

UNMAS OCCUPIED PALESTINIAN TERRITORY

ANNUAL REPORT
2025



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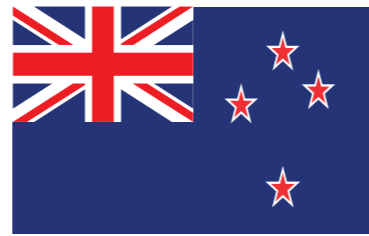
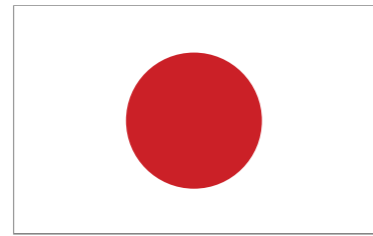
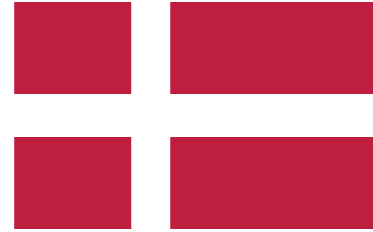
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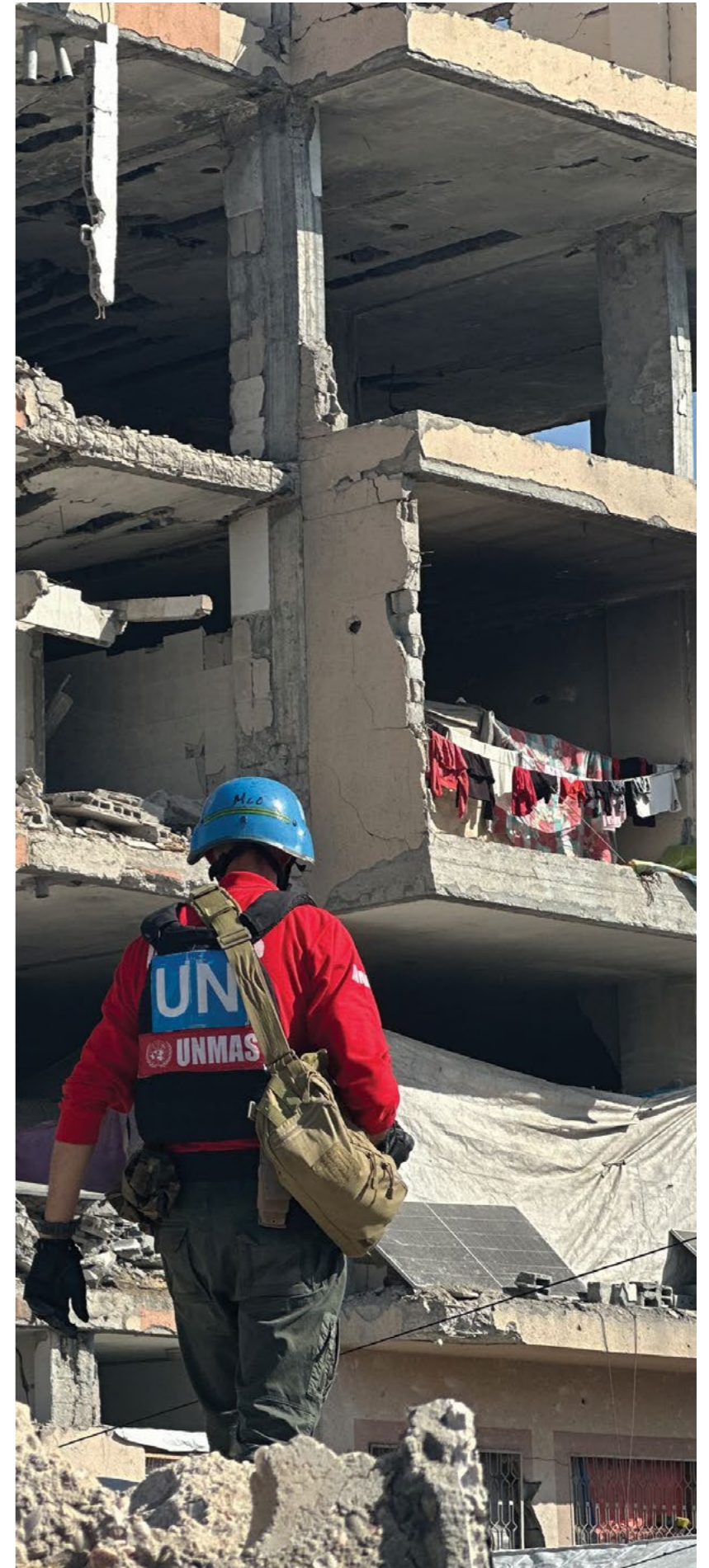
ACRONYMS

CPP	Conflict Preparedness and Protection
EHA	Explosive Hazard Assessment
EO	Explosive Ordnance
EOD	Explosive Ordnance Disposal
EORE	Explosive Ordnance Risk Education
IAM	Interagency Mission
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
IMAS	International Mine Action Standards
IMS	Information Management System
INGO	International Non-Governmental Organization
MA AoR	Mine Action Area of Responsibility
MERAT	Mission Explosive Risk Awareness Training
OPT	Occupied Palestinian Territory
PA	Palestinian Authority
PMAC	Palestinian Mine Action Centre
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNMAS	United Nations Mine Action Service
UNOPS	United Nations Office for Project Services
WFP	World Food Programme
WHO	World Health Organization

DONOR CONTRIBUTIONS




TOTAL RECEIVED IN 2025:
\$27,000,000



The humanitarian mine action needs are significant and increasing all over the world. In the Occupied Palestinian Territory, explosive ordnance threatens lives and livelihoods, hinders humanitarian response and impacts early recovery efforts.

In collaboration with partners and donors, in 2025 our UNMAS colleagues worked tirelessly to meet mine action needs, making communities safer and enabling critical humanitarian delivery. I am confident that the cooperation, coordination and support from our generous donors will help us to continue this critical work in 2026.

MR. JEAN-PIERRE LACROIX,
Under-Secretary-General
for Peace Operations



MESSAGE FROM JULIUS VANDERWALT, CHIEF OF MINE ACTION PROGRAMME IN THE OCCUPIED PALESTINIAN TERRITORY

Dear colleagues, partners, and friends,

For communities across the Occupied Palestinian Territory, 2025 was an extraordinarily difficult year.

In Gaza in particular, communities faced unprecedented risks from explosive ordnance (EO),¹ compounding an already fragile humanitarian situation. Against this backdrop, UNMAS continued to deliver life-saving assistance, prioritizing the safety of people, supporting humanitarian access, and adapting our operations to an evolving and highly constrained environment. These efforts were made possible by the unwavering support of our donors, who stood with the people of Gaza and with UNMAS at critical moments. Their commitment has been instrumental in helping protect communities from EO threats.

I am equally humbled by the extraordinary dedication of our personnel and partners working in Gaza and the West Bank. These women and men have shown great courage, endured hardship and risked life and limb to deliver essential mine action services. Their work is not only a testament to resilience, but also a beacon of hope for communities striving to live free from fear.

The threat of EO continues to cast a long shadow over daily life in Gaza and the West Bank, claiming lives, restricting

movement, endangering livelihoods, and undermining recovery. Yet, through steadfast collaboration with partners, stakeholders, and donors, UNMAS has worked to expand the mine action sector, increase our collective impact, and promote a vision of safety and dignity.

Our mission is clear:

To protect lives and support reconstruction efforts in the OPT by mitigating EO threats, strengthening local (Palestinian Authority) institutions, and enhancing the safety and resilience of communities.

Each step we take is guided by the belief that freedom from explosive threats is not only a humanitarian imperative, but also a foundation for peace, recovery, and locally-led mine action responses of tomorrow.

We will continue to advocate for relief from the EO threat, and to work hand in hand with our partners to ensure that the people of Gaza and the West Bank can rebuild their lives with security and confidence. With courage, unity, and determination, we will continue to work to help make this a reality.

