

## **SUDAN NATIONAL MINE ACTION CENTER (NMAC)**

### **Land Release Policy**

#### **Introduction**

This policy aims to improve the quality and efficiency of the land release operations, activities and services in Sudan. In reference to the Sudan National Mine Action Standards (SNMAS) and International Mine Action Standards (IMAS), this policy also aims to ensure safety and effectiveness in land release operations and to build the confidence of beneficiaries, affected communities, stakeholders and interested parties about the land release services, outputs and outcomes.

The references for this policy are IMAS 07.11 and SNMAS 05.01 and the programme commitment to continual improvement of the quality, safety, efficiency and effectiveness of the land release process including survey (non-technical survey and technical survey) and clearance activities in Sudan.

#### **Purpose**

To provide guidance and direction to the mine action organizations working in Sudan to ensure that all mine and or ERW hazardous areas are properly surveyed, reported and recorded in IMSMA database.

To avoid recording of unnecessary claimed hazardous areas into IMSMA.

To ensure that all the presence and or suspicion of explosive ordnance contamination are removed through applying all reasonable effort, and the safe land is handed over to the beneficiaries and communities for their intended use.

#### **Rational**

Sudan is the state party to the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC) that is signed and ratified by the Republic of the Sudan. Under its approved extension request by the state parties, the government is committed to achieve the deadline of Sudan free from the known Explosive Ordnance (EO) by 2023. However, the main challenge that NMAC as national mine action authority, and the mine action programme are faced with; is the limited information about the actual scope of EO problem in Sudan. To overcome this challenge, it is crucial to make all unknowns known through undertaking comprehensive survey throughout the country that will improve the information and knowledge about the scope of the EO problem. Survey and proper management of information can facilitate appropriate management of land release operations in terms of planning, resource mobilization, implementation, regular monitoring and evaluation and reporting to the state parties and mine action stakeholders.

It is, therefore, important to provide policy guidance and direction to the mine action organizations enabling them to accurately determine the scope of EO problem, properly plan and undertake land release operations; apply all reasonable effort, using the most appropriate procedures, tools and assets; to remove immediate threat of EO, support humanitarian assistance, improve the livelihood of affected communities, facilitate development and make efforts to achieve the APMBC obligation of the government of Sudan.

## **All Reasonable Effort**

Reference the requirements of SNMAS 05 series and IMAS 07.11; all reasonable effort in the context of Sudan shall at minimum include, but not limited to the following:

- 1) Undertake communities survey, gathering of information from the communities and wider source of information about the possible EO contamination.
- 2) Information gathering shall take place throughout the land release process including NTS, TS and clearance.
- 3) In addition to other possible informants, affected communities shall form the main source of information during NTS, TS and clearance operations.
- 4) Information and evidence collected shall be analyzed, reported and recorded in IMSMA database.
- 5) The ultimate decision about reported hazardous areas shall be based on evidence including direct and indirect evidence and “no evidence of” EO hazards; that should result in Confirmed Hazardous Area (CHA), or Suspected Hazardous Area (SHA) and or Cancellation.
- 6) All CHAs and SHAs shall be subject to TS as targeted investigation and systematic investigation respectively. The information and evidence collected during TS, shall form the bases for decision-making about the succeeding clearance activities.
- 7) The procedure, methodology, type of tools and assets shall be based upon the information and evidence collected during NTS and TS activities. The most suitable and effective available tools and assets and related procedures shall be applied to release the land from the presence and or suspicion of EO.
- 8) Proper information management system shall be ensured by NMAC to record the outputs of each activity including NTS, TS and Clearance undertaken as part of the Land Release process.
- 9) Proper Quality Management System shall be established to ensure the quality of land release activities, services, outputs, outcomes and information management.

## **Requirements**

Achieving APMBC deadline is only possible and feasible when the quality, reliability and efficiency of survey and land release operations are improved, ensured and the confidence of beneficiaries, impacted communities and stakeholders is built. To achieve this, the following important provisions of this land release policy shall be followed by NMAC with technical support of UNMAS and mine action organizations working in Sudan:

- 1) NMAC as a regulatory and coordination body for mine action in Sudan, is responsible to accredit mine action organizations including the management and implementation aspects of land release including survey and clearance in Sudan.
- 2) NMAC shall ensure the quality of land release operations including non-technical and technical survey and clearance activities and their outputs. The assessment of land release outcome and impact is also essential for the continual improvement and the beneficiaries focused land release operations, this will help to ensure that the released land is used productively by the beneficiaries that contributes to their livelihood. Ensuring the quality of land release process shall be started from very beginning through proper prioritization, planning, accreditation, monitoring of activities,

monitoring of outputs, completion QA and Post Land Release Impact Assessment and Landmine and Livelihood Evaluation.

- 3) The management and operational capacity of all mine action organizations accredited in survey and clearance operations in Sudan, shall be regularly reviewed and improved by NMAC with technical support of UNMAS, considering the requirements outlined in updated editions of SNMAS and IMAS.
- 4) All mine action organizations accredited to plan, manage and undertake survey and clearance operations as part of the land release process in Sudan, are responsible to establish, develop and maintain their capacity including procedures and personnel.
- 5) All mine action organizations accredited in management and implementation of land release operations in Sudan, shall consider applying all reasonable effort outlined in this policy and be responsible for the quality of their land release operations.
- 6) All previously recorded hazardous areas shall be resurveyed to understand the real and current scope of the EO problems in Sudan and update IMSMA with fresh and up to date information.
- 7) All Anti-Personal Mine contaminated areas shall be considered as the main challenge to be managed first due to their impact on the safety of affected communities and also as the main obligation of Sudan as part of APMBC.
- 8) All newly reported and requested EO areas shall be subject to NTS as a first step of land release process.
- 9) The findings of NTS activity regarding the new and previously recorded hazardous areas, shall be used as basis for informed decision-making that is leading to taking the most suitable, appropriate and effective succeeding actions. Such action may include TS and or Clearance, or area cancellation, if “no evidence of” EO is confirmed.
- 10) All clearance teams working in the field, shall conduct situation analysis around their ongoing tasks and notify NMAC about the presences of any possible EO contamination that affect the people and local communities.
- 11) Each hazardous area that is issued to the teams for land release operations, shall be subject to a fresh NTS.
- 12) NTS should be considered as a dynamic activity throughout the land release process; any new information and evidence identified shall be recorded, analyzed and immediately reported to related organization and NMAC for authorizing required actions to be taken.
- 13) Presence of direct evidence in some parts of a big area, shall not be used as a strong justification to record and report the entire area as a CHA, rather those parts with direct evidence shall be recorded as CHA and the rest of the area with indirect evidence to be recorded as a separate SHA.

- 14) The survey and clearance teams shall liaise with affected communities throughout the survey and land release operations. Their needs and requirements should be considered as important aspects in land release planning, prioritization and operations.
- 15) NMAC shall manage and maintain information management system (IMSMA) for survey and clearance activities; capable of proper and timely entry and recording of data and information, facilitate regular analysis, and ensure timely reporting and communication of programme achievements and progress with mine action stakeholders and interested parties.
- 16) All mine action organization accredited in survey and clearance shall develop land release training management packages and train their teams in land release process at least once a year.
- 17) All area reduction through technical survey and cancellation through non-technical survey shall be based on evidence and “no evidence of” EO.