SRI LANKA

MINE ACTION REVIEW

CLEARING THE MINES 2021

ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE: 1 JUNE 2028
ON TRACK TO MEET DEADLINE

KEY DATA

ANTI-PERSONNEL (AP) MINE CONTAMINATION: MEDIUM

MINE ACTION REVIEW ESTIMATE

10KM²

AP MINE CLEARANCE IN 2020

4.59KM²

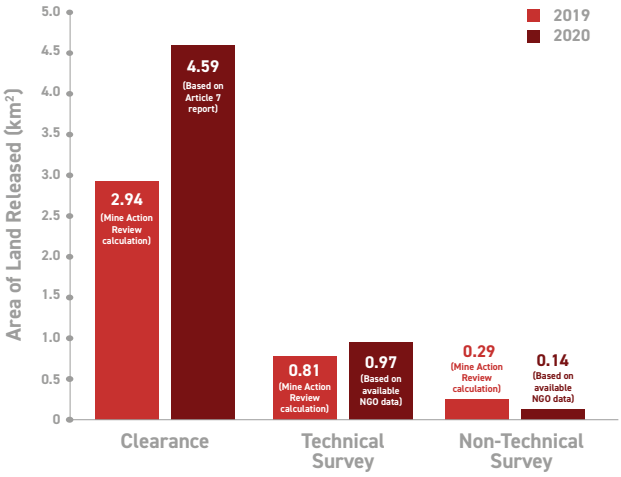
(BASED ON ARTICLE 7 REPORT)

AP MINES DESTROYED IN 2020

43,157

(BASED ON ARTICLE 7 REPORT)

LAND RELEASE OUTPUT



CURRENT LIKELIHOOD OF MEETING 2025 CLEARANCE TARGET *(as per the Oslo Action Plan commitment)*: **MEDIUM**

KEY DEVELOPMENTS

Sri Lanka had hoped to complete mine clearance by the end of 2020, an overly ambitious target which was contingent on securing additional funding and increasing demining capacity. However, while demining capacity did steadily increase during 2019 and into 2020, it was not sufficient to meet the 2020 completion target.

Furthermore, while a significant amount of mined area was cleared in 2020, new, previously undiscovered contamination continues to be discovered. Additional survey is therefore needed to ensure that Sri Lanka has made every effort to identify all remaining mined areas and address them in its planning for fulfilment of Article 5 of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC).

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

- **The National Mine Action Centre (NMAC) should conduct survey/re-survey in mine-contaminated districts to ensure that every effort is made to identify remaining mined areas and include them in its completion strategy.**
- **Greater efforts should be devoted to information management, including ensuring that the national database is up to date and that survey and clearance reports are sent to the NMAC and entered into the national database in a timely fashion. In particular, Sri Lanka should make the necessary changes to its Information Management System for Mine Action (IMSMA) database to enable "sections" of large tasks that have been released to be recorded as "closed" and therefore reflected in the database.**
- **Sri Lanka should adopt, without further delay, the revised national mine action standards (NMAS), which were developed with support from the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining Centre (GICHD) and input from clearance operators in 2018.**
- **The NMAC should elaborate a new National Mine Action Strategy to replace the existing strategy which expired at the end of 2020.**

- **The NMAC should establish an in-country forum/platform to bring together all relevant national and international stakeholders regularly to discuss progress and challenges in Article 5 implementation and help strengthen coordination.**
- **Sri Lanka should develop plans for the management of mine contamination found after fulfilment of Article 5 (i.e. residual contamination), including ensuring a sustainable long-term national capacity for survey, clearance, and information management.**
- **Based on clear timelines for completion, the Sri Lankan government should support operators to demobilise their workforce safely and with minimal disruption to the local economy and stability of the communities by equipping the approximately 3,000 deminers and support staff with further skills, assets, and employment opportunities.**

ASSESSMENT OF NATIONAL PROGRAMME PERFORMANCE

Criterion	Score (2020)	Score (2019)	Performance Commentary
UNDERSTANDING OF CONTAMINATION (20% of overall score)	7	7	Sri Lanka gained better clarity on the extent of confirmed contamination, through a district-by-district re-survey in 2015–17 of known hazardous area, which resulted in the cancellation of more than 42km^2 of mined area. However, new, previously unknown mined areas continue to be discovered and additional survey/re-survey is still required to ensure that Sri Lanka has made every effort to identify remaining mine contamination.
NATIONAL OWNERSHIP AND PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT (10% of overall score)	7	7	Sri Lanka's national mine action programme is nationally owned, with committed funding from the national government, which increased in 2020, compared to the previous year, and significant contribution from the Armed Forces in the dedicated demining units. The NMAC suffers from frequent leadership changes, which impedes good governance and reduces its effectiveness. Following parliamentary elections in August 2020, the NMAC sits under the Ministry of Rural Home Construction and Building Material Industry Promotion.
GENDER AND DIVERSITY (10% of overall score)	7	8	Following a mid-term review in 2018, Sri Lanka's National Mine Action Strategy 2016–2020 contains a section on gender and diversity as cross-cutting themes for all mine action. It reflects awareness of the cultural context of gendered employment in mine action specific to Sri Lanka, with a focus on women's empowerment. NMAC reported in 2020, that 25% of its employees are female, including 12.5% of managerial level positions. However, none of the Army's Humanitarian Demining Units (HDUs)' s 450 employees in 2020 was a woman.
INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING (10% of overall score)	5	5	A number of efforts are ongoing to help strengthen information management in Sri Lanka's mine action programme. While some progress can be seen, data reporting between operators and the NMAC continued to reflect a number of disparities and inconsistencies, which are also apparent in Article 7 reports. Sri Lanka did report annual clearance output in 2020, but did not report the amount of mined area cancelled through non-technical survey or reduced through technical survey, or the amount of previously unrecorded mined area added to the database during the year.
PLANNING AND TASKING (10% of overall score)	7	8	Sri Lanka's National Mine Action Strategy 2016–2020, which was reviewed in 2018 with the support of the GICHD, elaborates the national planning and tasking criteria, which are centred around resettlement and urgent livelihood priorities for displaced and returning civilians. Elaboration of a new National Mine Action Strategy was hindered by COVID-19 and general elections in Sri Lanka, but was planned to take place in 2021 in collaboration with all relevant stakeholders.
LAND RELEASE SYSTEM (20% of overall score)	7	7	Revisions to Sri Lanka's NMAS in 2017 and in 2018 through an extensive review process with input from operators and support from the GICHD had still to be approved and adopted as at June 2021. Clearance capacity increased significantly in 2020, including with respect to mechanical demining, thanks to increased donor funding.
LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND ARTICLE 5 COMPLIANCE (20% of overall score)	8	7	In its Article 7 report covering 2020, Sri Lanka reported clearance of almost 4.6km^2, an increase on the previous year. However, no information was made available by the national authorities on the number of mined areas cancelled through non-technical survey or reduced through technical survey in 2020, or on the amount of new, previously unrecorded mined area, discovered during 2020, despite reports from operators that this occurred. Until a resurvey (also referred to as a "completion survey") has been conducted to ensure every effort has been made to identify remaining mined area, it is not possible to accurately forecast when Sri Lanka will fulfil its Article 5 commitments.
Average Score	**7.0**	**7.0**	**Overall Programme Performance: GOOD**

DEMINING CAPACITY

MANAGEMENT CAPACITY

- Ministry of Rural Home Construction and Building Material Industry Promotion (responsible line ministry following August 2020 Parliamentary elections, which was previously the Ministry of Community Empowerment and Estate Infrastructure Development)
- National Mine Action Centre (NMAC)

NATIONAL OPERATORS

- Delvon Assistance for Social Harmony (DASH)
- Skavita Humanitarian Assistance and Relief Project (SHARP)
- Sri Lankan Army (SLA) Humanitarian Demining Units (HDUs)

INTERNATIONAL OPERATORS

- The HALO Trust
- Mines Advisory Group (MAG)

OTHER ACTORS

- Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD)

UNDERSTANDING OF AP MINE CONTAMINATION

As at end of March 2021, total mined area in Sri Lanka stood at 12.8km^2 across 304 mined areas: of which there was 11.4km^2 across 295 confirmed hazardous areas (CHA) and 1.4km^2 across 9 suspected hazardous areas (SHAs) (see Table 1).[1] Similarly, at the APMBC Intersessional meetings in June 2021, Sri Lanka said there was a total of 13km^2 of mined area remaining.[2] This is a significant reduction in the baseline of mined area compared to the situation at the end of 2019.

