UNMAS

ANNUAL REPORT 2019

The UNMAS Annual Report 2019 describes the organization's activities and achievements resulting from contributions to the United Nations Voluntary Trust Fund for Assistance in Mine Action.

Please see reverse for an overview of UNMAS work in United Nations peacekeeping and special political missions in 2019.

SAFE GROUND

TURNING MINEFIELDS INTO PLAYING FIELDS

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un_mineaction UNMAS United Nations

Cover photo: Drawings by school children in Abyei; UNMAS-organized Mine Risk Education drawing contest and quiz – the winners were awarded medals and various prizes. UNMAS-UNISFA

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ABBREVIATIONS

EOD	Explosive ordnance disposal
ERW	Explosive remnants of war
IACG-MA	Inter-Agency Coordination Group on Mine Action
IED	Improvised explosive device
IEDD	Improvised explosive device disposal
ISIL	Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant
MA AoR	Mine Action Area of Responsibility
RRTSC	Rapid response and technical support capacity
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNHCR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNMAS	United Nations Mine Action Service
WAM	Weapons and ammunition management

CONTRIBUTORS

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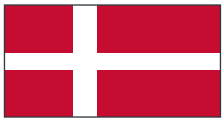
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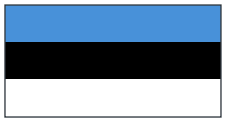

Estonia

European Union

Finland

France

Germany

Italy

Japan

Liechtenstein

Luxembourg

Netherlands

New Zealand

Poland

Republic of Korea

Russian Federation

Slovakia

Spain

United Kingdom

United States

FN-förbundet
UNA SWEDEN

United Nations CERF Central Emergency Response Fund

Trust fund for peace and security in Mali

UNITED NATIONS FOUNDATION

MESSAGE FROM THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

Mine action demonstrates what is possible when the international community comes together against a known threat. For many decades, landmines buried around the world — from Cambodia to Angola and Afghanistan — have killed and injured thousands of people each year. But concerted action led the multilateral system to take a stand. The Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention of 1997 and other crucial frameworks have saved thousands of lives and are a testament to our common humanity. Today, as we face the COVID-19 pandemic, we can take heart from the global success of mine action.

The present annual report for 2019 is a reminder of the steady work that the United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS) undertakes every day — despite the risk of death and injury — on behalf of all the citizens of the world.

I have seen for myself how UNMAS clears the road — sometimes literally — for humanitarians, peacekeepers and peacebuilders, and lays the foundation for stability and sustainable development. There are myriad ways in which mine action supports the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, from helping displaced persons return home, to converting minefields into playing fields, and breaking gender barriers by training women as deminers.

The death toll from explosive ordnance continues to rise, due in part to the urbanization of conflict and an increase in the use of improvised explosive devices. UNMAS must be equipped and resourced to respond through a needs-driven approach. I commend the efforts of this unique Service which is doing critical work for peace and sustainable development.

The successes of mine action show how we can achieve the seemingly impossible when we work together towards common goals. That is a valuable lesson for all, as we focus on suppressing the transmission of COVID-19 and recovering from its impact.

UN Photo/Mark Garten

António Guterres,
United Nations
Secretary-General

MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

The work of UNMAS makes a difference in the lives of people. In its role as United Nations mine action coordinator, UNMAS enables and accelerates many of the core activities of the United Nations — from humanitarian action and peacekeeping to sustainable development and peacebuilding. In 2019, the clearance of landmines, explosive remnants of war (ERW) and improvised explosive devices (IEDs) paved the way for food distribution centres, playing fields and schools. Roads were made safe, ensuring that people could travel to markets, humanitarian workers could deliver assistance, and peacekeepers could go on patrol. UNMAS, guided by the United Nations Mine Action Strategy 2019-2023, placed a strong focus on victim assistance by providing direct services to survivors and their families, and by coordinating with national institutions to strengthen referral pathways. In light of the urbanization of conflict and the growing threat posed by IEDs, risk education was scaled up, with outreach to 2.9 million people in 2019, marking an increase of almost 40 per cent from 2018.

