



**UNMAS**

# ANNUAL REPORT 2024

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**COLOMBIA**  
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# ANNUAL REPORT 2024

The UNMAS Annual Report 2024 in Colombia describes the activities and achievements made possible thanks to donor funding and funds received from the United Nations.

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Unión Europea  
Ayuda Humanitaria



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Photo: UNMAS Colombia, 2024.

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# ACRONYMS AND GLOSSARY

- **AICMA Group:** Mine Action Center
- **APM:** Antipersonnel Mines
- **CCCM:** Colombian Campaign Against Landmines
- **CERF:** Central Emergency Response Fund
- **VA:** Victim Assistance
- **DRC:** Danish Refugee Council
- **ECHO:** European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations Directorate
- **EORE:** Explosive Ordnance Risk Education
- **ICRC:** International Committee of the Red Cross
- **IED:** Improvised Explosive Devices
- **IMAS:** International Mine Action Standard
- **MA AoR:** Mine Action Area of Responsibility
- **NGO:** Non-Governmental Organization
- **OAS:** Organization of American States
- **OCCP:** Office of the Peace Commissioner
- **OCHA:** United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
- **SJP:** Special Jurisdiction for Peace- JEP by its acronym in Spanish
- **UARIV:** Unit for Comprehensive Care and Reparation for Victims
- **UN:** United Nations
- **UNHCR:** United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
- **UNICEF:** United Nations Children's Fund
- **UNMAS:** United Nations Mine Action Service
- **UXO:** Unexploded Ordnance

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Since 2010, UNMAS has strengthened the capacities of key government institutions in Colombia, such as the AICMA Group of the OCCP, the Ministry of Defense, and the Special Jurisdiction for Peace (JEP by its acronym in Spanish), among others, improving their understanding and operations within the mine action sector. Its mission in Colombia focuses on technical strengthening, coordination among actors, and promoting safe communities, prioritizing vulnerable populations in highly affected regions.

In 2024, UNMAS achieved significant progress, contributing to three strategic pillars of the UN Cooperation Framework for Sustainable Development. Under Pillar 1 (Comprehensive Peacebuilding, Human Security, and Social Justice), UNMAS implemented EORE and VA projects that benefited 16,596 people, achieving a 100% increase in knowledge of explosive risks, supported by outreach via radio and social media. Priority departments included Antioquia, Cauca, Chocó, Córdoba, Nariño, Putumayo, and Valle del Cauca. Additionally, 1,047 public officials participated in mine action sensitization workshops.

Under Pillar 3 (Social Protection and Socioeconomic Inclusion), UNMAS supported the inclusion of mine action issues in 65 local contingency and development plans and provided assistance to 206 victims of explosive devices.

Under Pillar 5 (Enablers of the 2030 Agenda), UNMAS facilitated the first project implemented with the SJP under its restorative sanctions system, strengthened strategic alliances, contributed to the IMAS 13.10 on victim assistance, and led advocacy milestones such as the publication of the Annual Antipersonnel Mine Report and the event “Space for Reflection and Discussion of the Mine Action Sector in Colombia,” mobilizing technical and financial support.

UNMAS’ strategic priorities for 2025 focus on three areas: 1) strengthening the mine action sector through partnerships with the AICMA Group and OCCP; 2) improving preparedness of communities, local authorities, and humanitarian actors in response to explosive threats; and 3) promoting the role of mine action as a facilitator of peacebuilding.

Key challenges include raising visibility of the humanitarian deterioration and securing financial sustainability for projects. Opportunities lie in strengthening inter-agency coordination, increased government ownership in areas such as quality management of humanitarian demining (currently led by the OAS), and strategic partnerships that expand influence and maintain mine action in national and international agendas.

