



Masquite Jim, the Village Chief of Nhabirira, is now growing maize on land where HALO conducted mineclearance. Masquite Jim said *“before we feared to walk here, you’ve done a good job”*.



HALO mineclearance began 18 June and was completed on 20 August 2009. Masquite Jim told HALO *“we trusted it was cleared because they (HALO) did a handover ceremony and we walked together over the land”* (below).



Nearly 300 members of the local community have benefitted from this area being cleared. HALO handed over the land in September; leading by example Masquite Jim has built a small grass hut and in October planted maize on the cleared land (above left). He is confident that this land is now safe and says that more farmers have requested to join him next season on the cleared land to plant tomatoes, onions and garlic.

The minefield was situated 50m from Nhabirira Village primary school, a school for 65 children, as well as the small community shop which, during harvest time, doubles as the market place for local farmers to sell their maize. A river, the local water supply, lay adjacent to the minefield and the local women had to pass by the minefield each day to wash their children, their clothes and to collect water. The minefield was clearly identifiable as the surrounding land was being entirely used for farming whereas the area feared by the local people was not. It was very apparent before mineclearance started that locals were afraid of the land and would not enter the area to cut sticks or to farm.