

## Highlights January 2019



**179,997 m<sup>2</sup>**  
deemed as safe from explosives



**13.86 km of roads**  
deemed safe from explosives



**6 Landmine/ERW  
Safety Training sessions  
for UN personnel**



**Mine Risk Education  
31 participants**

UNMAS Integrated Clearance Team (ICT) and Integrated Road Assessment and Clearance Teams (IRACT) completed the clearance operations as per the UNISFA Dry Season Deployment Plan requirements and continued with clearance and mine risk education (MRE) activities within the Abyei area.

During the month of January, UNMAS IRACT conducted battle area clearance (BAC) and road assessment tasks at locations and on roads set as priority by the mission, and also assisted the Patrol Support Teams (PSTs) in JBVMM Sectors 1 and 2 towards the establishment of new team sites.

UNMAS teams assessed as safe from explosive hazards a total of 13.86 kilometres of roads, including 2.1 kilometres of the Abyei-Nyanchor-Madinton route leading to the UNISFA dry season temporary operating base in Madinton and 11.76 kilometres of the Rumamier-Kolanyiin and Rumamier-Sherorngoran routes. During the reporting period, 86,197 square meters (sqm) of land were cleared through BAC activities and deemed safe from explosive hazards, out of which 33,277 sqm at the UNISFA dry season temporary operating base in Madinton, 52,500 sqm at the identified firing range in Rubakoc and 420 sqm in Abyei, where UNMAS ICT commenced clearance of a former military trench in Abyei town.

In January, UNMAS conducted emergency demolition of one Explosive Remnant of War (ERW), a F1 hand grenade found in Myordol and reported by the UNISFA UNPOL.

During the month of January, UNMAS delivered one MRE session, reaching a total of 31 men, women, boys and girls in the Abyei area. Additionally, UNMAS provided six landmine and ERW awareness induction training sessions to 28 UNISFA staff officers and military observers, 22 males and 6 females.

With its four PSTs, UNMAS continued to support all the Ground Monitoring Missions (GMMs) in the Safe Demilitarised Border Zone (SDBZ). In JBVMM Sector 1 Gok Machar, during the month of January, PST completed clearance operations at the identified location for TS 12 at As Sumayah/War Abar, with additional support from the IRACT mechanical clearance team. In total, 93,800 sqm were cleared using BAC and mechanical clearance techniques. Previously cleared TS 11 in Safaha/Kiir Adem has been established and PST permanently located at the TS 11. After establishing these two team sites, two PSTs successfully conducted first GMMs at both locations on 31 January transporting JBVMM teams to the North Outer Limit and South Outer Limit points.

In JBVMM Sector 2, one PST with elements of IRACT was on standby in El Amira while waiting for a decision to move forward to the new TS 22 at Abu Qussa/Wunkur. The team conducted refresher training sessions and set up the temporary camp in El Amira.

The PST at the Tishwin TS 21 continued to support JBVMM GMMs. In January, eight GMMs were conducted from Tishwin TS to the North Outer Limit and to the South Outer Limit of the Higlig-Bentiu border crossing corridor on 3, 6, 13, 15, 19, 22, 27, and 29 January 2019. On 9 January, UNMAS joined a UNISFA and JBVMM assessment team on a visit to the Tishwin TS 21, in order to assess



Battle Area Clearance (BAC) Sub-surface at a former military trench in Abyei Town



UNMAS CASSPIR vehicle and Minewolf mechanical clearance in southern Abyei





# Field Story: Clearance of a Reported Minefield in Southern Abyei

Rupjaba is a little hamlet, situated about five kilometers from Rumamier village in South-East Abyei. The Kiir River is a prominent geographical and tactical feature, running across the northern side of the Rupjaba village. During the conflict period between 1982-1984, the people from Rupjaba were displaced to different locations. Since 2011, the local population has returned and began to resettle the area of Rupjaba. During the conflict period pre-2011, both the Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) and Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) occupied this area, taking advantage of the geographical features. In early 2000, the SPLA laid landmines in the area.

In 2001, a former SPLA engineer who laid the landmines reported to United Nations Mission in Sudan (UNMIS) the existence of three minefield locations. In January 2019, UNMAS managed to identify and approach the same informant and asked for assistance to identify the minefields. According to the informant, the anti-personnel (fragmentation effect) landmines were laid by him on the northern bank of the Kiir River in early 2000. He decided to report the location of the minefields to UNMIS in 2001, for the benefit of local community.

The Kiir River area is currently a hot spot area due to the ongoing sporadic clashes between Dinka and Nuer tribal groups which have taken place over the recent years. Due to these reasons, the locals avoid accessing and conducting livelihood activities along the northern bank of the Kiir River in the Rupjaba area.

On 24 January 2019, the UNMAS Integrated Road Assessment and Clearance Team (IRACT) conducted field reconnaissance activities in the Rumamier area, with the support of the aforementioned informant, a retired Lieutenant Colonel from SPLA's engineering regiment. Upon arriving in the Rumamier village, the informant met with former SPLA colleagues from the area. From Rumamier, the team used the CASSPIR mine protected armoured vehicles to reach the location of the reported minefields and recorded the approximate boundaries. The team further deployed the Advanced Route Clearance Roller (ARCR) in order to verify the route from Rumamier to the northern bank of the Kiir River, where the suspected minefield was initially reported by the informant. The Mechanical Asset (Mini Minewolf 240 machine) was additionally deployed in order to prepare and verify the ground. The task is currently ongoing and no evidence of landmines has yet been found.

The majority of the community members in Rupjaba and its neighbouring Malual village are fishermen who are depending on the resources from the Kiir River and the adjoining area. By clearing this hidden explosive threat, UNMAS will enable the local population to conduct livelihood activities without fear. UNMAS and its team's efforts have been recognised by the community, as expressed by the community leaders of Rupjaba.



*UNMAS liaising with the Rupjaba and Malual community leaders*



*UNMAS mechanical ground preparation using the Minewolf machine*



*Task site visit by the Rumamier County Commissioner, Mr Mayot Kunit Miyen and several local chiefs*

**IF YOU SEE AN ITEM OF CONCERN,  
DO NOT TOUCH IT!  
CONTACT UNMAS IMMEDIATELY!**  
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