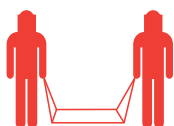


Highlights October 2019

15 OCT **UN SECRETARY GENERAL
REPORT ON UNISFA
PUBLISHED**



**EXTENDED RAINY
SEASON**



**INTEGRATED ROAD
ASSESSMENT AND
CLEARANCE TEAMS
REACCREDITED**



49 **UNISFA STAFF
RECEIVED RISK
EDUCATION**

The rainy season continued in the region, limiting movement and activities in the Abyei area. Roads throughout Abyei have been eroded by the heavy rains and continue to be inaccessible.

UNMAS Integrated Road Assessment and Clearance Teams (IRACT) completed remobilisation and commenced refresher training on 4 October. Reaccreditation of the teams was successfully completed on 30 October. The teams are now on standby, ready for deployment in support of the UNISFA Dry Season Deployment Plan.

The Dry Season Deployment plan was received from UNISFA; however, initiation dates are still to be determined due to a prolonged rainy season and inaccessible road conditions. On 31 October, UNMAS Programme Manager (PM), Mr Nico Bosman and Chief of Operations Officer-in-Charge (COO OIC), Mr Artur Snitkovsky, met with the UNISFA leadership to discuss the Mission's priorities, particularly focusing on the Dry Season Deployment Plan.

With its four PSTs, UNMAS is dedicated to support all the Ground Monitoring Missions (GMMs) in the SDBZ. In total, 14 GMMs took place and were all supported by the PSTs in October 2019.

In JBVMM Sector 1 - Gok Machar, one PST was on standby in Gok Machar, due to inaccessible road conditions to Team Site (TS) 12 at As Sumayah/War Abar, while one PST continued to support patrols in the SDBZ from TS 11 at Safahah/Kiir Adem. In October, nine GMMs were conducted on 4, 8, 10, 14, 17, 22, 25, 28, and 31 October 2019.

In JBVMM Sector 2 - Kadugli, one PST continued to be on standby in Kadugli and conducted Integrated Ground Patrol Training (IGPT) for 27 JBVMM staff on 21-23 October. The PST at TS-21 Tishwin continued to support JBVMM GMMs. In October, five GMMs were conducted from Tishwin TS to the North Outer Limit and to the South Outer Limit of the SDBZ at the Higlig-Bentiu border crossing corridor on 3, 15, 21, 27, and 31 October 2019.

No weapons or ammunition for destruction were received from UNISFA during this reporting period.

UNMAS delivered four landmine and Explosive Remnants of War (ERW) risk education sessions to 49 (42 males and 7 females) UNISFA military, civilian personnel and humanitarian staff as part of their induction training. As part of the UN Day celebratory events, UNMAS delivered an MRE public information session in Abyei town, reaching 128 residents.



IRACT Reaccreditation



MRE at UN Day Community Event

WOMEN IN MINE ACTION: STAFF PROFILES

LAURA BOSA

Laura is one of the remarkable women in mine action: a wife, a mother of two, and a Support Services Officer with UNMAS-UNISFA. In October Laura celebrated 5 years of working with UNMAS. She remembers fondly how she came across the vacancy announcement for a Support Services Officer position with UNMAS in 2014, while she was working with the World Food Programme (WFP) in Juba. "I had worked with WFP for over 10 years in Uganda, Sudan and South Sudan and was at a point in my career when I needed a change," she says, "The job with UNMAS in Entebbe was a breath of fresh air because it would give me an opportunity to reconnect with family and friends after a period of six years away from home." She started working at UNMAS as a National Support Services Officer in Entebbe, Uganda, where she remained for the following three years. When offered the opportunity to relocate to Abyei, Laura took on the challenge: "I considered the three-year tenure in Entebbe as a break from action. I have always loved working in the field because that is where the action is, and I get to experience first-hand the impact of our programmes."



Although certainly more challenging than life in Entebbe, working in the field comes with its own advantages, particularly in the strong development of connections with colleagues and co-workers. Laura loves the team work and support from UNMAS and UNISFA colleagues and there's never a dull day in her line of work. "UNMAS is like a family, a smaller team in comparison with my previous workplace which makes coordination and communication easier," she stated. The most difficult aspect of field life as a woman and a mother, in Laura's opinion, is being away from her children and family. "My kids are in Uganda. They have a mother who, from the time they were born, has been doing this kind of things. I had to explain my job to them, now they're much older, so they even understand more why I do what I do. They appreciate what I'm doing and, although they miss me, at the end of the day they realize I'm doing this for humanity, it's all for a greater cause."



Laura is very proud of her work, feeling rewarded and motivated each day UNMAS-UNISFA teams deliver results and ensure that the people of Abyei can return to their homes safely. "Waking up in the morning to go to work with the knowledge that my work contributes immensely to the delivery of our mandate in Abyei makes this job very fulfilling. You can see that people's lives have been changed through the work that is being done by UNMAS. Local communities have been able to go back and do some gardening, and their kids can now go back to school, because the areas where they live have been cleared. For me, as a family person, that is really fulfilling, to realize that I'm working with an organization that is ensuring that people's quality of life actually improves." ■

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

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**NEEDS
DRIVEN.
PEOPLE
CENTRED.**

The United Nations Mine Action Service is the United Nations entity on explosive hazards and the coordinator for mine action within the United Nations system. UNMAS provides critical support to the protection of civilians, peacekeeping, humanitarian relief and development, allowing UN personnel to rapidly deploy, and refugees and internally displaced persons to safely return to their homes. UNMAS is hosted by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations. UNMAS supports the UNISFA mandate, ensuring Joint Border Verification and Monitoring Mechanism (JBVMM) freedom of movement as well as the identification and clearance of mines and Explosive Remnants of War (ERW) in the Abyei Area and the Safe Demilitarised Border Zone (SDBZ).