



ISSUE BRIEF

TIME TO CHANGE COURSE

Angola and The Ottawa Treaty

April 2017



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Twenty years ago, Diana Princess of Wales walked in Angola's minefields. In doing so, she captured the conscience of states, civil society and the public. This helped inspire the final successful push to achieve the ground breaking Ottawa Treaty banning landmines in 1997.

As a result, Angola holds an iconic status for the mine ban movement. It continues to symbolise the commitments and spirit of the treaty and its cause – to end, for all time, the suffering caused by anti-personnel landmines.

As long as people live at risk and in daily fear from landmines, the cause and commitments of the Treaty must remain alive. Yet 20 years on, in spite of progress made, Angola's minefields and the people who fear them risk being forgotten. The legacy of contamination remains a lasting blight on their lives.

It is also an obstacle to Angola regaining sustainable agricultural productivity, a goal that is more important now than ever. The collapse of the Angolan oil-based economy means that agriculture must play an increasing role in building shared prosperity.

There is an opportunity for change. With renewed commitment and support, international governments can help Angola be landmine free by 2025. It is an achievable goal that could release thousands of men, women and children from fear, and unlock enormous development potential in a country where poverty is still rife and misunderstood.

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Front cover image: Children play on land that has been cleared by MAG in Chifoio village, Angola. The football is home-made; fashioned from plastic bags.

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The remains of a partially destroyed and long since abandoned shop and bakery in Cambinga village.

INTRODUCTION

Decades of conflict in Angola created a protracted humanitarian emergency, displacing thousands of communities and devastating the country's infrastructure¹. As one of the hottest 'proxy wars' of the Cold War period, all of Angola's 18 provinces were left littered with landmines. By the time the peace agreement was signed in 2002, an estimated 982 square kilometres was believed to be contaminated.

Since then, landmines have hampered the return of refugees and displaced communities, denied communities access to land for housing and livelihoods, and created a culture of fear that has affected generations. They continue to have a devastating impact on the country's agricultural potential and economic development.

Angola had strong agricultural structures in place before the start of the war for independence in 1961. These enabled it to take advantage of its sympathetic climate and fertile soils and to be a significant agricultural producer.

Once self-sufficient in all major food crops, Angola was also a net exporter of coffee and maize, as well as crops such as bananas and cassava. It remains a country with huge agricultural potential. This brief shows how completing landmine clearance will be a key contributor to Angola's economic sustainability in addition to achieving food security and improved livelihoods in some of the poorest rural communities.

The Ottawa Treaty

The Ottawa Treaty, officially known as the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction, was negotiated and signed by 122 States in 1997 and entered into force in 1999. Since then, another 40 countries have acceded to the treaty, bringing the total number of States Parties to 162. It is acknowledged to be a ground-breaking disarmament treaty for putting humanitarian considerations above all others. Since its development, 49 million stockpiled landmines have been destroyed, production has all but ceased and millions of people have benefitted as a result of clearance and victim assistance.

¹ Angola saw more than 40 years of conflict between 1961 and 2002, with the Angolan war of independence (1961-1974) and the Angolan Civil War (1975-2002).

MIDDLE-INCOME MYTHS

Angola's poverty and the rural poor

For the decade after the peace agreement, Angola experienced an economic boom. This was driven predominantly by a growing oil industry, as well as exploitation of its diamond fields. The rapid economic growth and infrastructure development in some parts of the country led the international community to believe that Angola was fast becoming a middle-income country. On paper this was true, but it masked huge inequality and extreme poverty.

The Angolan government made huge investments in the development of the country's infrastructure and started several social development schemes. But the economic growth did not reflect the huge reliance by the majority of the population on international aid and international NGOs for many basic services, including access to medical facilities and education. Nor did it reflect the fact that the wealth generated from oil and diamonds benefitted only a small percentage of the population.

For many international donors, the perception of a prosperous Angola went hand-in-hand with a view that international development aid was no longer required to help eliminate poverty. International aid to Angola reduced and aid organisations had to close their programmes and leave as a result. The provision of many basic services has not been replaced by the government.

