



# UNMAS

# Occupied Palestinian Territory

## February-March 2026 Newsletter: Supporting communities



### In Focus:

In the densely populated, urban environment of Gaza, there is limited land available for farming activities. With the land that is available potentially being contaminated with explosive ordnance (EO), it becomes extremely difficult - and dangerous - for people to grow produce to feed communities and support livelihoods.

In February, OXFAM requested UNMAS support to help start community-led agricultural initiatives, particularly in displacement-affected areas. In February and March, UNMAS assessed 21,000 square meters of agricultural land, all of which we confirmed as 'low risk' from EO. This allowed OXFAM to support communities to grow fresh produce at the sites, benefiting over 1,500 people by reducing dependency on external food supplies and strengthening community resilience. Already, the first production cycle is bearing fruit and the first harvest is expected soon. People living in temporary displacement camps will have more sustainable access to produce including aubergines, courgettes, peppers and tomatoes, to feed their families.

This collaboration with OXFAM highlights the transformative power of mine action, making land accessible for critical interventions that feed families, restore livelihoods and contribute to community resilience.



*UNMAS assesses a site for OXFAM.*



*Communities benefit from productive agricultural activities after UNMAS completion of its EHA.*

### Supporting safe return through the Rafah Crossing

The reopening of the Rafah crossing in early February following nearly two years of intermittent closures gave displaced Palestinians an opportunity to return to Gaza. This reopening required extensive humanitarian support and a proactive mine action response to ensure the safety of returnees.

UNMAS deployed female, Arabic-speaking personnel to Rafah for nine days as part of coordinated UN missions to support returnees. "Many people returning were no longer accustomed to the sounds of bombardment, yet faced the risk of explosive hazards near damaged or destroyed homes. By listening patiently, communicating in Arabic, and reassuring them that they had arrived safely, we helped ease anxiety and reduce fear." - Randa, Operations Assistant.

This combination of early material positioning and empathetic, localized communication empowered returnees with the knowledge necessary to navigate a hazardous environment more safely.

**Check out UNMAS new online exhibition and video released for the International Day for Mine Awareness and Assistance in Mine Action on 4 April:**

[Signs of Safety digital exhibition](#)

[Creating Safe Pathways video](#)



Chief Mine Action  
Programme Mr. Julius  
Vanderwalt  
julius.vanderwalt1@un.org



[Website](#)



[YouTube](#)



[X \(Twitter\)](#)



[Facebook](#)

**For more information:**



# UNMAS

# Occupied Palestinian Territory

## February-March 2026 Newsletter: Supporting communities



### Data snapshot 1 February - 31 March 2026

#### EOD operations:

- 779 Explosive Hazard Assessments (EHAs) completed
- 71 Interagency Missions (IAMs) supported
- 15 partners enabled to deliver responses
- 13 EO identified at **eight** sites
- 19 missions cancelled (11) or denied (8)

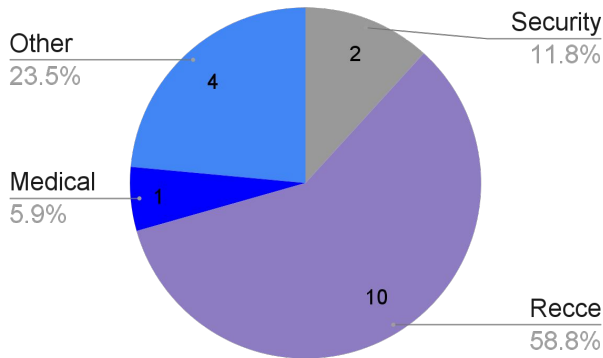
#### EORE operations:

- 79,190 people reached in sessions in Gaza
- 8,405 people reached in sessions in the West Bank
- 33 humanitarian personnel trained in EO risk awareness
- 35 people in the West Bank received Training of Trainers

UNMAS continued to deliver activities and work with its implementing partner, The HALO Trust, to meet mine action needs. Teams completed 743 EHAs for a UNDP-led Physical Damage Assessment project, ensuring future reconstruction efforts mitigate explosive threats, preventing accidents and delays. EOD Officers also spent 54 days embedded with the UN Emergency Response Team, allowing partners to conduct critical humanitarian activities across Gaza, including in the most high-risk areas.

# EHAs by place type						
Access/Roads 2	Camp/Shelter 15	UN Facilities 0	Medical Facility 3	Public Facilities 8	Education/Child Friendly Area 5	WASH Facility 0
Religious Place 8	Cultural/Heritage Site 4	Residential Facilities 681	Area Debris Management 0	Food Security/Agriculture 31	Other 22	

#### Type of IAM supported



#### Direct beneficiaries of EHAs

# 39,836

#### EO victims reported in Gaza in Feb-Mar\*

Killed	4
Injured	24
<b>Total</b>	<b>27</b>

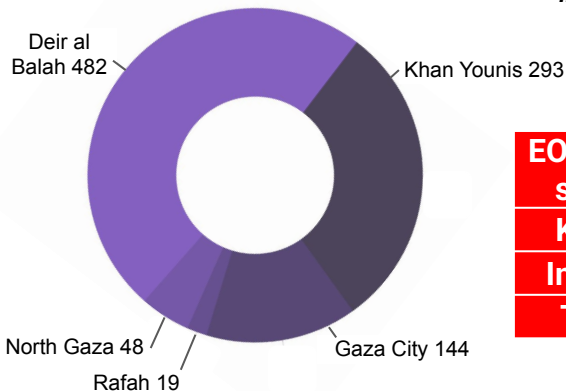
### Explosive Ordnance Risk Education

UNMAS local partners delivered in person EORE sessions to **79,190 people in Gaza and 8,405 people in the West Bank**, enhancing the safety of Palestinians throughout the OPT.

UNMAS trained **33 humanitarian personnel** in Gaza in risk awareness, and supported the Palestinian Mine Action Centre to deliver Training of Trainers to **34 people** in the West Bank. This allows partners to continue humanitarian delivery safely, and expands the network of people delivering lifesaving EORE.

### Threat in Gaza since 7 Oct 2023

#### # of EO per Governorates



#### # EO identified

# 986

#### EO victims reported since Oct 2023\*

Killed	155
Injured	758
<b>Total</b>	<b>913</b>

\*These are only accidents that have been reported to UNMAS; these figures are likely much higher.