SOMALIA

ARTICLE 4 DEADLINE: 1 MARCH 2026
(TOO SOON TO ASSESS LIKELIHOOD OF COMPLIANCE)

PROGRAMME PERFORMANCE

	2015	2014
Problem understood	3	5
Target date for completion of cluster munition clearance	4	3
Targeted clearance	4	4
Efficient clearance	5	5
National funding of programme	3	3
Timely clearance	4	4
Land-release system in place	6	6
National mine action standards	6	6
Reporting on progress	5	5
Improving performance	6	6
PERFORMANCE SCORE: POOR	**4.6**	**4.9**

PERFORMANCE COMMENTARY

Somalia has made little progress so far in implementing its obligations under Article 4 of the Convention on Cluster Munitions (CCM). No survey specific to CMR was conducted in 2015 and no CMR clearance occurred in Somalia in 2015.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

- Somalia should ensure the timely survey and clearance of cluster munition remnants (CMR) in accordance with its CCM obligations, alongside efforts to address wider explosive remnants of war (ERW).
- The Information Management System for Mine Action (IMSMA) database should be transferred to full national ownership under the Somalia Explosive Management Authority (SEMA) and efforts should be made to ensure complete transparency and accessibility of all mine action data for operators and relevant stakeholders. Information management and coordination of mine action activities could also be improved through more effective dissemination of information electronically.
- Continued efforts should be made to ensure recording of and reporting on mine action according to International Mine Action Standards (IMAS) terminology.
- Somalia should develop a resource mobilisation strategy and initiate dialogue with development partners on long-term support for mine action, including to address CMR.

CONTAMINATION

The extent of CMR contamination in Somalia is unknown. In 2013, dozens of PTAB-2.5M submunitions and several AO-1SCh submunitions were found within a 30km radius of the town of Dolow on the Somali-Ethiopian border, in the southern Gedo region of south-central Somalia.[1] CMR were also identified around the town of Galdogob in the north-central Mudug province of Puntland, further north on the border with Ethiopia.[2] More contamination was expected to be found in south-central Somalia's Lower and Upper Juba regions.[3] In June 2016, SEMA reported that two areas of an unknown size were suspected to contain CMR in the Bakool region of south-west Somalia.[4]

According to the United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS), the Ethiopian National Defence Forces used cluster munitions in clashes with Somali armed forces along the Somali-Ethiopian border during the 1977–78 Ogaden War.[5] The Soviet Union supplied both Ethiopia and Somalia with weapons during the conflict. PTAB-2.5 and AO-1Sch submunitions were produced by the Soviet Union on a large scale.[6]

While the extent of CMR contamination along the Somali border with Ethiopia is not known, in 2014, Somalia claimed it posed an ongoing threat to the lives of nomadic people and their animals.[7]

Other ERW and Landmines

Somalia is heavily contaminated with ERW other than CMR, a result of conflict in 1990–2012. Contamination exists across its three major regions: south-central Somalia (including the capital Mogadishu), Puntland (a semi-autonomous administration in the north-east), and Somaliland (a self-proclaimed, though unrecognised, state that operates autonomously in the north-west).

Insecure and poorly managed stockpiles of weapons and ammunition, as well as use of improvised explosive devices (IEDs) by non-state armed groups have a serious humanitarian impact. The extent of the threat is not well known, except in Puntland and Somaliland where a range of surveys have been carried out over the past decade.[8]

In 2015, UNMAS reported that explosive hazards, including residual ERW, explosive stockpiles and ammunition caches, were a daily threat to communities along the main supply routes across south-central Somalia and the Ethiopian border.[9] In 2015, the vast majority (94%) of deaths and injuries from explosive hazards in south-central Somalia were caused by IEDs, while the number of ERW victims fell from 170 in 2010 to 50 in 2015 (a decrease from 86 in 2014). Few mine victims were recorded.[10]

Landmines along the border with Ethiopia, mainly as a result of legacy minefields, also continued to affect civilians in south-central Somalia.[11]

1 Email from Mohammed Abdulkadir Ahmed, Director, SEMA, 14 June 2016.

2 Response to questionnaire by Mohamed Abdulkadir Ahmed, SEMA, 19 June 2015.

3 Presentation by Mohammed Abdulkadir Ahmed, National Director, Somali National Mine Action Authority (SNMAA), "Somalia Weapons Contamination: Addressing Key Challenges to Meeting Clearance Deadlines under the Mine Ban Convention and Convention on Cluster Munitions", African Union and International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) workshop, Addis Ababa, 5 March 2013.

