LIBYA

MINE ACTION REVIEW

CLEARING CLUSTER MUNITION REMNANTS 2022

KEY DATA

CLUSTER MUNITION CONTAMINATION: UNKNOWN

SUBMUNITION CLEARANCE IN 2021

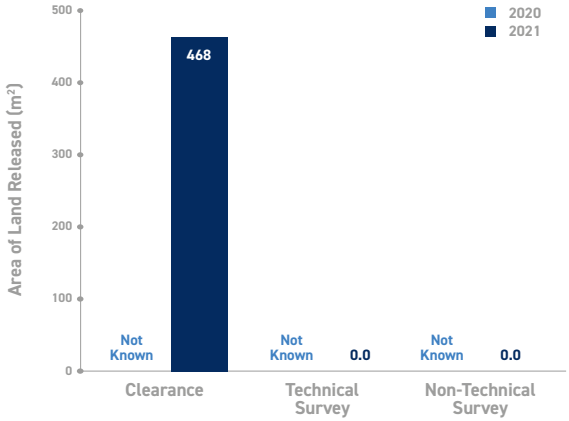
468M²

RUBBLE PILE CLEARANCE

SUBMUNITIONS DESTROYED IN 2021

22

LAND RELEASE OUTPUT



RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

- Libya should accede to the Convention on Cluster Munitions (CCM) as a matter of priority.
- Libya should comply with its obligations under international human rights law to clear cluster munition remnants (CMR) on territory under its jurisdiction or control as soon as possible.
- Libya should enact mine action legislation, establish an interministerial national mine action authority, and adopt a national mine action strategy.
- Libya should expedite the capacity building and accreditation of mine clearance operators.
- Libya should conduct a baseline survey to identify the extent of CMR contamination and begin systematic clearance based primarily on humanitarian priorities.
- Libya should mainstream gender and diversity in its national mine action programme.
- Libya should update its national mine action standards (NMAS) in light of the prevailing context and nature of its mine action activities.
- Libya should ease bureaucratic hurdles to efficient importation of mine action equipment and granting of visas for international staff.
- The Libyan Mine Action Centre (LibMAC) should finalise the migration to the Information Management System for Mine Action (IMSMA) Core as soon as possible, and improve the data flow to allow for a more efficient tasking.

CLUSTER MUNITION SURVEY AND CLEARANCE CAPACITY

MANAGEMENT

- The Libyan Mine Action Centre (LibMAC)

NATIONAL OPERATORS

- Free Field Foundation (3F) - accredited
- The Safe Trust Non-governmental organisation (NGO): (Al-Thiqa al-Amena) - accredited
- The Communication NGO (Al-Tawasol) (accredited)
- Libyan Peace Organisation (accredited for non-technical survey)

INTERNATIONAL OPERATORS

- DanChurchAid (DCA)
- Danish Refugee Council Humanitarian Disarmament and Peacebuilding sector (formally known as Danish Demining Group (DDG). Hereafter referred to as DRC
- The HALO Trust
- Humanity and Inclusion (HI)

OTHER ACTORS

- The United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS)

UNDERSTANDING OF CMR CONTAMINATION

CMR contamination in Libya is largely the consequence of armed conflict in 2011 and renewed conflict since 2014. The full extent of contamination is unknown, but is thought to be light. In 2011, armed forces used at least three types of cluster munition, including MAT-120 mortar projectiles, RBK-250 PTAB-2.5M cluster bombs, and Dual-Purpose Improved Conventional Munitions (DPICMs) delivered remotely by rockets.[1] In early 2015, fighting between Libya's rival armed groups saw reported use of cluster munitions, including RBK-250 PTAB-2.5M bombs, in attacks on Bin Jawad near the port of Es-Sidr in February, and in the vicinity of Sirte in March. The Libyan Air Force, controlled by the internationally recognised government of the time, had bombed both locations, though it denied using cluster munitions.[2]

