Botswana, Namibia, Zambia, and Zimbabwe where more than 130,000 elephants are waiting to be allowed to move from Botswana through the park. This process has been held up until the park is free of the threat of mine.³⁵ It is after mine action teams (MAT) make this conservation area free of mines that the above South and Central African countries will realize their goal of having the world largest park.

Mine action therefore is not only concerned with just removal and destruction of dangerous items but also with issues that affects various aspects of lives – whether wild, aquatic or domestic. As study by United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) concludes: “mine action is a development issue as well as a humanitarian issue, a political issue, a social issue, and, ultimately, a human rights issue – for nothing is more basic than the right to life, liberty and security of the person”.³⁶ Mine action also helps to create a safe environment not only by reducing the risk of injury and death caused by landmine through mines awareness and promotion of behavioral change but also by ridding the environment of landmines and ERW. Landmine is also an environmental issue because its effects are not only felt by human beings but by all living beings including animals and plants besides land pollution.

Two World Bank papers written in 2009 on Angola also address the negative impacts of landmines in the country in terms of environmental and development facet. The Environmental and Social Management Framework Final Report concludes that the presence of landmines throughout the country inhibits access to land and is an environmental limitation that undermines development.³⁷ The report says that the areas cleared of mines and ERW are primarily being used for housing and farming. It also found that sometimes communities begins construction and farming before formal handover tasks with

³⁵ International Campaign to Ban Landmine, *Landmine Monitor*, 2010.
http://www.themonitor.org/index.php/cp/display/region_profiles/theme/459 (Viewed 16-12-2010)

³⁶ United Nations Development Programme, Mine Action Team (brochure), 2004. Mainstreaming Mine Action into Development: Rationale and Recommendations. <http://www.mineaction.org/downloads/1/Dec%202004.pdf> (Viewed 28-11-2010) pp. 2-3

³⁷ International Campaign to Ban Landmine, *Landmine Monitor Report*, 2010.
http://www.themonitor.org/index.php/cp/display/region_profiles/theme/459 (Viewed 16-12-2010)

local officials are completed. This portrays the gravity of the problem in Angola. Safe land is in high demand and communities are under so much pressure that they begin using the land before they are formally handed over to them.

Articles 9.0 -9.5 of Sudan CPA, recognizes the importance of mine action by stipulating development activities after mine action (Art. 9.1). The arrangement of the articles in context implies that the latter takes precedence over the former (activities mentioned in articles 9.2- forward). In post conflict situations where there are high levels of mine contaminations, implementation of development activities are also highly dependent on mine action especially demining, mine risk education and victim assistance. For instance, opening of roads, rehabilitation of bridges, passages, railways airports, air strips and lines of river navigation stated in the CPA Articles 9.2-9.5 require what Paterson, et al call “principal outputs of mine action - safe land and facilities ...”³⁸ These areas have to be assessed, verified and incase they are contaminated they have to be demined and re-verified by mine action teams before they are declared safe for use or before workers are deployed to rehabilitate them.

In agrarian countries like Angola and Sudan landmines obstruct access to agricultural land and yet most of their communities are dependent on subsistence agriculture. The agricultural sector accounts for only 8.8% of Angola’s gross domestic product (GDP) and employs two-thirds of the working population. Subsistence agriculture provides the main source of livelihood for 85% of the population. Agriculture is a fundamental economic activity in a country with a large rural population and small industrial sector (excluding oil). It is the main source of employment and food supply and therefore is key to poverty alleviation and food security. The 27 civil war in Angola disrupted agricultural sector and this situation is worsened by landmine contamination and ERW scattered in many provinces. For this reason Angola has become a country dependant on large-scale importation of food (commercial imports of wheat and rice), and food aid donations (mostly in the form of maize and beans), and there is no exportation of agricultural products as a source of foreign exchange.

The LIS 2007 report indicates that the most affected land in impacted areas was agricultural land constituting to 61 percent. By 2006, there were approximately 2900 suspected hazardous areas (SHA)

³⁸ PATERSON, T. and FILLIPINO, E.M, 2006. The Road to Mine Action and Development: The Life-cycle Perspective of Mine Action. *Journal of Mine Action*. Issue 9.2. <http://maic.jmu.edu/journal/9.2/feature/paterson/paterson.htm> (Viewed 13-12-2010)

covering a total area of approximately 1300-1400 square kilometers. This represents 130 years of clearance activities based on the current national clearance rate of 10 km²/year³⁹. In 2009, international NGO operators reported cancelling 205.8km² of SHAs through survey and in March 2009, the national database managed by CNIDAH showed that 998 SHAs from the LIS—30% of the total—had either been cancelled or released through technical survey or clearance.⁴⁰ The 2006 LIS in Southern Sudan identified the largest amount of contamination in the three Equatorial states (Eastern, Central and Western). In total, 183 communities in Southern Sudan were impacted, 136 of which were in Equatoria.

Conclusion and Recommendations

From the foregoing analysis, it is clear that mine action is important in post conflict management and development in that its output like safe land and safe behavior promotes security for post conflict reconstruction. Clearance is crucial in restoration of security and facilitates free movement of humanitarian and aid personnel working in the recovery and rehabilitation of post conflict countries. Victim Assistance (VA) as a pillar of mine action involves medical treatment, physical rehabilitation and reintegration of mine victims. VA does not only save lives but also promotes development through empowering mine victims to enable them participate in socio- economic development.

Mine action is vital in ensuring safe post-conflict reconstruction and development. In mien/ERW contaminated countries post-conflict management activities are dependent on mine action. Therefore, to ensure that there is sustainable peace and development in these countries, policy makers have to ensure that mine action is integrated into national development program and implemented, monitored and assessed as part and parcel of the national strategic plan.