But there were inconsistencies in Sri Lanka's reporting of its previous baseline of mined area. In one section of its Article 7 report (covering 2019), Sri Lanka put the remaining hazardous area as at 30 September 2020 at 15.70km^2.[3] Later in the same Article 7 report, however, Sri Lanka variously put the size of remaining mined area (as at July 2020) at 22.2km^2 and 15.97km^2 (as at end-September 2020).[4] An international clearance operator clarified that the 22.2km^2 refers to the area remaining on IMSMA inclusive of clearance conducted on open/ongoing/suspended tasks, and that 15.97km^2 is the area on IMSMA less the total area covered by open/ongoing/suspended tasks.[5]

Sri Lanka was once extensively contaminated by mines and explosive remnants of war (ERW). Most remaining contamination is in the north, the focus of three decades of armed conflict between the government and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), which ended in May 2009. Much progress in land release has been achieved over the course of the last decade.[6]

Estimates of total contamination have fallen sharply: down from 506km^2 at the end of 2010. A district-by-district re-survey in 2015–17 of all registered SHAs in the national database resulted in cancellation of more than 42km^2 of mined area and helped provide greater clarity on the extent of remaining contamination.[7] The Northern province is still by far the most affected, as set out in Table 1.[8] However, while significant progress is being made in releasing mined areas through survey and clearance, previously unknown contamination continues to be identified and added to the national database. Contamination is often discovered when communities return, settle, and try to rebuild their livelihoods.[9] In last year's Article 7 report (covering 2019), Sri Lanka reported that a total of nearly 24.5km^2 of newly identified mined area had been added to the database between 2015 and 2020.[10]

Table 1: Mined area (at end March 2021)[11]

Province	District	CHAs	Area (m^2)	SHAs	Area (m^2)	Total SHAs and CHAs	Total area (m^2)
Northern	Jaffna	21	1,021,472	0	0	21	1,021,472
	Kilinochchi	51	3,172,248	0	0	51	3,172,248
	Mannar	85	1,250,712	2	74,165	87	1,324,877
	Mullaitivu	97	4,960,349	5	566,128	102	5,526,477
	Vavuniya	25	629,786	2	713,471	27	1,343,257
Subtotals		**279**	**11,034,567**	**9**	**1,353,764**	**288**	**12,388,331**
Eastern	Batticaloa	1	683	0	0	1	683
	Trincomalee	12	306,351	0	0	12	306,351
Subtotals		**13**	**307,034**	**0**	**0**	**13**	**307,034**
North Central	Anuradhapura	2	89,828	0	0	2	89,828
	Polonnaruwa	1	12,700	0	0	1	12,700
Subtotals		**3**	**102,528**	**0**	**0**	**3**	**102,528**
Totals		**295**	**11,444,129**	**9**	**1,353,764**	**304**	**12,797,893**

The NMAC did not report on the amount of previously unrecorded mine contamination added to Sri Lanka's national information management database in 2020. However, international non-governmental organisations (NGOs) The HALO Trust and Mines Advisory Group (MAG), and national NGO, Delvon Assistance for Social Harmony (DASH), reported identifying a combined total of almost 2.6km^2 of previously unrecorded mined area in 2020.[12] National operator SHARP reported that it did not identify previously unrecorded mined area in 2020.[13]

Further survey/re-survey is still required to ensure that all mined areas have been identified.[14] In Jaffna, where the minefields were laid by the Sri Lankan Army (SLA), the extent of contamination is well understood, with the exception of the remaining military-controlled High Security Zone area.[15] However, minefield maps and information on mine-laying strategy are not readily available for the LTTE-laid minefields, which pose more of a challenge to clear.[16] Typically, LTTE minelaying was less predictable and more sporadic, added to which, many of the minefields the group laid are in jungle areas, where limited human activity occurs.[17]

Furthermore, additional survey is required due to the relocation of contaminated land for construction. For example, in February 2020 gravel from a quarry in Kilinochchi was delivered to a sports club in Jaffna. While levelling the gravel, workers found landmines and HALO was subsequently called to survey and clear the area.[18]

HALO Trust continues to urge the development of a unified "end state" strategy for the sector.[19] In 2019, the sector began liaising with the NMAC to urge the development of a "completion survey", delivered through a village-by-village assessment, to locate any remaining evidence of contamination, prior to any district being officially declared as cleared. International NGOs (INGOs) consider this essential to accurately identifying the remaining mine contamination and what resources are required to address it, and to inform other key elements of Sri Lanka's completion strategy.[20]

In August 2020, NMAC confirmed it planned to conduct a completion survey in conflict-affected areas together with demining organisations, in order to update its strategy.[21]

The NMAC said the current baseline of anti-personnel mine contamination has been established through inclusive consultation with women, girls, boys, and men, including, where relevant, from minority groups.[22]

Most remaining contamination is located in Sri Lanka's five northern districts. Both sides made extensive use of mines, including belts of P4 Mk I and Mk II blast anti-personnel mines laid by the SLA, and long defensive lines with a mixture of mines and improvised explosive devices (IEDs), including anti-personnel mines of an improvised nature, laid by the LTTE.[23] Indian peacekeeping forces also used mines during their presence from July 1987 to January 1990.[24]

The SLA used both anti-personnel and anti-vehicle mines, with all minelaying said to have been recorded[25] and made available to the national mine action programme.[26] Operators have encountered a wide range of LTTE devices, including anti-personnel mines with anti-tilt and anti-lift mechanisms. Tripwire-activated Claymore-type mines and, to a lesser extent, anti-vehicle mines, were also used by the LTTE, along with a number of forms of improvised devices to act as fragmentation mines, bar mines, electrical and magnetically initiated explosive devices, and mines connected to detonating cord to mortar and artillery shells.[27] Almost all the mines they used were manufactured by the LTTE themselves.[28]

Aside from mines, Sri Lanka remains contaminated with a wide range of ERW, including unexploded air-dropped bombs (although these are very rarely discovered), artillery shells and missiles, mortar bombs, hand-held anti-tank projectiles, and rifle and hand grenades. Large caches of abandoned explosive ordnance (AXO) also exist, particularly in the north.[29] These are being cleared at the same time as the remaining minefields.[30]

NATIONAL OWNERSHIP AND PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

Following the parliamentary elections in August 2020, the NMAC sits under the Ministry of Rural Home Construction and Building Material Industry Promotion, under new leadership personnel.[31] Prior to this the NMAC had sat under the Ministry of Community Empowerment and Estate Infrastructure Development following the November 2019 presidential election;[32] and prior to that under the Ministry of National Policies, Economic Affairs, Resettlement, Rehabilitation, Northern Development, Vocational Training, Skills Development, and Youth Affairs. The NMAC has responsibilities for priority setting, information management, quality assurance (QA) and quality control (QC), coordination with demining organisations and cooperation partners, and establishing policy and standards.[33]

The NMAC suffers from frequent leadership changes, including under which ministry within the Sri Lankan government the Centre sits, while the Director of the NMAC is a political appointee by the secretary of the ministry in question. Lack of consistent leadership can impede management of the mine action centre and reduce its effectiveness. In the last six years, there are thought to have been four different ministerial secretaries/directors of the NMAC. This latest change in 2020 only adds to confusion and impedes efficiency.