4 Email from Mohammed Abdulkadir Ahmed, SEMA, 14 June 2016.

5 UNMAS, "UN-suggested Explosive Hazard Management Strategic Framework 2015–2019", undated, provided by email from Kjell Ivar Breili, Project Manager, Humanitarian Explosive Management project, UNMAS Somalia, 7 July 2015; and email from Mohammed Abdulkadir Ahmed, SNMAA, 17 April 2013.

6 Email from Mohammed Abdulkadir Ahmed, SNMAA, 17 April 2013.

7 Statement of Somalia, CCM Fifth Meeting of States Parties, San José, 2–5 September 2014.

8 UNMAS, "2015 Portfolio of Mine Action Projects, Somalia", at: http://www.mineaction.org/sites/default/files/print/country_ portfolio4765-1070-10565.pdf.

9 Ibid.; and UNMAS, "2016 Portfolio of Mine Action Projects, Somalia", at: http://www.mineaction.org/sites/default/files/print/country_ portfolio6512-1530-96790.pdf.

10 Ibid.

11 UNMAS, "UN-suggested Explosive Hazard Management Strategic Framework 2015–2019", undated, pp. 6 and 12.

PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

The UN supports mine action activities in Somalia according to the three geographical regions: south-central Somalia, Puntland, and Somaliland. The respective centres responsible for mine action in each of these areas are SEMA, the Puntland Mine Action Centre (PMAC), and the Somaliland Mine Action Centre (SMAC). In 2015, UNMAS continued to support SEMA, as well as to train and equip national police in explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) in south-central Somalia, Puntland, and Somaliland.[12] In 2016, UNMAS reported it was developing a four-year plan for comprehensive police EOD support.[13]

South-central Somalia

SEMA was established in 2013 as the mine action centre for south-central Somalia, replacing the Somalia National Mine Action Authority (SNMAA) created two years earlier.[14] SEMA's goal was to assume full responsibility for all explosive hazard coordination, regulation, and management by December 2015.[15]

UNMAS reported that "significant steps" were made in late 2015 towards "the full transfer of responsibilities to a national authority" with Somalia's Council of Ministers endorsing of SEMA's legislative framework, policy, and budget, making it responsible for managing and coordinating all explosive hazards in Somalia.[16] SEMA developed a national plan in 2015, aiming to develop state-level coordination mechanisms to support SEMA's work and to create employment in local communities.[17] In June 2016, SEMA reported that its legislative framework, which had been endorsed by the Council of Ministers, was awaiting the approval of the Federal Parliament.[18]

In 2015, the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) deployed 11 EOD teams. UNMAS deployed four multi-task teams (MTT) in support of AMISOM to conduct survey, clearance, and risk awareness on three main supply routes connecting out of Mogadishu, along with nine community liaison officers to support AMISOM projects in nine regions in Somalia. Ten government police EOD teams were also deployed in south-central Somalia.[19]

Puntland

PMAC was established in Garowe with UN Development Programme (UNDP) support in 1999. Since then, on behalf of the regional government, PMAC has coordinated mine action with local and international partners, including HALO Trust, Danish Demining Group (DDG), and Mines Advisory Group (MAG).[20] PMAC runs the only police EOD team in Puntland, which is responsible for collecting and destroying explosive ordnance. In June 2015, Puntland requested assistance to increase its capacity and deploy three EOD teams in Bosaso, Galkayo, and Garowe.[21]

Somaliland

In 1997, UNDP assisted the government of Somaliland to establish SMAC, which is responsible for coordinating and managing demining in Somaliland.[22] Officially, SMAC is under the authority of the Vice-President of Somaliland, who heads the interministerial Mine Action Steering Committee.[23] UNMAS reported that coordination meetings were held twice monthly by the SMAC in 2015.[24]

Strategic Planning

Mine action in Somalia since 2013 has been increasingly tied to implementation of the Somali Compact, and its priorities for government stabilisation and development, infrastructure initiatives, and humanitarian assistance.[25] Focus is placed on national ownership of mine action and training of national police EOD capacity, as a source of employment for local people and former fighters, and to contribute to stabilisation.[26]

In 2015, the Federal Government of Somalia's Ministry of Internal Security and SEMA developed the "Badbaado Plan for Multi-Year Explosive Hazard Management", in coordination with Federal State members, the UN Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNSOM), and UNMAS. The plan's overarching objective over the next "two to three years" is to support the Federal Government in fulfilling its obligations under the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention and the CCM, with a focus on national ownership through the institutional development of SEMA federal state entities, the training of national police EOD teams, and the creation of employment opportunities

12 UNMAS, "UNMAS in Somalia", updated February 2016, at: http://www.mineaction.org/programmes/somalia; and UNMAS, "2016 Portfolio of Mine Action Projects, Somalia".