This annual report outlines the work of UNMAS in 2019. Highlights include:

- Finalizing the framework for a United Nations inter-agency taskforce on IED threat mitigation, with the first meeting scheduled for January 2020 — part of the ongoing work of UNMAS to respond to the Secretary-General's call for the development of a "whole-of-system" response to IEDs.
- Focusing on strengthening links between humanitarian planning and mine action through UNMAS coordination of the Mine Action Area of Responsibility, as part of the UNHCR-led Global Protection Cluster.
- Leading the update of the Gender Guidelines for Mine Action Programmes, aimed at increasing gender mainstreaming across mine action programming, which coincided with United Nations-wide preparations for the 20th anniversary of the adoption of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) in 2020.
- Contributing concretely to the Action for Peacekeeping (A4P) initiative, most notably by training uniformed personnel and troop-contributing countries in IED threat mitigation, which improved the safety and security of the Blue Helmets.
- Supporting the United Nations system as a whole by expanding, at the request of United Nations senior leadership, UNMAS operations in Burkina Faso and deploying expertise to the United Nations Mission to Support the Hodeidah Agreement, in Yemen.

75 years on from its creation, the United Nations continues to be driven by the needs of people. Mine action not only saves lives, it allows States, communities, families and individuals to chart their own future in safety and with dignity. I want to thank those who support UNMAS, in particular Member States and the wider mine action sector. Moreover, I want to acknowledge all those who work for, or engage with, UNMAS on the ground. This report is testimony to their commitment.

UN Photo / Evan Schneider

Agnès Marcaillou,
Director, UNMAS

GLOBAL COORDINATOR FOR MINE ACTION

Since its inception 22 years ago, UNMAS has remained relevant, recognized and resolute as the global coordinator for mine action. Mandated by the General Assembly and the Security Council, and guided by a "needs driven, people centred" approach, UNMAS has continued to lead, support and coordinate activities that protect civilians, sustain peace, spur development and strengthen national capacities.

> *In our turbulent world, mine action is a concrete step towards peace.*
>
> António Guterres
> Secretary-General

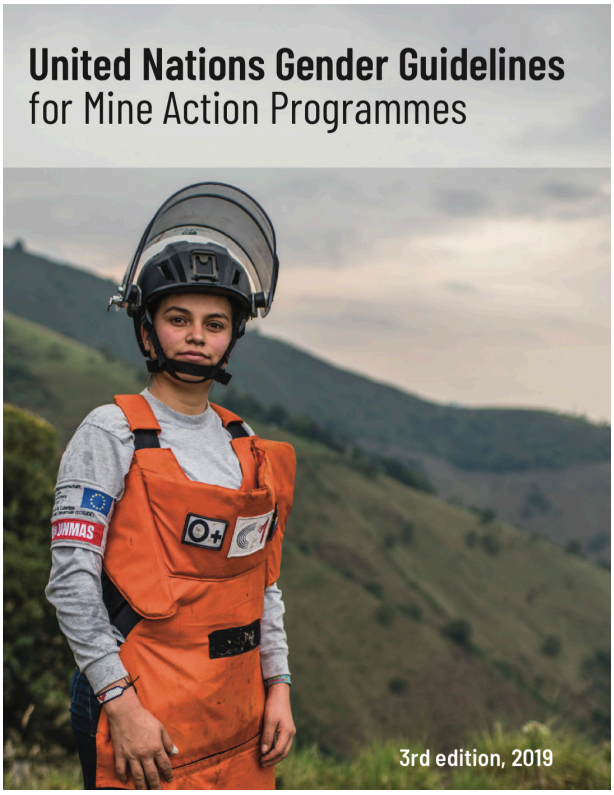
INTER-AGENCY COORDINATION GROUP ON MINE ACTION

As Chair of the Inter-Agency Coordination Group on Mine Action (IACG-MA), UNMAS leads the United Nations mine action response via cross-pillar coordination in peacebuilding and in implementing the United Nations agendas for disarmament and sustainable development. In 2019, IACG-MA reviewed and updated the United Nations Gender Guidelines for Mine Action Programmes to enhance the mainstreaming of gender perspectives and promote women's participation in United Nations mine action projects and policy. In addition, the Principals of the Group adopted four chapters of International Mine Action Standards, including three new chapters to address the growing threat of improvised explosive devices (IEDs).