Clearance operations are coordinated, tasked, and quality managed by a Regional Mine Action Office (RMAO) in Kilinochchi, working in consultation with District Steering Committees for Mine Action. The Committees are chaired by government agents heading district authorities.[34] NMAC and RMAO also suffer from the impact of high staff turnover, following national elections and also as military personnel are seconded and generally rotate fairly quickly.[35]

In 2021, Sri Lanka committed US$2 million towards coordination and monitoring the national mine action programme and the SLA HDU mine clearance operations.[36] This is a significant increase on the previous year, when Sri Lanka reported contributed 1.5 million Sri Lankan rupees (approx. US$8,000) towards the NMAC and 149.5 million Sri Lankan rupees (approx. US$800,000) towards survey and clearance of mined areas in 2019.[37]

Sri Lanka estimated that the annual funding requirement of its national mine action programme is approx. US$20 million to sustain its operations at the existing level, including

priority setting, the information management system, QA/QC, coordination with demining organisations and cooperation with partners, and establishing policy and standards.[38]

Sri Lanka said previously that it intended to provide a detailed project proposal for the donor community, outlining its funding needs and the predicted results for implementation of Article 5.[39]

The SLA continued to support the sector through conducting daily demolitions, providing security oversight at all work sites, and significantly through ensuring that the demining sector gained key worker status after the initial six-week curfew period caused by COVID-19. This was crucial in ensuring that demining teams were able to get back to work (with suitable COVID-19 mitigation measures in place) and continue to conduct clearance operations.[40]

The Sri Lankan Cabinet has approved the continuance of demining until 2023 and consequently all demining organisations signed memorandums of understanding (MoUs) in February 2021, with respect to both its 2020 and 2021 demining operations.[41] However, since the NGO secretariat (responsible for issuing visas to NGO personnel) was moved under the Ministry of Defence following the appointment of the current government, the constant review of the application process for international staff is reported to have become extremely cumbersome.[42]

HALO Trust continued to provide capacity development support to NMAC in 2020, as part of its support rolling out the predictions information management tool.[43]

NMAC and the five operators (DASH, HALO Trust, MAG, Skavita Humanitarian Assistance and Relief Project (SHARP), and the SLA) maintained a positive relationship throughout 2020. This was achieved despite a challenging year due to COVID-19, government offices having to close for large portions of the year, and national elections and subsequent line ministry changes. While no regular formal in-country platform exists for coordination of all stakeholders, national and international operators are in regular communication by a variety of means – email, Skype, office visits, and sector meetings on specific topics, for example information management, safeguarding, reallocation of tasks, among others.[44] In 2020, the GICHD supported coordination efforts, chairing a coordination meeting with NMAC and operators in July 2020.[45]

GENDER AND DIVERSITY

Gender and diversity were included in Sri Lanka's National Mine Action Strategy for 2016–20, following the mid-term review in 2018. The revised strategy contains a specific section on gender and diversity, which it emphasises are cross-cutting issues for the planning, implementation, and monitoring of all mine action initiatives. The strategy pledges to ensure that all mine action activities, from survey and clearance to victim assistance, are conducted in a targeted manner to ensure the equal participation of all age and gender groups, and that all data collected is disaggregated by sex and age. It further recognises that mine action in Sri Lanka should be tied to the implementation of the Women, Peace, and Security Agenda and Sustainable Development Goal 5 on Gender Equality and the empowerment of women, noting that the safeguarding of non-discriminatory employment opportunities and the promotion of gender equality and empowerment of women has been a particularly successful aspect of Sri Lanka's national mine action programme.[46] In 2019, the GICHD carried out a study examining the socio-economic impact of the employment of female deminers. The key findings of the study were published in 2020.[47]

NMAC reported in 2020, that 25% of its employees are female, including 12.5% of managerial level positions.[48] However, none of the SLA HDU's 450 employees was a woman.[49]

DASH and fellow national operator, SHARP, have both sought to progressively increase the number of women employed, including in operational positions, recognising the positive impact employment has on women and their families' well-being.[50]

DASH considers gender equality and employment of women important to its programme. As at July 2021, 24% of DASH's total employees were female, with women holding 22% of managerial/supervisory level positions and 24% of operations positions.[51]

SHARP employs a total of 14 women, which represents 13% of its workforce. Three women at SHARP hold managerial/supervisory positions and 11 women hold operations positions.[52]

International operators The HALO Trust and MAG confirmed that each organisation has gender policies in place, with a focus on achieving equal access to employment, gender-balanced survey and clearance teams, gender-focused community liaison outreach, disaggregated data collection, and a gender focus to be employed during pre- and post-clearance assessments.[53] Both organisations reported increasing efforts to encourage women to apply for operational, as well as managerial positions, and positive trends in the increasing number of women employed in their respective programmes as a result.[54]

The HALO Trust reported that as at May 2021, 40% of its total staff in Sri Lanka were women. This included 43% of all operations staff and 28% of managerial/supervisory level positions.[55] HALO's deployment structure is designed to allow demining teams to be deployed daily from bases in Kilinochchi, Jaffna, and Jeyapuram, in order to allow female staff to return to their homes at the end of each working day, rather than being based in remote camps for lengthy periods of time. This ensures that women who had dependents at home were able to provide for their families while maintaining their daily home lives. HALO Trust also reported specific efforts to encourage women's employment through advertising maternity leave policies.[56]

MAG reported that as at April 2021, 22% of its total staff in Sri Lanka were female, including 22% of operational staff and 13% of managerial/supervisory positions.[57] MAG continues to consider how more female staff could be recruited. Following the mitigation measures introduced in response to COVID-19 pandemic in Sri Lanka, MAG shifted to a non-camping approach in June 2020 and launched a specific recruitment

campaign for female deminers, which led to a 20% increase of female staff in operations.[58]

MAG stated that overcoming barriers which inhibited participation by women, girls, people with disabilities, ethnic minorities, and other marginalised groups was an essential focus for its programme operations in order to ensure that programme delivery is inclusive, both in terms of internal staff composition and external programme outreach. As such, it reported that internal training and awareness-raising ensure that staff working with communities recognise the importance of gender and diversity and understand tools and approaches to enable inclusive participation.[59] MAG has been assessing the need to establish a community reporting mechanism, which it planned to roll out in July 2020.[60]

COVID-19 caused a slight delay in the roll-out of the community reporting mechanism, but as at April 2021, an external consultant had trained the Community Liaison team, who in turn carried out several community awareness sessions and had distributed MAG's hotline number for feedback and complaints. Furthermore, MAG was in the process of liaising with local government officials to set up complaint and feedback boxes and to train community focal points.[61]

INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING

Sri Lanka's IMSMA database has undergone substantial and continuing improvements since the installation of an updated version in 2015 and a subsequent process of data entry and ground verification.[62] Since that time, operators have reported that significant efforts have been exerted by all stakeholders to correct erroneous data entered into the IMSMA database and to update it on the basis of re-survey, leading to a more accurate representation of remaining contamination.[63] A transition to upgrade to the use of IMSMA Core software with assistance from the GICHD had been planned for 2020, but was delayed due to staff changes at NMAC[64] and the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.[65] The IMSMA installation is now planned for 2022.[66] Challenges to information management and establishing long-term sustainable national IM capacity, in part stem from lack of resources and also the high staff turnover at the NMAC and RMAO, as military personnel are seconded and generally rotate fairly quickly.[67]

Complications to data management are also posed by the existence of very large tasks on the database which consist of many "sections". These tasks show as "open" in IMSMA until all sections contained in them have been cleared, even if several sections have been reduced or cleared. This complicates land release figures and reduces the accuracy of the estimated size of mined area remaining in the database. This could be rectified with minor changes to IMSMA by allowing cleared sections to be recorded as "closed", thereby providing greater clarity on the remaining problem. The GICHD has offered support to NMAC to make the required minor changes to the database.[68] The HALO Trust reported that while the hazardous status has not yet been changed to reflect this, there had been firm guidance from NMAC on larger tasks, for operators to release land in sections on the ground. This was primarily to enable IDP resettlement and return of land to productive use as quickly as possible, but also has the benefit of helping improve progress monitoring in IMSMA.[69]

One of the objectives of Sri Lanka's National Mine Action Strategy is that the Sri Lanka's mine action sector "can access good quality information for its strategic and operational decision-making.[70]

The HALO Trust reported it was submitting reports every two weeks to NMAC and that a review of IMSMA data was usually held on a quarterly basis.[71] HALO Trust's predictions tool is designed to help assess when clearance operators are likely to complete clearance and to analyse operator capacities in order to inform decision making regarding task reallocation, completion strategy, and demobilisation. In 2020, the tool was handed over to the NMAC and shared with other operators. HALO conducted two group training sessions and one-to-one training sessions with each operator to set up the staging areas to link the tool to IMSMA. HALO remains 'on call' to support the sector with regards to the tool, as and when queries arise and to support new NMAC personnel on how to make best use of the tool.[72]