In mid-2014, the oil price plummeted from \$120 per barrel to \$30. Being 80% dependant on oil revenues, Angola's economy crashed. Fifteen years after the end of the conflict, the country's prospects of transitioning from poverty to prosperity are poor.

Angola is ranked 150 out of 188 countries on the Human Development Index (HDI, categorising it as 'low' levels of human development) and has a healthcare system that has near completely collapsed. The under-five mortality rate is still the highest in the world.

A Yellow Fever outbreak that started in Luanda in early-2016 only served to highlight this. An isolated case spread quickly from Luanda to five provinces, before an emergency response by

Angola Statistics²

Human Development Index (HDI): 150/188

Under-Five Mortality: 157/1,000 live births

Primary-school drop-out rate: 68%

Life expectancy at birth (both sexes): 52.4

1.7 doctors per 10,000 people

66% of population living on less than \$2 per day

the World Health Organisation (WHO) brought it under control³. The epidemic was recorded as having infected 355 people and killed 159. The number of unreported deaths is known to be far higher as people could not reach over-stretched hospitals or receive treatment.

The last three years have seen the situation in Angola become even more desperate. The inflation and currency depreciation that followed the 2014 economic crash has further compounded the extreme poverty in most of the country, with the majority of people living on less than \$2 per day.

Angola is now food insecure. Once a net-exporter of crops, it imports more than 80% of its consumables. Fifteen years after the end of the conflict, Internally Displaced People (IDPs) and refugees are still returning to the villages they fled years ago. The dire economic situation has also seen a population influx from urban to rural areas, with people looking to engage in subsistence farming. Many of these people are returning to rural areas, which are landmine contaminated.

The Angolan government has identified the need to diversify its economy and that agriculture represents a key part of this strategy, along with clearance of remaining landmines.

2. 2016 Human Development Index report. <http://hdr.undp.org/en/2016-report>

3. <http://www.who.int/emergencies/yellow-fever/mediacentre/timeline/en/>



Daughters of the Soba (Chief of village) bring water in preparation for a wedding feast in Sacandelei village.

ANGOLA'S AGRICULTURAL POTENTIAL

The impact of landmine contamination on agriculture and development potential

A self-sufficient Angola that realises its agricultural potential will not be possible until clearance of landmines has been completed. The estimated 118 square kilometres of remaining contaminated land is almost exclusively in agricultural areas. While all of Angola's 18 provinces are affected, the worst are Moxico and Cunene Provinces, which together account for nearly half of all remaining contamination⁴.

UK trade and aid

Angola is one of the 15 countries in Africa that has a dedicated UK Trade Envoy. This puts it in the company of countries such as Ghana, Nigeria, Tanzania, Mozambique, Uganda, Kenya and DRC,

all of which have been priority countries for UK Overseas Development Assistance (ODA). Although Angola's economy has suffered recently as a result of over-reliance on the oil industry, it is a politically stable country open to foreign investment. It has a favourable climate, significant natural resources and vast areas of under-used fertile land.