In July 2019, LibMAC that it had found evidence of RBK-250-275 cluster bomb use in three areas: Al-Hira Bridge (Al-Sawani); the Bir al-Ghanam area south-west of Tripoli (Nafusa Mountains); and Aziziya (south of Tripoli).[3] The same year, Humanity and Inclusion (HI) reported three areas of CMR contamination on the basis of its own operations. One cluster munition-contaminated area was confirmed in 2017, through non-technical survey in the Nafusa mountains region, near the town of Kikla, in north-west Libya. Then, in 2018–19, HI found further cluster munition strikes in Tawargha and Al Karareem.[4] Additional contamination by CMR occurred as a result of kick-outs from ammunition storage areas bombed by North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) forces in 2011.[5]

In May 2019, the self-styled Libyan National Army (LNA), led by commander Khalifa Haftar was accused of using cluster bombs in attacks in and around Tripoli.[6] On 15 and 16 August 2019, aircraft of forces affiliated with the LNA dropped cluster munitions on Zuwarah International Airport, according to the UN Panel of Experts report of December 2019.[7] Human Rights Watch has stated that forces aligned to Haftar also used cluster munitions in an airstrike in a residential area in Tripoli on or around 2 December 2019. The organisation visited the site on 17 December 2019 and found remnants of two RBK-250 PTAB-2.5M cluster bombs, as well as evidence that high-explosive air-dropped bombs were also used in the attack. The area was not known to be contaminated by cluster munitions before the attack.[8] There have been no further reports of the use of cluster munitions in Libya since.

According to DCA, the current CMR baseline is not accurate due to the lack of resources to conduct a widescale survey, and the need to focus on priority areas.[9] The HALO Trust reports well-documented evidence of kicked-out cluster munitions from ammunition storage areas in Misrata and Mizdah (north). In Sirte (north centre), there is minimal evidence of presence of CMR, although 22 DPICMs were found by HALO in 2021. Despite the reports referred to above, The HALO Trust found no evidence of cluster munitions during survey following the 2019 conflict in Tripoli.[10]

None of the operators reported discovering previously unknown areas of CMR contamination in Libya in 2021.

OTHER EXPLOSIVE REMNANTS OF WAR AND LANDMINES

Libya is also contaminated by other unexploded ordnance (UXO); anti-personnel mines, including those of an improvised nature (see Mine Action Review's *Clearing the Mines* report on Libya for further information); and by other improvised explosive devices (IEDs).[11] According to the United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS), ongoing conflict has resulted in significant explosive remnants of war (ERW) contamination in cities across Libya.[12]

1 Cluster Munition Monitor, "Libya: Cluster Munition Ban Policy", Last updated 27 July 2019, at: http://bit.ly/2YAbygi.
2 Human Rights Watch, "Libya: Evidence of new cluster bomb use", 15 March 2015.
3 Email from Col. Adel Elatwi, Chief of Operations, on behalf of Brig. Turjoman, LibMAC, 4 July 2019.
4 Email from Catherine Smith, Head of Mission, HI, 12 March 2019.
5 Cluster Munition Monitor, "Libya: Cluster Munition Ban Policy", Last updated 27 July 2019.
6 Ibid.; and "Tripoli forces claim successes and accuse Haftar of using cluster bombs and internationally banned phosphorus bombs", *Libya Herald*, 20 June 2019.
7 Human Rights Watch, "Libya: Banned Cluster Munitions Used in Tripoli", 13 February 2020, at: http://bit.ly/3gAfq9G.
8 Ibid.
9 Email from Graeme Ogilvie, Programme Manager, DCA, 1 April 2022.
10 Email from Zita Andrassy, Programme Officer Libya, HALO Trust, 27 February 2022.
11 "Lives and Limbs Shattered by Libya Mines", *Asharq Al-Awsat*, 5 April 2018.
12 UNMAS, "Programmes: Libya", accessed 16 May 2019, at: http://bit.ly/2WMTzTk.