While NMAC officers have been trained by GICHD to enter data into IMSMA, and also trained by HALO in GIS and mapping, most have limited formal training in database theory, management, and query design. It is hoped that training in the design of simple querying and reporting tools will allow the NMAC to generate reports much easier and will allow them more time to focus on the quality of the data.[73]

During 2019, MAG began rolling out its new ESRI-based global operational management information system (OMIS) in Sri Lanka. The system and processes were put in place to update information and support tracking of land release and community liaison activities conducted by MAG staff in real time. Following planned training of staff in July 2020, the OMIS system was due to become operational in August 2020.[74] It was subsequently postponed to August 2021 due to the COVID-19 related restrictions preventing required travel for training and implementation.[75]

PLANNING AND TASKING

NMAC's current strategy was developed before Sri Lanka acceded to the APMBC in 2017. At the request of the NMAC, Sri Lanka's National Mine Action Strategy for 2016–20 was reviewed in April 2018 in a multi-stakeholder workshop facilitated by the GICHD, and in consultation with operators and the SLA. The reviewed strategy, which was formally approved by the government in March 2019, is guided by the vision of Sri Lanka to become "set free from the threat of landmines and ERW by 2020, enabling women, girls, boys and men to live in a safe environment where the needs of mine/ERW victims are met".

The strategic vision is based around the following objectives:

- The remaining mine/ERW problem is addressed using the most appropriate methodologies and tools.
- Mine/ERW safe behaviour among women, girls, boys and men is promoted.
- The needs of mine/ERW victims are determined and met and victims are integrated into society.
- Sri Lanka complies with its international convention obligations.
- Long-term residual contamination is effectively managed with appropriate and sustainable national capacities.
- Sri Lanka mine action sector can access good quality information for its strategic and operational decision-making.[76]

The initial strategy set an initial target of the release of 6.5km^2 of contamination by clearance and technical survey per year.[77] This target increased to 9km^2 released through clearance and technical survey per year in the revised version of the strategy.[78] The revised strategy states that "completion of clearance at the end of 2020 will only be possible if considerably more funding is made available, allowing all five operators to expand to their maximum capacity".[79] However, according to Sri Lanka, donor funding was not sufficient to increase capacity to the level anticipated and progress towards the 2020 completion target was also further hampered by the discovery of new, previously unrecorded mined areas following an increase in livelihood activities of those resettled.[80] The COVID-19 pandemic has also raised additional obstacles. The vision of the strategy has therefore not been achieved and a strategy beyond 2020 was being elaborated in 2021.[81]

GICHD support for the development of the new national mine action strategy has now been twice postponed, first due to the ministerial reshuffle following the November 2019 election and in the Spring of 2020 owing to the COVID-19 pandemic. GICHD remains ready to support the development of the new strategy,[82] which was now planned to take place in the course of 2021, in collaboration with international operators and the mine action sector in Sri Lanka.[83] The NMAC also develops annual work plans for survey and clearance.[84]

International operators reported that ongoing talks and collaborative discussions have ensured progress is being made towards revising the national strategy, with respect to task reallocation, a completion survey, demobilisation of demining personnel, and management of residual risk remaining the focus points of all discussions. Operators remained fully engaged in the strategy process and were regularly consulted by the national authorities on sector issues.[85]

Sri Lanka's mine action programme has a well-developed prioritisation system, outlined in NMAC's existing national mine action strategy. The primary priority is clearance of land for resettlement, particularly the return of IDPs. Further to this, contaminated land planned for livelihood activities (mostly agricultural land), access to public services, and large-scale infrastructure, are also prioritised in accordance with NMAC's national mine action strategy.[86] According to the NMAC, despite marking of contaminated areas and sustained risk education, returnees are likely to enter contaminated areas, especially agricultural areas, to meet their basic livelihood needs. As such, socio-economic pressures and livelihood activities are vital considerations in the prioritisation process in relation to resettlement plans.[87]

LAND RELEASE SYSTEM

STANDARDS AND LAND RELEASE EFFICIENCY

A review of Sri Lanka's National Mine Action Standards (NMAS), taking into account the local context, was carried out in May 2017 with the input of all demining operators, and support from the GICHD. However, as at July 2021, the expected revised version of the NMAS had yet to be approved and adopted, and the previous version remained in place. In August 2020, the NMAC, under new leadership, had claimed that since Sri Lanka was in the final stages of its mine action programme there was no significant requirement for the development [revision] of NMAS and that during implementation the programme will apply the International Mine Action Standards (IMAS).[88] No updates were made to the NMAS in 2020.[89]

OPERATORS AND OPERATIONAL TOOLS

In 2020, demining operations continued to be conducted by the SLA; national NGOs, DASH and SHARP; and INGOs, The HALO Trust and MAG.

Table 2: Operational clearance capacities deployed in 2020[90]

Operator	Manual teams	Total deminers*	Dogs and handlers	Machines**	Comments
DASH	13	278	0	0	DASH increased its clearance capacity by one team, from February 2020. Survey teams conduct initial technical survey to determine the perimeter of the contamination. The clearance team then conducts further technical survey to distinguish low-threat areas from high-threat areas, in support of the clearance plan. DASH's manual clearance teams are comprised of 1 Team Leader, 3 Section Leaders, 2 Paramedics, and 21–24 Deminers.
HALO Trust	71	537	0	10 front loaders, 12 excavators, 2 JCBs, 1 Beach Tech sand cleaner, 1 PrimeTech tiller machine, and 4 tractors with various attachments.	Based on the average annual number of clearance teams and deminers in 2020. Mechanical demining capacity increased significantly in 2020.
MAG	45	528	0	0	Mine Action Teams (MATs) also conduct technical survey as part of the standard land release process.
SHARP	4	88	0	0	
SLA HDU	8	320	8	13	Based on information reported to Mine Action Review by the NMAC in 2020.
Partial totals	**141**	**Approx. 1,751**	**8**		

* Excluding team leaders, medics, and drivers. ** Excluding vegetation cutters and sifters.

DASH increased its manual clearance capacity by one team in February 2020, bringing the total number of teams to 13. DASH does not receive funding from the Sri Lankan government and is entirely reliant on international donors. It planned to form an additional survey team to help contribute to national efforts for a planned completion survey.[91]

HALO's clearance capacity increased in 2020, in particular with respect to mechanical clearance capacity which increased significantly throughout the year. In 2019, the total number of staff in HALO's Sri Lanka programme peaked at 934. This then increased to 1,062 by 2020, due to additional funding. As at April 2021 it stood at 1,217 and was expected to further increase to 1,350 staff during the course of 2021.[92]

In 2020, MAG increased the number of clearance teams and recruited the shortfall of approximately 250 staff to fully deploy the teams. MAG didn't plan any further expansion in 2021.[93]

SHARP's capacity in 2020 was consistent with the previous year, but it planned to increase clearance capacity by two teams and add an additional survey section in 2021.[94]

With regards to survey capacity, the SLA HDU deployed four non-technical survey teams totalling twenty personnel. Technical survey personnel are deminers and are included as part of the clearance capacity summarised in Table 2.[95] DASH deployed two non-technical survey teams in 2020, totalling four personnel, and thirteen technical-survey teams, totalling up to 24 personnel. Technical survey personnel also conduct clearance.[96] The HALO Trust deployed three non-technical survey teams in 2020, totalling nine personnel. Technical survey personnel are deminers and included in HALO's clearance capacity in Table 2.[97] MAG deployed two non-technical survey teams in 2020, totalling six personnel.[98] SHARP deployed one technical survey section in 2020, totalling 10 personnel.[99]

DEMINER SAFETY

The HALO Trust reported one demining accident in 2020, involving a P4-MK1 anti-personnel mine during clearance. The accident resulted in minor injuries to one casualty, who made a full recovery. The accident was fully investigated, with involvement from the NMAC, and all operators and donors were informed, and the accident report shared.[100]

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND ARTICLE 5 COMPLIANCE

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS IN 2020

According to Sri Lanka's Article 7 report covering 2020, a total of 4.59km^2 of mined area was cleared in 2020, in addition to 2.09km^2 of battle area clearance (BAC). In total, during the mine clearance and BAC operations in 2020, 43,157 anti-personnel mines, 45 anti-vehicle mines, and 5,430 items of UXO were destroyed (see Table 5).[101]

Sri Lanka did not, however, report on the total amount of mined area cancelled through non-technical survey or reduced through technical survey, nor the amount of previously unrecorded mined area discovered in 2020. DASH, The HALO Trust, MAG, and SHARP reported collectively cancelling 0.14km^2 through non-technical survey in 2020 and reducing 0.97km^2 through technical survey. DASH, HALO, and MAG also reported identifying a combined total of nearly 2.6km^2 of previously unrecorded mined area in 2020. No data had been made available on the amount of mined area cancelled or reduced by SHARP or the SLA HDUs.