With sincere gratitude,

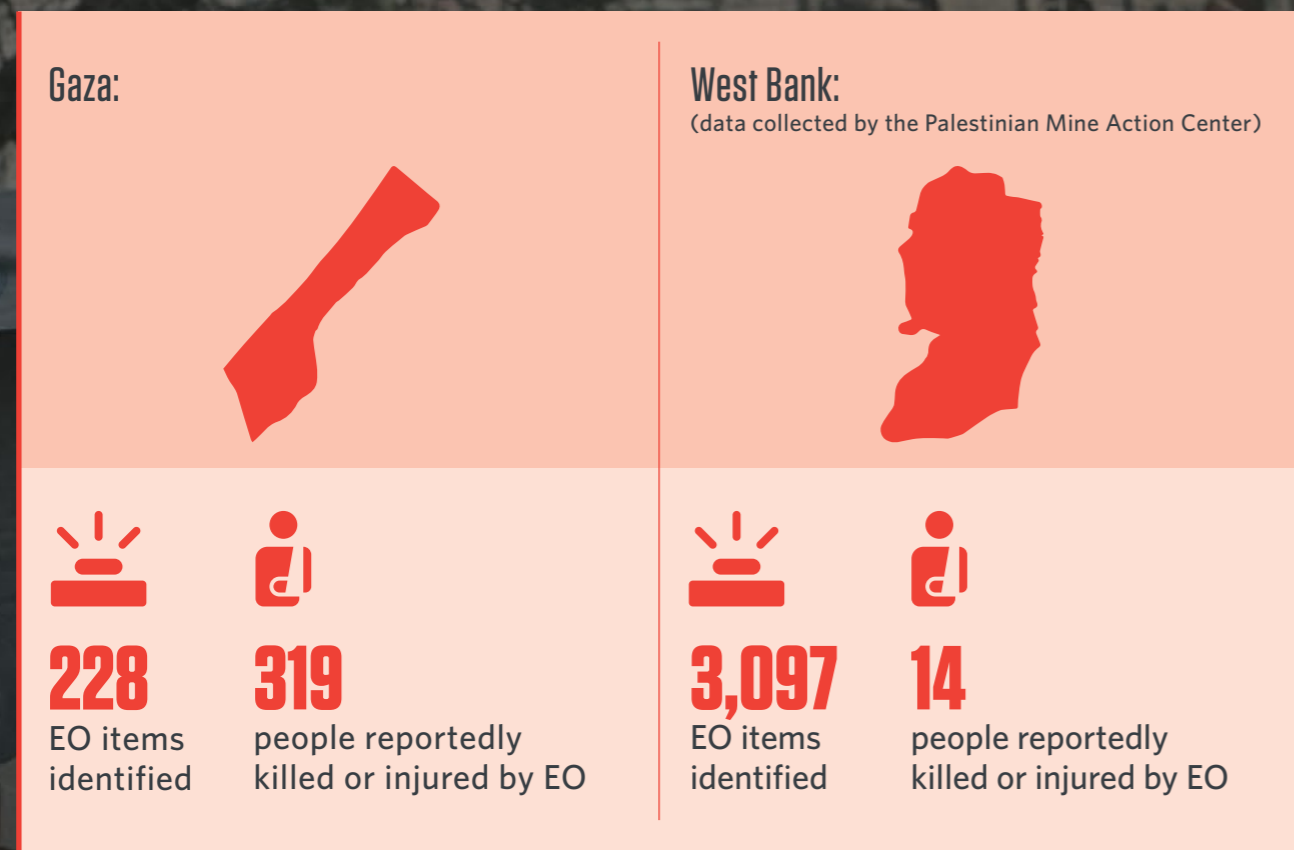
Julius

¹ The International Mine Action Standards define 'explosive ordnance' as encompassing the following munitions: mines, cluster munitions, unexploded ordnance, abandoned ordnance, booby traps, improvised explosive devices, and other devices as defined by Protocol II of the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons.



DATA SNAPSHOT

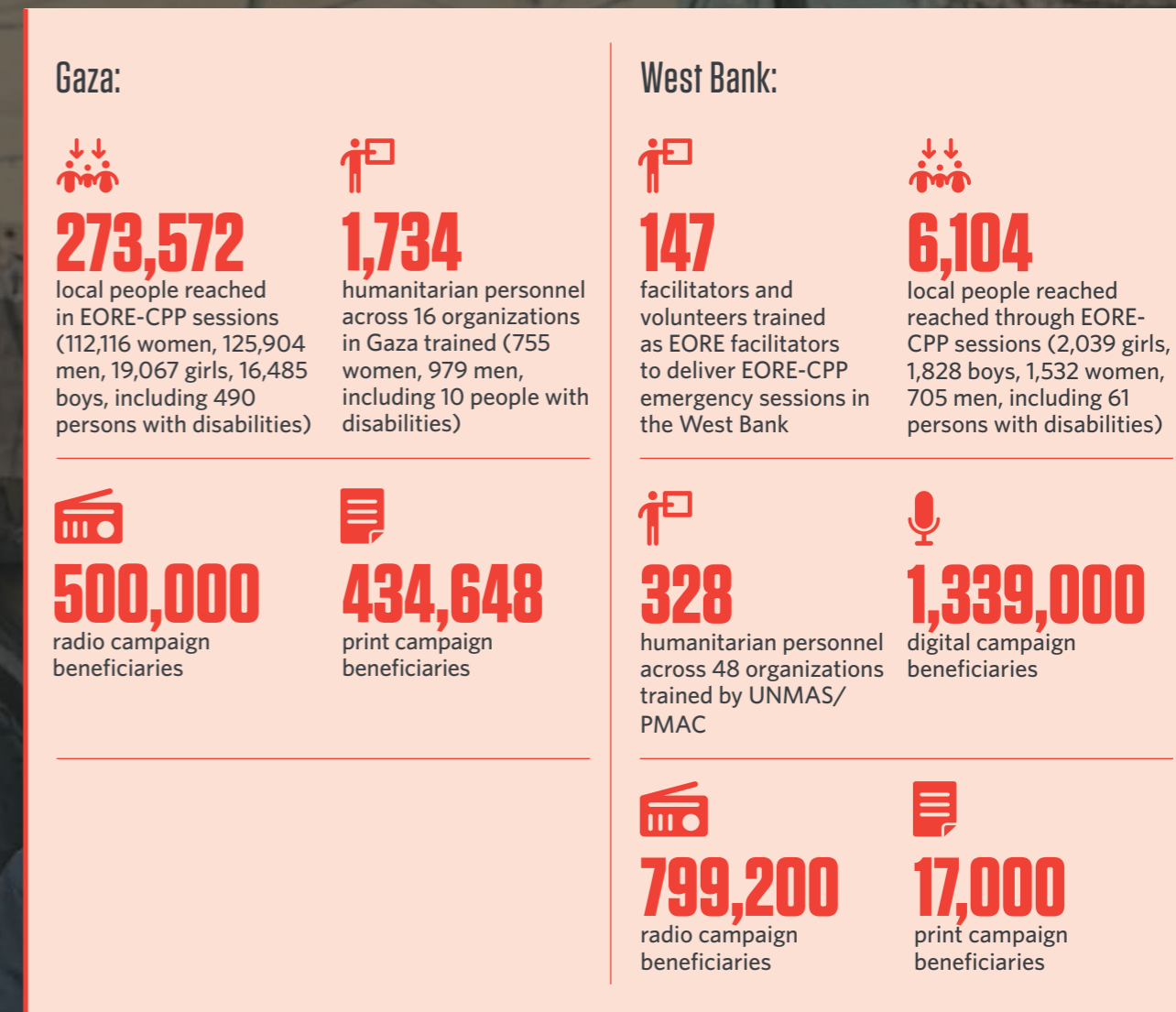
Recorded Contamination and Victims Data:



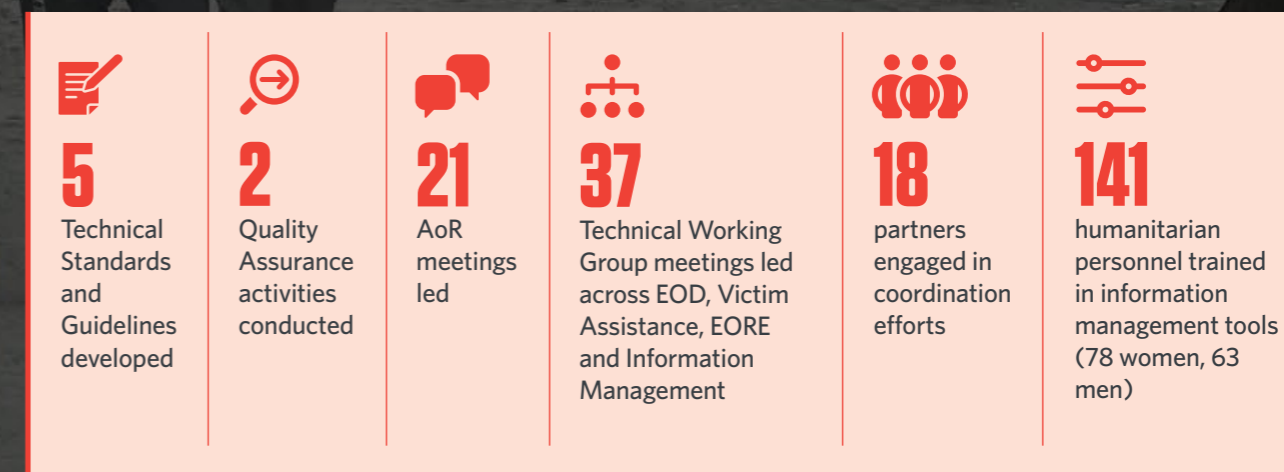
Explosive Hazard Response:



Explosive Ordnance Risk Education:



Coordination:



BACKGROUND

UNMAS has been delivering mine action activities throughout the Occupied Palestinian Territory (OPT), including Gaza and the West Bank, since 2012. However, after the escalation of hostilities on 7 October 2023, operations evolved significantly to respond to the proliferating EO threats to local populations and humanitarian partners. UNMAS rapidly scaled up its capacity across the OPT to mitigate immediate risks to communities

and ensure that humanitarian delivery could continue to vulnerable communities throughout the escalation.

The programme operates through the below pillars, leading coordination efforts, delivering explosive hazard response, raising awareness of EO threats to communities and humanitarian personnel, and supporting capacity enhancement efforts in the West Bank.