The researcher is of the opinion that development/humanitarian donors as well as implementers consider mine action as a multi faceted issue. This is because landmines/ERW does not only affect development but it is also a humanitarian, political, social and human rights issue.

³⁹ Comissão Nacional Intersectorial de Desminagem e Assistência Humanitária às vítimas de minas (CNIDAH), 2006. The 2006-2011 Mine Action Strategic Plan for Angola. P.9

⁴⁰ International Campaign to Ban Landmine, *Landmine Monitor Report*, 2010.
http://www.themonitor.org/index.php/cp/display/region_profiles/theme/459 (Viewed 16-12-2010)

Governments in mine/ERW affected countries, mine actors and other mine action stakeholders should make mine action information available for development/humanitarian workers and donors to enable them appreciate better its significance in their programmes and programming.

There are many outstanding vital contributions of mine action in post-conflict reconstruction, recovery and development. However, there are also needs for more research to be conducted to cover other aspects of human life that are affected by landmines and explosive remnants of war namely: human rights, environment and wild life. Further research has to be carried out to establish the role of mine action in peace building or its contribution in addressing problems and challenges like: terrorism, environmental security and global warming, chemical and biological weapons.

More advocacy work is required by mine actors to raise mine action profile to the donors and implementers of development programmes so as to make the sector receive the attention it befits.

References

Comissão Nacional Intersectorial de Desminagem e Assistência Humanitária às vítimas de minas (CNIDAH), 2006. The 2006-2011 Mine Action Strategic Plan for Angola

DanChurchAid, 2005. *Socio-economic Baseline Survey, Nuba Mountains - Sudan*. Final Draft Report.http://www.gichd.org/fileadmin/pdf/ma_development/database/Socio_economic_baseline_survey_Nuba_Mountains_Sudan.pdf

Evans, M., 2002. The Casamance conflict: out of sight, out of mind? *Humanitarian Exchange Magazine*. Issue 20. <http://www.odihpn.org/report.asp?id=2408>

FUSATO, A. 'Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration of Ex-combatants'. *CRInfo: The Conflict Resolution Information Source*. July 2003. <http://crinfo.beyondintractability.org/essay/demobilization/?nid=1376>

Geneva International Center for Humanitarian Demining, 2004. *A Guide to Mine Action*. Geneva: GICHD.

Geneva International Center for Humanitarian Demining, 2004. *A Guide to Socio- Economic Approaches to Mine Action Planning and Management*. Geneva: GICHD.

International Campaign to Ban Landmines. *Landmine Monitor Report*, 2009. http://www.the-monitor.org/index.php/publications/display?act=submit&pqs_year=2009&pqs_type=lm&pqs_report=sudan

International Campaign to Ban Landmines. *Landmine Monitor Report*, 2010. http://www.the-monitor.org/index.php/cp/display/region_profiles/theme/459

International Campaign to Ban Landmines. *Landmine Monitor Report*, 2010. http://www.the-monitor.org/index.php/cp/display/region_profiles/theme/615

International Mine Action Standard Standards (IMAS) 04.10, Edition 2, January 2003, Standard

IRIN. 10 December 2002. Angola: MSF mourns loss of life in Angola land mine incident. <http://reliefweb.int/node/115011>

Jesuit Refugee Services, 2004. Towards a Universal Ban on Landmines. Servir. No.32. <http://www.jrs.net/Assets/Publications/File/serv32en.pdf>

KUAN, A., 2008. When the displaced return: challenges to 'reintegration' in Angola. Policy Development and Evaluation Service United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. Research Paper no.152

MAG Angola in Depth. <http://www.maginternational.org/where-we-work/where-mag-works/mag-angola/>

MANSFIELD I, 2002. Landmines, Reconstruction and Development. *International Aid and Trade Review*. http://www.gichd.org/fileadmin/pdf/about_gichd/staff_statements_articles/MAI/AidandTrade-Mansfield-Jan2002.pdf

MANSFIELD I, 2003. The Role of the Military in Mine Action. *United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research, Disarmament Forum*. no.3. //www.unidir.org/pdf/articles/pdf-art1956.pdf

Mines Advisory Group, Angola Review 2008. <http://www.maginternational.org/silo/files/angola-review-2008.pdf>

National Intersectoral Commission for Demining and Humanitarian Assistance and the Survey Action Center, 2007. *Landmine Impact Survey, Republic of Angola*

NPA Mine Action in Angola, Review 2004-2007, Appraisal 2008-2010.http://www.norad.no/en/_attachment/119734/binary/7591?download=true

PATERSON, T. and FILLIPINO, E.M, 2006. The Road to Mine Action and Development: The Life-cycle Perspective of Mine Action. *Journal of Mine Action*. Issue 9.2. <http://maic.jmu.edu/journal/9.2/feature/paterson/paterson.htm>

Survey Action Center and Mines Advisory Group, 2007. *Landmine Impact Survey Sudan; Kassala, Red sea, Gadaref and Sennar States*. http://www.sac-na.org/pdf_text/sudan/ES_Report_Sep07.pdf

The Comprehensive Peace Agreement Between The Government of the Republic of the Sudan and The Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Sudan People's Liberation Army, January 2005. <http://www.aec-sudan.org/docs/cpa-en.pdf>

United Nations Development Programme, Mine Action Team (brochure), 2004. Mainstreaming Mine Action into Development: Rationale and Recommendations. <http://www.mineaction.org/downloads/1/Dec%202004.pdf>