Together with IACG-MA, UNMAS continued to monitor reports of new threats of contamination from explosive ordnance and explosive remnants of war (ERW) in Central African Republic, Mali, Nigeria and South Sudan, and undertook several technical assistance and evaluation missions, including to provinces in Iraq affected by the activities of Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL).

The Group also called for the complete implementation and universalization of relevant disarmament conventions during international conferences. It advocated the need to protect the rights of all civilians, mainstream gender and age considerations in policies, and provide comprehensive victim assistance.

In 2019, IACG-MA strengthened its monitoring and evaluation mechanism to assess the progress made during the first year of implementation of the United Nations Mine Action Strategy 2019-2023. To supplement the mechanism, the Global Mine Action Monitor was created to streamline data collection at the



global level, including on the integration of mine action within broader international frameworks. Initial analysis of global and country-level data showed significant improvement in reporting, as well as in the quality of disaggregated figures such as gender and age. The inclusion and integration of mine action in analyses, planning and monitoring has also increased in several United Nations planning processes, including Humanitarian Needs Overviews and Humanitarian Response Plans, further reaffirming the importance of mine action as an enabler of crucial humanitarian, development and peacebuilding activities.

MINE ACTION AREA OF RESPONSIBILITY

Through its humanitarian hub in Geneva, UNMAS continued to coordinate the Mine Action Area of Responsibility (MA AoR) at the global level, in co-leadership with the organization, Humanity & Inclusion, and to support subcluster field coordinators. MA AoR, which is a partnership forum for both civil society and United Nations mine action organizations, worked to ensure that mine action in humanitarian contexts was well coordinated and secured appropriate visibility, quality and impact. Mine action field coordinators incorporated mine action into 17 humanitarian responses, targeting 19 million people in need of protection from the impact of explosive ordnance in humanitarian crises. Mine action was included in the humanitarian response plans incorporating 88 entities delivering mine action in Afghanistan, Chad, Colombia, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Iraq, Libya, Mali, Myanmar, Niger, Nigeria, State of Palestine, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, Syrian Arab Republic, Ukraine and Yemen. Under MA AoR, information-management mine action partners met in Amman in March 2019, to explore methods to strengthen information-sharing both within the mine action sector and with the wider humanitarian community.

IED THREAT MITIGATION AND COORDINATION

In 2019, UNMAS continued to provide technical expertise and support to Member States, both at Headquarters and in the field, in mitigating the threat posed by IEDs.

In his 2018 Agenda for Disarmament, "Securing our common future", the Secretary-General recognized the need for greater coherence within the United Nations system in its approach to addressing the threats posed by IEDs and made the commitment that:

> *United Nations entities, under the leadership of the **United Nations Mine Action Service**, in cooperation with the **Office for Disarmament Affairs and other relevant United Nations entities**, will promote a strengthened and coherent United Nations*

SMART IED THREAT MITIGATION TECHNOLOGY ROADMAP (SMITMITR)

In support of a whole-of-system approach to information-sharing and identification of effective responses, UNMAS coordinated development of a *SMART IED Threat Mitigation Technology Roadmap (SMiTMiTR)* which aims to bring together the latest information on IED threats, and the technology and equipment available to detect and mitigate them. Information will be compiled in a searchable database maintained by UNMAS.

inter-agency coordination on improvised explosive devices to ensure a whole-of-system approach.

In 2019, UNMAS completed a mapping of the United Nations system response to IEDs, which revealed the need for strengthened coordination to improve understanding of available United Nations expertise and resources, information-sharing and knowledge management among United Nations entities, standardized data collection, analysis and reporting. Based on the findings, UNMAS began preparations to establish a task force for a whole-of-UN approach to IEDs.

Led by UNMAS, another significant achievement for the mine action community in 2019 was the adoption of new International Mine Action Standards on improvised explosive device disposal (IEDD), which provide guidance on the management of IEDD in humanitarian contexts and in areas where active hostilities have ceased.