Pillar One: Coordination

Serving as the coordinating body for humanitarian mine action, prioritizing and coordinating operations

Engaging with stakeholders to lay the groundwork for expanded deployment of mine action assets and enhance operational response

Co-chairing the Mine Action Area of Responsibility under the Protection Cluster

Providing information management and cross sectoral information sharing



Pillar Two: Explosive Hazard Response

Acting as the provider of last resort for mine action operations

Providing Explosive Hazard Assessments at sites to enable humanitarian and early recovery efforts

Guiding humanitarian convoy and accompanying other interagency missions along routes

UXO removal and disposal of EO becomes possible, marking of explosive hazards



Pillar Three: Risk Education

Providing EO risk information and awareness sessions to communities

Training humanitarian partners in Explosive Ordnance Risk Awareness and other training to manage safely in high risk environments

Training mine action partners to deliver EORE and conflict preparedness and protection to local populations

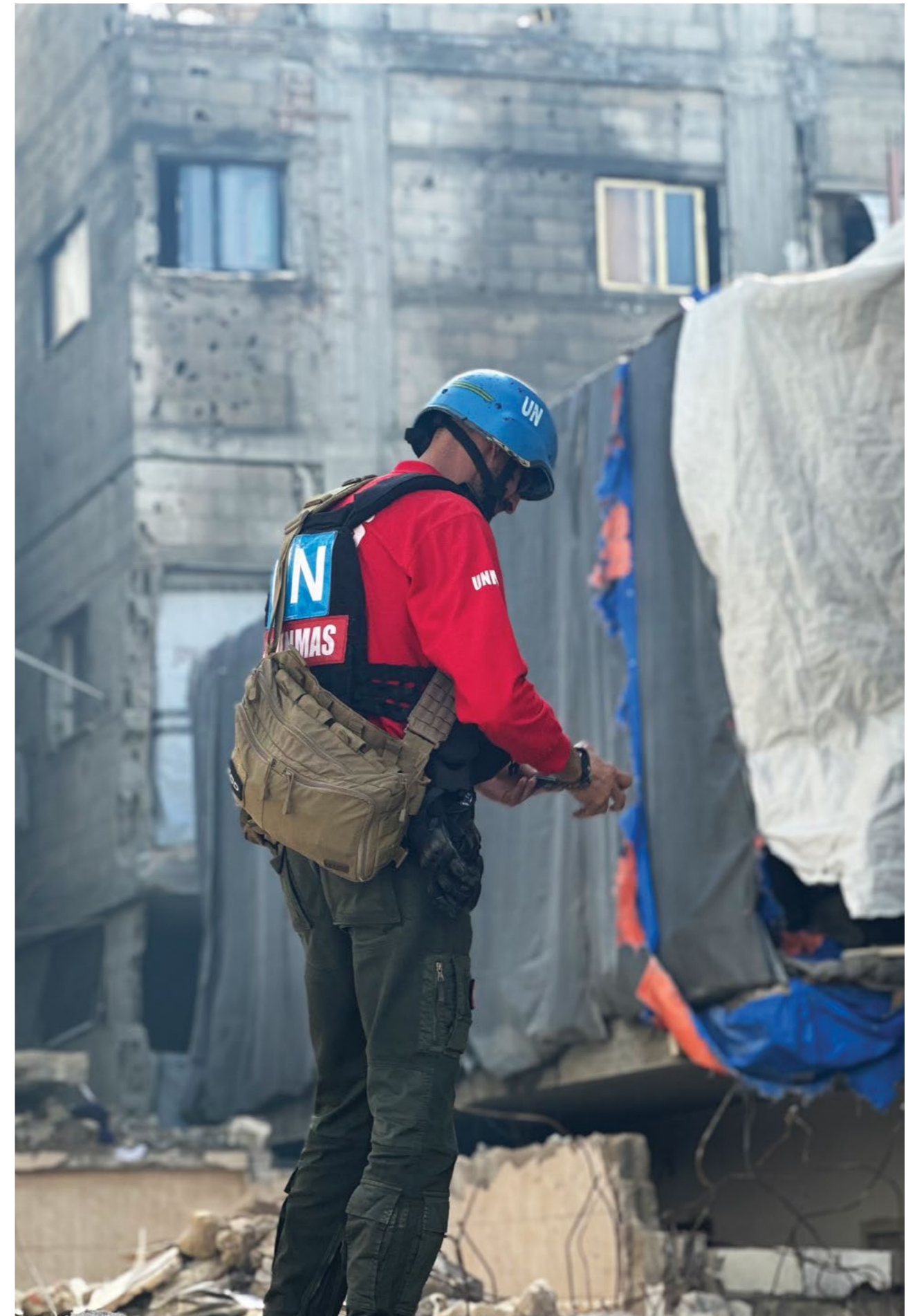


Pillar Four: Capacity Enhancement

Serving as advisory partner to the Palestinian Mine Action Centre (PMAC) in the West Bank

Providing technical support to the PMAC and PA EOD Police in the West Bank

Preparing to respond to capacity enhancement needs in Gaza as requested and in coordination with humanitarian partners



CONTEXT

The year 2025 began with a glimmer of hope for Gaza when a fragile ceasefire took hold on 19 January, but in the eight months following its collapse in March Gaza saw some of the most intense conflict in its history and a further deepening of the humanitarian crisis. Nearly the entire population of 2.1 million people was displaced, many multiple times, with more than one million people estimated to have required emergency shelter assistance.² Throughout the year, 25,718 people were killed and 62,854³ injured, and in August, the World Health Organization (WHO) confirmed a famine for the first time in Gaza.⁴ Meanwhile EO contamination proliferated, posing a severe threat to communities and impacting the humanitarian response.

Tensions rose significantly in the West Bank, with Israeli Forces operations, settler attacks and fighting between Palestinian groups all increasing. Meanwhile, demolitions of buildings, the creation of checkpoints, and other access limitations further shrunk the spaces in which Palestinians could live in peace. More than 37,000 people were displaced across the West Bank throughout the year.⁵ The increase in violence, particularly in the northern West Bank, increased EO contamination, with explosive hazards reported in densely populated areas and elsewhere.

In response to the drastic deterioration in the political, security and humanitarian situation in the OPT, in September the international community significantly increased the pressure on stakeholders to prevent further deterioration. During the high-level General Debate of the 80th Session of the United Nations (UN) General Assembly in the same month, 10 additional UN Member States recognized Palestinian statehood, including permanent members of the Security Council – France and the United Kingdom – signaling support to the safety and security of the Palestinian community in Gaza and the West Bank. On 10 October a ceasefire began, greatly lowering hostilities and enabling the humanitarian community to scale up critical humanitarian response. Through resolution 2803 (2025), in November the UN Security Council endorsed the Comprehensive Plan to End the Gaza Conflict, which included an immediate ceasefire, unimpeded flow of humanitarian aid, the release of all hostages held in Gaza, and the disarmament of Hamas, as well as longer-term steps to prevent another ceasefire collapse.

While enormous challenges remain, after more than two years of immense suffering, the ceasefire brought hope for Gaza, for the end of the conflict in the OPT and peace in the region.

² Shelter Cluster through ReliefWeb as of 20 February 2026.

<https://reliefweb.int/report/occupied-palestinian-territory/occupied-palestinian-territory-emergency-response-activity-update-52-1-31-january-2026-enar#:~:text=SITUATION%20OVERVIEW,people%20require%20emergency%20shelter%20assistance>

³ Data from WHO:

<https://app.powerbi.com/view?r=eyJrjoiODAxNTYzMDYtMjQ3YS00OTMzLTkxMWQzOTU1NWUwMzE5NTMwliwidCI6ImY2MTBjMGI3LWJkMjQzNGIzOS04MTBiLTNkYzI4MGFmYjU5MCIslmMiOj9>

⁴ WHO:

<https://www.who.int/news/item/22-08-2025-famine-confirmed-for-first-time-in-gaza>

⁵ OCHA:

<https://www.ochaopt.org/content/west-bank-monthly-snapshot-casualties-property-damage-and-displacement-december-2025>



I never imagined something so small could destroy my son's life.

I understand now how these things hide in places we do not expect.

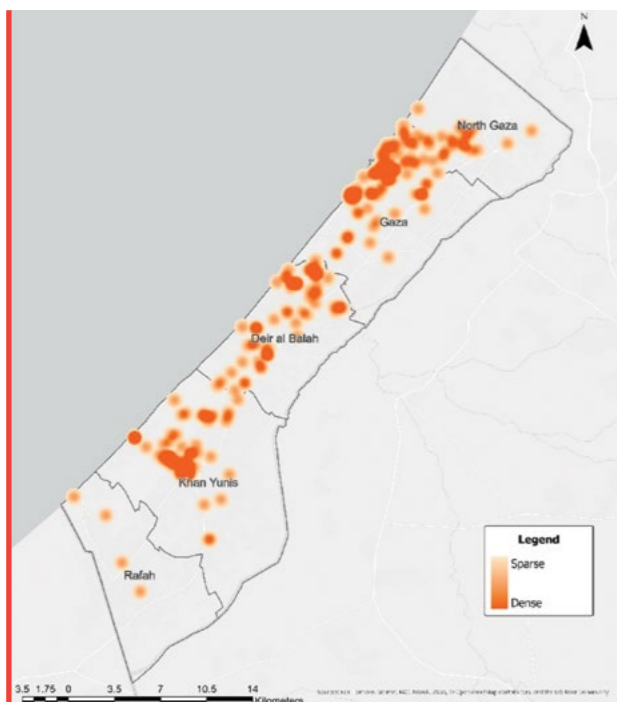
Mahmoud,

whose 12-year-old son Mahmoud suffered severe burns to his face, right hand and left leg when he picked up a small, circular metal object. Through UNMAS reporting tools, Mahmoud's case was referred to the Danish Refugee Council who provide support to people affected by EO and their families.



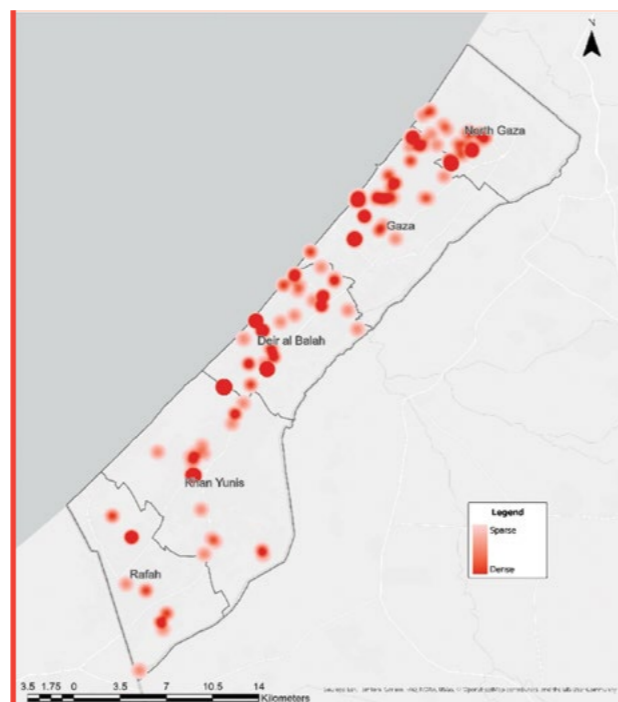
EXPLOSIVE ORDNANCE THREAT AND IMPACT

The period since October 2023 saw an immense use of explosive weapons in Gaza, leading to EO contamination throughout. Gaza's extremely limited space and high population density make it nearly impossible to steer clear of contamination. In 2025, EO continued to pose an immediate risk to lives and livelihoods, increase the risks to humanitarian actors, hinder the delivery of humanitarian activities, and impede recovery and reconstruction initiatives.