NATIONAL OWNERSHIP AND PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

Mine action exists in a fragmented and occasionally violent political context. Following years of armed conflict, a new UN-backed "unity" government, the Government of National Accord (GNA), was formally installed in a naval base in Tripoli in early 2016. It has subsequently faced opposition from the rival LNA authority and a host of militia forces. The warring parties reached a ceasefire agreement to halt hostilities in October 2020, albeit with frequent interruptions. This culminated in the election of an interim government following the UN-sponsored five-day Geneva talks in February 2021 with a roadmap leading to national elections in December 2021. As of writing, however, no elections had been held.[13]

LibMAC was mandated by the Minister of Defence to coordinate mine action in December 2011.[14] Operating under the UN-backed GNA, LibMAC's headquarters are in Tripoli, in the west of the country, and it also has offices in Benghazi[15] and Misrata.[16] According to the UN Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) of 2021, Libyan national capacity to mitigate the risks of explosive hazards remains insufficient to address the growing threat to the population. While the necessary managerial and coordination capacity is in place, governmental and non-governmental actors lack enough qualified personnel, equipment, and technical expertise to meet the demand for survey and clearance.[17]

Enhancing Human Security (ITF) started its capacity-building project in Libya since January 2014. It paid the salaries of 21 LibMAC employees in 2021, and covered the day-to-say costs of LibMAC.[18]

The HALO Trust trained and accredited two technical survey teams and one explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) team in 2021. It also provided EOD Level 3 training to several NGOs.[19]

UNMAS, which is an integral part of the UN Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL), has largely been operating from Tunis since November 2014.[20] UNMAS returned with international personnel to Libya in 2018, and since then has maintained permanent presence of critical operational and technical staff.[21] UNMAS prioritises the capacity enhancement of Libyan mine action actors, supports LibMAC in accreditation processes for mine action organisations, and facilitates coordination with international stakeholders and implementing partners.[22] UNMAS also acts as the mine action lead, providing non-technical coordination through information sharing, and represents the mine action sector in various fora, including the UN protection cluster and the inter-sectoral coordination group.[23] UNMAS and LibMAC chair monthly mine action sub-cluster working groups, with participation from mine action stakeholders and donor states.[24]

The UNMAS mine action programme sought a budget of US$2.58 million for the mine action sector in Libya, but, as at June 2022, the protection sector, including mine action, was facing a shortfall of 50% in funding.[25]

GENDER AND DIVERSITY

LibMAC does not have a gender and diversity policy for mine action in place. LibMAC disaggregates mine action data by sex and age.[26]

DCA's Libya programme has an active policy of employing women into programme roles to increase their financial independence and teach them transferable skills that they may use beyond their current employment with DCA.[27] Gender mainstreaming and mainstreaming of marginalised groups form part of the programme's core policies. DCA also employs all-women teams, including three explosive ordnance risk education (EORE) and two multi-task teams, to be able to engage with female-headed households. DCA engages early with municipal councils, civil society organisations, community leaders and representatives of groups working for the rights of minorities. These engagements drive project design and ensure community ownership. In 2021, 39% of DCA's employees were women. The numbers were even higher for women in operational positions (40%) and in managerial positions (55%).[28]

DRC takes into consideration gender and age factors when collecting information on how contamination impacts different groups. DRC adopts a transparent and inclusive recruitment process to ensure that staff as much as possible originate from the area of operations and are representative of the local social context. DRC employed mixed gender teams in the field in 2021. Women made up 31% of DRC total employees in 2021, 27% of operational, and 40% of managerial staff.[29]

13 "Libya elections: Presidential poll postponed", *BBC News*, 23 December 2021, at: https://bbc.in/39ohwez.
14 LibMAC website, accessed 20 March 2020, at: http://bit.ly/2JqVr0S.
15 Email from Jakob Donatz, Associate Programme Officer, UNMAS, 21 June 2018.
16 Email from Roman Turšič, Head of Implementation Office Libya/Afghanistan, ITF, 26 February 2017; and interview with Brig. Turjoman, LibMAC, in Geneva, 10 January 2017.
17 OCHA, Libya Humanitarian Response Plan, January 2021, p. 74–75, at: https://bit.ly/3F9eCWU.
18 ITF, "Annual Report 2021", pp. 107108, at: https://bit.ly/3FeE39S.
19 Email from Zita Andrassy, HALO Trust, 27 February 2022.
20 23 UNMAS, "Programmes: Libya", accessed 14 May 2022, at: http://bit.ly/31tU1tB.
21 Email from Samir Becirovic, UNMAS, 2 March 2022.
22 UNMAS, "Programmes: Libya", accessed 14 May 2022.
23 Email from Samir Becirovic, UNMAS, 2 March 2022.
24 Email from Samir Becirovic, UNMAS, 10 June 2022.
25 Email from Samir Becirovic, UNMAS, 2 March 2022; and the humanitarian dashboard for Libya 2022, last updated 26 June 2022, at: https://bit.ly/3HQFQ66.
26 Email from Col. Adel Elatwi, LibMAC, 22 April 2021.
27 Email from Graeme Ogilvie, DCA, 20 April 2021.
28 Email from Graeme Ogilvie, DCA, 1 April 2022.
29 Email from Alessandro Di Giusto, DRC, 7 March 2022.