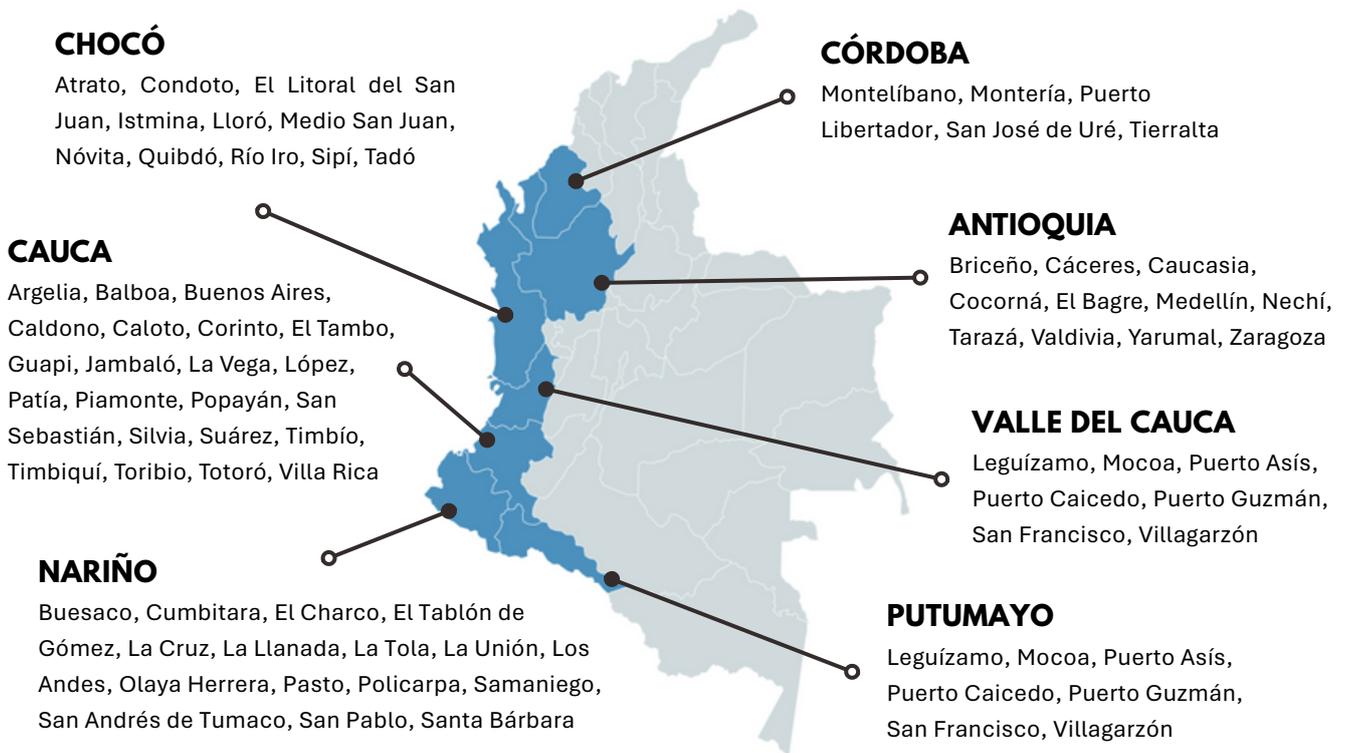
# MAIN RESULTS AND ACHIEVEMENTS

Since 2010, UNMAS has played a fundamental role in strengthening the capacities of government institutions, including OCCP, the Ministry of Defense, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the National Planning Department, the SJP, and the Victims Unit, among others. This support has improved their technical and operational capacities, as well as their understanding of this unique and specialized sector. UNMAS has supported AICMA Group's capacity development in areas such as planning, policy implementation for mine action, and preparation of technical documents for humanitarian demining. Technical assistance has included land release, EORE, VA, and support for implementing mine action elements of the 2016 Peace Agreement, including the

provision of information about explosive devices by signatories.

In 2024, UNMAS provided technical assistance to AICMA Group and to the mine action sector at local and national levels. Its strategic lines included: strengthening AICMA's technical capacity; coordinating sector actors to ensure effective and efficient mine action activities; and promoting safer, more inclusive, and more productive communities through humanitarian mine action interventions funded by UNMAS. Efforts prioritized populations affected by antipersonnel mines, particularly rural communities, women, children, persons with disabilities, and ethnic communities.