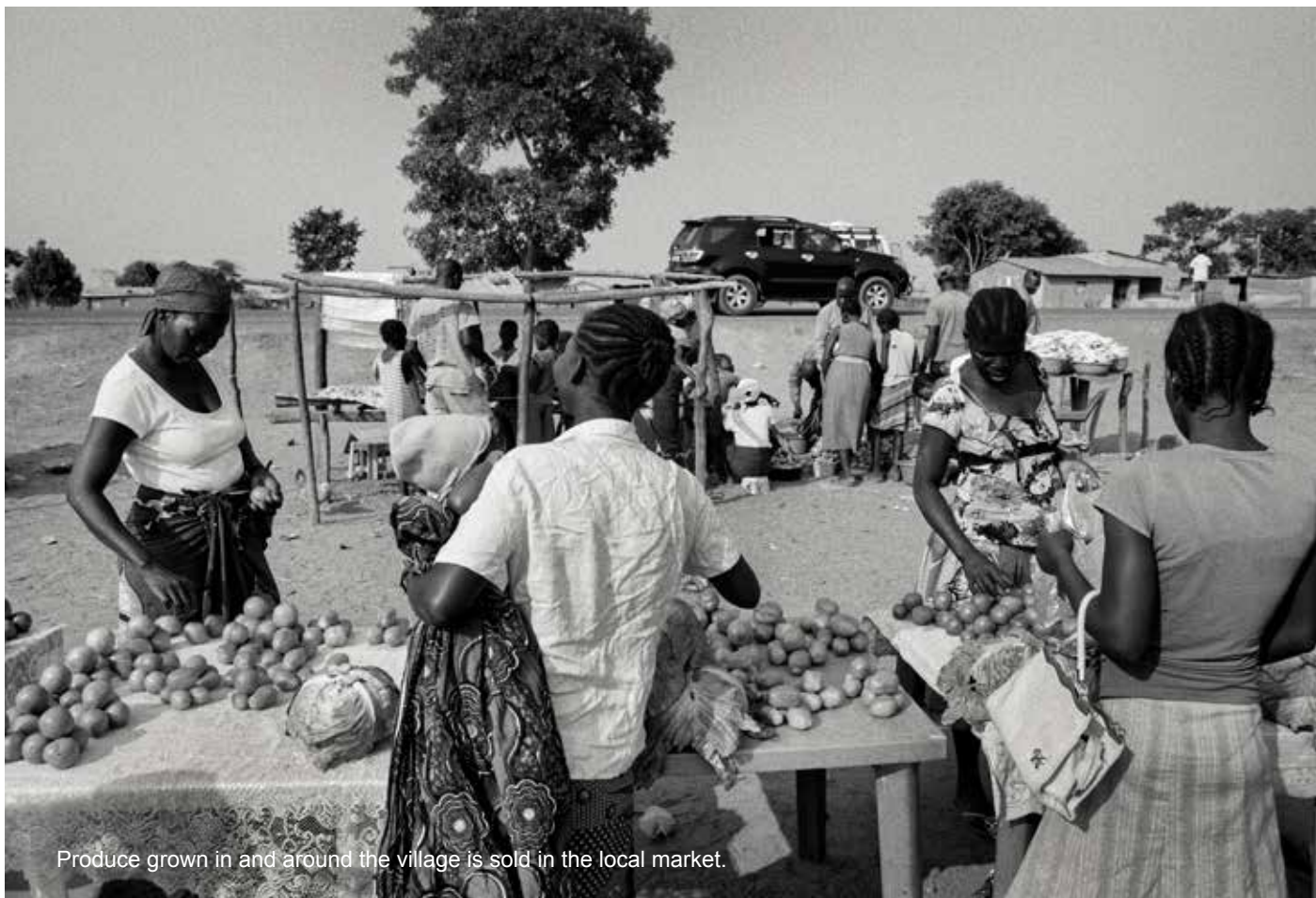
The UK's strategy is not just to see Angola become agriculturally productive, but also to become a net agricultural exporter as it was prior to the conflict for independence and the civil war. Its focus is on the development of its agricultural marketing practices – the process of transporting food from where it is grown, to where it is stored and distributed to the consumer – as well as practices and techniques applied to increase yield.

UK TRADE ENVOYS

UK Trade Envoys focus on emerging markets where substantial trade and investment opportunities have been identified. This aims to support the country's drive for economic growth through maximising trade potential. Together, the Governments of Angola and the UK have identified three key areas for cooperation: infrastructure and services, hydropower and agriculture and minerals.

With rich fertile soils and favourable climate, Angola remains a country with huge agricultural potential. This can only be fully realised by clearing the remaining 44% of landmine contamination.

4. Clearing the Mines 2016. <http://www.mineactionreview.org/assets/downloads/NPA-Clearing-the-Mines-2016.pdf>



Produce grown in and around the village is sold in the local market.

LIFE RETURNS TO VILLAGES AFTER LANDMINE CLEARANCE

Luzi village is in the municipality of Lumbala-Nguimbo, Moxico province. The village and surrounding area saw intense conflict during the Angola civil war. It was a strategic base at different times for both the government forces and UNITA. Minefields were laid by both sides during the conflict.