13 Ibid.

14 Interview with Mohamed Abdulkadir Ahmed, SEMA, in Geneva, 9 April 2014; and email from Kjell Ivar Breili, UNMAS, 12 July 2015.

15 Response to questionnaire by Mohamed Abdulkadir Ahmed, SEMA, 19 June 2015.

16 UNMAS, "2016 Portfolio of Mine Action Projects, Somalia".

17 Ibid.

18 Email from Mohammed Abdulkadir Ahmed, SEMA, 14 June 2016.

19 Ibid.

20 UNMAS, "UN-suggested Explosive Hazard Management Strategic Framework 2015–2019", p. 9.

21 Response to questionnaire by Mohamed Abdulkadir Ahmed, SEMA, 19 June 2015.

22 SMAC, "Annual Report 2011", Hargeisa, January 2012, p. 2.

23 Ibid.

24 UNMAS, "2016 Portfolio of Mine Action Projects, Somalia".

25 UNMAS, "2015 Portfolio of Mine Action Projects, Somalia"; and UNMAS, "UN-suggested Explosive Hazard Management Strategic Framework 2015–2019", p. 6.

26 UNMAS, "2015 Portfolio of Mine Action Projects, Somalia".

for local Somalis, including from at-risk groups such as youths and former combatants, to undertake clearance operations in their own communities.[27] According to SEMA, the Badbaado Plan's objectives for nationwide mine and ERW clearance in south-central Somalia include areas "reported with cluster munition presence".[28] A separate plan was developed for explosive hazard management by the police.[29]

UNMAS' Explosive Hazard Management Strategic Framework for Somalia for 2015–19 (including Somaliland and Puntland), was also approved by SEMA and the Federal Government of Somalia in 2015.[30] The Framework specifically includes addressing the threat from CMR through survey and clearance in its strategic objectives, alongside capacity building for SEMA.[31]

Somaliland has a five-year strategic plan for mine action for 2011–16, with goals focusing on strengthened national coordination capacity, an operational IMSMA database, clearance of high-priority minefields, and systematic victim support.[32]

Standards

UNMAS has developed National Technical Standards and Guidelines (NTSGs) for Somalia, including Puntland, which were used by implementers in 2015.[33] SEMA reported that there were no significant developments with regards to the NTSGs in 2015 and that the present version in use was developed by UNMAS in 2012–13 and had not been updated since.[34] The NTSGs do not include specific guidance for CMR survey or clearance and SEMA stated in June 2016 that it did not have the capacity to revise the existing NTSG to include provisions specific to CMR.[35]

Quality Management

SEMA reported that it lacked the capacity to carry out external quality assurance (QA) or quality control (QC) activities in 2015. It stated that UNMAS's QA/QC capacity was limited to ERW clearance activities and did not extend to mine clearance. It underlined as a matter of concern, that as of June 2016, mine clearance activities had been initiated under the Badbaado Plan but without a capacity for external quality management control for ongoing activities.[36]

Information Management

SEMA has claimed a number of improvements in mine action information management in 2015, including in staff training, data entry QA, and standardisation of reporting forms. An upgraded version of IMSMA was installed, providing the opportunity for a review of historical data in the database and integrity and consistency checks.[37] As at June 2016, however, full responsibility for the management of the database had yet to be transferred from UNMAS to SEMA.[38]

NGO operators have noted that uncertainty as to who "owns" the IMSMA database is a significant concern. Despite plans to transfer data to SEMA for more than two years, SEMA and mine action operators still had only limited access to the database in 2015. A primary reason for this was the lack of clarity in SEMA's status and its capacity to be able to take ownership of the database, leading to caution in the planned transfer. Questions have also been raised in connection with the fact that, despite being a civilian asset, the IMSMA database was being used to record security-related data on IEDs; information that was deemed classified by AMISOM.[39]

27 "Badbaado Plan: Multi-Year Explosive Hazard Management proposal outlined by the Federal Government of Somalia – Ministry of Internal Security and Somalia Explosive Management Authority", HMSWQ/31/8/15/025, 31 August 2015.