## PRIORITY DEPARTMENTS AND MUNICIPALITIES



# OUR WORK IN 2024

In 2024, UNMAS contributed to three of the five strategic pillars of the UN Cooperation Framework for Sustainable Development 2024-2027:

 **Pillar 1: Consolidation of Total Peace, Human Security, and Social Justice**

**Output 1.1.5: Implementation of actions and strategies for territorial transformation, strengthening justice systems, human security, including protection and management of antipersonnel mine risks, community resilience, and substitution/transformation of illegal economies.**

In 2024, UNMAS implemented EORE activities through two key projects: the first in coordination with UNICEF and funded by ECHO, focused on the “NIDOS” Strategy for Education in Emergencies and Protective Environments; and the second funded by CERF, addressing humanitarian emergencies caused by explosive hazards in highly affected regions of Colombia. Implementing partner of the first project was Corporación Paz y Democracia and of the second Fundación Barco.



EORE session for children in El Charco, Nariño. Photo: UNMAS Colombia, 2024.

A total of 16,596 people benefited from EORE activities, including 3,614 women, 3,041 men, 5,042 girls, and 4,899 boys, reflecting an inclusive approach that is sensitive to the particularities of each population group. Workshops were adapted to local needs in response to suspected, confirmed, or resulting emergencies involving APM, UXO, and IED, applying gender-, age-, and diversity-sensitive approaches to ensure relevant and accessible messages and methodologies.

**16.596 people benefited through EORE activities.**



100% of the participants showed a significant and measurable increase in their knowledge of mine risks. This progress was demonstrated through rigorous pre- and post-assessments, which made it possible to quantify the effectiveness of the training sessions. Additionally, reinforcement activities were carried out using innovative and participatory educational materials, such as illustrated brochures and posters that encouraged active participation and the clarification of questions. This contributed to a deep and lasting understanding of preventive measures, empowering communities to identify and mitigate the risks associated with explosive devices.

# OUR WORK IN 2024



EORE session in Istmina, Chocó. Photo: Lutheran World Federation. (Photo collected for the 4 April 2024 campaign by MA AoR led by UNMAS).

In addition to the EORE workshops, capacity was built in the territories through the participatory construction of 183 Local Community Routes in the departments of Antioquia, Cauca, and Putumayo. These routes, developed in conjunction with local leaders and authorities, contain accurate information on procedures and key contacts in the event of incidents involving explosive devices. This tool not only reinforces immediate response systems, but also leaves an organizational legacy that strengthens community resilience in the face of future risks, thus consolidating a comprehensive and territorialized approach to prevention and protection.

Between February and September 2024, a comprehensive public information dissemination strategy was implemented. This included radio spots on safe behaviors, available in Spanish and Awapit language (an indigenous language), as well as virtual communication pieces for dissemination on social media. The following actions stand out as part of this initiative:

- The transmission of audio messages with prevention messages aimed at the general community in prioritized municipalities and population centers, reaching areas that are difficult to access due to armed conflict, road limitations, or remoteness. This was done through radio stations in the

municipalities of Cáceres, Briceño, Tarazá, Valdivia, and Yuramal (Antioquia); Argelia, Caloto, Jambalo, Popayán, and El Tambo (Cauca); Puerto Asís, Puerto Caicedo, Puerto Leguízamo, Puerto Guzmán, Mocoa, and Villa Garzón (Putumayo); Buenaventura (Valle del Cauca); Litoral de San Juan, Sipí, and Novita (Chocó); and La Tola, El Charco, Olaya Herrera, and Santa Bárbara (Nariño).

- Various communications were published on social media, including platforms such as Instagram and WhatsApp, among others, to maximize the reach of prevention messages.
- Brochures and posters with key prevention messages were distributed, as well as the Community Care Pathway, which was designed in collaboration with the communities and established in each location where the EORE workshops were held, thus ensuring a response tailored to local needs.