SURVEY IN 2020

Sri Lanka did not report the annual amount cancelled through non-technical survey or reduced through technical survey in 2020. It also did not report the amount of previously unrecorded mined area added to Sri Lanka's database in 2020.

NGOs, DASH, the HALO Trust, MAG, and SHARP reported to Mine Action Review, cancelling through non-technical survey a combined total of nearly 0.14km^2 (see Table 3) and reducing through technical survey a combined total of more than 0.97km^2 (see Table 4).[102]

DASH, HALO, and MAG also reported identifying a combined total of nearly 2.6km^2 of previously unrecorded mined area in 2020. Of this, DASH reported identifying nearly 0.2km^2 of previously unrecorded mined area across 10 CHAs in Kilinochchi and Mullaitivu districts in 2020.[103] HALO reported identifying nearly 0.8km^2 of previously unrecorded mined area across 30 CHAs and over 0.1km^2 across 3 SHAs in Kilinochchi, Jaffna, and Mullaitivu districts in 2020, slightly more than the previous year.[104] MAG reported that it found an additional 1.5km^2 of previously unrecorded mined area across 121 CHAs in 2020,[105] an increase on the 1.1km^2 found in 2019.[106]

Table 3: Cancellation through non-technical survey by DASH, HALO, and MAG in 2020 (based on operator data)[107]

District	Operator	Area cancelled (m²)
Jaffna	DASH	9,693
Kilinochchi	DASH	13,417
Kilinochchi	HALO Trust	76,157
Mannar	MAG	9,945
Mullaitivu	DASH	21,568
Mullaitivu	MAG	962
Trincomalee	MAG	4,956
Vavuniya	MAG	1,415
Total		**138,113**

Table 4: Reduction through technical survey by DASH, HALO Trust, and MAG in 2020 (based on operator data)[108]

District	Operator	Area reduced (m²)
Jaffna	DASH	12,636
Jaffna	HALO Trust	2,471
Kilinochchi	DASH	65,752
Kilinochchi	HALO Trust	8,164
Kilinochchi	SHARP	2,930
Mannar	MAG	119,180
Mullaitivu	DASH	269,744
	HALO Trust	48,982
	MAG	15,775
Trincomalee	MAG	9,343
Vavuniya	MAG	416,301
Total		**971,278**

CLEARANCE IN 2020

According to Sri Lanka's Article 7 report covering 2020, a total of nearly 4.6km^2 of mined area was cleared in 2020. In total, during mine clearance and BAC in 2020, 43,157 anti-personnel mines, 45 anti-vehicle mines, and 5,430 items of UXO were destroying during the year (see Table 5).[109]

This is a huge increase in annual clearance compared to 2019, when NMAC reported to Mine Action Review clearance of more than 1.2km^2 in 2019, with the destruction of 9,000 anti-personnel mines and 5 anti-vehicle mines.[110] However, the 2019 clearance data excluded national operator, SHARP, which was not reported by NMAC. Furthermore, INGOs, HALO Trust and MAG alone reported a clearing a combined total of nearly 2.46km^2 of mined area in 2019, with a total of 13,820 anti-personnel mines, and 37 anti-vehicle mines destroyed – significantly more than reported by NMAC.[111] This was most likely due to a number of reasons, including a database issue that currently prevents NMAC from reporting release of partially cleared polygons; and NMAC appearing to only report tasks completed in 2019, whereas operator data includes all clearance that was conducted in 2019.[112]

All anti-personnel mines were destroyed by the SLA – Engineers Brigade. As per national standards, humanitarian mine action operators are not authorised to conduct explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) in Sri Lanka.[113]

Despite the impact of the COVID-19 lockdown on operations in 2020, the total amount of mined area released by DASH during the year, was an increase on 2019. DASH cleared 593,056m^2 in 2020, compared to 545,905m^2 in 2019; reduced 348,132m^2 through technical survey in 2020, compared to 241,851m^2 in 2019; and cancelled 44,678m^2 through non-technical survey in 2020, compared to zero cancellation in 2019. The increase in clearance was due to an extra manual clearance team becoming operational from February 2020. DASH also reported that all its clearance tasks in 2020 were found to contain mines.[114]

HALO's clearance output in 2020 was nearly 20% higher than the previous year, primarily due to the expansion of clearance teams, in particular mechanical teams. Of the 14 mined areas cleared by HALO Trust in 2020, only one (of 12,462m^2 in size) contained no mines. This task was surveyed by another operator and reallocated to HALO by the NMAC, as part of reallocation of tasks. The task is thought to have been the site of a munitions factory, rather than an area where mines were laid.[115]

HALO trialled and developed a new mechanical clearance methodology, the "wet soil bucket", in late 2019. The attachment filters the soil very finely, making clearance more efficient by removing the need for "back blading", where teams of deminers manually rake through excavated soil. HALO deployed seven excavators and one front loader with wet bucket technology. Due to the success of this model, HALO deployed four adapted "potato pickers" in 2020, which are originally intended for the agricultural sector, and which use a similar mechanism to the wet buckets to finely sift soil. Initial results showed an increase of 15% efficiency gains compared to standard mechanical assets.[116]

The total area released by MAG in 2020 was also an increase on the previous year, due to expansion of its clearance capacity. No mines or UXO were found during clearance of three of MAG's tasks in 2020: a 2,168m^2 clearance task in Mannar district, and two clearance tasks in Vavuniya district, one covering 1,168m^2 and the other 1,003m^2, of a total of 64 tasks totalling over 1.62km^2 released. All of MAG's other clearance tasks contained mines.[117]

Table 5: Mine clearance in 2020[118]

District	Mine clearance (m^2)	BAC(m^2)	AP mines destroyed	AV mines destroyed	UXO destroyed
Amuradhapura	36,579	0	209	0	4
Batticaloa	12,854	0	506	0	0
Jaffna	161,508	0	9,377	1	160
Kilinochchi	2,073,379	1,181,773	15,440	34	3,401
Mannar	666,121	0	5,685	2	150
Mullaitivu	893,384	917,413	8,697	8	725
Polonnaruwa	8,325	0	93	0	0
Trincomalee	71,287	0	226	0	926
Vavuniya	668,052	0	2,924	0	64
Totals	**4,591,489**	**2,099,186**	**43,157**	**45**	**5,430**

ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE AND COMPLIANCE

APMBC ENTRY INTO FORCE FOR SRI LANKA: 1 JUNE 2018

↓

ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE: 1 JUNE 2028

ON TRACK TO MEET ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE: YES
LIKELIHOOD OF COMPLETING CLEARANCE BY 2025 (OSLO ACTION PLAN COMMITMENT): MEDIUM

Table 6: Five-year summary of AP mine clearance

Year	Area cleared (km²)
2020	4.59
2019	*2.94
2018	3.46
2017	3.25
2016	2.35
Total	**16.59**

***Mine Action Review calculation**

Under Article 5 of the APMBC, Sri Lanka is required to destroy all anti-personnel mines in mined areas under its jurisdiction or control as soon as possible, but not later than 1 June 2028. Sri Lanka should still complete clearance by this deadline and may even fulfil its Article 5 obligations by the end of 2025, but this depends on how much previously unrecorded mined area continues to be discovered and if Sri Lanka can accurately identify and release all remaining mined area, in line with its treaty obligations, by this date.