MAG has cleared four areas in the village over the last six years. The most recent area cleared was handed back to the community in August 2015.



337,608 square metres of suspected land has been cleared and handed over to the community, an area equivalent to 80 football pitches.



81 landmines and 210 unexploded bombs were found and destroyed.



274 people lived here before clearance, now there are more than 6,270 with more families arriving all the time.

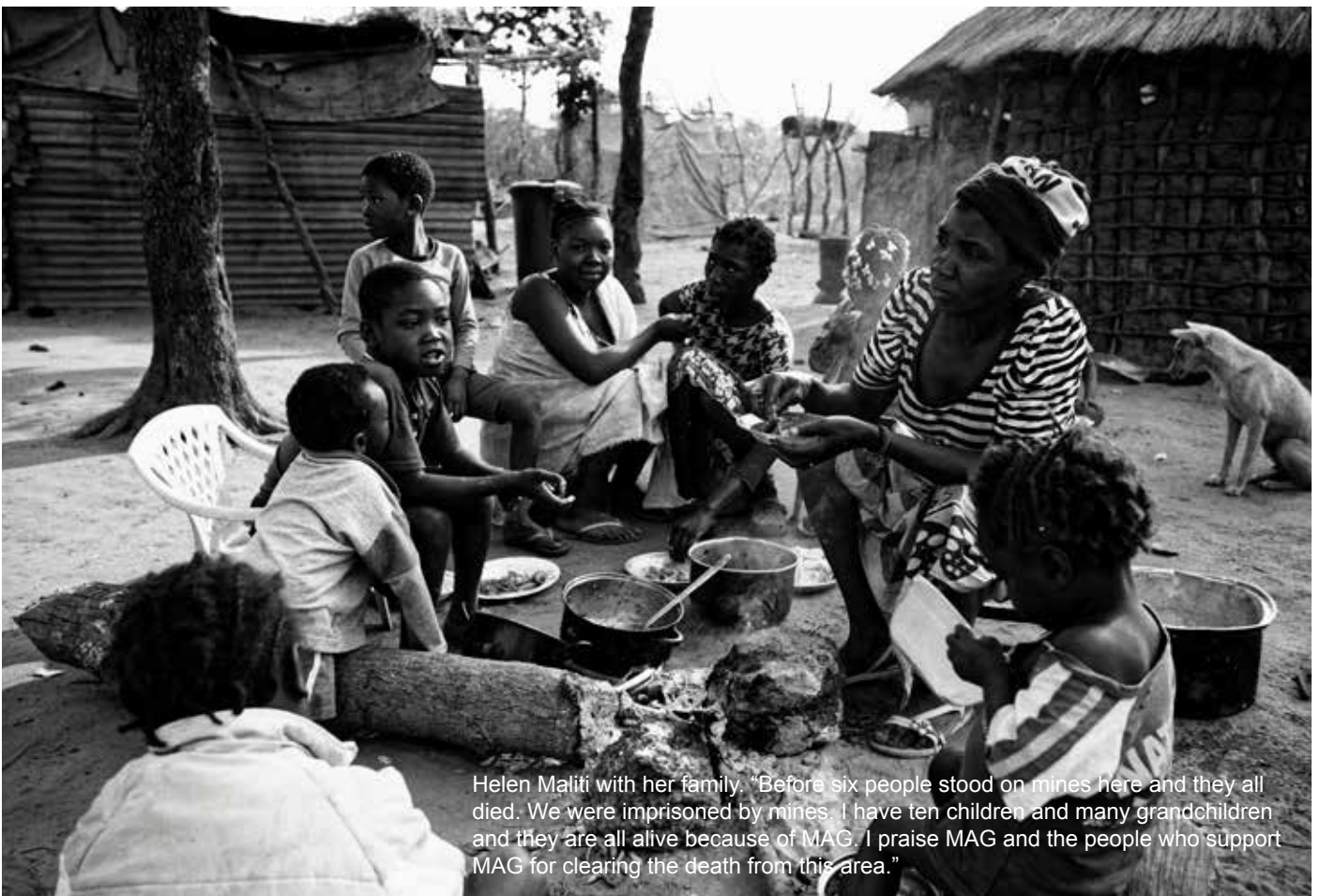


Photo Left: School teacher Manuel Evaristo Cassanga: "There were so many mines here and it is by the grace of MAG that the mines have been cleared and the school and the health post were built. Education is very important for the community and for the country. We can only rebuild our country through education as it is the people who make the country. This area has been cleared, lives have been saved and people have a future – but there are other areas and other communities that need you."



