

ANGOLA



RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

- Angola should confirm as soon as possible whether it believes that cluster munition remnants (CMR) remain to be cleared.
- Angola should ratify the Convention on Cluster Munitions (CCM) as a priority.

CONTAMINATION

The extent to which Angola is affected by CMR remains unclear. There is no confirmed contamination, but there may remain abandoned cluster munitions or unexploded submunitions. CMR contamination was a result of the decades of armed conflict that ended in 2002, although it is unclear when, or by whom, cluster munitions were used in Angola.

In August 2016, The HALO Trust found two Alpha submunitions in Cunene province, which were reported by local residents to a HALO Trust survey team during re-survey operations.¹ A number of damaged bomb casings were also found but according to The HALO Trust, it was unclear if the bombs had been fired at a target in the area or if they were jettisoned after an unsuccessful mission and the bomblets scattered on the ground.²

The HALO Trust informed Mine Action Review that this was an isolated case and that it had not encountered anything similar in more than 20 years of survey across eight of Angola's eighteen provinces. The HALO Trust emphasised that it had seen very little evidence of cluster munition strikes in Angola, and that the majority of bomblets destroyed by The HALO Trust were aging items from military stockpiles, which the military identified and requested the organisation to destroy.³

As at April 2017, the majority of clearance operators had not found CMR in more than nine years,⁴ apart from The HALO Trust, which had earlier found and destroyed 12 unexploded submunitions in 2012.⁵ In May 2017, Norwegian People's Aid (NPA) and Mines Advisory Group (MAG) confirmed they did not encounter any CMR in their operations in 2016.⁶

In 2011, The HALO Trust and the National Institute for Demining (Instituto Nacional de Desminagem, INAD) affirmed that unexploded submunitions remained in Cuando Cubango province.⁷ In June 2016, Menschen gegen Minen (MgM) reported that it had not encountered CMR in nearly 10 years of operations, including near Jamba, an area in the south-east of the province where contamination might have been expected.⁸

More typical of CMR destruction is the disposal of old or unserviceable cluster munitions identified by HALO Trust's Weapons and Ammunition Disposal (WAD) teams in military storage areas, some of which were earmarked for destruction by the Angolan Armed Forces. Between 2005 and 2012, HALO Trust WAD teams reported destroying a total of 7,284 submunitions.⁹ In May 2016, The HALO Trust indicated that it had not been asked by the military to do any further destruction of cluster munition stockpiles since 2012.¹⁰

Other Explosive Remnants of War and Landmines

Angola is heavily contaminated with landmines and explosive remnants of war (ERW) other than CMR.

PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

Angola's national mine action programme is managed by two mine action structures. The National Intersectoral Commission for Demining and Humanitarian Assistance (Comissão Nacional Intersectorial de Desminagem e Assistência Humanitária, CNIDAH) serves as the national mine action authority. It reports to the Council of Ministers or, in effect, to the President of Angola.

The other mine action coordination body, the Executive Commission for Demining (Comissão Executiva de Desminagem, CED), was established and is chaired by the Minister of Social Assistance and Reintegration (MINARS). In 2002, in order to separate coordination and operational responsibilities, Angola established INAD, which is responsible, under the auspices of the Ministry of Social Assistance and Reintegration, for demining operations and training.

Operators

Three international non-governmental organisations (NGOs) conduct demining for humanitarian purposes in Angola: The HALO Trust, MAG, and NPA.¹¹ MgM closed its operations in November 2015 upon completion of its last task in Cuando Cubango which formed part of a European Union-funded project.¹² A number of national commercial companies, accredited by CNIDAH and mostly employed by the state or other private companies, also operate in Angola.

LAND RELEASE

No land containing CMR contamination was reported to have been released by clearance or survey in 2016.

After finding the two Alpha bomblets in August 2016, The HALO Trust was planning to carry out limited battle area clearance around the reported area until fade-out. They were intending to perform this work, subject to funding, in July or August 2017, during Angola's dry season when items can be more easily seen.¹³ The area where the bomblets were found was being re-surveyed by The HALO Trust as part of efforts to improve the records in the national Information Management System for Mine Action database. No CMR specific survey is planned.¹⁴

ARTICLE 4 COMPLIANCE

As at May 2017, Angola was a signatory, but not a state party, to the CCM. In addition to its obligations as a treaty signatory, Angola has obligations under international human rights law to clear CMR as soon as possible, in particular by virtue of its duty to protect the right to life of every person under its jurisdiction.