The HALO Trust's community liaison officers in Libya are all women who can engage with both men and women. As of writing, HALO staff were not specifically trained to work directly with children, but rather to ask parents for specific considerations for vulnerable persons under their responsibility, including children, elderly, and persons with disabilities. Data collected are disaggregated by gender and age so that representation can be targeted in a proportionate manner. HALO community liaison activities are performed at the same time as surveys, including focus group discussions when applicable, ensuring that women's voices are also heard. HALO staff are required to complete the online "Gender and Diversity in Mine Action" training module developed by the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD) after their recruitment. HALO, however, reported difficulty in hiring women for operational roles. Of a total of 77 national staff in 2021, 10 (13%) were women, of which, four were in managerial positions and one in an operational position.[30]

INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING

LibMAC receives technical support for the Information Management System for Mine Action (IMSMA) from the GICHD and UNMAS. With support from the GICHD, LibMAC planned to transition from IMSMA New Generation (NG) to IMSMA Core in 2020.[31] As at February 2022, HALO reported that the data transition was almost complete, and was planning to take part in a workshop organised by LibMAC in Tunis to finalise the data flow process.[32]

IMSMA is accessible to clearance organisations and data collection forms are reported to be consistent and enable collection of necessary data,[33] although DRC reported that the system requires updated information, capacity building for operator staff, and easier access.[34] Operators have internal quality control systems prior to submitting data to LibMAC for further quality control. HALO Trust reported that the LibMAC regularly updates the IMSMA database to a high standard.[35]

The IMSMA NG relies on manual data extraction, which can result in a delay between the time information is received and when it is acted upon. This is hoped to be resolved once the transition to IMSMA Core is completed.[36]

LibMAC reports that it checks the quality of the reports, sometimes requesting modification of or elaboration on some of the information reported. The HALO Trust noted that task site visits and feedback from LibMAC were useful to strengthen the quality of the data it has submitted. The revision of data flow mechanisms should enable operators to provide more precise inputs and to increase the standard and quality of data.[37]

PLANNING AND TASKING

There is no national mine action strategy for Libya.[38] LibMAC does, however, have a national short-term operational plan.[39] LibMAC prioritises survey and clearance operations based on humanitarian, security, and development indicators,[40] and is responsible for issuing task orders. DCA considers that LibMAC is doing its best to issue task orders in a timely and effective manner within its limited capacity and resources, and that more capacity building and funding is required to allow the Centre to become more effective.[41] According to DRC, LibMAC issues clearance and survey task dossiers in a timely fashion and prioritises tasks according the urgency of the need.[42]

DCA continues to clear ERW in support of electricity and water supply facilities, and to survey and clear schools, medical facilities, and housing so that internally displaced people (IDPs) can return safely. This approach is in line with the triple nexus approach, linking humanitarian action to development projects and contributing to stability and peace.[43] Mine action operators liaise with the municipal councils, community leaders, and security providers to build a picture of priority areas for survey and follow-on clearance. Operators then apply for task orders through the LibMAC. Due to the small number of clearance teams and personnel in Libya, the priority is responding to call-outs, particularly from returning IDPs. Therefore, much of the clearance is reactive EOD spot tasks in order to minimise an immediate threat to life.[44]