Sri Lanka's target to complete mine clearance by the end of 2020, was overly ambitious and contingent on significantly increasing funding and capacity. The anticipated increase in capacity of the SLA HDUs did not materialise as was hoped,[119] with expansion hindered by the army's focus on responding to the Easter Sunday terrorist attacks in April 2019 and by the subsequent COVID-19 pandemic. Furthermore, progress towards achieving the 2020 target was also hampered by the continued discovery of new, previously unknown mined area adding to the contamination baseline.

According to international operators, despite challenges such as the constitutional crisis, terrorist attacks in 2019, and COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, the Sri Lankan government is still committed to complete mine clearance before 2025, but it needs sustained political and financial support from the international community to achieve the target.[120]

The re-launch of the National Mine Action Strategy in March 2019 and the Government of Sri Lanka's renewed commitment to becoming mine free, has however, attracted new attention from the international donor community and operators reported receiving increased funding.[121] As a result of additional funding, HALO and MAG both increased their clearance capacity in 2020.[122]

HALO Trust was due to complete clearance of all HALO allocated tasks before the end of 2020 with a capacity of 700 staff. In contrast, two other operators had too many tasks allocated to them which would see mine clearance continue for many more years. Considering this mismatch, and HALO's recent increase in capacity to over 1,000 staff, the NMAC allocated additional minefield tasks to HALO and particularly those minefields where the terrain is better suited to mechanical clearance. This additional tasking being added to HALO's overall clearance plan is crucial in helping Sri Lanka fulfil its Article 5 commitment as soon as possible, by ensuring that all operators are working at maximum capacity up to completion.[123]

HALO, in coordination with NMAC and its RMAO, has now cleared the majority of accessible SLA-laid minefields in Jaffna district. While the High Security Zone is currently only accessible to the SLA, the HALO Trust hopes to work in partnership with the SLA to assess and clear any remaining contamination when areas of the High Security Zone are made accessible.[124] The SLA is currently conducting clearance within the High Security Zone, but it is not known how much mined area remains within the zone.

At the same time, HALO Trust was continuing to focus operations on the Muhamalai minefield, along with other tasks in southern Kilinochchi district, northern Mullaitivu district, and expanding operations in East Mullaitivu district.[125]

Newly identified and previously unrecorded mined areas continue to be discovered. HALO Trust believes that until the end-state/completion survey has been conducted it is not possible to accurately forecast when Sri Lanka will fulfil its Article 5 commitments. A forecasting tool has been developed, which now just requires data from the completion survey and from operators on their anticipated capacity/clearance rates. In the absence of the latter, the tool uses average clearance rates from previous months, adjusting for periods when operations were suspended due to COVID-19.[126]

Providing donors continue current levels of funding for mine clearance and the NMAC allocates minefield tasks proportionally to demining operator capacity, HALO is confident Sri Lanka could be mine free before the end of 2025.[127]

During the last task reallocation meeting in February 2021, a plan for completion of all known minefields registered on IMSMA was put in place to complete by 2023. However, this does not include the planned completion survey and the potential discovery of additional CHAs, nor does it take into account the potential reallocation of a large number of tasks allocated to the Sri Lankan Army. This might extend the completion timeline to 2025.[128]

In agreement with NMAC, in early 2020 MAG introduced a pilot for a district-level "completion survey" with the aim of conducting a final survey of a district to identify any as yet unrecorded areas of mine contamination.[129] It was agreed with NMAC and other operators that the process would include: a desktop assessment, meetings with District Secretariats (DS) and Grama Niladari (GN) authorities, and group interviews with communities at village level to determine whether there is further knowledge of any

remaining hazardous areas (HAs) and/or explosive ordnance. According to MAG, "if any such report is made, standard non-technical survey activities will be conducted, to identify any remaining evidence through key informant interviews and a field visit. If required, new SHAs/CHAs will be then recorded on the IMSMA database and technical survey and clearance operations will be conducted as per normal tasking procedures." According to MAG, upon completion of this process, NMAC would be able to inform GNs, the DS, and Government Administrator (GA) that "all reasonable effort" had been applied to identify and release all mined area.[130] As at April 2021, the NMAC was discussing procedures and processes for the completion survey, to feed into the national strategy review planned for September 2021.[131]

The full impact of COVID-19 on Sri Lanka's Article 5 implementation is not yet known, in particular with regards to the activities of the SLA HDUs. Due to COVID-19, HALO Trust and MAG stopped land release operations in Sri Lanka on 18 March 2020. With the permission of national authorities and with COVID-19 mitigation measures in place and staggered deployment, HALO Trust resumed demining operations on 30 April 2020, with 45% of teams deployed, rising to 100% by mid-May.[132] DASH reported that it lost 37 operational days due to the COVID-19 lockdown, but that it recovered some of the lost productivity through working an extra 30 mins every day following lockdown.[133] SHARP suspended operations from mid-March to mid-April 2020 due to COVID-19, but was able to make up lost work days by readjusting its work programme during the remainder of the year.[134]

MAG recommenced its operations on 23 May 2020, staggering deployment to adhere to physical distancing rules.[135] The HALO Trust reported losing 36 operational days due to COVID-19 overall in 2020. The pandemic also reduced the amount of survey/EOD callouts that would be conducted, due to restricted movements across and within districts.[136] MAG reported that no operations could be conducted during the 6–8 week lockdown, and that it had subsequently adjusted its methodology to meet government restrictions. MAG moved to a non-camping methodology, where staff returned home at the end of each day, rather than camping nearby on a three-week work cycle.[137] The GICHD reported very limited communication from NMAC in 2020 due to COVID-19, and that planned trips were cancelled due to travel restrictions.[138]

PLANNING FOR RESIDUAL RISK AFTER COMPLETION

Sri Lanka's current Mine Action strategy commits the government of Sri Lanka to ensure that relevant plans are in place to ensure effective management of residual contamination.[139] It sets out that the NMAC will lead efforts to plan for a transitional phase, a process which will involve the SLA, relevant government ministries, and civil society, noting that post-completion roles and responsibilities for management of residual contamination must be clarified, transparent, and communicated to all relevant stakeholders. It also commits the government and mine action operators to develop strategies for the demobilisation of deminers as completion approaches, in order to enable them vocational training and other employment prospects.[140] According to Sri Lanka's Article 7 report covering 2019, there were approximately 2,500 clearance, survey, and QA staff across the SLA HDU and clearance operators.[141]

On completion of clearance operations, the SLA will be responsible for dealing with residual contamination.[142] Sri Lanka has dedicated significant national resources to the SLD HDUs, with officers trained on EOD, QA, and IMSMA attached to RMAO in Kilinochchi, which monitors and evaluates demining activities in Sri Lanka. This regional office consists of 90% staff from the SLA. The NMAC recognises the importance of agreeing and explaining post-completion roles and responsibilities, so they are communicated to all relevant stakeholders. A fully fledged demining unit with necessary infrastructure, vehicles, ambulances etc. has been established at the Engineering Brigade headquarters of the SLA at Boo-Oya, Vavuniya, in the north of Sri Lanka, and will continue to be deployed after completion of Article 5. The SLA HDUs have been trained on EOD, QA, and IMSMA, and will be responsible for maintaining and updating the IMSMA database.[143]

Sri Lanka has also highlighted the importance of establishing a suitable demobilisation process for local personnel employed in demining and for SLA HDUs.[144] NMAC has initiated a pilot survey, with the support of MAG, to identify the capacity of deminers currently employed, with a view to develop a demobilisation plan. Based on the findings of the needs assessment survey, NMAC expects to facilitate demining staff to provide relevant livelihood training after completion of the demining.[145]

1 APMBC Article 7 Report (covering 2020), Form 5.

2 Statement of Sri Lanka on clearance, APMBC intersessional meetings (virtual meeting), 22–24 June 2021.

3 Article 7 Report (covering 2019), Form 2.

4 Ibid., Form 5.

5 Email from Lt.-Col. (ret.) Sarath Jayawardhana, SHARP, 9 September 2021.

6 Emails from Belinda Vause, Programme Manager, HALO Trust, 3 April 2020; Valentina Stivanello, Country Director, MAG, 6 April 2020; and GICHD, 13 May 2020. MAG informed Mine Action Review that the SHAs in Mannar are in fact CHAs, but that they were captured by NMAC as SHAs in IMSMA by mistake.