In addition, and in support of Member States, UNMAS IED Threat Mitigation Advisory Team contributed to training carried out in Nepal, which aimed to assist States in building self-sustainable IEDD capacities. The new training curriculum was presented to national trainers from 13 different States, including two women and 18 men.

SECURITY COUNCIL AND GENERAL ASSEMBLY RESOLUTIONS

Pursuant to General Assembly resolution 72/75, UNMAS coordinated the elaboration of the Secretary-General's report on Assistance in Mine Action (A/74/288), which was submitted to the General Assembly in August 2019. The report highlighted the key achievements of IACG-MA and introduced the United Nations Mine Action Strategy 2019-2023. The role of UNMAS as the lead United Nations entity for mine action was further affirmed by Member States in the unanimous adoption of General Assembly resolution 74/80 on assistance in mine action.

INTERNATIONAL MEETING OF MINE ACTION NATIONAL DIRECTORS AND UNITED NATIONS ADVISERS

In February 2019, UNMAS convened the 22nd International Meeting of Mine Action National Directors and United Nations Advisers at the Palais des Nations in Geneva. Nearly 500 participants from affected and donor States, United Nations entities and civil society came together to discuss best practices and to share lessons learned with regard to mine action operations and cooperation. In an inspiring keynote address, photojournalist and survivor, Giles Duley, stressed the need to not just save lives, but to aid survivors in "getting their lives back", which reflected the forward-looking theme of the meeting, "Stepping up for mine action".

The Meeting placed special focus on gender and geographical balance, as well as on the inclusion of youth across agenda topics and panel compositions. During the four-day event, a number of discussions and side events dealing with issues such as innovation in mine action, victim assistance, risk education and inclusion were held, facilitating a forum for discussion, learning and idea-sharing.

4 APRIL — INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR MINE AWARENESS AND ASSISTANCE IN MINE ACTION

UNMAS continues to use the International Day designated by the General Assembly to promote the United Nations vision of a mine-free world. In 2019, UNMAS launched the United Nations Mine Action Strategy 2019-2023 and promoted the linkages between mine action and the Sustainable Development Goals under the theme, "United Nations Promotes Sustainable Development Goals: Safe Ground — Safe Home". Through press conferences, panel discussions, exhibitions and social media campaigns, UNMAS stressed the role of mine action, including survey and clearance activities, as a driver of the progress of the Sustainable Development Goals.

The opening ceremony of the International Day at United Nations Headquarters in New York introduced a new campaign entitled, Safe

Member States delegates and United Nations officials open the "Safe Ground" exhibit at UNHQ, New York, 4 April 2019. UNMAS/Noffar Gat

Ground, which aims to turn minefields into playing fields. The Secretary-General launched the five-year campaign to raise awareness and resources for victims and survivors of armed conflict. The campaign complements the United Nations Mine Action Strategy 2019-2023, and specifically supports its Strategic Outcome 2 on caring for survivors of explosive accidents and their families. The Safe Ground campaign will leverage partnerships with Member States, donors, civil society, sports federations and the private sector.

To promote interactive education and engagement in mine action on the occasion of the International Day, UNMAS, in partnership with Member States and civil society, organized an interactive Safe Ground — Safe Home photo exhibition and installation, which were displayed in the General Assembly lobby for six weeks. The Safe Home installation, using virtual reality technology, enabled visitors to "visit" a home in Fallujah, Iraq, and meet a family returning after conflict. UNMAS also organized a number of panel discussions with Member States and IACG-MA partners. To ensure that the International Day responded to current challenges, UNMAS hosted an IED threat mitigation skills laboratory, "UNderstanding IEDs". Participants were taken through actual IED scenarios faced by the United Nations and other actors in the field, and educated on the ways in which those threats can be mitigated. In Geneva, UNMAS took the International Day to the wider public with the screening of a short trailer at six independent cinemas to increase awareness of the impact of explosive ordnance on civilians. A video explaining the importance of mine action was also displayed on screens at Geneva Airport. An interactive panel discussion at the University of Geneva explored the linkages between mine action activities and the goals and priorities laid out in the Secretary-General's Agenda for Disarmament and the global 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