30 Email from Zita Andrassy, HALO Trust, 27 February 2022.
31 Email from Nicholas Torbet, HALO Trust, 14 April 2020.
32 Emails from Zita Andrassy, HALO Trust, 27 February and 19 June 2022.
33 Email from Catherine Smith, HI, 12 March 2019.
34 Email from Alessandro Di Giusto, DRC, 7 March 2022.
35 Emails from Lucy Reeve, HALO Trust, 23 April 2021; and Zita Andrassy, HALO Trust, 27 February 2022.
36 Emails from Zita Andrassy, HALO Trust, 27 February and 19 June 2022.
37 Ibid.
38 Email from Col. Adel Elatwi, LibMAC, 22 April 2021.
39 Ibid.
40 Ibid.
41 Email from Graeme Ogilvie, DCA, 1 April 2022.
42 Email from Alessandro Di Giusto, DRC, 7 March 2022.
43 Email from Graeme Ogilvie, DCA, 1 April 2022.
44 Email from Graeme Ogilvie, DCA, 20 April 2021.

HALO Trust responds to the tasks as issued by LibMAC.[45] HALO's prioritisation criteria for non-technical survey are: number of conflict events, population density, critical infrastructure, duration of active fighting in a given area, recorded mines removed, and explosive ordnance accidents. For technical survey and clearance, HALO's criteria are: access, land use, number of beneficiaries, and direct evidence of contamination.[46]

While the above considerations are integrated in the assessment of contamination impact, survey, and community liaison activities, both DRC and HALO reported that final decisions on task prioritisation are owned by the LibMAC, which ultimately issues task orders based on its set of criteria, plans, and engagement with local authorities.[47]

Since 2020, HALO developed a Tripoli ERW Hazard Mapping and Information Management Project, which used open-source data collation and geolocation techniques to map potential ERW contamination along the Tripoli frontlines. The online data collection portal, linked to a live database that was shared with LibMAC and other stakeholders, was used to track historical data starting from April 2019.[48] While the project ended in January 2021, HALO continues to take internal efforts to keep track of the accidents happening in Tripoli.[49]

ENVIRONMENTAL POLICIES AND ACTION

Libya does not have an NMAS or a policy on environmental management.[50]

DCA has an environmental management system and standard operational procedures (SOPs) in place. It takes into account the impacts of the destruction of ERW prior to any battle area clearance (BAC) or EOD spot task, and puts in place mitigation measures. DCA considers that the removal of ERW from farmland and topsoil that could be used in food production in itself contributes significantly to environmental preservation. This is because ERW leaks nitrates into the soil and depletes its ability to absorb methane. Removal of ERW also prevents overcultivation of land. DCA assesses that the potential damage caused by uncleared ERW leaking toxins into the soil largely outweighs the damage resulting from their demolition.[51]

DRC does not have an environmental management system, but one was planned for 2022. DRC takes into account "do-not-harm" elements in consideration of environmental impact and policy when planning its operations.[52]

The HALO Trust does not have an environmental management system, but since January 2022 it has employed a global environment advisor to support progress in this regard. HALO's work in Libya is focused on urban clearance and therefore has little impact on biodiversity and vegetation. Environmental considerations in the HALO Libya programme in the future will focus on effective use of resources, especially fossil fuels, and effective waste management. As mitigation measures, HALO provides bins and reusable water bottles to reduce litter and minimise plastic waste.[53]

LAND RELEASE SYSTEM

STANDARDS AND LAND RELEASE EFFICIENCY

There is no national mine action legislation in Libya, but national mine action standards (LibMAS), in Arabic and English, have been elaborated with the support of the GICHD and UNMAS, and were approved by the GNA in August 2017. The LibMAS are available on the LibMAC website.[54] According to international clearance operators, the NMAS are aligned to the International Mine Action Standards (IMAS), reproducing it word-for-word in many parts.[55] Further, while the Arabic version of the LibMAS is largely accurate, the English version misstates the issue of liability after land release.[56] The LibMAS have not been updated since being first approved in 2017.