At the same time, in its role as leader of the MA AoR, UNMAS Colombia prioritized strengthening local capacities and community ownership in relation to the risks associated with explosive devices. This approach was consolidated through strategic and sustained collaboration with local authorities and the 16 member organizations of the MA AoR, such as Pastoral Social Pasto, the National Secretariat of Pastoral Social – Caritas Colombia, the Danish Refugee Council (DRC), the Colombian Campaign Against Landmines (CCCM), UNICEF, among other members. These partnerships made it possible to coordinate technical and operational efforts to ensure that institutions and communities have the necessary tools to sustain EORE and VA processes beyond direct support.

# OUR WORK IN 2024

During 2024, UNMAS Colombia provided technical assistance to local and regional government officials to promote understanding of mine action regulations and improve operational coordination at the local level. In January 2024, new regional and local government officials took office and familiarized themselves with the pillars of mine action and their responsibilities toward communities affected by explosive devices. Through UNMAS assistance, 1,047 public officials (579 women, 468 men) participated in mine action awareness workshops in Antioquia, Cauca, Córdoba, Chocó, Nariño, Putumayo, and Valle del Cauca. These workshops addressed essential topics such as reporting explosive device incidents, victim assistance pathways, and the importance of including mine action in local humanitarian responses.

**1,047 public officials participated in mine action awareness workshops in seven departments.**



**579 Women**



**468 Men**



Mine Action awareness-raising and advocacy session in Tadó, Chocó. Photo: UNMAS Colombia, 2024.



Roundtable discussion with the OCCP and the Indigenous Unity of the Awá People. Photo: UNMAS Colombia, 2024.

EORE session for the community of Olaya Herrera, Nariño. Photo: UNMAS Colombia, 2024.



# OUR WORK IN 2024



**Pillar 3: Social protection and socioeconomic inclusion, with an emphasis on vulnerable populations, migrants, and refugees.**

## **Output 3.1.5: Support for strengthening capacities in responding to humanitarian crises.**

During 2024, UNMAS supported local authorities in including mine action in their contingency, prevention, and development plans, providing technical assistance and coordinating with key actors in each prioritized municipality and department. This resulted in the inclusion in 65 plans to prioritize the community needs of people affected by explosive devices in the municipalities of Buenaventura, Jamundí, Dagua, Palmira, Florida, Tuluá, Bolívar, and El Dovio in the department of Valle del Cauca; in the municipalities of Argelia, Balboa, Caloto, El Tambo, Jambalo, Suarez, Toribio, Villa Rica, Buenos Aires Popayán, Timbiqui, and Guapi in the department of Cauca; in the municipalities of El Charco, Olaya Herrera, La Tola, Santa Bárbara, La Llanada, Policarpa, Cumbitara, Tumaco, Los Andes, and at the departmental level in Nariño; in the municipalities of Tierralta, Puerto Libertador, Montelíbano, and San José de Uré, and at the departmental level in Córdoba; in the municipalities of Caucasia, Cáceres, El Bagre, Nechy, Zaragoza, and Tarazá in the department of Antioquia; and in the municipalities of Quibdó, Tado, Medio San Juan, Sipi, Condoto, Novita, and Lloró in the department of Chocó.

Integration was achieved through advocacy efforts to ensure that mine action would be incorporated into local planning tools. In this regard, UNMAS contributed to strengthening local response systems, ensuring that the inclusion of mine action was not just a formal step, but a sustained part of long-term planning. Working closely with local authorities and communities, the development of customized strategies that prioritize community safety and resilience was facilitated. This collaborative effort sought to improve local capacities, ensuring that risks and threats from explosive devices are managed effectively and that affected populations receive the comprehensive support they need.

On the other hand, UNMAS Colombia provided legal assistance on the victim care pathway and facilitated access to medical treatment and rehabilitation services for victims. UNMAS supported 206 victims of explosive devices (104 men, 87 women, 9 boys, and 6 girls), in the departments of Antioquia, Cauca, Córdoba, Chocó, Nariño, Putumayo, and Valle del Cauca.

**206 victims of explosive devices received assistance in 7 departments.**



**87 Women  
6 Girls**



**104 Men  
9 Boys**

# OUR WORK IN 2024

In a coordinated effort with local authorities and MA AoR organizations, UNMAS Colombia, as leader of MA AoR, contributed to the management of the humanitarian response. This included medical care, legal assistance, and rehabilitation, avoiding duplication of efforts in assisting victims. This collaboration ensured the protection of victims' rights and the coordination of comprehensive care provided by entities such as the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), the Colombian Red Cross, and the National Secretariat of Social Pastoral Care – Caritas Colombia, among other local organizations.