"Safe Ground" exhibit at UNHQ, New York, showcasing UNMAS work in facilitating the return of civilians to their homes following conflict. UNMAS/Noffar Gat

THANK YOU TO DANIEL CRAIG, UNITED NATIONS GLOBAL ADVOCATE FOR THE ELIMINATION OF MINES AND EXPLOSIVE HAZARDS

Actor Daniel Craig, United Nations Global Advocate for the Elimination of Mines and Explosive Hazards, working with Omaze, an accredited fundraising platform, and United Nations Foundation, raised USD 1.2 million, which was allocated to programmes across a wide range of mine-affected countries in 2019. The largest donation came through the raffle of a vehicle donated by Aston Martin. The funds were disbursed to provide assistance to children, women and men living in mine-affected countries, including through the work of UNICEF, globally, and UNDP in Cambodia, Lao People's Democratic Republic and Bosnia-Herzegovina.

In Mali, funds were used for an UNMAS project that helped survivors of explosive ordnance accidents establish small businesses. In Nigeria, a pilot project targeting 100 vulnerable young men and women from Maiduguri, Borno State, were trained by UNMAS as Explosive Ordnance Risk Educators and employed to transmit knowledge to vulnerable populations. Safe Ground initiatives, which bring attention and resources to the survivors of landmine accidents, were supported in Cyprus, State of Palestine and Somalia.

In addition to activities in New York and Geneva, various interactive events were held around the world, supported or organized by UNMAS. For example, football matches, including both girls and boys, were organized in South Sudan on pitches that had recently been surveyed and cleared of explosive ordnance, while a combination of clearance and risk education activities in the Democratic Republic of the Congo allowed for a football tournament to take place on land previously contaminated by ERW.

In Colombia, a university panel discussion brought together academics, United Nations actors and civil society representatives to discuss the complex needs of survivors of explosive incidents and the challenges in promoting survivors' rights. Some of the interactive initiatives organized in Iraq included photo exhibitions, documentary screenings, risk education theatrical plays, and "safe runs" around camps for internally displaced persons.

Participants in the football tournament organized by UNMAS and the Palestine Amputee Football Association, as part of the Safe Ground campaign, International Day for Mine Awareness and Assistance in Mine Action, April 2019. UNMAS Palestine

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS MINE ACTION STRATEGY 2019-2023

STRATEGIC OUTCOME 1:

Protection of individuals and communities from the risks and socioeconomic impacts of explosive ordnance strengthened

Over the past years, data indicated that fewer people were falling victim to detonated mines and explosive ordnance. However, in 2015, that positive trend stalled, and an increase in casualties emerged again, mostly due to the urbanization of conflicts and the increase in the use of explosive ordnance, in particular IEDs. In 2019, UNMAS efforts focused on responding to that concerning increase in contamination, including in urban areas. Land release and clearance had significant socioeconomic benefits for communities and were implemented hand in hand with targeted risk education initiatives to prevent further civilian casualties. UNMAS also focused on mitigating the risks posed by poorly secured/managed explosive materiel. As in previous years, that work was complemented by efforts to strengthen mine action coordination among United Nations, national and international partners, and to develop the capacity of local and national actors, pursuing the goal of phasing out United Nations assistance. In 2019, UNMAS continued its work in Afghanistan, Colombia, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Iraq, Libya, Mali, Nigeria, State of Palestine, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, Syrian

One of the first female deminers in Afghanistan clears mines in Bamyan Province, Afghanistan. DDG

MINE ACTION ALLOWS FOR SAFE RETURNS IN LIBYA

In 2019, clashes in the city of Tawergha forced 40,000 inhabitants to flee, and led to widespread contamination from explosive ordnance. In response, UNMAS supported the national mine action organization, Free Field Foundation (3F), in conducting mine risk education and explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) in order to facilitate the safe return of internally displaced persons who had been living in camps since their departure. Risk education and explosive ordnance clearance have had a positive impact on the improvement of safety and livelihoods for the Tawerghan community; internally displaced persons have returned and are using their land for agriculture, increasing their incomes and protecting themselves against the risks associated with explosive hazards.