Map 1: Areas assessed as Medium and High Risk.

Data derived from 1,984 Explosive Hazard Assessments and 932 Interagency Missions between 7 October 2023 and 28 February 2026. Of the total sites assessed, 43% of sites were assessed as Low Risk and are not shown on the map.



Map 1: Suspected Explosive Ordnance Density Map.

Data derived from 1,984 Explosive Hazard Assessments and 932 Interagency Missions across the Gaza Strip between 7 October 2023 and 18 February 2026, within accessible areas and where operations were requested.

Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) Officers identified 228 EO items across 68 sites. Since it was not possible to conduct a comprehensive survey due to access and security restrictions, these are only items that were found in areas that were accessible and where teams were requested to support humanitarian activities. Actual contamination levels are expected to be much higher.

People continued to be injured and killed by EO accidents in Gaza. UNMAS received reports of 319 victims of EO (52 killed, 267 injured) as a result of 130 accidents in 2025, although these figures are likely to be significantly underreported.



This graph shows the number of sites where EOD Officers encountered EO per month since October 2023. The spikes in January and October 2025 demonstrate a correlation between increased access and increased identification, suggesting that actual contamination levels are significantly higher than identified to date. This also indicates that communities and humanitarians are at increased risk of EO as they circulate more widely throughout Gaza.

In the West Bank, EO contamination persisted throughout 2025 as a result of remnants of past conflicts including landmines, ongoing military operations, and continued security constraints limiting the ability for clearance efforts to proceed. The volatile security situation exacerbated EO risks and restricted access for clearance teams. These challenges, combined with the PA's fiscal constraints, limited the systematic management of contaminated areas. EO contamination is now widespread across the West Bank. The Palestinian Authority (PA) EOD Police face severe constraints in reaching and clearing contaminated areas which hinder timely disposal and increase the risk to communities throughout the territory.

According to data from the Palestinian Mine Action Centre (PMAC) and the Palestinian Authority (PA) EOD Police, 3,097 EO items were identified during the year. This figure is likely an underestimate, as it only reflects locations accessible to PA EOD Police. Fourteen EO-related victims were recorded in the West Bank. However, this is most likely underestimated due to the access constraints. EO contamination continues to pose direct threats to life and limb, while restricting civilian movement, agricultural activities, and access to critical infrastructure.

COORDINATING THE RESPONSE: UNMAS ROLE IN GAZA

In response to the significant need for a harmonized mine action response in Gaza, and in the absence of a formally designated authority, UNMAS continued to serve as the Mine Action Coordinator in Gaza,⁶ building on its global mandate to coordinate humanitarian mine action. In this role, UNMAS worked closely with humanitarian mine action partners in Gaza to minimize the impact of EO on conflict-affected communities where a response was most needed. UNMAS represented the sector in coordination with humanitarian partners directly and as part of key working groups. For example, as a key member of the Debris Management Working Group, UNMAS advised partners such as the UN Development Programme (UNDP) and the UN Environment Programme on explosive threat considerations while conducting and planning debris management activities. Moreover, through standardization, training, tasking, accreditation, quality assurance, advocacy and operational support to enable partners to enter and operate effectively in Gaza, UNMAS enabled a harmonized sector-wide response.

⁶ In 2024, UNMAS was designated by the UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator as the lead humanitarian coordinating body for the mine action response in Gaza.



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Standardization, Quality Assurance, and Capacity Enhancement

To maintain high operational standards across the sector in Gaza, UNMAS delivered comprehensive training programmes, including Training of Trainers for 121 Explosive Ordnance Risk Education (EORE) personnel (also see section on EORE below) and specialized inductions for newly deployed EOD personnel, reinforcing efforts through quality assurance activities across both EORE and EOD.

UNMAS also led the development of sector-wide standards and guidelines, developing four Technical Standards and Guidelines for Explosive Hazard Assessments (EHAs), Marking EO and Hazard Areas, Medical Support, and EOD. These ensured a unified operational framework for all partners.



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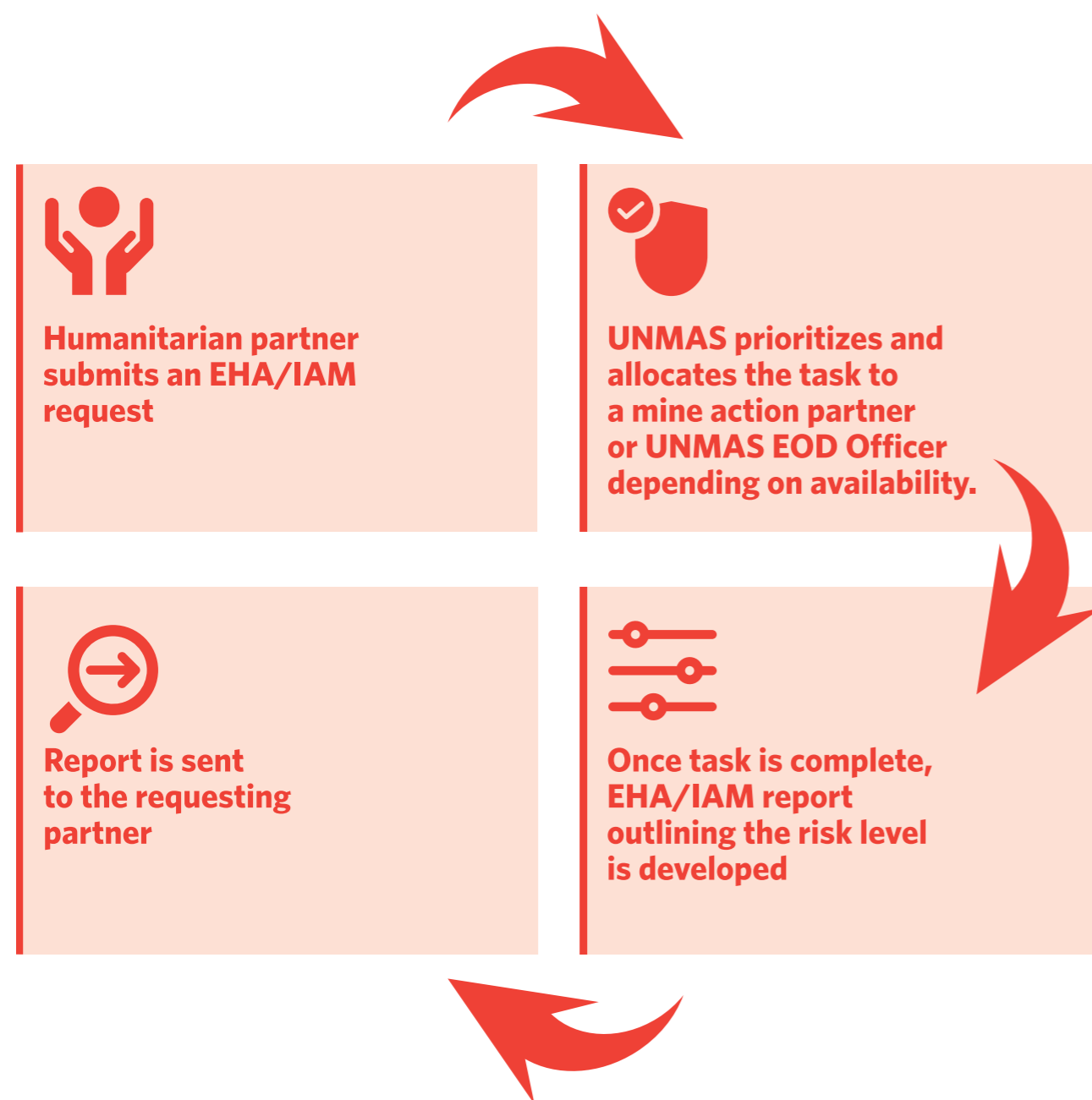
Tasking and Prioritization

Information management tools and data analysis were critical for UNMAS to map and respond to requests for support, potential or confirmed explosive threats, facilitating sector-wide prioritization, coordination and tasking to ensure an efficient and needs-based response. UNMAS OPT strengthened its Information Management System (IMS) as a core operational tool for tasking, partner coordination, and evidence-based decision-making. This facilitated safer, faster, and accountable mine action operations.

At the start of 2025, UNMAS received a huge surge in EHA requests triggered by the announcement of the January ceasefire. In response UNMAS implemented an EHA Prioritization Matrix, enabling requests to be ranked based on humanitarian impact, socio-economic importance, and operational feasibility. UNMAS prioritizes requests for EOD support in line with the priorities set by the UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator and in coordination with OCHA, UNDP, the World Food Programme (WFP), WHO, and other humanitarian actors. Prioritization meets the following main criteria: (1) lifesaving interventions; (2) urgent humanitarian aid delivery; (3) access roads and infrastructure for critical humanitarian aid; (4) debris management projects. This prioritization framework focuses in large part on critical infrastructure, such as electricity, communications and water infrastructure, health facilities, and schools. Rubble removal may also contribute to (1), (2) and (3) above. This tool therefore ensured that, particularly in significant surge periods, operations focused on the areas of greatest need.

Once prioritized, UNMAS assigned tasks to humanitarian mine action partners, enabling resources to be deployed safely and impactfully across Gaza. UNMAS integrated humanitarian mine action partners' data into a single operational picture with automated workflows eliminating manual entry, preventing duplicates, and embedding International Mine Action Standards (IMAS)-compliant processes.

Through an agreement with the Danish Refugee Council, who led victim assistance efforts across Gaza, in June UNMAS centralized verified EO accident and victim data while protecting sensitive information. This supported victim assistance referrals, verification of accidents and victim data, targeted EORE, and stronger partner coordination and operational planning, helping people affected by EO accidents to get medical, psychological and financial support, although access to more extensive support such as rehabilitation services, prosthetics, physiotherapy and assistive devices is severely limited in Gaza.