Photo Top Left: Joanna Manumga was born last year in a former mined area. **Above:** Robert Machai, bricklayer, "I have built 15 houses so far this year. The village is expanding because the area is free – we are free to build – free to live."

Top Right: Newly-weds head for the groom's house on a former minefield. **Above:** NGOs have been able to drill water wells for the community. For the first time in many decades life is returning to normal in many villages.



Helen Maliti with her family. "Before six people stood on mines here and they all died. We were imprisoned by mines. I have ten children and many grandchildren and they are all alive because of MAG. I praise MAG and the people who support MAG for clearing the death from this area."

COMPLETING LANDMINE CLEARANCE - WHAT WILL IT TAKE?

Huge progress has been made in ridding Angola of its landmines, with approximately 56% of contaminated land cleared since the end of the war to date. Over 300,000 mines and UXO have been cleared across Angola through combined international efforts. The overwhelming majority of clearance has been carried out by international NGOs, with ODA support.

This year will see Angola's second request under the Ottawa Treaty's Article 5 to extend the time allowed for completion of landmine clearance. The request – one of the Treaty's legal obligations – will include a strategy to complete clearance by the end of 2025, the global completion goal agreed by all Ottawa Treaty states in 2014⁵.

The work-plan on which the extension request is based estimates that \$275 million will be needed to make Angola landmine-free by 2025. The extension request is based on a work-plan that outlines the capacity that would be needed to complete non-technical survey, technical survey and clearance across Angola's 18 provinces.

Article 5 of the Ottawa Treaty

- **This requires each State Party to identify and clear all known or suspected anti-personnel mine contamination in areas under its jurisdiction or control. States must achieve this as soon as possible, but no later than ten years after joining.**
- **If a State Party believes it will be unable to achieve this within the ten-year time period, there is a process for submitting a formal request to states for an extension of up to ten years.**
- **Angola ratified the Ottawa Treaty in 2002. After ten years, it submitted an interim extension request in 2012. The 2017 request seeks an eight-year extension to make Angola landmine free by 2025.**

Achieving this will require the reversal of a trend of deep cuts to international mine action in Angola, which now depends overwhelmingly on support from the United States for its survival⁶. It will also depend on support and allocation of the national budget contribution to the Commission for Humanitarian Demining and Assistance (CNIDAH, the national authority), whose capacity and funding was cut as a result of the austerity budget that followed Angola's economic crash.

Angola's first extension request in 2012 was presented as 'interim', covering a five-year period. It aimed to allow enough time for a nation-wide re-survey to be undertaken through partnership between the national authority, and national and international NGOs. This would clearly define the extent of remaining contamination, informing a detailed plan that would form the basis of a final extension request to be submitted in 2017.

Cuts to the funding for humanitarian mine action meant that the re-survey could only be undertaken in 12 of Angola's 18 provinces. Survey is ongoing in three, with the final three provinces depending on more international donor funding. This nevertheless provided far more comprehensive and accurate data than the 2012 request. It enabled the mine action community to clearly estimate the timeframe and resources needed to complete clearance across the country, the basis of Angola's 2017 submission⁷.

The fact that Angola is able to submit an accurate and credible extension request during a period of cuts to the national budget and international mine action assistance is a huge achievement in itself. But delivering the plan and fulfilling its legal obligations under the Ottawa Treaty will need a change in international funding commitment and strategy.

5. This ambition is set out in the Maputo Action Plan, a document agreed by States at the 3rd Review Conference of the Ottawa Treaty, held in Mozambique in 2014.

6. Historically, both the UK and the European Commission (EC) have been significant donors to mine action in Angola. The UK Department for International Development (DFID) last provided funding for mine action in Angola in 2010. The EC stopped funding in 2016.

