



### Highlights **MARCH 2023**

 **45 km**  
of routes assessed as safe  
from explosive hazards



UNMAS monitoring visit

 **52,654**  
square meters cleared in  
the Abyei Area



Battle Area Clearance

 **18** Explosive Remnants  
of War destroyed



Explosive Ordnance Risk Education session in Goli

 **54** Explosive Ordnance  
Risk Education  
sessions provided

 **12** Ground Monitoring  
Missions supported



Ground Monitoring Mission in Tishwin

# UNMAS CLEARANCE OF IOM VOCATIONAL TRAINING CENTRE

In mid-February 2023, International Organisation for Migration (IOM) was implementing the establishment of a Vocational Training Centre in Abyei town. The project required the construction of prefabricated structures on foundations inside a previously established fenced compound. While setting up the construction site, IOM discovered small arms ammunition (SAA) cases in the ground and halted work immediately to call in UNMAS for support. On 1 March, UNMAS dispatched a clearance team from The Development Initiative (TDI), UNMAS's implementing partner, to conduct a thorough clearance of the site to allow IOM to proceed with their project. Local information revealed that the compound had been occupied by military units in previous years.

Based on the initial assessment by TDI, the site was deemed to be requiring a 'Battle Area Clearance' (BAC) approach with sub-surface investigation to eliminate any buried ammunition. This sub-surface BAC required deminers to excavate the ground by hand down to a depth of 20cm. The presence of Explosive Remnants of War (ERW) could not be discounted hence the manual and laborious approach. Also, to compound progress, the safety distances for deminers working on this methodology meant that only several deminers could work concurrently. Finally, after 10 full working days the site was cleared and handed over to IOM as safe on 13 March. The team needed to saturate the ground with water to make excavation safer and easier. Each metallic item found required identification and subsequent disposal, whether it was old ammunition or even just pieces of domestic scrap metal. This is an extremely slow process but is the only way to declare land 100% free from metal and ERW.

In the end, UNMAS demining team unearthed:

**208** live small arms ammunitions

**One** live RGM-PD fuze

More than **10,000** used SAA cartridge cases

All in an area of only 105 square metres! The live items were safely moved to the explosive storage facility in Dukra for disposal and the site cleared of all the spent cases and scrap metal found.

Through prompt reporting of suspect ammunition and a professional and thorough BAC task conducted by the UNMAS team, IOM have been able to complete the construction of the VTC and successfully establish the beginning of vocational trainings for the benefit of the people of Abyei. Currently IOM along with the authorities for education and labour are running 8-month courses in catering, tailoring and masonry and also a 2 to 3-month courses in business management and computer skills. All activities are geared up to contribute towards sustainable income generation, where youths are strongly encouraged to participate. These are transferable skills that can help families earn a living and become self-sustainable.

This fantastic initiative by IOM has been complemented through the activities of UNMAS and serve to highlight what dangers lurk beneath the surface if unnoticed. UNMAS looks forward to support similar activities in future in order to protect the population from the dangers of ERW.

Muhammad Salahuddin, IOM Programme Officer says: "We at IOM are grateful for the UNMAS prompt response, who adopted an expedited approach to complete the task in a very short time to our utmost satisfaction. This has enabled us to implement our activities at the Vocational Training Centre. The place is now safe, and we are planning to provide various vocational trainings to 100 youths within this year that will help in improving the livelihoods and income generating abilities of the Abyei youth. Since IOM is engaged in many infrastructure activities, we look forward to similar support and cooperation from the wonderful UNMAS team, to make secure our working and service delivery environment."



Metal collection point



BAC clearance at the VTC in Abyei



Ammunition found



Ammunition found



Scan for more information about UNMAS Abyei

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

**CONTACT UNMAS UNISFA IMMEDIATELY!**

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