

Inter-Agency Coordination Group on Mine Action
Monitoring and Evaluation Mechanism of the United Nations Mine Action Strategy
2019-2023 Final Progress Report
Key Findings

1. These key findings highlight the progress achieved over the course of the United Nations Mine Action Strategy 2019-2023 towards the outcomes. The progress is captured through the UN IACG M&E Mechanism survey, which collected data from countries with UN mine action presence. During the five years of reporting, the survey achieved **excellent completion rates with an annual average of 84%**.
2. Explosive ordnance continues to threaten people's lives and cause casualties globally. Conflicts' scale and scope is expanding and the impact on civilians remain the main challenges with civilians continue to be the most affected by EO. According to the report of the UN Secretary General on Assistance in Mine Action¹, **delays in security sector reform processes and unreliable funding** also continue to challenge the UN efforts to achieve the Strategy's vision of a world free of explosive ordnance.
3. During the course of this strategy the world witnessed the **COVID-19 pandemic**, which significantly changed both the impact and the response. Despite the pandemic being behind, and the world going back to almost the pre-pandemic pace, the ways of work and the priorities did not go back to pre-pandemic scene. Funding continues to be unpredictable with donor countries refocusing priorities as per geopolitical and security interests.
4. The data show that over the past five years, funding for UN Mine Action has been gradually decreasing, from almost **US\$ 251 million** in 2018 to around **US\$ 176 million** in 2023, with a significant dip at the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. Since then, UN funding for mine action did not recover to meet the rates of 2018. In the wider context, the decrease in funding for certain UN mine action programmes, often resulted from changes in donor priorities, budgetary constraints, unreliable funding, and geopolitical factors and conflicts influencing donor countries, which led to shifts towards other urgent international issues demanding attention and resources.
5. Despite challenges, evidence gathered through the M&E mechanisms unmistakably show that the collective effort of the UN Mine Action continues to deliver results and push forward the vision of the strategy, especially in terms of significantly decreasing the number of casualties of traditional mines, ERW, and IED by **almost 50% from over 13,500 in 2018 to almost 6,700 in 2023**. The percentage of civilians remains worryingly high, and civilians continue to be the most affected by explosive ordnance. The **annual average of civilian casualties was 70% over the course of the strategy compared to 56% in 2018**. **Syria, Somalia, Iraq, and Afghanistan** continue to consecutively record the **highest number of casualties** since 2018, with a yearly average of 3,900 casualties (ranging from around 2,000 to 6,000 annually). Conflicts in **Yemen and Nigeria** and more recently **Myanmar and Ukraine** also contributed to a large percentage of overall casualties since 2019.

¹ 2023 UN Secretary General Report to the Seventy-eighth session of the General Assembly on Assistance in Mine Action
https://www.mineaction.org/sites/default/files/secretary-general_report_2023_a_78_259-en_5.pdf

6. The urbanization of conflicts is impacting the ability to protect civilians with traditional mines/Explosive Remnants of War (ERW) continue to kill and injure thousands. Survey data show that the percentage of casualties caused by **traditional mines and ERW has slightly increased causing an annual average of 58% of casualties over the course of the strategy compared to 41% during the baseline year**. Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) remain difficult to counter and are getting more sophisticated and shift in technology. The trends show that **the percentage of casualties caused by IEDs is gradually decreasing, causing an annual average² of 42% of casualties compared to 59% during the baseline year**. Despite this drop in the percentage, 42% is still considered alarmingly high do to the fact that that the design, size, and methods of IEDs emplacement vary, and tactics continuously evolve to circumvent countermeasures used to locate and defuse these devices.
7. Persistent efforts and commitment to protect civilians through survey and clearance, weapons, and ammunition management and EORE continue to pay dividends. The UN sustained the effort to protect people by clearing contamination and returning safe infrastructure to communities. since 2019, the UN was able to clear and return to the communities **946 square kilometers of land** (374 km² of former battlefields and 572 km² of minefields). Also, since 2020³, **17,777 km² of battlefields and minefields** were designated as **suspected hazardous areas (SHA)**, and almost **22,802 km²** were designated as **confirmed hazardous areas (CHA)**.
8. The UN also sought to reduce the risk of explosive ordnance by enhancing the sustainability, safety, and security of weapons and ammunition management (WAM). The United Nations continue to carry this out by working to improve coordination and providing technical support and advice on WA capacity development. By 2023, almost **50%** of countries that have active WAM operation already established **laws or policies** that use the International Ammunition Technical Guidelines (IATGs) and the Modular Small-arms control Implementation Compendium (MOSAIC) compared to 25% at the beginning of the Strategy cycle. In addition, and since 2019, the UN assessed/rehabilitated/constructed **1,503 weapon storage areas** and **774 ammunition storage areas** in countries where the UN conducted WAM operations.
9. Between 2019 and 2023, **UN-funded face-to-face Explosive Ordnance Risk Education (EORE)** projects was able to reach **21.11 million beneficiaries**. A spike in the number of UN EORE beneficiaries was registered in 2022 after a dip during the COVID-19 pandemic lockdown period, however overall trends showing the number UN EORE beneficiaries saw a decline over the course of the strategy, which might be justified but different factors, such as funding constraints, shift in priority and security factors due to increased number of conflicts globally. On the other hand, and despite challenges, the data continues to show year over year positive trends and improved ability of national institutions to reduce EO risks through institutionalization of EORE. Different countries reported on different years; however, data clearly shows that **more countries now have a national EORE priority-setting mechanism** (48% in 2023 compared to 30% in 2018), **more have**

² 2021 which saw a dip in the percentage of IEDs was the year of global lockdowns due to COVID-19 pandemic. It is estimated that the decreased mobility of the people, and the lower rate of data collection both could have contributed to the drop in the percentage.