28 Email from Mohammed Abdulkadir Ahmed, SEMA, 14 June 2016.

29 UNMAS, "2016 Portfolio of Mine Action Projects, Somalia".

30 Ibid.; and UNMAS, "UNMAS in Somalia".

31 UNMAS, "UN-suggested Explosive Hazard Management Strategic Framework 2015–2019".

32 Response to questionnaire by Mohamed Abdulkadir Ahmed, SEMA, 19 June 2015.

33 Email from Terje Eldøen, Programme Manager, NPA, 5 June 2016; and response to questionnaire by Mohamed Abdulkadir Ahmed, SEMA, 19 June 2015.

34 Email from Mohammed Abdulkadir Ahmed, SEMA, 14 June 2016.

35 Ibid.; and email from Terje Eldøen, NPA, 5 June 2016.

36 Email from Mohammed Abdulkadir Ahmed, SEMA, 14 June 2016.

37 Ibid.

38 Ibid.

39 Emails from Tom Griffiths, Regional Director North Africa, HALO Trust, 17 and 26 June 2016; Tammy Hall, Head, DDG, 17 June 2016; and Terje Eldøen, NPA, 5 June 2016.

Operators

DDG began operations in the country in 1999 with mine and ERW clearance in Somaliland and has since undertaken mine action programmes in Mogadishu, Puntland, and Somaliland.[40] In 2015, DDG did not conduct any mine or battle area clearance (BAC) operations, focusing instead on EOD and risk education.[41]

HALO Trust's mine clearance programme in Somaliland was established in 1999. In 2015, HALO Trust was the only operator conducting mine action there, employing 434 demining personnel, 90 support staff, and 50 temporary local staff.[42] It deployed three mechanical teams and in 2015 it introduced a Road Threat Reduction (RTR) mechanical verification of road tasks, carrying out survey, mine clearance, BAC, and EOD spot tasks.[43] In the first half of 2015, HALO Trust opened a new programme in south-central Somalia and began surveying along the Somali border with Ethiopia.[44]

In 2015, MAG continued its arms management and destruction (AMD) programme across south-central Somalia, Puntland, and Somaliland. It also carried out risk education in Puntland.[45] MAG previously conducted non-technical survey (NTS) and EOD in Puntland, along with training and support to police EOD teams, but halted its mine action programme in August 2013 due to a change of strategy and worsening security.[46]

In 2014, NPA initiated a programme in south-central Somalia for survey, BAC, and capacity-building assistance to SEMA.[47] In 2015, NPA was operating in Mogadishu and its outskirts, within Banaadir. It deployed three eight-strong MTTs.[48]

In 2015, UNMAS continued to contract the Ukrainian commercial operator Ukroboronservice to undertake mine action-related tasks in south-central Somalia. It deployed four survey teams in 2015 and in the first half of 2016.[49]

LAND RELEASE

Survey in 2015

No overview of areas suspected to contain CMR exists in south-central Somalia, and, as at June 2016, no national survey had been conducted, mainly due to the security situation.[50] No survey specific to CMR was conducted in 2015.

Clearance in 2015

No CMR clearance occurred in Somalia in 2015. SEMA reported that no major mine action operations were conducted in south-central Somalia and that no CMR were found during survey, spot tasks, and BAC carried out during the year.[51] No formal land release occurred in Puntland in 2015; operations consisted only of risk education and EOD spot tasks. HALO Trust continued mine clearance, NTS and technical survey, and EOD spot tasks in Somaliland.[52]

Approximately 42.4km^2 of BAC was carried out by NPA in south-central Somalia, a dramatic increase from the 5.25km^2 in south-central Somalia and Somaliland in 2014.[53] In Somaliland, HALO Trust did not conduct BAC in 2015. It did not encounter any CMR in its operations.[54]

MAG did not find any CMR in its operations across south-central Somalia in 2015.[55] Likewise, DDG did not report finding any CMR in its EOD spot task activities in south-central Somalia, Puntland, or Somaliland in 2015.[56]

40 In 2007, DDG initiated a mine action programme in south-central Somalia (in Mogadishu) and in Puntland. DDG's mine action programme in Somaliland ceased mine clearance in 2006. DDG, "South-Central Somalia and Puntland", undated, but accessed 30 April 2014.