LibMAC and The HALO Trust are collaborating on how best to establish land release principles for urban clearance. In the interim, LibMAC accepts completion reports detailing the outputs of mechanical BAC as mechanical clearance.[57]

45 Email from Zita Andrassy, HALO Trust, 27 February 2022.
46 Emails from Lucy Reeve, HALO Trust, 23 April 2021; and Zita Andrassy, HALO Trust, 27 February 2022.
47 Emails from Alessandro Di Giusto, DRC, 7 March 2022; and Zita Andrassy, HALO Trust, 27 February 2022.
48 Email from Nicholas Torbet, HALO Trust, 14 April 2020.
49 Email from Zita Andrassy, HALO Trust, 27 February 2022.
50 Emails from Graeme Ogilvie, DCA, 1 April 2022; Alessandro Di Giusto, DRC, 7 March 2022; and Zita Andrassy, HALO Trust, 27 February 2022.
51 Email from Graeme Ogilvie, DCA, 1 April 2022.
52 Email from Alessandro Di Giusto, DRC, 7 March 2022.
53 Email from Zita Andrassy, HALO Trust, 27 February 2022.
54 LibMAC website, accessed 20 May 2022 at: https://bit.ly/3ldhvx2. Report of the Secretary-General on UNSMIL, UN doc. S/2018/140, 12 February 2018, p. 12; and UNMAS, "Programmes: Libya", accessed 14 May 2022 at: http://bit.ly/31tU1tB.
55 Emails from Catherine Smith, HI, 12 March 2019; and Nicholas Torbet, HALO Trust, 14 April 2020.
56 Email from Graeme Ogilvie, DCA, 1 April 2022.
57 Emails from Zita Andrassy, HALO Trust, 27 February and 19 June 2022.

OPERATORS AND OPERATIONAL TOOLS

Table 1: Operational survey capacities deployed in 2021

Operator	NTS teams	Total NTS personnel	TS teams	Total TS personnel	Comment
3F[58]	2	6	0	0	
Libya Peace Organization[59]	2	6	0	0	
HALO Trust[60]	5	20	0	0	Reduced to 3 teams/12 personnel by the end of 2021
DCA[61]	4	40	4	40	Multi-task teams (conducting both TS and clearance – also reported in Table 2)
DRC[62]	2	6	0	0	
Totals	**15**	**78**	**4**	**40**	

NTS = Non-technical survey TS = Technical survey

Table 2: Operational clearance capacities deployed in 2021[63]

Operator	Manual clearance teams	Total deminers*	Dog teams(dogs and handlers)	Mechanical assets/machines
DCA	4	40	0	4
HALO Trust	2	12	0	5
Totals	**6**	**52**	**0**	**9**

* Excluding team leaders, medics, and drivers.

Mine action operations have been conducted by the army engineers, a police unit, and the Ministry of Interior's national safety authority (NSA), also known as Civil Defence.[64] Military engineers reportedly lack mine detectors and are working with basic tools.[65] The NSA is mandated to conduct EOD in civilian areas.[66] These institutions liaise with LibMAC but are not tasked or accredited by them, nor do they provide clearance reports to the Centre.[67]

The national operator, Free Field Foundation (3F), continued to be operational in 2021, working with both DRC and UNMAS,[68] and is accredited to conduct clearance and EOD tasks.[69] In 2020, LibMAC reported having accredited two additional local operators: The Safety Trust NGO (*Al-Thiqa al-Amena*) and the Communication NGO (*Al-Tawasol).*[70] Another national operator, the Libyan Peace Organisation, was present in Libya in 2022, and is accredited for non-technical survey.[71]

DCA is operational in Libya conducting risk education, clearing residential, commercial, education, medical, and agricultural sites of mines and ERW, and providing training in clearance, search, and EOD, to help strengthen the capacity of national authorities.[72] Now in its twelfth year of working in Libya, DCA currently has offices in Benghazi, Misrata, Sirte, and Tripoli, and is accredited to conduct clearance and EOD tasks.[73] In 2021, DCA main clearance operations were in the south and western Tripoli, Sirte, and Benghazi. There was a significant uplift in the number of survey and clearance personnel deployed by DCA in 2021 due to increased funding. A further increase was expected in 2022 as more funds have been secured from the European Union (EU), the United Kingdom (UK), and the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA).[74]