7. The draft extension request will be submitted to the Committee on Article 5 Implementation in mid- 2017. It will be reviewed and discussed with the Government of Angola before being formally approved at the Meeting of States Parties in December 2017.

The Role of Survey and Resurvey in Defining the Contamination

In most countries with mine contamination, landmines are not always laid in patterns and maps are rarely available. In some places, including Angola, mines were laid randomly or in small clusters, often referred to as 'nuisance mining'. As a result, identifying what is confirmed as a mined area in need of clearance represents the biggest challenge for the mine action community.

In the early years of humanitarian mine action, contamination assessments were based heavily on Landmine Impact Surveys (LIS). These involved the collection of information on suspected contamination from local communities, most of whom were justifiably concerned about accidents. A lack of systematic verification resulted in the scale of the problem being unintentionally exaggerated.

Lessons have been learned and applied and in recent years, the survey methodologies and

efforts to focus clearance on areas of confirmed contamination have vastly improved. Sector good practice now involves the use of evidence-based surveys which aims to prevent over-estimation and target mine clearance.

In some instances, such as Angola, this has required resurvey to achieve efficient clearance programmes in the longer-term. Steady progress has been made in the last three to four years on defining the extent of the contamination through an evidence based resurvey process as part of improvement to the efficiency of land release.

In Moxico province of Angola, resurvey has resulted in the cancellation of up to 90% of land previously designated as contaminated (representing 105 square kilometres). Angola's completion plan is based on current sector good practice, making it accurate and reliable.



The MAG team get their equipment ready for a day of work in Tapa Minefield.

THE PRICE OF FAILURE

Successful implementation of the work-plan underpinning Angola's extension request would have a significant positive humanitarian and development impact for Angola. This would be felt at the local level, where rural communities remain among the most impoverished globally. But it would also support the development of the country's agricultural sector and a return of Angola to a net exporter.

Failure to support and implement the work-plan would have significant negative consequences. For the thousands of communities living in daily fear, risk of death and injury, failure to complete clearance would be a further injustice to marginalised women, men and children who are already enduring extreme poverty.

With its iconic status, completing clearance in Angola is also integrally tied to the success of the Ottawa Treaty itself. Angola cannot complete its clearance without assistance. If it is not assisted to do so – itself an obligation of States Parties – the treaty and everything it stands for is weakened.