Angola is facing a critical decline in international support for mine action. In the decade from 2007 to April 2017, collectively, the resources of the three largest operators, The HALO Trust, MAG, and NPA declined by 89%. Current annual funding was only 19% of projected amount needed (\$275 million) to complete mine clearance by 2025.¹⁵ This sharp reduction, combined with the national economic crisis brought on by the fall of oil prices, which has resulted in a decrease in government revenue by more than half, severe budget cuts, and double-digit inflation, is jeopardising the sustainability and existence of demining in the country.¹⁶

1 The Alpha bomblet was developed in Rhodesia in 1970 and later in South Africa in the 1980s. It was produced to be incorporated into the CB470 cluster bomb, which contained 40 Alpha submunitions each and were designed to be dropped from baskets or "hoppers" in the bomb bays of bomber aircraft. Email from Gerhard Zank, Programme Manager, HALO Trust, 2 May 2017; and Weapons Systems, "CB470", at: <http://weaponsystems.net/weaponsystem/HH12%20-%20CB470.html>.

2 Email from Gerhard Zank, HALO Trust, 3 May 2017.

3 Ibid.

4 According to reports from NGO operators in the national database at the Intersectoral Commission for Demining and Humanitarian Assistance (CNIDAH), CMR ceased to be found in significant numbers after 2008, with the exception of The HALO Trust reporting finding and destroying 12 submunitions in 2012. Prior to this, as of February 2008, Norwegian People's Aid (NPA) reported clearing 13 submunitions in Kwanza Sul province; Mines Advisory Group (MAG) reported clearing 140 submunitions in Moxico province; and The HALO Trust reported clearing 230 submunitions in Bié province. Email from Mohammad Qasim, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)/CNIDAH, 22 February 2008. NPA reported finding no CMR during its operations in northern Angola, with the exception of a small number of submunitions found in 2008. Menschen gegen Minen (MgM) reported that no CMR had been discovered in its areas of operations in south-east Angola from 1997 through to May 2016. The HALO Trust also confirmed that it had not encountered any cluster munitions since 2012 and MAG's Technical Operations Manager reported that the programme had not found any CMR since his arrival in 2013. Emails from Vanja Sikirica, Country Director, NPA, 11 May 2016; Kenneth O'Connell, Technical Director, MgM, 5 May and 15 June 2016; Gerhard

Zank, Programme Manager, HALO Trust, 17 May 2016; and Bill Marsden, Regional Director, East and Southern Africa, MAG, 18 May 2016.

5 Response to questionnaire by Gerhard Zank, HALO Trust, 19 March 2013.

6 Emails from Vanja Sikirica, NPA, 3 May 2017 and Bill Marsden, MAG, 3 May 2017.

7 Interviews with Jose Antonio, Site Manager, Cuando Cubango, HALO Trust; and with Coxé Sucama, Director, INAD, in Menongue, 24 June 2011.

8 Email from Kenneth O'Connell, MgM, 15 June 2016.

9 Response to questionnaire by Gerhard Zank, HALO Trust, 19 March 2013.

10 Emails from Gerhard Zank, HALO Trust, 17 May 2016; and Bill Marsden, MAG, 18 May 2016.

11 DanChurchAid (DCA) was forced to close their operations in early 2015 due to lack of funding. M. P. Moore, "Angola Avante – Onward Angola", Landmines in Africa blog, 26 February 2016, at: <https://landminesinafrica.wordpress.com/2016/02/26/angola-avante-onwards-angola/>.

12 Email from Vanja Sikirica, NPA, 3 May 2017.

13 Email from Gerhard Zank, HALO Trust, 3 May 2017.

14 Ibid.

15 Portia Stratton and Chris Loughran, "Issue Brief: Time to Change Course, Angola and The Ottawa Treaty", MAG, April 2017.

16 Ibid; and emails from Vanja Sikirica, NPA, 11 May 2016; Gerhard Zank, HALO Trust, 17 May 2016; and Bill Marsden, MAG, 2 May 2016.