³ The M&E survey did not collect SHA and CHA data prior to 2020.

an EORE focal point (96% in 2023 compared to 80% in 2018) and more countries **integrated EORE in their national school curricula** (36% 2023 to 30% in 2018).

10. The United Nations continued to make progress in meeting the needs of persons who have suffered explosive ordnance injuries. **Victim Assistance (VA) has been scaled up** especially institutionally. Like EORE national institutional capacity, the survey shows continuously improved trends in commitment to victim assistance (VA) translated in the improved indicators almost across all VA areas including the number of countries with UN mine action presence that have a **national disability policy** (53% to 68%), a **VA strategy/framework/plan** (20% to 50%)⁴, a **national representative of VA** (50% to 58%), **referral pathways** (33% to 48%), **mine action standards** (20% to 48%), **mapping of VA service providers** (17% to 29%), and a **UN coordination of VA** (30% to 36%). More sustained endeavor is required to strengthen UN coordination on VA with national authorities. The United Nations promoted the enhancement of economic opportunities and **access** to livelihoods for explosive ordnance victims, survivors, and their families. Overall, and since the beginning of this strategy, positive trends were reported on UN support to victims' **participation in education** (56% to 63%) and improved accessibility to **public services with persons with disability** (44% to 50%). Competing priorities continue to challenge the efforts of the inclusion of victims and survivors in education, as well as push for equal inclusion of victims in employment, and equal access of men, women, girls, and boys to education. Evidence from the survey show that more countries now have the needed institutional frameworks to advocate and push for a sustained inclusion efforts during the coming years.
11. The data show significant evidence of the **pivotal role of UN investment** in support of national institutions to effectively lead and manage mine action functions and responsibilities. Figures from the survey show enhanced national mine action legislative frameworks, further established national institutional capacity for mine action management, and improved effectiveness of national operational capabilities to mine action. national mine action institutional capacity, legislative frameworks, and national operational capacity. Compared to baseline values of 2018, data collected between 2019 and 2023 (on average) show evident improvement across all national capacity indicators. More countries now have a **mine action strategy** (60% to 62%) **national authorities for mine action** are established and/or designated (73% to 80%), more countries have a **national mine action law** (30% to 43%), a **national UN-supported mine action priority-setting mechanism** (37% to 55%), a **data quality assurance system** (70% to 85%), a **mine action information strategy** (27% to 42%), UN-supported/IMAS compliant **national mine action standards** (53% to 67%), and a **national accreditation system** (50% to 66%).
12. IACG-MA continues to advocate for the universalization and full implementation of mine action relevant treaties and for the full compliance of all actors with applicable international law. The UN had and will have a vital role in **enhancing the momentum and the profile of mine action** and in supporting national authorities to establish needed frameworks and platforms and acquire funding to support mine action. Over the course of the strategy, and in more than half of the

⁴ This indicator was introduced in the survey in 2020. Upon the signing of the IMAS on VA in 2021, almost all national VA strategies/frameworks/plans were IMAS-compliant.

countries with UN mine action presences, UN programmes provided technical support to national authorities/ partners with reporting for relevant treaties on mine action (i.e., APMBC, CCW, CCM and CRPD). Advocacy efforts also resulted in mine action now being increasingly included in **HRPs (71%)** and in **sustainable development frameworks (63%)**.

13. Addressing the specific needs of women, girls, men, and boys saw substantial progress over the past five years. with the publishing of the **Gender Mine Action Standards** and the advocacy to tailor programmes and responses to the needs of the different gender and age groups, countries have increasingly set up the legal and institutional frameworks to mainstream gender at the policy and programme level. The survey shows increased commitment to mainstreaming gender across mine action at the national level. **46%** of countries reported having a **gender strategy for mine action** in 2023, an increase from 20% in baseline year 2018. Also, more UN programmes support national authorities by providing technical assistance and training on how to mainstream gender & diversity aspects in Mine Action with the percentage increasing **from 38% in 2018 to 54% in 2023**. Gender parity across all organizational levels significantly improved from women staff consisting only **22%** of the workforce in 2018 **to 40%** in 2023. This reflects the UN commitment to achieve targeted male/female ratio among UN mine action personnel. More work is needed at the level of inclusion of disabled persons especially with more countries now signing the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities CRPD.
14. **Sex and age data disaggregation (SADD)** rates of casualty data considerably improved over the course of the strategy. Longer-term data show that on average **40%** of all casualties' data was of unknown gender and/or age, compared to **67%** back in 2015. Men continue to be the most affected by explosive ordnance with an average of 40% of casualties reported are men since 2019. The **high rate of unknown sex and age of IED casualties** continue to be the main contributing factor to the lack of disaggregation of 46% of all casualties. In 2023, excluding unknown IED casualties improves that rate from **54% to 96%** SADD casualty data. Since 2019, almost **all UN-funded EORE beneficiary data** continued to be completely disaggregated.