



Lebanon Country Report

The Landmine Problem

Lebanon remains affected by landmines and explosives remnants of war, largely as a result of 15 years of civil conflict and multiple disputes with Israel. Affected areas include land used for agriculture, neighborhoods, and areas designated for infrastructural improvements. Landmines also restrict access to roads and stall agricultural industry in otherwise fertile, revenue generating land. In total, there were approximately 20 km² of confirmed contaminated land in Lebanon as of the end of 2016. While much work remains to be done, both the amount of land affected by mines and the number of annual casualties have decreased substantially between 2014 and 2017.

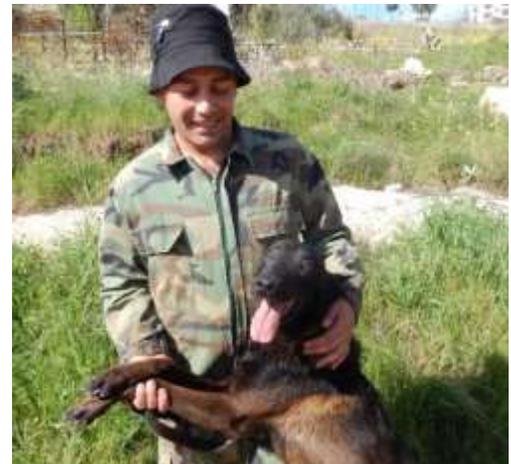
Humanitarian Demining

In Lebanon, the Lebanese Mine Action Center (LMAC) within the Lebanese Armed Forces (LAF) is responsible for executing and coordinating the Lebanese National Mine Action Program. LMAC has been a significant partner of MLI since 2001, when MLI helped to establish the first indigenous Mine Detection Dog (MDD) capacity in Lebanon. LMAC and the Lebanese Armed Forces have recognized the utility of these remarkable animals that help accelerate the pace of mine clearance operations by sniffing out the explosive odors that mines release into the soil.

The Marshall Legacy Institute in Lebanon

Mine Detection Dog Partnership Program

Though no one solution exists for the global landmine epidemic, Mine Detection Dog teams are among the most efficient and effective assets for locating landmines. Dogs have the incredible ability to detect landmines by "sniffing out" the explosive "off-gas" in mines, without sacrificing safety or accuracy. Traditional demining techniques rely on human deminers with metal detectors and probes, which are slow, hazardous, and inefficient. A human deminer may search & clear up to 50m²/day, but a highly trained MDD Team may search up to 1,500m²/day! With a working life of six to eight years, dogs are vital, long term assets in indigenous demining programs.



MDD Brick with handler

MLI started working in Lebanon following a successful pilot project in 2001, during which MLI provided two highly-trained MDDs to test how well the dogs can be incorporated into the LMAC's mine-clearance efforts. After the pilot, MLI provided the first six canines to the LMAC upon its request. Each of the dogs was sponsored by private Americans, including many Lebanese Americans who were very supportive of these efforts. In 2008, MLI received a letter from the President of Lebanon with a request for twelve MDDs to replace the retiring MDDs and to further expedite LMAC's demining efforts. MLI identified private Americans to sponsor the new MDDs, and again in 2010, 2014, 2015, and 2017 at the LMAC's request! As of June 2018, MLI has donated 36 privately sponsored lifesaving dogs to Lebanon and is in the process of training an **additional 3 mine detection dogs to further enhance the work currently ongoing in the region to return more land to the Lebanese people.**

These valuable animals have been working with their Lebanese handlers to assist in mine clearance in medium- and low-impacted areas and have **searched more than 250 acres of contaminated land.** Their duties include searching for mines and providing quality assurance (QA) to manual and mechanical demining teams. The teams have worked throughout Lebanon where there is mine contamination, but most recently have worked in Badgan and Dayr Al Kamar of the Mount Lebanon governorate, a mountainous region surrounding Beirut whose hills were of strategic value during Lebanon's 15-year civil conflict. Unfortunately, the area is also where many homes and businesses are located, and the thousands of landmines hidden in the soil continue to endanger people and

hinder the return of a thriving business district. With the help of the dog teams, the LMAC hopes to soon release the land and declare it mine-safe.

Children Against Mines Program (CHAMPS) and Survivors' Assistance Program

CHAMPS Lebanon was launched in 2009, linking schools in the United States with schools in mine-affected areas of Lebanon in order to foster global citizenship, raise awareness of the landmine problem in Lebanon, and raise funds to provide prosthetic limbs and other rehabilitative treatment to young landmine and cluster munitions survivors. Of the 36 MDDs donated to LMAC, five were sponsored by schoolchildren through CHAMPS campaigns in the United States.



Landmine survivor tending to his bees

To date MLI has assisted hundreds of Lebanese landmine survivors through our survivors' assistance program. MLI's programs have provided high quality prosthetic limbs, assistive devices and prosthetic repairs to needy survivors, and have held vocational training courses in beekeeping, apple production, poultry production, English classes and computer classes to landmine survivors and their family members. MLI is continuing our successful Survivors' Assistance program in Lebanon in 2018 – we are in the process of selecting, in cooperation with the Lebanese Mine Action Center and the Landmine Resource Center at the University of Balamand, 75 Lebanese landmine survivors requiring either medical assistance or vocational training. Courses will be held in July in apple tree production and beekeeping.



MDD Sergeant sniffing out mines



Handler plays with MDD Joan



Young mine survivors assisted by MLI

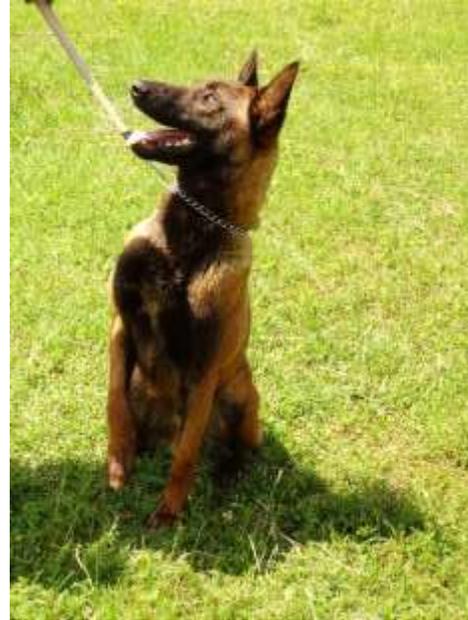


Recipients of vocational training course in 2016

Mine Detection Dogs in training to be provided to LMAC in July 2018



Boa
Female Belgian Shepherd
DOB: January 16, 2017
Seeking sponsorship



Astor
Male Belgian Shepherd
DOB: January 3, 2017
Seeking sponsorship



Roni
Male Belgian Shepherd
DOB: February 2, 2017
Seeking sponsorship