"When we returned to our house in Tawergha, we were surprised by the presence of bomb pieces inside the house, which made me anxious and afraid to move around, forcing us to stop all cleaning and maintenance activities until the 3F team arrived and removed the items. Many families benefited from the removal of dangerous items from their homes and farms, and began to benefit from their land and move without fear within the city."

48-year-old woman from Tawergha

Arab Republic and Western Sahara. UNMAS also established a new programme in Burkina Faso.

In **Afghanistan**, UNMAS implemented land release projects in areas with the potential to generate socioeconomic gains. Nationally led assessments guided the selection and clearance of areas of key socioeconomic value, including hard-to-reach areas such as Zabul and Kandahar, paving the way for increased agricultural activities and construction, including of community centres and irrigation points. In **Somalia**, UNMAS mobilized and trained community-based clearance and liaison actors, who were deployed in liberated districts across the Federal Member States of Somalia, and in areas along the mined border with Ethiopia. The clearance teams' activities allowed communities to live free of the risk of explosive ordnance and to use land to generate income. UNMAS-funded multi-task clearance teams in the **Democratic Republic of the Congo** and worked with national actors to clear and survey former areas of conflict, allowing for the free movement of vulnerable communities, clear access to water points, and the resumption of agricultural and other economic activities. Those and other efforts not only had a significant impact on people and communities, but also helped to drive the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development at the national and local levels. In **Iraq**, UNMAS formed its first mixed-gender team of explosive ordnance searchers and ensured that survey and disposal activities led by partners benefited from gender-sensitive response training, thereby clearing land for use

UNMAS trains locals from affected communities to identify and safely remove ERW in Somalia. UNMAS

The Al Maedan District, West Mosul, is one of the most damaged and heavily contaminated areas in Iraq. The area is teeming with explosive hazards, in particular IEDs, left behind following the conflict. UNMAS/Cengiz Yar

by local communities in a way that mainstreams gender considerations.

There is a demonstrable link between land clearance and food security. In 2019, conflict and insecurity in **South Sudan** continued to limit the production of food, with an estimated 47 per cent of the total population facing acute food insecurity. In 2019, due to a reduction in conflict, which facilitated access, UNMAS surveyed, cleared and released land back to communities, including returnees, to bolster resilience and allow for the restart of agricultural and livestock activities, thereby increasing food security. For example, an area of land cleared by UNMAS in Buaw, Unity State, went on to house a new food distribution centre. Moreover, in **Sudan**, UNMAS surveyed and cleared regions in South Kordofan and Blue Nile States, enabling safe humanitarian and development interventions. Major population centres and important agricultural assets were targeted, allowing, in one case, for a large mango orchard near Kurum, South Kordofan, to be

AWARENESS RAISING IN THE SYRIAN ARAB REPUBLIC: A MULTI-PRONGED APPROACH

In 2019, UNMAS marked the International Day for Mine Awareness and Assistance in Mine Action for the first time in the Syrian Arab Republic, with the launch of a one-month mine awareness campaign on social and mainstream media and via SMS. Awareness graphics designed by UNMAS were shared on a weekly basis through prominent Facebook pages and in four Syrian newspapers, and SMS messages were sent, also on a weekly basis, to most subscribers of the two Syrian phone companies. Those messages increased the awareness of the threat of explosive hazards to civilians across the country. Indeed, thousands of Facebook subscribers have viewed UNMAS awareness designs posted on the country's most frequently followed pages. In parallel, 5,400 awareness flyers were distributed in public spaces in Damascus, where internally displaced persons and people likely to travel to affected governorates are concentrated.

released to local farmers, which should boost livelihoods in the area.

UNMAS clearance activities also continued to contribute to stabilization efforts throughout 2019. In **Iraq**, where explosive contamination is complex, extensive, and exceeds the capacity of existing resources to address it, the work of UNMAS in clearing explosive ordnance was an essential "first step" — allowing the Government of Iraq, the United Nations and other national and international stakeholders to re-establish basic services, facilitate returns and begin key infrastructure construction. In **Libya**, UNMAS conducted battle area clearance and explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) in Tawergha and Benghazi, thereby enabling the safe return of internally displaced communities, facilitating safe movement and access, and increasing the use of productive land through non-technical survey, risk education, the provision of technical expertise and emergency clearance activities. With the **Syrian** conflict in its eighth year, access restrictions and limited operating space for humanitarian organizations result in the full extent of explosive ordnance contamination remaining unknown. In 2019, UNMAS continued to implement contamination impact surveys to support data gathering, while prioritizing mine action initiatives in humanitarian respons plans and providing immediate benefit to affected populations by marking hazardous areas when possible.