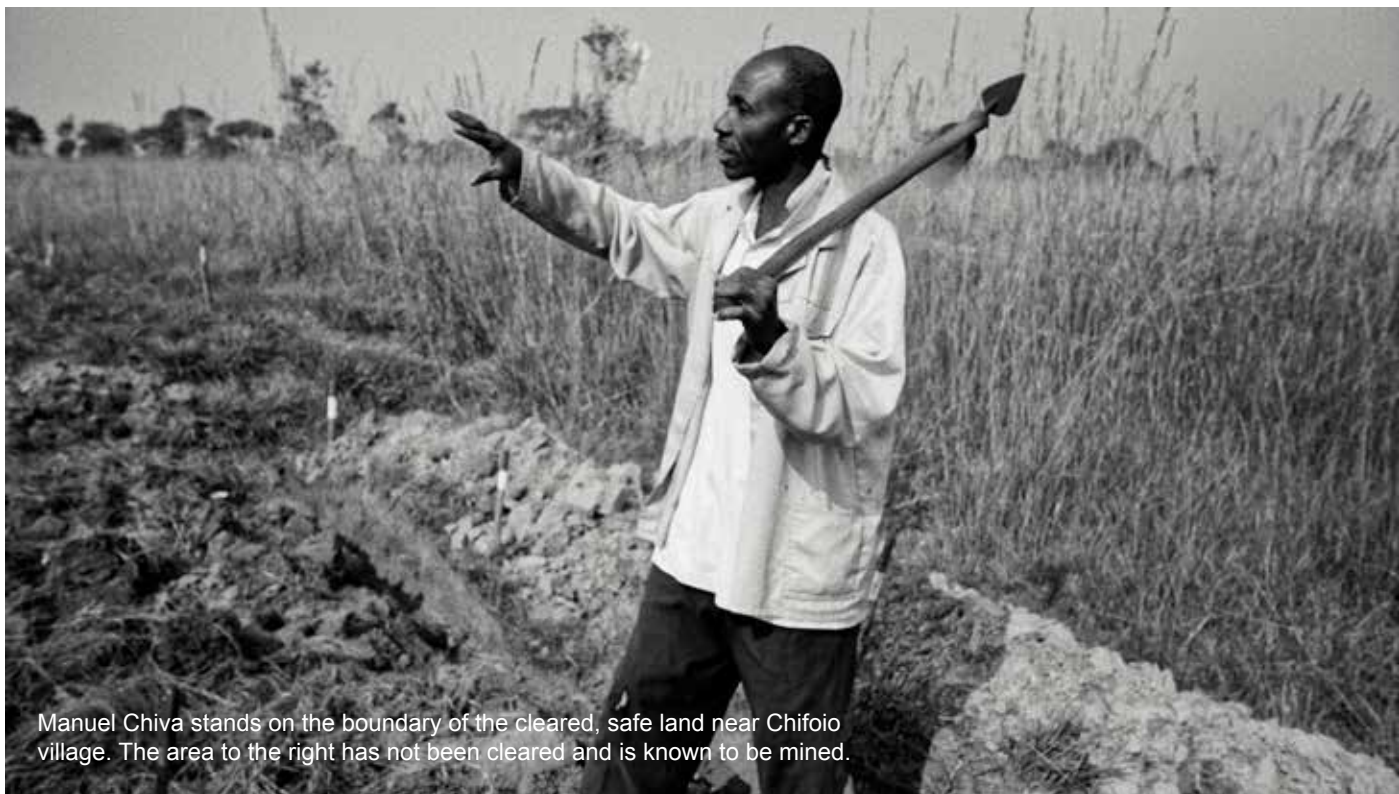
CUTTING TOO DEEP

- **International funding reduced by 86% from ten years ago.**
- **This has led to 89% reduction in locally-recruited demining staff.**
- **Current annual funding is only 19% of what is needed to complete clearance by 2025.**

\$275m is needed to make Angola landmine free by 2025. This requires a step-change in funding for mine action in Angola.

This MAG 'benchmark' and SP or startpoint represents where mine clearance began in Chifoio village.





Manuel Chiva stands on the boundary of the cleared, safe land near Chifoio village. The area to the right has not been cleared and is known to be mined.

CONCLUSION

During 2017, Angola will formally request to other Ottawa Treaty States Parties that it extend its survey of clearance deadlines. It will set out a plan to complete clearance in the next eight years. States should approve this request. With the right support, the plan behind it is achievable, meaning that Angola could join Mozambique and become landmine-free by 2025.

Like Mozambique, Angola is a symbol of the Ottawa Treaty's vision and hope for countless countries and millions of conflict-affected people. A landmine-free Angola in 2025 will only be possible with the support Angola seeks in the 2017 extension request. To ensure this:

- Donors should commit the \$34.37m per year needed to complete mine clearance in Angola.
- The UK should ensure that Angola is included as a priority country in the DFID Global Mine Action Programme. Other states and donors should join them.
- Ottawa Treaty States Parties should consider the adequacy of international cooperation and assistance commitments to Angola when considering the request for an extension to the clearance deadline. They should highlight the significant shortfalls and identify ways to meet them.

- Angola should ensure that the national mine action authority, CNIDAH, is supported by the national budget as a demonstration of national ownership.

Twenty years ago, Angola captured the world's attention. This year, states and donors have an opportunity to finish what the Ottawa Treaty started. The other choice is to turn a blind eye, based on the false assumption that Angola's population enjoy the benefits of a being a middle-income country.

Ending, for all time, the suffering caused by landmines leaves only one real choice for the international community.

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Issue Briefs are part of MAG's policy and advocacy work. Reflecting the experience and realities faced by the organisation's global programmes, they aim to inform and influence policy and good practice on specific issues for the benefit of communities affected by violence, conflict and insecurity.