7 Emails from Belinda Vause, HALO Trust, 3 April 2020; Valentina Stivanello, MAG, 6 April 2020; and GICHD, 13 May 2020.

8 Email from V. Premachanthiran, Deputy Director, National Mine Action Centre (NMAC), 25 August 2020.

9 Emails from Valentina Stivanello, MAG, 6 April 2020 and 19 April 2019; and Article 7 Report (covering 2019), Form 2.

10 Article 7 Report (covering 2019), Form 2.

11 Article 7 Report (covering 2020), Form 5.

12 Emails from Eleanor Porritt, HALO Trust, 2 May 2021; Valentina Stivanello, MAG, 19 April 2021; and Brig. (ret.) Ananda Chandrasiri, Director, DASH, 20 July 2021. Of the total 2.6km^2 of previously unrecorded mined areas identified in 2020, DASH reported identifying nearly 0.2km^2 across 10 CHAs in Kilinochchi and Mullaitivu districts in 2020; HALO reported identifying nearly 0.8km^2 across 30 CHAs and over 0.1km^2 across 3 SHAs in Kilinochchi, Jaffna, and Mullaitivu districts in 2020, slightly more than the previous year; and MAG reported that it recorded, confirmed, and generated 1.5km^2 across 121 CHAs in 2020, also slightly more than the previous year.

13 Email from Lt.-Col. (ret.) Sarath Jayawardhana, Director, Skavita Humanitarian Assistance and Relief Project (SHARP), 9 September 2021.

14 Emails from Belinda Vause, HALO Trust, 3 April 2020; and Valentina Stivanello, MAG, 6 April 2020.

15 Email from Belinda Vause, HALO Trust, 3 April 2020.

16 Email from Belinda Vause, HALO Trust, 3 April 2020; and Statement of Sri Lanka, Fourth APMBC Review Conference, Oslo, 29 November 2020.

17 Email from Belinda Vause, HALO Trust, 3 April 2020.

18 Ibid.

19 Ibid.

20 Emails from Belinda Vause, HALO Trust, 3 April 2020; and Valentina Stivanello, MAG, 6 April 2020.

21 Email from V. Premachanthiran, NMAC, 25 August 2020.

22 Ibid.

23 Interviews with demining operators, Colombo, 29 March–2 April 2010; and with Maj. Pradeep Gamage, Officer-in-Charge, North Jaffna Humanitarian Demining Unit (HDU), Jaffna, 3 April 2007.

24 Ministry of Prison Reforms, Rehabilitation, Resettlement, and Hindu Religious Affairs, "Sri Lanka National Mine Action Strategy 2016–2020", May 2016, p. 6; and Article 7 Report (covering 2020), Form 1.

25 Ministry of Prison Reforms, Rehabilitation, Resettlement, and Hindu Religious Affairs, "Sri Lanka National Mine Action Strategy 2016–2020", May 2016, p. 6; interview with Rob Syfret, Operations Manager, HALO Trust, in Kilinochchi, 12 September 2016; and Article 7 Report (covering 2020), Form 1.

26 Article 7 Report (covering 2020), Form 1.

27 Email from Valon Kumnova, HALO Trust, 11 April 2014; and "Sri Lanka National Mine Action Strategy 2016–2020", May 2016, p. 6.

28 Article 7 Report (covering 2019), Form 1.

29 "Sri Lanka National Mine Action Strategy 2016–2020", May 2016, p. 6; and Article 7 Report (covering 2019, Form 1.

30 Email from Matthew Hovell, Regional Director, HALO Trust, 30 September 2018.

31 Email from Belinda Vause, HALO Trust, 2 September 2020.

32 Email from Belinda Vause, HALO Trust, 3 April 2020.

33 Article 7 Report, submitted in 2019, p. 12.

34 "Sri Lanka National Mine Action Strategy 2016–2020", May 2016, p. 9.

35 Email from GICHD, 13 May 2020.

36 Article 7 Report (covering 2020), Form 5.

37 Email from V. Premachanthiran, NMAC, 25 August 2020.

38 Article 7 Report (covering 2019), Form 5.

39 Ibid.

40 Email from Eleanor Porritt, Programme Manager, HALO Trust, 2 May 2021.

41 Emails from Eleanor Porritt, HALO Trust, 2 May 2021; and Valentina Stivanello, MAG, 19 April 2021.

42 Email from Valentina Stivanello, MAG, 19 April 2021.

43 Email from Eleanor Porritt, HALO Trust, 2 May 2021.

44 Emails from Eleanor Porritt, HALO Trust, 2 May 2021; Valentina Stivanello, MAG, 19 April 2021; Brig. (ret.) Ananda Chandrasiri, DASH, 20 July 2021; and Lt.-Col. (ret.) Sarath Jayawardhana, SHARP, 9 September 2021.

45 Email from GICHD, 30 April 2021.

46 "Sri Lanka National Mine Action Strategy 2016–2020", Reviewed version, September 2018, p. 6.

47 GICHD, "The Socioeconomic Impact of Employing Female Deminers in Sri Lanka", July 2020, available at: http://bit.ly/33aAIGb.

48 Email from V. Premachanthiran, NMAC, 25 August 2020.

49 Ibid.; and Article 7 Report (covering 2019), Form 2.

50 "Sri Lanka National Mine Action Strategy 2016–2020", Reviewed version, September 2018, p. 6; and Article 7 Report (covering 2020), Form 5.

51 Email from Brig. (ret.) Ananda Chandrasiri, DASH, 20 July 2021.

52 Email from Lt.-Col. (ret.) Sarath Jayawardhana, SHARP, 9 September 2021.

53 Emails from Belinda Vause, HALO Trust, 9 August 2019 and 3 April 2020; Beth Lomas, MAG, 26 July 2019; and Valentina Stivanello, MAG, 6 April 2020.

54 Emails from Belinda Vause, HALO Trust, 9 August 2019; and Beth Lomas, MAG, 26 July 2019.

55 Email from Eleanor Porritt, HALO Trust, 2 May 2021.

56 Email from Belinda Vause, HALO Trust, 9 August 2019.

57 Email from Valentina Stivanello, MAG, 19 April 2021.

58 Emails from Valentina Stivanello, MAG, 23 June 2020; and Simon Rea, MAG, 3 September 2020.

59 Emails from Beth Lomas, MAG, 26 July 2019; and Valentina Stivanello, MAG, 6 April 2020.

60 Emails from Valentina Stivanello, MAG, 6 April and 23 June 2020.

61 Email from Valentina Stivanello, MAG, 19 April 2021.

62 Email from Alistair Moir, MAG, 8 August 2018.

63 Emails from Bartholomew Digby, HALO Trust, 5 March 2018; Alistair Moir, MAG, 8 August 2018 and 21 August 2017; and Helaine Boyd, HALO Trust, 25 April 2017.

64 Email from Asa Massleberg, GICHD, 23 June 2020.

65 Email from V. Premachanthiran, NMAC, 25 August 2020.

66 Email from GICHD, 23 July 2021.

67 Email from GICHD, 13 May 2020.

68 Email from Asa Massleberg, GICHD, 23 June 2020.

69 Email from Eleanor Porritt, HALO Trust, 2 May 2021.

70 "Sri Lanka National Mine Action Strategy 2016–2020", Reviewed version, September 2018, p. 11.

71 Email from Belinda Vause, HALO Trust, 9 August 2019.

72 Email from Eleanor Porritt, HALO Trust, 2 May 2021.

73 Email from Belinda Vause, HALO Trust, 3 April 2020.

74 Email from Valentina Stivanello, MAG, 23 June 2020.

75 Email from Valentina Stivanello, MAG, 19 April 2021.

76 "Sri Lanka National Mine Action Strategy 2016–2020", Revised version, September 2018, p. 11.