In addition, UNMAS Colombia played a key role in strengthening the local response by fostering collaboration between humanitarian and government actors. This approach not only ensured the efficient delivery of services, but also improved the long-term sustainability of victim assistance programs. UNMAS coordinated its efforts with other United Nations organizations, such as OCHA, UNICEF, and

UNHCR, within the framework of the CERF-funded project, as well as with local government institutions in the departments of Antioquia, Cauca, Chocó, Córdoba, Nariño, and Valle del Cauca to maximize impact and avoid duplication of efforts. By leveraging the expertise and resources of various partners, UNMAS contributed to a more integrated and holistic approach to humanitarian response.

To expand its support, UNMAS conducted a training on VA in the department of Córdoba. This activity included training students from the Faculty of Law of the Cooperative University of Colombia on topics such as the care pathway for victims of explosive devices, the contextualization of their situations in the territory, strengthening legal guidance for obtaining disability certificates through local health units, and managing financial compensation for survivors with the UARIV.



*Ramón survived an antipersonnel mine accident in Chocó. Photo: Lutheran World Federation. (Photo collected for the 4 April 2024 campaign by MA AoR led by UNMAS)*



*Arley is a survivor of an antipersonnel mine accident and is now part of the Colectivo Cimarronaje Association in Chocó. Photo: Lutheran World Federation. (Photo collected for the 4 April 2024 campaign by MA AoR led by UNMAS)*

# OUR WORK IN 2024



## Pillar 5: Enablers of the Agenda 2030.

Under the leadership of UNMAS, the MA AoR made progress in 2024 in updating its work plan, in line with the Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development. This plan was guided by the principle of centrality of protection and incorporated five strategic objectives from the MA AoR Global Strategy 2022-2024: ensuring reliable coordination of humanitarian mine action in emergency situations; fostering strategic partnerships; strengthening capacities with a focus on local and national actors; promoting equality, diversity and inclusion in operations and teams; and contributing to sustainable solutions through coordination with peace and development actors.

As part of the strategic partnerships component, UNMAS provided a space for members of the MA AoR to learn about the experience of the first mine action project, led by the CCCM and developed in coordination with the SJP, within the framework of the sanctions contemplated by this restorative justice system. This exercise made it possible to identify good practices and lessons learned, and invited other non-governmental organisations to join this type of initiative that links humanitarian action with restorative justice and reparation mechanisms.

In the coordination component of the work plan, under the leadership of UNMAS, the MA AoR also accompanied the Government of Colombia in the process of nationalising the International Mine Action Standard (IMAS) 13.10, focused on assistance to victims of explosive devices. In

October 2024, a workshop was held in Cúcuta, Norte de Santander, in coordination with the AICMA Group, with the participation of state entities and organisations from the sector. The objective was to discuss the importance of the standard, clarify institutional roles and responsibilities, and outline the steps towards its formal adoption. As a result, three key products were generated that described the respective functions of: 1) national and local institutions; 2) national and international NGOs; and 3) United Nations agencies, such as UNMAS and UNICEF.

As part of efforts to raise awareness and visibility of the issue of explosive devices in Colombia, several key milestones were achieved in 2024 aimed at informing, raising awareness and mobilizing technical and financial support. On 17 April, UNMAS Colombia published its annual report on anti-personnel mines in the country, which provided an updated assessment of mine contamination, progress in humanitarian demining, numbers of victims and ongoing efforts in EORE and survivor assistance. In addition to informing the public, this report highlighted the challenges that remain in achieving a mine-free Colombia and called on the national and international community to maintain political and financial support for the sector, in line with the global commitment to 'leave no one behind'.

# OUR WORK IN 2024



Event “Space for reflection and discussion Mine Action Sector in Colombia”. Photo: UNMAS Colombia, 2024.