Operational Support to Partners

UNMAS innovated to facilitate safe and feasible entry for partners, expanding critical EOD capacity in Gaza at a time of significant need. For example, during periods of high-intensity kinetic activity, when it was exceptionally difficult for organizations to deploy EOD personnel, UNMAS implemented an 'in-kind' arrangement, enabling international non-governmental organizations (INGO) to embed their EOD Officers into the UNMAS team in Gaza, allowing them to operate through UNMAS mandate and channels and under UN security systems. In 2025, UNMAS inducted three 'in-kind' EOD personnel, expanding the EOD capacity in Gaza when this was critically needed.

After October 2025 the humanitarian community observed a shift to a more enabling environment, allowing partners to enter Gaza independently. UNMAS provided essential technical, logistical and administrative support such as housing and entry support for personnel arriving in Gaza.

In February, UNMAS and an in-kind Global Clearance Solutions EOD Officer worked with UNMAS EOD Officers to assess an area at Kamal Adwan Hospital where the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) planned to install a water pump. This would enable the hospital to reopen after sustaining significant damage during the conflict, allowing doctors to provide medical support to communities including screening children for malnutrition. The EOD Officers were able to confirm that the site had 'low risk' of EO, giving UNICEF the green light to begin clearing rubble and install the water pump, estimating an estimated 45,000 community members who rely on the hospital for critical medical support.



Take a look at the UNMAS Interactive Data Hub where partners request support, report an item, accident or victim of EO, for an overview of UNMAS response in Gaza to date.

[UNMAS interactive data hub](#)

WORKING FOR THE SECTOR: MA AoR COORDINATION

UNMAS co-chairs the Mine Action Area of Responsibility (MA AoR) across the OPT with INGO Humanity & Inclusion, under the Protection Cluster. The MA AoR enables partners to harmonize their humanitarian mine action responses and houses multiple Technical Working Groups led by UNMAS to tackle key thematic issues.

While in 2023 and 2024 the MA AoR was only operational in Gaza, in January 2025, the MA AoR expanded its scope to the OPT level and began operating in the West Bank, following information shared by the PMAC indicating significant contamination levels and limited response capacity, which confirmed the urgent need for mine action intervention. As a result, and through sustained advocacy and awareness-raising among partners and donors, the number of implementing partners operating in the West Bank increased from three to 10 by the end of the year, ensuring that communities received more lifesaving humanitarian mine action interventions at a time when EO contamination continued to expand.

The MA AoR convened 21 coordination meetings (13 in Gaza and eight in the West Bank), as well as 37 Technical Working Group meetings across EOD, Victim Assistance, EORE, and Information Management.

In collaboration with the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining, the MA AoR organized a three-day technical workshop in Amman in September, bringing together 47 participants (31 men, 16 women) from

25 organizations, including national partners. The workshop focused on scenario planning, advocacy priorities, and strengthening operational approaches across EOD, EORE, and Victim Assistance. Outcomes from the workshop informed an advocacy package presented ahead of a closed Donor Forum in November, attended by approximately 80 participants, including representatives from 15 donor Member States.

To strengthen visibility and information accessibility, the MA AoR improved data collection and information products, including:

-  Launch of the [MA AoR public website](#) to enhance transparency and partner visibility.
-  Development of the MA AoR Success Stories Form and Dashboard to capture and showcase partner achievements.
-  Introduction of a Mass Media Reporting Form to improve media monitoring and partner reporting. These complement the existing EORE, EHA and IAM reporting forms, all of which allow UNMAS to collect and display data about the sector-wide response to EO threats in support of prioritization, advocacy and needs-based planning.
-  Creation of the OPT EORE Prioritization and Mapping Dashboard to support coordinated EORE planning and reduce duplication.

In addition, the MA AoR delivered 22 training sessions for mine action and humanitarian partners, including training on EO accident and Victim Assistance reporting forms and integration into the IMS data collection system, strengthening data quality and reporting on EO-related incidents and victims.

In support of high-level advocacy and funding processes, the MA AoR provided inputs into key strategic documents on behalf of the sector, including the 2026 Flash Appeal, Rapid Damage and Needs Assessment, and a range of UN Reports. Inclusion of mine action inputs into these documents raised global awareness of the mine action needs across the OPT.



EXPLOSIVE HAZARD RESPONSE: ENABLING HUMANITARIAN AND EARLY RECOVERY ACTIVITIES

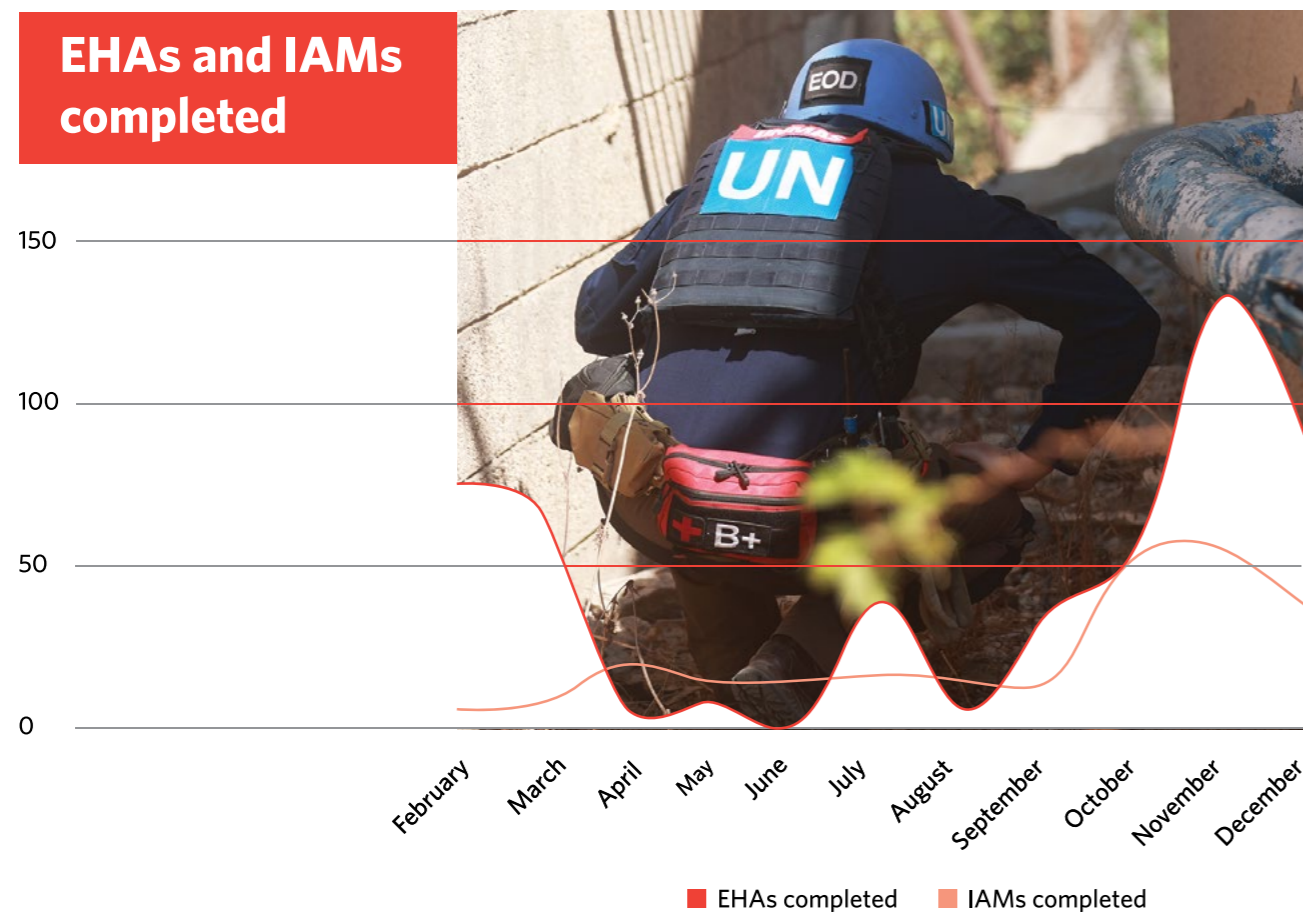
TOTAL EHAs CONDUCTED:

475

TOTAL IAMs SUPPORTED:

545

EHAs and IAMs completed

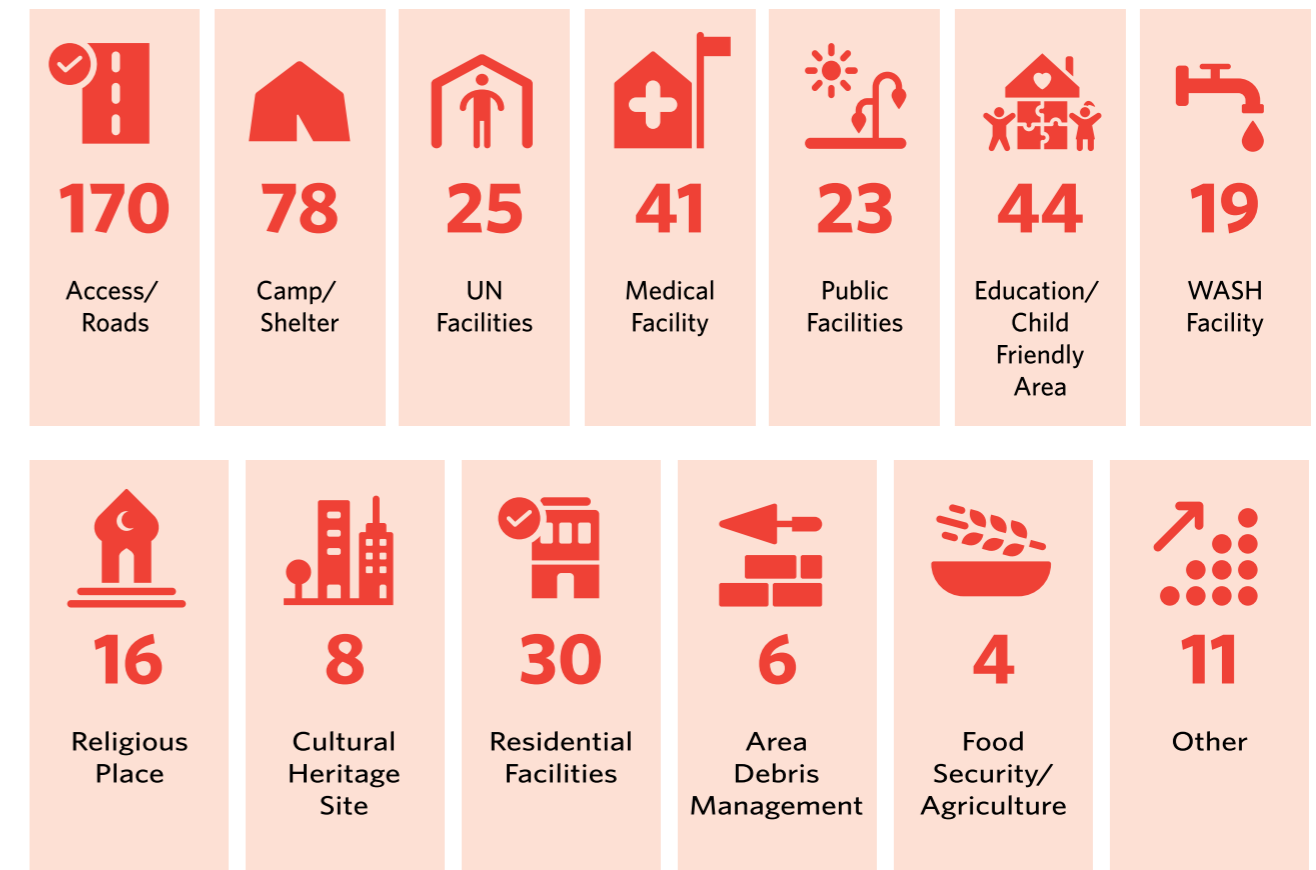


Demand for IAMs was particularly high during periods of high kinetic activity, for example between March and October. During these periods, UNMAS presence was requested on missions even if the routes being used had been assessed those routes the day prior, due to the threat of recontamination. During the ceasefire periods, requests for IAMs dropped and EHA requests surged as partners worked to expand their humanitarian and early recovery response.

In Gaza, to minimize explosive risks to communities and enable humanitarian personnel to continue delivering services, UNMAS EOD Officers conducted technical assessments, namely EHAs and support to Interagency Missions (IAMs) almost every day of the year. Without this, hospitals and schools could not be opened safely, at-risk communities could not be reached, and debris could be cleared. UNMAS received 1,260 requests to conduct EHAs and support IAMs throughout the year, averaging more than three requests per day. While access constraints, denials and cancellations of mission requests, and security concerns at times limited the ability to respond to all requests received, robust prioritization based on humanitarian needs and coordination with partners ensured a needs-based response.

EHAs remained a critical first step for humanitarian and recovery efforts in Gaza. To complete requests, teams visited each site, spoke with focal points to understand the nature of conflict in the area, and conducted visual searches to identify potential or confirmed EO threats. Teams then provided a report to enable requesting partners to tailor their activities to minimize any risks identified. When EOD Officers encountered EO, they marked and cordoned the area to minimize the risk to communities and enable humanitarian activities to proceed safely.

Number of EHAs completed by place type



UNMAS led humanitarian convoys along routes during IAMs, often walking ahead of the vehicles to inspect suspicious objects and guiding partners along the safest paths to ensure that food, fuel, and medical supplies could reach communities in need without the risk of accidental detonation of EO. This support made more high-risk areas accessible; without the real-time risk mitigation provided by UNMAS, the possibility of encountering EO could have paralyzed the delivery of life-saving aid and the movement of humanitarian personnel across Gaza.

In addition to supporting planned IAMs, UNMAS also provided on-call EOD resources every day by deploying an EOD Officer as part of the Emergency Response Team (formerly Mission Support Team) composed of CADUS, UNDSS and UNMAS. Primarily based in Gaza city, this Team remained on standby to provide urgent or ad hoc support to partners delivering services to communities through Gaza city and North Gaza.

Empowering the sector - the MERAT initiative:

After the October ceasefire, UNMAS began delivering day-long Mission Explosive Risk Awareness (MERAT) sessions to train 57 UN Security Officers to identify and mitigate the risks of explosive threats while leading missions along routes that UNMAS had previously assessed. Training and awareness sessions such as these enhanced the capability of the humanitarian sector to navigate explosive threats, making humanitarian personnel safer and enabling the sector to continue delivering lifesaving services in support of humanitarian and early recovery efforts in Gaza.



LIFESAVING ACCESS: SECURING HEALTH SERVICES

EHAs CONDUCTED OF
MEDICAL FACILITIES:

47

MEDICAL IAMs
SUPPORTED:

30

From enabling partners to build health centres on land impacted by kinetic activity, to supporting the evacuation of critically ill patients, EOD support played a key role in ensuring lifesaving medical response could continue in Gaza. Through EHAs, UNMAS assessed damaged hospitals to see whether they could be used safely and areas of land where partners intended to build temporary healthcare facilities to deliver services to conflict-affected communities. Through IAM support, partners could deliver medical supplies to facilities throughout Gaza and hospital patients could be moved from areas issued with displacement orders to ensure their continued care and safety.

In early October, UNMAS conducted a three-day EHA of the European Gaza Hospital, the second-largest hospital in Khan Younis. The facility had sustained significant damage during the May 2025 hostilities, resulting in its closure and the loss of essential medical services such as neurosurgery, cardiac care, and oncology, services not available elsewhere in Gaza. The assessment identified a number of dangerous items as well as areas with potential additional explosive contamination. Over the following weeks, UNMAS supported numerous IAMs to enable partners including WHO and OCHA to recover vital medical equipment in areas identified by UNMAS as safely accessible during the prior assessment. Partners were able to retrieve lifesaving medical supplies and generators which were brought to nearby operational hospitals. By guiding partners, UNMAS prevented explosive hazard contamination from impeding lifesaving humanitarian response in Gaza.

ENSURING SAFETY: SUPPORTING SHELTER SERVICES

EHAs CONDUCTED OF
SHELTER FACILITIES:

78

SHELTER IAMs
SUPPORTED:

6

With 81% of structures damaged in Gaza⁷ and almost the entire population⁸ displaced at least once after October 2023, the sustainment and expansion of shelter services was a critical priority. However, with the threat of EO present across Gaza, partners could not safely construct Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) sites on land without prior assessment. In many cases, UNMAS was requested to assess open areas, making this precious and limited land usable. In other cases, UNMAS was called to an existing IDP site because residents had encountered a suspicious item and needed to know how and whether to avoid it.

The mine action support to shelter services ensured that displaced persons could reside in Gaza more safely and in a more dignified manner.

In November, residents of an IDP camp in Gaza city faced a terrifying reality: an explosive ordnance remnant was discovered inside one of the tents. With limited space, families had no choice but to live alongside the suspicious item, hoping it would not explode.

Despite heavy rain, UNMAS reached the site and assessed the item; thankfully, it was harmless scrap. This was a huge relief to residents, allowing them to continue without the constant fear of an explosion.

This time, the threat was only psychological. But across Gaza, communities are forced to navigate daily life amid explosive threats littered throughout their neighbourhoods. Palestinians must be able to rebuild their lives in safety and dignity, not under the shadow of explosive remnants of war.

⁷ UNOSAT as of 11 October 2025. <https://unosat.org/products/4213>

⁸ Shelter Cluster through ReliefWeb as of 20 February 2026. <https://reliefweb.int/report/occupied-palestinian-territory/occupied-palestinian-territory-emergency-response-activity-update-52-1-31-january-2026-enar#:~:text=SITUATION%20OVERVIEW,people%20require%20emergency%20shelter%20assistance.>

THE PATH TO RECONSTRUCTION: OPENING ACCESS AND RESTORING INFRASTRUCTURE

EHAs CONDUCTED OF ROADS:

170

Supporting efforts to clear debris from sites and routes was a key part of UNMAS response in 2025, as these critical activities enabled humanitarian access to expand, debris to be recycled and reused productively, and infrastructure to begin to be rehabilitated. The Rapid Damage and Needs Assessment⁹ published by the European Union, United Nations and World Bank in February highlighted that “one of the most pressing constraints to recovery in Gaza is the extensive amounts of debris resulting from the conflict”, recognizing explosive ordnance as a critical element of debris clearance. Later in 2025, UNMAS also contributed to the Rapid Damage and Needs Assessment for 2026, which at the time of writing is pending publication.

In collaboration with WFP, UNMAS ensured that critical access routes, particularly those near border crossing points such as Zikim and Rafah crossings, could be opened to allow

ROUTE CLEARANCE MISSIONS SUPPORTED FOR WFP:

45

expanded delivery of humanitarian aid to populations in need.

Working closely with UNDP on missions to clear debris from roads and sites identified as ‘high priority’ for rehabilitation efforts, UNMAS supported UNDP to open access, begin reconstruction and process the debris for use in other humanitarian and early recovery efforts. This enabled UNDP to collect 225,000 tonnes of debris, clearing 91km of roads in Gaza.¹⁰ At the end of the year, UNDP requested UNMAS support for a Physical Damage Assessment project to assess the extent of damage across large areas in Gaza, to inform early recovery planning, prioritization, and decision-making. UNMAS assessments which will begin in 2026 will aim to ensure that damage assessments and follow-on engineering activities are both safe and technically accurate, and that rehabilitation costs and timelines account for potential costly and time-consuming mitigation or elimination of EO threats.

