



WORLD WITHOUT MINES

FOCUS: ZIMBABWE



Photo: The HALO Trust

Demanding work: Noel Piroro has been clearing mines for six years. For specialists like him, the risks can be kept under control. That's because of good initial training and constant practice.

NOEL PIORORO IS ONE OF OUR BEST DEMINERS

In the village of Chisecha in Zimbabwe, the soldiers of previous white colonial powers not only laid many mines, but they also let perfidies prevail. Our demining team has now made sure that a thousand children can finally go to school safely.

When he goes to work, Noel Piroro proudly wears the logo „World Without Mines” on his khaki-coloured shirt. Piroro, 42, is one of our deminers in Zimbabwe. Not just any, but one of our best. Together with his colleagues, he has taken on a Herculean task. One of the world's densest minefields sprawls out along the border between Mozambique and Zimbabwe. The mines were laid in the 70s when the African National Liberation Army fought against the soldiers of Rhodesia, as it was then. Even after the end of the war, around 2.5 million mines re-

mained in the ground and have since taken a terrible toll. 1,550 people have died in accidents or have been injured.

Locating mines by radar

Piroro has been working on destroying this legacy of colonialism since 2013. Originally a foreman in a coal mine, he retrained for his new career. Today, Piroro wears the title „HSTAMIDS Section Commander” which means that he leads a team of deminers equipped with the „Handheld Stand-off Mine Detection System.” These



Photo: The HALO Trust

A fair wage: Noel Piroro shows his daughter the new house that he has been able to build thanks to his work as a deminer.



Photo: The HALO Trust

„Who has to go through a minefield on their way to school?“ the teacher asks. In this class, around half of the children raise their hands.

devices can only be used by specialists. Like all others, they react to metal and scan the ground but they also use radar. In this way, it is possible to distinguish between metal waste – the main cause of false alarms – and actual mines.

Since spring 2018, Piroro has been undertaking a task which the Zimbabwe government has given highest priority: to clear the minefields surrounding the two schools in Chisecha, a village close to the border river to Mozambique. A few hundred metres north of the school, there is an unusually long 3.8-kilometre minefield. It cuts settlements in two, prevents access to the Mukumbura river and makes normal day-to-day life impossible. To the south of the schools, the minefields are smaller but here the Rhodesian soldiers did something particularly perfidious: they laid directional fragmentation mines in several rows and connected them with overlapping trip wires. So that the mines cannot be removed, they also buried additional anti-personnel mines around them.

Running the gauntlet of the minefields

Consequences of minefields: In the area around Chisecha alone, there have been 104 casualties. Time and again, Piroro meets adults on his way to work who have lost a leg or a hand. But perhaps even more, Piroro worries about the permanent danger that the mines put children in, especially as he himself has several children. Around a thousand children walk to school every day

along the minefields or even have to cross them. They can only use narrow paths – a journey fraught with danger.

Thanks to World Without Mines, the risk is becoming smaller every day. Together with other deminers, Piroro’s team has searched almost 90,000 square metres and removed 528 mines in 12 months. In so doing they have far exceeded their target of 60,000 square metres.

Education centre for orphaned children

Demining the areas around the schools in Chisecha has been a success for World Without Mines on many levels. In Zimbabwe, a country with unemployment rates of 90%, we can create jobs within demining – there are currently 22 jobs. Through this, we can secure the livelihoods of 22 families in this extremely challenging economic climate.

But Noel Piroro isn’t just keeping the money for his dangerous work for his family and that of his impoverished brother. „Not everyone has as much luck in life as I have. That’s why I’m planning to establish an education centre for orphaned children.“

THE MINES ARE LOCATED HERE



Photo: The HALO Trust

With modern detectors, deminers like Noel Piroro search the ground for mines, metre by metre.

Please support our work in countries like Zimbabwe with a donation.

Thank you very much!



Photo: UXO Lao

Laos: The danger of unexploded ordnance is explained to school children through puppet theatre.

WHEN MINES LIE IN WAIT IN FRIDGES

Mines are increasingly targeted against civilians. Buried in front gardens or hidden in fridges and toys, mines have become a pervasive threat, presenting a new challenge for risk education.

Around 60 countries worldwide are severely affected by mines. In 2017 alone, a total of 2,793 people were killed and 4,446 injured. Most are civilians and almost half of them are children.

Civilians have been accidental victims for a long time. If they returned to their homeland after the end of the conflict, they often didn’t know where the mines had been laid. So they lived in uncertainty until – years later – the danger left behind was removed.

For a few years now, targeted attacks on the civilian population have been increasing. In countries like Syria, Libya and Afghanistan, roads, wells and houses have been systematically mined by retreating troops. Even children’s rooms aren’t exempt. Often improvised explosives are used which are made from everyday objects such as saucepans or phones and are therefore hard to detect. These booby traps prevent refugees from returning home, make rebuilding difficult and claim more and more victims.

With target group-oriented education

campaigns, World Without Mines is helping those affected better protect themselves against the danger. In South Sudan, for example, we train youths and young adults who then pass on their knowledge to their peers. In Laos, the danger of cluster bombs left behind after the Vietnam war has been explained to children with the help of puppet theatre.

In this way, we were able to teach 73,100 people over the past year safe ways of dealing with the danger posed by mines and help them protect themselves against mines.



Photo: DanChurchAid

South Sudan: Young risk ambassadors learn how to pass on their knowledge about mines to their peers.



Photo: FSD

So-called improvised mines are a key reason for the steep rise in the number of civilian victims in the last few years.

You can find more information about World Without Mines on our website: www.wom.ch



SAVING MANY LIVES IN JUST A FEW LINES

Have you ever thought about writing a will too? Writing a will in good time has numerous benefits: your affairs will be in order for your heirs, misunderstandings will be avoided and, above all, you can decide yourself which people and causes you want to remember.

Photo: World Without Mines



Our managing director Gabriela Fuchs is happy to provide you with information on the topic of wills and legacies.
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Supporting a non-profit organisation in your will is easier than you might think. So that the will is valid, the legal entitlement of close relatives has to be taken into account alongside the formalities. Using the so-called free quota of assets you can determine the amount yourself and do good even after you are gone.

An uncomplicated form of support in your will is a legacy (also called a bequest). With a legacy, you leave a fixed contribution or named material assets for an organisation which is particularly close to your heart. Alternatively, you can also leave behind a percentage proportion of your total assets to an organisation as a bequest.

If you are interested in the possibility of a leaving a legacy, we are more than happy to discuss this with you without obligation. You can also find further infor-

mation and contacts for specialists at the Swiss Federation of Notaries:
www.schweizernotare.ch.

DONATION MADE IN SOMEONE'S MEMORY

Lots of relatives want to do away with flowers and wreaths when they lose a loved one, and would rather support a non-profit organisation. In the notice of death or in the funeral circular, you could suggest that donations in the person's memory are directed to World Without Mines. Here is an example: „Instead of flowers, we are commemorating (name of deceased) with a donation to World Without Mines, IBAN: CH80 0900 0000 8741 5116 3. Thank you very much!“

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WELT OHNE MINEN
WORLD WITHOUT MINES
MONDE SANS MINES