Explosive ordnance risk education continued to be deeply embedded in UNMAS activities. Behaviour change messages and communication are tailored to specific audience groups, namely women, men, girls, boys and displaced or nomadic communities, among others. In **Iraq**, risk education took various formats in order to increase outreach, for example through billboards, TV clips, virtual reality goggles, branded products for United Nations implementing partners and targeted events, among others. UNMAS-coordinated explosive ordnance risk education in **Nigeria** specifically targeted internally displaced persons, host communities, refugees and returnees, which led to an increase in reporting of the presence of explosive ordnance. To improve the safety of families and individuals displaced at the onset of fighting in Tripoli, **Libya**, UNMAS

UNMAS provided risk education in a school in Mavivi, Beni district, Democratic Republic of the Congo. MONUSCO/Michael Ali

coordinated the integration of risk education materials in emergency food parcels to ensure the dissemination of key life-saving messages regarding the threat from ERW. In **Gaza** and the **Syrian Arab Republic**, risk education messages were integrated into humanitarian response planning and training, while risk education in **South Sudan** placed specific emphasis on vulnerable populations, in particular children. In **Afghanistan**, a behaviour change communication strategy was developed by UNMAS, in cooperation with national and international actors, which tailored risk education to the sociological, psychological and environmental factors of at-risk groups. Under that approach, styles of communication were tested with intended audiences prior to mass implementation, succeeded by a follow-up assessment — an approach which served to heighten the impact and effectiveness of risk education throughout Afghanistan.

A key priority of UNMAS risk education work is the development of capacities among communities and national institutions to raise awareness about the risks posed by explosive ordnance. For that reason, UNMAS orients its training and support to ensure that local and national actors can sustain risk education initiatives. For example, in the **Syrian Arab Republic**, UNMAS trained and deployed a mixed-gender team of 80 Risk Education Facilitators to raise awareness within communities; they targeted people considered the most at risk — such as farmers, herders, displaced persons and returnees — while paying attention to gender, age and cultural contexts. In addition to removing explosive ordnance, UNMAS-trained community clearance teams in **Somalia** promoted safe behaviours to reduce the likelihood of accidents. In **Iraq**, UNMAS provided national authorities with training to improve coordination and management of risk education throughout the country.

RAPID RESPONSE AND TECHNICAL SUPPORT CAPACITY

UNMAS Rapid Response and Technical Support Capacity (RRTSC) is a specialized tool that facilitates the timely deployment of experts and specialized equipment in response to explosive threats posed by explosive hazards. At the request of Member States or senior United Nations officials, RRTSC supports United Nations Country and Humanitarian Teams, as well as national institutions through the provision of needs assessments, training and advice. The skills of UNMAS experts deployed through RRTSC range from mine action programme management and coordination to clearance of landmines, ERW and IEDs, quality management, risk education and weapons and ammunition management (WAM).

In July 2019, at the request of the United Nations Resident/Humanitarian Coordinator, RRTSC deployed to Burkina Faso to assist the Ministry of Security in developing its IED threat mitigation capabilities and to provide humanitarian mine action in support of the United Nations Country Team.

Following the armed escalation in Gaza at the end of March 2019, RRTSC dispatched a deep buried bomb specialist to provide emergency risk assessments to United Nations facilities and civilian infrastructure damaged during the escalation. Moreover, in November 2019, RRTSC facilitated the destruction of a newly discovered aircraft bomb located in the heart of a crowded residential area in Gaza. The bomb was rendered safe and destroyed, ensuring that the 5,000 people living in the vicinity were not exposed to the threat of some 945 pounds of explosives.