Specialized risk education for debris management workers:

Debris management workers in Gaza are one of the most exposed groups during early recovery and reconstruction. As large-scale rubble removal, road clearance, and site rehabilitation accelerated, workers faced daily risks from EO embedded in debris, buildings and infrastructure.

UNMAS developed and delivered targeted EORE training packages for 178 debris management personnel, using messaging aligned with IMAS and adapted to local operating conditions. The training combined hazard awareness with practical risk mitigation, including how to recognize suspicious items, assess unsafe environments, maintain safe distances, and apply clear safety procedures such as “do not touch, mark and report”. This equipped personnel with the knowledge and understanding to conduct works more safely, minimizing the risk of EO.

UNDP then integrated this training into their contractor induction processes for debris and rubble removal teams, systematizing EO risk mitigation in UNDP’s debris management efforts. Educational materials were distributed at worksites to reinforce key safety messages and promote consistent safe behaviours.

In parallel, UNMAS also worked with WFP-contracted engineers engaged in recovery and reconstruction operations, ensuring that EORE principles were embedded into engineering and site management practices and enhancing the safety of personnel and work.

“Inspecting or assessing roads and premises for EO is a critical safety step before any rehabilitation or construction work [...] We couldn’t safely do our job without UNMAS EOD officers on board.” — WFP

“UNMAS support has had a significant and positive impact on our organization’s ability to operate safely and effectively in Gaza. Their EHAs have enabled our teams to access high-risk areas, resume field operations, and deliver services without exposing staff or beneficiaries to unnecessary danger. The technical guidance and risk briefings provided by UNMAS have improved our operational planning and reduced safety incidents, making their support not only useful but essential to maintaining continuity of our humanitarian and recovery efforts [...]” — UNDP

⁹ World Bank, February 2025.

<https://thedocs.worldbank.org/en/doc/133c3304e29086819c1119fe8e85366b-0280012025/original/Gaza-RDNA-final-med.pdf>

¹⁰ UNDP, 19 December 2025.

<https://www.undp.org/papp/publications/gaza-debris-management-situation-report-december-2025/OVERVIEW,people%20require%20emergency%20shelter%20assistance>.



We couldn't safely do our job without UNMAS EOD officers on board



SCALING UP INCLUSIVE RISK EDUCATION ACROSS THE OPT

UNMAS strengthened Explosive Ordnance Risk Education (EORE) across the OPT through a coordinated, inclusive and evidence-based approach rooted in technical leadership, partnership and workforce development. Working in one of the world's most complex operating environments, UNMAS partnered with local and international mine action actors and humanitarian agencies to ensure that communities most exposed to explosive hazards received life-saving, accessible and high-quality risk education at scale. Working within the MA AoR, UNMAS led EORE Technical Working Groups for Gaza and the West Bank, coordinating with partners to deliver a response aligned with international standards and local realities.

Reaching local populations with lifesaving messaging

In Gaza, UNMAS worked with local partners Palestinian Organization for Development and Save Youth Future Society, to deliver 9,867 formal and rapid EORE sessions with integrated conflict preparedness and protection (CPP) messaging across all five governorates, reaching 273,572 conflict-affected people. Mass media outreach further amplified the reach of essential EORE-CPP messaging, with 500,000 people reached through radio and 434,648 through print campaigns.

To ensure risk education was embedded across the humanitarian response, UNMAS worked in close partnership with medical and protection actors and education partners, to deliver EORE to vulnerable children and adolescents

through temporary learning centres across Gaza. EORE was also integrated into services delivered in IDP camps, ensuring life-saving safety information reached children, caregivers, patients, and displaced families where they were already accessing essential support.

Disability inclusion was embedded through a partnership with UNICEF and Atfaluna Association for the Deaf, resulting in a checklist integrated into training, quality assurance, and reporting tools. Putting this policy into practice, UNMAS recruited and trained 10 risk education facilitators with disabilities in preparation for expanding the EORE workforce and promoting broader inclusion across 2026 programming, demonstrating an ongoing commitment to quality, accessibility and equity.

In the West Bank, through local partner PalVision, UNMAS delivered 2,592 formal and rapid EORE-CPP sessions across Areas A, B and C, reaching 6,104 beneficiaries through community-based EORE-CPP activities in refugee camps, schools settings, and community centres. Mass media outreach extended messaging to 1,339,000 people through social media platforms, and a further 799,200 through radio, and 17,000 through print materials.

To further support inclusive outreach, UNMAS produced a suite of 50 child- and disability-inclusive EORE-CPP products, including storybooks, songs, radio plays, animations, and games, ensuring messages are accessible across age, literacy, and ability levels.

Following the 19 January ceasefire, UNMAS delivered surge and bespoke training for humanitarian responders, supporting the mainstreaming of EORE across protection, shelter, education and water, sanitation and hygiene services. A comprehensive Ceasefire Response Package, including digital, print, radio, and SMS messaging, was produced to enable rapid and coordinated risk communication. As communities returned en masse to highly contaminated areas in northern Gaza, UNMAS coordinated with site management actors to deliver rapid EORE sessions and distribute life-saving materials at reception and monitoring points along key human corridors. These interventions ensured that families, many of whom were returning to heavily damaged and unfamiliar environments, received critical information on explosive hazards, safe behaviours, and reporting mechanisms. This immediate risk education helped reduce accidents, supported safer movement, and enabled communities to make informed decisions as they returned to their communities of origin.



ENHANCING THE CAPACITY OF PARTNER PERSONNEL

UNMAS conducted 53 training sessions to humanitarian organizations in Gaza, covering EO awareness, integration of EORE into humanitarian programming, and EORE Training of Trainers. These sessions strengthened the capacity of 1,734 humanitarian personnel across 16 organizations.

In the West Bank, UNMAS and the PMAC partnered to deliver 20 training sessions on EO awareness, integrating EORE into humanitarian delivery, and EORE-CPP Training of Trainers, strengthening a workforce of 329 humanitarian staff across 48 organizations. In parallel, PMAC personnel were trained as EORE-CPP Master Trainers to support sustainable national capacity. UNMAS trained a further 147 facilitators and volunteers to deliver emergency EORE sessions.

To strengthen safe and inclusive delivery, UNMAS developed trauma-sensitive Mental Health and Psychosocial Support training with the Gaza Community Mental Health Programme and co-facilitated a three-part IMAS for EORE training series with the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining, building sector capacity and laying the foundation for localized standards. Across the OPT, UNMAS invested in long-term systems, inclusive programming, and workforce expansion through comprehensive strategies and scale-up roadmaps aligned with international standards.

“The EORE awareness sessions have had a significant positive impact on our operations. They increased staff and community knowledge about the risks of explosive remnants of war, which improved safety during field activities and humanitarian service delivery. The sessions also strengthened our ability to integrate risk education into our programmes, reduced incidents of unsafe behavior, and built trust with the communities we serve. Overall, this support has been very useful in enhancing both the effectiveness and safety of our work.” — Catholic Relief Services

“EORE when adapted to the needs of persons with disabilities—has strengthened community awareness and safer behaviours, particularly among deaf children and their families who often lack access to audible warnings or mainstream risk messaging. This has increased confidence among caregivers and communities to safely access Atfaluna’s services.” — Atfaluna Society for Deaf Children



CAPACITY ENHANCEMENT

UNMAS worked closely with PA counterparts in the West Bank to strengthen a locally led mine action response, with capacity enhancement efforts primarily focused on reinforcing the PMAC in its role as the national coordination authority. UNMAS provided direct institutional and technical support through dedicated programme personnel providing continuous on-the-job mentoring and technical accompaniment to PMAC staff across coordination, operational planning, and information management functions. This included support to prioritize mine action activities in the West Bank based on risk and operational constraints, develop and refine workplans, strengthen tasking and reporting procedures, and enhance coordination with national and international partners. These efforts contributed to more structured planning processes, improved oversight of partner activities, and greater coherence in the implementation of mine action priorities. As a direct outcome of these efforts, the PMAC standardized and coordinated the mine action sector in the West Bank, including delivering EORE ToT to 72 personnel (18 men and 54 women) from community-based organizations and conducted additional EORE awareness sessions for 121 humanitarian actors and health workers to expand outreach to at-risk populations.

UNMAS also began developing an EOD training plan for the PA EOD Police, scheduled for implementation in 2026, to enhance safe response capacity to EO threats with limited equipment and under access restrictions imposed by Israeli authorities. UNMAS actively engaged with the PA Government Operations Room for Emergency Interventions in the Southern Governorates, participating in multiple high-level meetings with ministers and senior officials, providing strategic advice in support of PA-led decisionmaking around the integration of mine action priorities into emergency planning. UNMAS also provided technical guidance, coordination, and capacity-building support to PalVision, MA'AN, HI, NPA, PCC, ANAAR, and YES Theatre to ensure alignment with PMAC strategies and effective implementation of mine action activities, collectively contributing to strengthened institutional capacity, improved EORE coordination, and enhanced sector-wide coherence and sustainability in the West Bank.

At the end of 2025, UNMAS engaged an implementing partner to conduct a comprehensive capacity assessment of the PMAC, reviewing technical competencies, Information Management capabilities, and compliance with IMAS. This assessment will enable UNMAS and other humanitarian mine action partners to tailor their capacity enhancement activities to ensure they are the most impactful.

Information Management Capacity Enhancement:

Following a comprehensive Information Management desk assessment in May, UNMAS worked with the PMAC to implement an operational IMS to transition towards a dashboard-driven national platform aligned with international standards.

UNMAS:

- Established a dedicated PMAC operational space within ArcGIS Enterprise.
- Developed and standardized EO Accident and Victim reporting forms aligned with Information Management minimum data requirements, incorporating additional fields to address West Bank operational needs.
- Integrated multi-level validation and approval workflows with clearly assigned PMAC validation officers.
- Launched EO Accident and Victim forms into live production, activating associated dashboards and reporting templates.
- Finalized EORE reporting forms, including validation processes.
- Delivered user onboarding and operational training to PMAC personnel.
- Provided continuous technical assistance and live-entry support during system rollout.