58 Email from Col. Adel Elatwi, LibMAC, 22 April 2021. The data might not be up to date as at May 2022.
59 Ibid.
60 Email from Zita Andrassy, HALO Trust, 27 February 2022.
61 Email from Graeme Ogilvie, DCA, 1 April 2022.
62 Email from Alessandro Di Giusto, DRC, 7 March 2022.
63 Emails from Graeme Ogilvie, DCA, 1 April 2022; and Zita Andrassy, HALO Trust, 27 February 2022.
64 Interview with Brig. Turjoman, LibMAC, in Geneva, 10 January 2017.
65 "Mines still claim legs and lives in Libya's Benghazi, months after war ceased", *Reuters*, 21 January 2018.
66 Email from Diek Engelbrecht, UNMAS Libya, 20 July 2013.
67 Email from Col. Adel Elatwi, LibMAC, 22 April 2021.
68 Emails from Alessandro Di Giusto, DRC, 7 March 2022; and Samir Becirovic, UNMAS, 2 March 2022.
69 Email from Graeme Ogilvie, DCA, 1 April 2022.
70 Email from Col. Adel Elatwi, LibMAC, 22 April 2021.
71 Email from Samir Becirovic, UNMAS, 10 June 2022.
72 DCA website, accessed 3 May 2021, at: http://bit.ly/2vYatmb.
73 Email from Graeme Ogilvie, DCA, 1 April 2022.
74 Ibid.

DRC set up in Libya since 2017 and has three offices in Benghazi, Sabha, and Tripoli. Its offices in Misrata and Zwara were closed at the end of 2020, and its Sabha office closed on 31 December 2021, resulting in the reduction of the number of EOD, non-technical survey, and EORE teams. DRC will establish a new EOD team in Tripoli in 2022. In 2021, DRC performed EOD, non-technical survey, and EORE operations in Benghazi, and expected to conduct EOD and EORE activities in Tripoli in 2022. DRC continued to partner with 3F and is planning to invest in the partnership capacity with support to other national and local operators in the coming years.[75]

The HALO Trust has been present in Libya since November 2018, and has offices in Misrata, Sirte, and Tripoli. HALO first deployed survey personnel in Tripoli in July 2020 following the cessation of fighting in southern Tripoli in the summer of that year. HALO was able to use data gathered during an information management project that mapped reports of conflict events, to prioritise areas for survey. HALO accredited one EOD team in Tripoli, but due to all international staff having to leave Libya during a period of visa blockade, the team was not deployed. HALO's clearance teams in Sirte were supported by a DCA EOD team.[76]

In 2021, HALO trained and accredited two teams to conduct technical survey, in addition to one EOD team. HALO conducted non-technical and technical survey and EOD operations in Tripoli; non-technical survey and mechanical clearance in Sirte; and delivered an EOD Level 3 training course to several NGOs, including the local NGOs, Tawasul, Safety Trust, and the Libyan Peace Organisation, the first training of its kind to take place in Libya.[77]

The HALO Trust's output in 2021 saw a decrease in non-technical survey, but a growth in technical survey capacity. This was to pivot towards clearance of hazards. Going forward, HALO Trust was planning to deploy one non-technical survey team in Sirte in 2022.[78]

In 2021, HALO Trust introduced tripwire clearance drills to the sector in Tripoli, and continued to pioneer mechanical clearance of rubble piles in Sirte. In both locations, HALO pioneered the use of the differential global positioning system (DGPS) to increase the precision of geodata. As of writing, HALO was also trialling Libya's first hybrid thermal lance.[79]

Humanitarian access to Libya for survey and clearance operations remains challenging for all operators. DCA, DRC and HALO experienced delays in the granting of multiple-entry visas, which led in the case of HALO Trust to suspension of its operations between August and October 2021.[80] Other administrative procedures such as importing equipment often lead to delays. HALO Trust, for example, saw its detectors held at customs for over six months.[81]

In Libya, the provision of security is highly localised; tribe-affiliated armed groups, with oftentimes shifting allegiances, control cities and towns down to neighbourhood level. This in turn requires humanitarian actors to have a good knowledge of armed group dynamics on the one hand while liaising with many interlocutors on the other. The risk of arbitrary detention of national staff is high, either due to tribal background or due to suspected affiliation with opposing armed groups.[82] The prevalent insecurity and shifting frontlines throughout 2021 has caused operational delays and limited access to certain locations.