Subsequently, on 19 September, UNMAS Colombia led the event “Space for reflection and discussion on the Mine Action Sector in Colombia”, which brought together more than 60 representatives from civil society, the donor community, diplomatic missions, academia, the Government of Colombia and the United Nations System. The event was opened by the UN Resident Coordinator, reflecting institutional support for strengthening intersectoral coordination and the role that mine action plays in the country's peacebuilding and sustainable development processes.

Finally, on 11 October, UNMAS shared an update on the humanitarian context, which was distributed to key actors in the humanitarian, development and international cooperation systems. This document presented a comprehensive overview of the current situation of mine action in Colombia, promoting a common understanding of the context and facilitating informed decision-making. The



UNMAS Colombia team. Photo: UNMAS Colombia, 2024.

document also sought to promote the mobilisation of resources, strengthen inter-institutional coordination and align the sector's priorities with strategies for recovery, peacebuilding and sustainable development.

All these efforts reaffirmed the role of mine action as a key enabler of the Agenda 2030, contributing directly to peacebuilding, institutional strengthening, the protection of human rights and the creation of sustainable and inclusive partnerships that respond effectively to the country's humanitarian and structural challenges.

# STRATEGIC PRIORITIES FOR 2025

Within its priority areas of work for 2025, UNMAS maintains three strategic approaches, designed to maximize its impact and relevance in the Colombian context:

## 1. Strengthening the mine action sector

UNMAS prioritises the consolidation of strategic partnerships with government institutions such as the AICMA Group, the Ministry of Defence and the OCCP, as well as with members of the sector, including national and international organisations. The aim is to achieve effective coordination and support through coordination and collaboration with members of the humanitarian mine action sector. This synergy seeks to optimise the collective response and ensure greater consistency in the implementation of initiatives.

## 2. Better preparedness of communities, local authorities and humanitarian actors in the face of explosive device threats

UNMAS will provide territorial support focused on Nariño, Cauca, Chocó, Norte de Santander, and Putumayo. These regions have been identified due to their high presence of explosive devices. The objective is to strengthen EORE capacities and guarantee comprehensive assistance to victims, thereby promoting community resilience and local response capacity.

## 3. Role of mine action as a facilitator of peacebuilding in Colombia

UNMAS seeks to actively influence the inclusion of mine action in peace talks between the government and armed groups. Recognising that mine action is a fundamental pillar for stabilisation and peacebuilding, this strategic inclusion is vital to ensure that mine action contributes effectively to agreements and the consolidation of lasting peace.



Panel discussion as part of the International Mine Awareness Day. Photo: UNMAS Colombia, 2024.



EORE session in Santa Barbara de Iscuandé, Nariño. Photo: UNMAS Colombia, 2024.

# CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

## CHALLENGES

### Raising awareness of the humanitarian crisis

The main challenge is to achieve greater visibility and understanding of the impacts of the deteriorating humanitarian situation in the country, driven by the alarming increase in the use of explosive devices. It is crucial not only to highlight the difficulties, but also the urgent need for support from the international community to scale up interventions.

### Financial sustainability

Securing sustainable, long-term funding for mine action operations is an ongoing challenge, given that humanitarian funding cycles can be short and dependent on shifting priorities.



Roundtable discussion with the Office of the High Commissioner for Peace and the Indigenous Unity of the Awá People. Photo: UNMAS Colombia, 2024.

## OPPORTUNITIES

### Strengthening inter-agency coordination

There is a significant opportunity to deepen coordination with other UN agencies, non-governmental organisations and local actors to maximise impact and avoid duplication in mine action operations.

### Greater local ownership

Encouraging greater participation and leadership by local communities and authorities in mine action initiatives can ensure the sustainability and cultural relevance of interventions.

### Strategic alliances for advocacy

Collaboration with civil society organisations and other key actors can enhance UNMAS's advocacy capacity to promote mine action as an essential component of the peace and development agenda in Colombia.



EORE session in Olaya Herrera, Nariño. Photo: UNMAS Colombia, 2024.



# UNMAS

United Nations Mine Action Service



AdR Acción contra Minas  
Colombia

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