41 Email from Tammy Hall, DDG, 3 June 2016.

42 UNMAS, "UN-suggested Explosive Hazard Management Strategic Framework 2015–2019", undated, p. 12; and response to questionnaire by Tom Griffiths, HALO Trust, 20 May 2015.

43 Email from Tom Griffiths, HALO Trust, 25 May 2016.

44 Ibid.

45 Email from Bill Marsden, Regional Director, East and Southern Africa, MAG, 12 May 2016; and MAG, "MAG Somalia: Humanitarian Action to reduce the impact of the conflict", undated.

46 Response to questionnaire by Homera Cheema, Desk Officer Somalia, MAG, 28 April 2014.

47 NPA, "Humanitarian Disarmament in Somalia", accessed 28 April 2014; and emails from Terje Eldøen, NPA, 29 April 2014; and from Ahmed Siyad, NPA, 1 May 2014.

48 Email from Terje Eldøen, NPA, 5 June 2016.

49 Email from Terje Eldøen, NPA, 14 June 2016.

50 UNMAS, "2016 Portfolio of Mine Action Projects, Somalia"; and Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention Article 7 Report (for 16 April 2012–30 March 2013).

51 Email from Mohammed Abdulkadir Ahmed, SEMA, 14 June 2016.

52 Email from Tom Griffiths, HALO Trust, 25 May 2016.

53 Email from Terje Eldøen, NPA, 5 June 2016. NPA reported that operational results had far exceeded expectations, with an average of 75,000m^2 carried out per team per day, compared with a former standard average rate of 5,000m^2 per team per day by former operators. It attributed the 15-fold increase in productivity to changes in surface BAC methodology. These included amending a former BAC protocol stipulating that all search must include covering the same ground twice (meaning each team walked over the same area three times) to only once, as statistics showed that 99.4% of items were found during the first sweep. NPA also adjusted BAC marking requirements from every five metres to every fifty metres, and allowed greater distance between searchers in areas with little or no vegetation.

54 Email from Tom Griffiths, HALO Trust, 25 May 2016.

55 Email from Bill Marsden, MAG, 12 May 2016.

56 Email from Tammy Hall, DDG, 17 June 2016.

ARTICLE 4 COMPLIANCE

On 30 September 2015, Somalia deposited its instrument of ratification of the CCM, becoming the 97th state party. Under Article 4 of the CCM, Somalia is required to destroy all CMR in areas under its jurisdiction or control as soon as possible, but not later than 1 March 2026. It is too soon to say whether Somalia is on track to meet this deadline.

In June 2016, SEMA reported that it was optimistic that with adequate resources, Somalia could meet its CCM Article 4 clearance deadline by March 2026.[57] It highlighted the need for international assistance, greater transparency on bilaterally funded projects, better coordination and information sharing between operators, SEMA, and its Federal State member offices, and ensuring sufficient capacity to conduct independent QA/QC activities as key areas of concern.[58]

In 2015, following the approval of SEMA's legislative framework by the Council of Ministers, funding for SEMA was included in the Federal Government of Somalia's annual budget through the Ministry of Internal Security.[59] According to NPA, however, the Federal Government of Somalia did not provide any funding for mine action activities in Somalia prior to this during the year. NPA stated this was a significant limitation for the training of SEMA personnel, and that its staff had not received salary payments since the ending of a seven-month grant from UNMAS in December 2015.[60]

In June 2016, SEMA stated that it was not receiving any external support and that the national government lacked the resources to provide support.[61] NPA reported that UNMAS had stopped funding SEMA, in the expectation that its legislative framework was due to be approved by the Federal Parliament and that funding for SEMA would be allocated from the national budget. NPA expressed concern, however, that the process of adopting the law had stalled and that it would not be passed prior to elections planned for the second half of 2016. This, in turn, would mean that government funds for SEMA would also not be approved.[62]

There were no plans to conduct a national survey of CMR contamination as at June 2016.

57 Email from Mohammed Abdulkadir Ahmed, SEMA, 14 June 2016.

58 Ibid.

59 UNMAS, "UNMAS in Somalia", updated February 2016, at: http://www.mineaction.org/programmes/somalia; and email from Tom Griffiths, HALO Trust, 25 May 2016.

60 Email from Terje Eldøen, NPA, 5 June 2016.

61 Email from Mohammed Abdulkadir Ahmed, SEMA, 14 June 2016.

62 Emails from Terje Eldøen, NPA, 5 June and 14 June 2016.