According to HALO, non-technical survey in Ain Zara (Tripoli area) was difficult due to tensions in the vicinity. Sirte was entirely off-limits for international staff in 2021, and operations in Sirte were suspended between June and October 2021 due to the establishment of a new frontline in Abu Grain (west of Sirte), and the presence of fighters in and around Sirte.[83] Operators reported varying levels of disruption by the COVID-19 pandemic in 2021, ranging from minor impact for HALO and DCA, despite some positive cases among staff, to major impact in the case of DRC, leading to teams to stand down for several periods.[84]

In 2021, LibMAC personnel opened 87 tasks mostly for EORE, EOD, and non-technical survey activities performed by international and national NGOs in Tripoli, Sirte, Tawargha and Benghazi. In addition, LibMAC personnel conducted 68 quality control (QC) and quality assurance (QA) missions.[85]

75 Email from Alessandro Di Giusto, DRC, 7 March 2022.

76 Email from Zita Andrassy, HALO Trust, 27 February 2022.

77 Ibid.

78 Ibid.

79 The hybrid thermal lance is a tool for semi-remotely low-ordering, or high-ordering if desired, explosive ordnance. It does not require any explosive compounds and uses compounds that can be easily airfreighted or locally sourced. Email from Zita Andrassy, HALO Trust, 19 June 2022.

80 Emails from Graeme Ogilvie, DCA, 1 April 2022; Alessandro Di Giusto, DRC, 7 March 2022; and Zita Andrassy, HALO Trust, 27 February 2022.

81 Email from Zita Andrassy, HALO Trust, 27 February 2022.

82 Email from Nicholas Torbet, HALO Trust, 14 April 2020.

83 Email from Zita Andrassy, HALO Trust, 27 February 2022.

84 Emails from Alessandro Di Giusto, DRC, 7 March 2022; Zita Andrassy, HALO Trust, 27 February 2022; and Graeme Ogilvie, DCA, 1 April 2022.

85 ITF, "Annual Report 2021", at: https://bit.ly/3FeE39S, p. 107.

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND PROGRESS TOWARDS COMPLETION

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS IN 2021

A total of 468m^2 of cluster munition-contaminated area was cleared by HALO Trust in Libya in 2021. This concerned rubble piles in Sirte that had been untouched since the fight against the Islamic State[86] in 2015–16.

UNMAS reports that 13,988 explosive items were removed or destroyed by EOD spot task and BAC teams in 2021.[87] It is not known how many of the EOs, if at all, are CMR.

SURVEY IN 2021

According to UNMAS, 514km^2 of land have been non-technically surveyed in 2021.[88] It is not clear what proportion, if at all, of the surveyed area was for CMR contaminated land.[89] CMR survey was not reported by any of the international operators active in Libya in 2021.

CLEARANCE IN 2021

In 2021, The HALO Trust mechanically cleared a total area of 468m^2 in Sirte and Jeeza. DCA destroyed 22 submunitions and 10 other items of UXO from processing the rubble piles.[90]

Table 3: CMR clearance by HALO Trust in 2021[91]

District	Area cleared (m²)	Submunitions destroyed	Other UXO destroyed
Sirte, Jeeza	468	22	10
Totals	**468**	**22**	**10**

PROGRESS TOWARDS COMPLETION

LibMAC describes the following challenges to implementation of mine action operations: the high level of contamination; ongoing conflict and the continued presence of Islamic State; the difficulty in convincing IDPs to delay their return until the ERW threat is addressed; security and access to priority areas; the limited ERW and EOD capacity in Libya; the vast geographical area; and limited governmental and international support.[92] Security conditions continued to pose a challenge to mine action in Libya. Libya needs a major shift to move mine clearance from an ad-hoc response to a systematic development tool. Part of this process involves the strengthening of LibMAC as a mine action coordination entity in Libya, and continued efforts to capacity build and enhance its resources.

86 Email from Zita Andrassy, HALO Trust, 27 February 2022.
87 Email from Samir Becirovic, UNMAS, 2 March 2022.
88 Ibid.
89 Ibid.
90 Email from Zita Andrassy, HALO Trust, 27 February 2022.
91 Ibid.
92 PowerPoint presentation by Brig. Turjoman, LibMAC, UN National Programme Directors' Meeting, Geneva, 8 February 2017.