

Support to demining, development and social protection for vulnerable people in Chad (PRODECO)



EU Trust Fund for Africa - Sahel & Lake Chad



 **EUTF PARTNER:**
Humanity & Inclusion

 **COUNTRY:** Chad  **BUDGET:** EUR 22.8M  From **09/2017** to **04/2022**

Armed conflict in Chad over more than 20 years¹ has led to significant contamination with anti-personnel mines and explosive remnants of war (ERW) in large areas in the North. More recently, rebel groups based in Libya and Boko Haram in the Lake Chad region further contributed to contaminating an estimated overall surface of 7,700 hectares of Chadian territory. In addition to the immediate security risk affecting people in these areas, the contamination also restricts economic activities: major routes are unusable, forcing merchants on longer journeys and shifting transhumance towards Niger. As a result of the latter, once established stopover villages along transhumance routes in northern Chad have disappeared.

Against this background, the EUTF funded the programme Support to demining, development and social protection for vulnerable people (PRODECO)², which was implemented from September 2017 to April 2022 in the provinces of Borkou, Ennedi Ouest, Lac Tchad and N'Djamena. Four implementing NGOs³ worked closely with the National High Commission for Demining (*Haut-Commissariat National de Déminage*, HCND) and its regional centres to achieve the project's objectives.

How did the EUTF help?

PRODECO's integrated approach aimed both to address the security threats associated with ERWs and to promote socio-economic development in the target areas. As a result, it worked in four areas of intervention, yielding the following results:

Objective of the project

To provide support for mine clearance, social protection and the development of vulnerable people in northern and western Chad.

Key successes

- > 6,966,270m² of land demined.
- > 17 national mine action standards revised.
- > 130,883 people benefiting from social services.

- ERW clearance of 696.6 hectares of land, including 169.9 kilometres of roads which can be used again without risk, representing 9% of contaminated land in Chad; 24,697 people sensitised on the risks related to ERW;
- 525 people with disability assisted to regain their physical independence through the Kabalaye Orthopaedic and Rehabilitation Centre (CARK); strengthened capacity of the CARK and improved assistance to victims of ERW through the establishment of a social fund to pay for medical treatment and social counsel for people in need;
- comprehensive institutional reform of the HCND through continued coaching, specialised training, management advice and a new organisational chart, leading to better defined roles, improved operational procedures, and enhanced internal cooperation; 233 staff members of government institutions and internal security forces trained;
- 130,883 people benefiting from social services (e.g. cash transfers, access to credit, income-generating activities), improving beneficiaries' capacities to develop long-term economic activities in affected areas; 16 local committees strengthened (training, targeting of vulnerable households, raising awareness on the risks related to ERW, support in elaborating local development plans) and 35 funds for local economic development established, benefiting 15,117 people.

Keys to success

Apply international norms and standards: PRODECO followed international standards and recommendations in implementing its mine action-related activities. Most importantly, the project trained HCND staff to use the Information Management System for Mine Action (IMSMA), developed by the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining. The IMSMA is a widely used and internationally recognised software to compile, store, analyse and share information on mine action. It can be used to understand the contamination, know the terrain and environment, analyse the impact of hazards, set priorities, measure operational efficiency, and monitor demining progress. PRODECO also assisted the HCND in revising 17 national mine action standards in line with the international norms developed by the International Mine Action Standards framework and endorsed by the United Nations.⁴ Revised national standards concerned, for example, clearing requirements, the destruction of landmines, and the quality management system. More generally, PRODECO contributed to the implementation of Article 5 of the Mine Ban Treaty of 1997, through which adhering countries, including Chad, have committed themselves to destroy all antipersonnel mines in mined areas under their jurisdiction.

Use state-of-the-art technology: The project used drones to record aerial images of the contaminated areas. The images helped detect hazardous objects like bombs and provided important information about the topography of the contaminated areas, supporting the preparation of demining activities. While the use of drones enhanced the project's clearance results, their systematic use in the future would require better IT infrastructure to analyse drone images. Furthermore, PRODECO used a remote-controlled clearance machine, specifically built for Humanity & Inclusion. The use of the machine considerably accelerated clearance activities, as it can demine up to 3,000 square-metres per day, compared to 100 square-metres per day for a single human deminer.

Implement innovative methodologies: The graduation approach, which was adopted by the project, aims to lead particularly vulnerable people out of poverty through multisectoral, sequenced interventions targeting support to consumption, savings, asset transfer and mentoring and/or training. Local committees selected through a

participatory process played a key role in embedding project activities in local structures. They also helped identify and classify vulnerable households which would benefit from the graduation approach. First, the 400 most vulnerable households received unconditional cash transfers to stabilise consumption patterns. Second, and building on pre-existing local initiatives, PRODECO supported the establishment of Village Savings and Loan Associations, allowing participating households to save money and take out small loans to invest in income-generating activities. Third, PRODECO provided productive assets, like livestock, and organised professional trainings for 1,004 young people to further support regular household income. Among the vulnerable households benefiting from cash transfers, 86% claimed to have improved their quality of life.

Building on success

The project's close and continuous cooperation with the HCND led to a fundamental transformation of the latter's way of working. By the end of the project, the organisation used a more effective information system and internal cooperation worked more smoothly. For example, better cooperation between information management agents and technical teams on the ground considerably improved the quality of data fed into the IMSMA.

PRODECO's integrated approach, demining important areas of land, protecting the victims of ERW, and developing socio-economic opportunities, **could be a model for future mine action in Chad.** Further support could build upon the enhanced capacities of the HCND and its experience with innovative technologies to expand demining activities in Chad in line with the 1997 Mine Ban Treaty. One key element of future cooperation would be to continue PRODECO's advocacy for more resources for the HCND so that its enhanced capacities can be translated into effective and comprehensive mine action in the years to come.

¹ Notably the civil war and the Chadian-Libyan war, spanning from the 1960s to the 1980s.

² *Appui au déminage, à la protection sociale et au développement des personnes vulnérables.*

³ Humanity & Inclusion, the Mines Advisory Group, the *Fondation Suisse de Déminage and Secours Catholique et Développement.*

⁴ Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining, 'The International Mine Action Standards'. Retrieved [here](#).



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Disclaimer

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