By the end of 2025, UNMAS had completed approximately 20% of the overall IMS implementation plan and core accident, victim and EORE workflows were planned. Implementation will continue in 2026 to expand the IMS to additional mine action workflows in the West Bank, including mine action partners utilizing the IMS, as well as hazard reporting, land release, quality management, and tasking processes. The next phase will further consolidate national ownership, strengthen interoperability with partners, and support the integration of Information Management components into national mine action standards.





In 2025, the collaboration between the PMAC and UNMAS had a direct positive impact on PMAC's work, significantly enhancing the team's capacities across several areas.

First, in awareness, the collaboration supported the design and implementation of high-quality programmes targeting not only the general public but also staff of partner institutions, thereby strengthening the Centre's influence within the community.

Second, in information management, the Centre enhanced the team's skills in handling data, whether for victim surveys or awareness programs, by improving their ability to store, organize, and manage information effectively. As a result, the team is now able to manage these programmes

efficiently, with the potential to extend the programme to other institutions to support their data management in the near future.

Third, in administration, coordination and cooperation between the Centre and UNMAS were continuously reinforced, with the UNMAS team serving as a key advisory reference for all mine action-related work in the West Bank and Gaza.

Additionally, UNMAS, in collaboration with an external organization, conducted a comprehensive technical assessment of PMAC's performance. This evaluation was instrumental in identifying areas for improvement and helped draft a clear plan for building a fully integrated and robust Centre based on solid scientific foundations.

Brigadier Issa Alghunaimat,

Deputy Director,
PMAC

CHALLENGES

The complex operating environment in both Gaza and the West Bank significantly challenged UNMAS activities in 2025. The extensive need for humanitarian mine action frequently had to be balanced against access constraints and a close observation of the security environment to ensure community and humanitarian personnel safety.

The active conflict increased the mine action needs due to increasing contamination and communities frequently displaced between potentially contaminated spaces. In parallel this conflict environment made it more difficult to maintain capacity in Gaza due to security concerns, and triggered severe access constraints which made large parts of Gaza inaccessible.

Regular cancellations or denials limited the ability to complete all missions. In total, 171 missions were cancelled – for

example due to security concerns by requesting partners – and 77 were denied. Limitations on the supplies and equipment able to enter Gaza, from fuel to EOD search and disposal equipment, further limited UNMAS' ability to expand its response.

Challenges relating to the movement of personnel and equipment in the West Bank and Jerusalem, including lack of visas and increasing checkpoints and movement restrictions, hindered personnel's ability to meet with key stakeholders including PA representatives, donors, local partners and other key stakeholders.

Despite these constraints, UNMAS maintained a continuous presence in Gaza and the West Bank, adapting to communities' needs to deliver the best possible response within the circumstances.



SUCCESS STORIES

Safe response: EOD teams enable safe recovery of a 25-person family amidst ongoing hostilities in Rafah

Following the ceasefire collapse in March 2025, military operations escalated significantly across Gaza. In Rafah, families who had returned to their homes were once again forced to flee to IDP camps. Others, exhausted and resigned, were unable or unwilling to abandon their homes once more.

Among them was a family trapped in their residence amidst fierce fighting. In April, OCHA received an urgent request for evacuation after two family members had been injured, one critically. Due to the severity of the security situation, UNMAS support was critical to mitigate the EO risk and safely reach the family.

During the mission, the UNMAS EOD Officer conducted a real-time risk assessment along the route and upon arrival, completed a full safety sweep within a 25-meter radius, securing the area for both humanitarian responders and the family to be evacuated.

Once the area was declared safe, the family, three generations strong, emerged from hiding. They carried the wounded on makeshift stretchers and brought only a few bags with essential belongings. The faces of 17 children, four women, and four men lit up as they saw the convoy: hope restored after days of fear and uncertainty. With all individuals accounted for, the mission proceeded to a medical facility where the wounded received treatment and the rest of the family found refuge.



Reigniting purpose: Hanan's return to community engagement in Gaza

For two years, Hanan, a dedicated community mobilizer from Gaza, had been disconnected from training and community engagement activities. Once active in public awareness and protection initiatives, the prolonged crisis and limited opportunities led her to withdraw from her professional path and lose confidence in her ability to contribute effectively.

When she received a nomination to participate in an UNMAS Training of Trainers in October 2025, Hanan expressed genuine excitement, describing it as "a chance to return to the field

that I truly love to serve my community again." During the three-day training, Hanan approached every session with commitment and enthusiasm. She emerged not only more capable but deeply inspired to extend this knowledge to others — especially women and youth. "This training reminded me that our work saves lives, including our own," Hanan shared.

Today, Hanan represents a model of resilience and empowerment — a woman who turned her skills into tools for saving lives and fostering collective safety. Through her renewed engagement, she is now contributing to raising community awareness and supporting others to act safely and confidently during and after emergencies.



Young people lead the way for community safety in the West Bank

Across the West Bank, youth committees have emerged as a powerful force in EORE, transforming volunteerism into civic leadership in some of the region's most vulnerable communities. Through UNMAS-supported training delivered with PalVision, 105 young volunteers, 75 women and 40 men, have been equipped to deliver life-saving messages among their communities. "Volunteering isn't just time we give, it's the impact we leave behind," explains Doaa, 24.

The youth facilitators have become trusted messengers in sensitive areas where people live with daily exposure to EO. Their sessions, delivered in homes, schools, IDP tents, and community centers, combine clear messaging, empathy, and locally grounded communication. Female volunteers in particular have stepped into critical

frontline roles, reaching mothers, caregivers, and children in ways that only they can. "Sometimes a single word from a woman or a simple hand gesture can be enough to save a child," reflects Leila, 28.

Beyond technical knowledge, the initiative has cultivated confidence, purpose, and a profound sense of belonging among youth participants. Many had never spoken publicly before, yet now they lead awareness sessions that can determine whether a child picks up a dangerous object, or walks away. Wassim, 21, captured this transformation: "I took the leap, overcame my fear, and realized how powerful this experience can be... every smile from a child gave me pride I can't describe." Through their collective efforts, these young volunteers are not only raising awareness, they are building resilient, informed communities and becoming the next generation of leaders standing at the heart of protection in the West Bank.



The programme in the OPT managed by UNMAS greatly benefited from the support provided by its long-standing global implementing partner of over **30 years** - **UNOPS.**

This unique relationship bolstered UNMAS efficiency, flexibility, deployment and responsiveness, particularly following the conflict that ensued after **7 October 2023**. As the operational arm of the UN, UNOPS has provided consistent support to UNMAS, even in the face of immense challenges.





Since October 2023, UNOPS has rapidly scaled up its mine action operations on behalf of UNMAS across Gaza and the West Bank, deploying specialized expertise to mitigate the risks of explosive ordnance and enable humanitarian access in one of the most restrictive and complex operating environments. The security incident on 19 March served as a tragic reminder of the volatility of the environment and the extraordinary bravery of colleagues. UNOPS is proud that with our support UNMAS was able to carry out hundreds of humanitarian missions, conducted explosive hazard assessments of critical sites such as hospitals and shelters, and identified and marked hundreds of explosive hazards.

During my last visit to Gaza, I witnessed firsthand the unwavering dedication of the team, especially national colleagues who continue to deliver lifesaving activities, despite the need to take care of their own physical safety and that of their families.

Amir Omeragic,
Director,
UNOPS Peace and Security Cluster

VISIBILITY

UNMAS continued to raise awareness of explosive threats in the OPT, advocate for continued support to the response, and raise awareness of the commitment by numerous Member States, the European Union, UN agencies, funds and programmes who are already supporting UNMAS efforts.

In November, UNMAS produced a video highlighting the need in Gaza and outlining the response to date. Watch the [full](#) or [shortened](#) version.

Media publications

- BBC News America | [Unexploded weapons among rubble](#) | 8 April 2025
- Reuters | [Gazans survive among unexploded bombs](#) | 17 April 2025
- UN News | [UNMAS warns explosive hazards in Gaza](#) | 17 October 2025
- The Guardian | [The grim task of recovering thousands of bodies from the rubble of Gaza](#) | 2 November 2025
- The Economist | [The dangers beneath Gaza's rubble](#) | 13 November 2025
- Anadolu | [Unexploded ordnance in Gaza](#) | 10 December 2025

UNMAS publications

- [Monthly newsletters](#)
- [Hidden Dangers, Unequal Risks](#) | International Day for Persons with Disabilities | 2 December 2025
- [Statement at the 22nd Meeting of the States Parties to the Anti-Personne I Mine Ban Convention](#) | 8 December 2025

Social media highlights

- UNMAS | [International Youth Day](#)
- United Nations | [Explosive Ordnance in Gaza](#)
- UNMAS | [Gaza Ceasefire](#)
- UN Geneva | [The EO Threat](#)



CONCLUDING MESSAGE

In 2025 the need for humanitarian mine action responses in the OPT continued to surge, necessitating a rapid, coordinated and comprehensive response. UNMAS worked closely with mine action and other humanitarian and early recovery partners to deliver this response, implementing measures to protect lives and limbs and enable humanitarian delivery to communities most in need.

This was only possible as a result of consistent, flexible and generous support from UNMAS' donors whose commitment to the mine action response in the OPT had a lifesaving impact for communities. We are grateful to our donors and partners, as well as the local communities where we operate, who put trust in

UNMAS to deliver lifesaving and enabling interventions to mitigate the explosive risk throughout Gaza and the West Bank.

Looking to 2026, UNMAS will continue to safeguard people, humanitarian response and recovery efforts. UNMAS will also continue supporting the expansion of the sector through coordination efforts, operational support and training and quality assurance measures. Advocacy will continue for partners to be able to conduct more comprehensive EO responses in support of communities throughout the OPT. We look forward to continued collaboration with donors and partners in 2026 to meet the significant needs in the OPT.

PARTNERS





UNMAS