77 Ibid., p. 13.

78 Ibid., p. 11.

79 "Sri Lanka National Mine Action Strategy 2016–2020", Revised version, September 2018, p. 4.

80 Article 7 Reports (covering 2019 and 2020), Forms 2 and 5; and Statement of Sri Lanka on clearance, APMBC 18th Meeting of States Parties (virtual meeting), 16–20 November 2020.

81 Article 7 Report (covering 2020), Form 2.

82 Email from GICHD, 13 May 2020.

83 Email from Belinda Vause, HALO Trust, 14 July 2020.

84 Email from V. Premachanthiran, NMAC, 25 August 2020.

85 Email from Eleanor Porritt, HALO Trust, 2 May 2021.

86 Email from Belinda Vause, HALO Trust, 3 April 2020.

87 Article 7 Report, submitted in 2019, p. 3.

88 Email from V. Premachanthiran, NMAC, 25 August 2020.

89 Emails from Eleanor Porritt, HALO Trust, 2 May 2021; Valentina Stivanello, MAG, 19 April 2021; and GICHD, 30 April 2021.

90 Emails from V. Premachanthiran, NMAC, 25 August 2020; Eleanor Porritt, HALO Trust, 2 May 2021; Valentina Stivanello, MAG, 19 April 2021; Brig. (ret.) Ananda Chandrasiri, DASH, 20 July 2021; and Lt.-Col. (ret.) Sarath Jayawardhana, SHARP, 9 September 2021.

91 Email from Brig. (ret.) Ananda Chandrasiri, DASH, 20 July 2021.

92 Email from Eleanor Porritt, HALO Trust, 2 May 2021.

93 Email from Valentina Stivanello, MAG, 19 April 2021.

94 Email from Lt.-Col. (ret.) Sarath Jayawardhana, SHARP, 9 September 2021.

95 Email from V. Premachanthiran, NMAC, 25 August 2020.

96 Email from Brig. (ret.) Ananda Chandrasiri, DASH, 20 July 2021.

97 Email from Eleanor Porritt, HALO Trust, 2 May 2021.

98 Email from Valentina Stivanello, MAG, 19 April 2021.

99 Email from Lt.-Col. (ret.) Sarath Jayawardhana, SHARP, 9 September 2021.

100 Email from Eleanor Porritt, HALO Trust, 2 May 2021.

101 APMBC Article 7 Report (covering 2020), Form 5.

102 Emails from Eleanor Porritt, HALO Trust, 2 May 2021; and Valentina Stivanello, MAG, 19 April 2021.

103 Email from Brig. (ret.) Ananda Chandrasiri, DASH, 20 July 2021.

104 Email from Eleanor Porritt, HALO Trust, 2 May 2021.

105 Email from Valentina Stivanello, MAG, 19 April 2021.

106 Email from Valentina Stivanello, MAG, 6 April 2020.

107 Emails from Eleanor Porritt, HALO Trust, 2 May 2021; Valentina Stivanello, MAG, 19 April 2021; and Brig. (ret.) Ananda Chandrasiri, DASH, 20 July 2021. SHARP reported that it did not cancel any mined area in 2020 (email from Lt.-Col. (ret.) Sarath Jayawardhana, SHARP, 9 September 2021.

108 Ibid.

109 Article 7 Report (covering 2020), Form 5.

110 Email from V. Premachanthiran, NMAC, 25 August 2020.

111 Emails from Belinda Vause, HALO Trust, 3 April 2020; and Valentina Stivanello, MAG, 6 April 2020.

112 Emails from Belinda Vause, HALO Trust, 2 September 2020; and Simon Rea, MAG, 3 September 2020.

113 Email from Valentina Stivanello, MAG, 6 April 2020.

114 Email from Brig. (ret.) Ananda Chandrasiri, DASH, 20 July 2021.

115 Email from Eleanor Porritt, HALO Trust, 2 May 2021.

116 Ibid.

117 Email from Valentina Stivanello, MAG, 19 April 2021.

118 Article 7 Report (covering 2020), Form 5. It appears that there may be discrepancies between the clearance data reported by NMAC and that reported by operators. DASH reported clearing a total of 593,056m^2 of mined area with the destruction of 10,115 anti-personnel mines, 14 anti-vehicle mines, and 562 UXO, in Jaffna, Kilinochchi, and Mullaitivu districts (email from Brig. (ret.) Ananda Chandrasiri, DASH, 20 July 2021). HALO Trust reported clearing a total of 1,903,622m^2 of mined area with the destruction of 11,272 anti-personnel mines, 16 anti-vehicle mines, and 2,348 UXO, in Jaffna, Kilinochchi, and Mullaitivu districts. HALO also cleared a further 34 anti-personnel mines during EOD spot tasks. In addition, HALO reported destroying a further 94 IEDs during clearance, which due to the clearance methodology (for example mechanical clearance), it was not possible for HALO to identify the method of initiation. Degradation of items, particularly LTTE-laid devices in jungle areas, also contributes to this challenge. (Emails from Eleanor Porritt, HALO Trust, 2 May 2021 and Belinda Vause, 4 September 2021). MAG reported clearing a total of 1,598,775m^2 of mined area with the destruction of 9,592 anti-personnel mines, 2 anti-vehicle mines, and 1,312 UXO, in Mannar, Mullaitivu, Trincomalee, and Vavuniya districts. Of the 9,592 mines destroyed in 2020, two were of an improvised nature (email from Valentina Stivanello, MAG, 19 April 2021). SHARP reported clearing a total of 171,084m^2 of mined area with the destruction of 2,471 anti-personnel mines, 14 anti-vehicle mines, and 758 UXO, in Kilinochchi district (email from Lt.-Col. (ret.) Sarath Jayawardhana, SHARP, 9 September 2021).

119 Email from Belinda Vause, HALO Trust, 9 August 2019.

120 Email from Valentina Stivanello, MAG, 6 April 2020.

121 Emails from V. Premachanthiran, NMAC, 25 August 2020; Belinda Vause, HALO Trust, 9 August 2019; and Beth Lomas, MAG, 26 July 2019.

122 Emails from Belinda Vause, HALO Trust, 3 April 2020; and Valentina Stivanello, MAG, 6 April 2020.

123 Emails from Belinda Vause, HALO Trust, 3 April 2020; and V. Premachanthiran, NMAC, 25 August 2020.

124 Emails from Belinda Vause, HALO Trust, 14 July 2020; and Eleanor Porritt, HALO Trust, 2 May 2021.

125 Email from Eleanor Porritt, HALO Trust, 2 May 2021.

126 Email from Belinda Vause, HALO Trust, 18 September 2021.

127 Email from Belinda Vause, HALO Trust, 3 April 2020.

128 Email from Valentina Stivanello, MAG, 19 April 2021.

129 Emails from V. Premachanthiran, NMAC, 25 August 2020; Belinda Vause, HALO Trust, 3 April 2020; and Valentina Stivanello, MAG, 6 April 2020.

130 Email from Simon Rea, MAG, 3 September 2020.

131 Email from Valentina Stivanello, MAG, 18 August 2021.

132 Email from Belinda Vause, HALO Trust, 14 July 2020.

133 Email from Brig. (ret.) Ananda Chandrasiri, DASH, 20 July 2021.

134 Email from Lt.-Col. (ret.) Sarath Jayawardhana, SHARP, 9 September 2021.

135 Email from Valentina Stivanello, MAG, 23 June 2020.

136 Email from Eleanor Porritt, HALO Trust, 2 May 2021.

137 Email from Valentina Stivanello, MAG, 19 April 2021.

138 Email from GICHD, 30 April 2021.

139 "Sri Lanka National Mine Action Strategy 2016–2020", Reviewed version, September 2018, p. 1.

140 Ibid, p. 17.

141 Article 7 Report (covering 2019), Form 2.

142 Article 7 Report (covering 2020), Form 5.

143 Statements of Sri Lanka on clearance, APMBC 18th Meeting of States Parties (virtual meeting), 16–20 November 2020 and APMBC intersessional meetings (virtual meeting), 22–24 June 2021.

144 Ibid.

145 Article 7 Report (covering 2020), Form 5.