RRTSC experts were also instrumental in developing standardizing materials, such as the updated United Nations Gender Guidelines for Mine Action Programmes, and improving data/information management through the development of the Information Management System for Mine Action Core — a knowledge base for the use of geographic information systems in mine action — in partnership with Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining and United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS).

UNMAS RESPONSE IN BURKINA FASO

The rapidly deteriorating security situation in Burkina Faso, involving persistent armed attacks in the northern and eastern regions of the country since 2016, has had serious humanitarian consequences. In September 2019, at the request of the United Nations Resident Coordinator, UNMAS deployed teams to Ouagadougou. With a clear escalation in the number of IED incidents in the past two years (an increase from one to 61 between 2016 and 2019), the country is facing a new threat that needs to be addressed. UNMAS projects fell under two areas of work: facilitating humanitarian responses, including through the sensitization of affected communities and humanitarian workers, and supporting national security forces in relation to explosive ordnance. During the first five months of its presence in the country, UNMAS conducted sensitization sessions for 249 humanitarian personnel (38 women and 211 men) in five regions; strengthened the protection sector, which contributed to improved integration of mine action into relevant humanitarian plans; and started working with the National Commission on the Fight Against Small Arms Proliferation to develop national standards for the coordination of risk education activities. UNMAS also established working relationships with national actors, including the Ministry of Security, conducted sensitization sessions and delivered IED-response training and equipment to security forces and humanitarian personnel.

UNMAS trains members of the United Nations Country Team in Burkina Faso on IED risk mitigation. UNMAS

STRATEGIC OUTCOME 2:

Survivors, family members and communities affected by explosive ordnance have equal access to health and education and participate fully in social and economic life

The effects of explosive ordnance can last a lifetime — survivors often face hurdles in accessing the services they need. As a result, their disabilities and injuries can lead to exclusion from society and the economy. UNMAS works closely with national partners to enhance access to health services and to promote the inclusion of survivors in social and economic life, while advocating full respect for, and safeguarding of, their human rights and dignity.

UNMAS has a victim assistance pillar as part of its work in Afghanistan, Colombia, Cyprus, Iraq, Libya, Somalia, State of Palestine, Sudan, Syrian Arab Republic and Western Sahara.

In its coordinating and convening role in **Afghanistan**, UNMAS brought national stakeholders in the disability sector, including civil society actors, together in order to catalyse cooperation and increase the network of support available to the country's Directorate of Mine Action Coordination, while promoting the inclusion of persons with disabilities, for example through awareness-raising campaigns on the rights of persons with disabilities. Moreover, UNMAS assisted in the development of the first draft of Afghanistan's new Disability Strategy, which aims to ensure that the specific needs of women, girls, men and boys are considered by actors within the sector. In **Libya**, UNMAS coordinated a stakeholder analysis of victim assistance, bringing together national and international entities, survivors and persons with disabilities to inform the ongoing

Civilian and military survivors play football in the main square of Popayan, Colombia, during the commemoration of International Mine Awareness Day. Angélica Collazos

ADDRESSING SURVIVOR NEEDS IN SUDAN

The effects of explosive ordnance continue to be felt by people in Sudan. In 2019, 111 survivors of mines and explosive remnants of war (ERW) accidents, as well as persons with disabilities in the states of Kassala, South Kordofan and Blue Nile received physical rehabilitation, and socioeconomic and psychological support from UNMAS in order to help address the needs arising from their injuries and disabilities. Through the provision of prostheses, assistive devices and rehabilitation, many survivors have regained their mobility and self-assurance. Counselling and psychosocial support focused on restoring their confidence, and vocational support equipped survivors with the tools to generate income. To access those who live in remote and hard-to-reach areas and to improve existing data, UNMAS teams conducted surveys to collect information on underreported explosive accidents. As a result, data regarding a total of 554 survivors whose accidents had not been previously reported due to a lack of accessibility to relevant authorities or communication technology was collected, verified and added to the database — an initiative that will serve to enhance broader survivor support at the national level.

elaboration of a National Victim Assistance Plan. UNMAS assisted the Federal Government of **Somalia** with drafting and launching a Disabilities and Victim Assistance National Plan of Action at the Review Conference of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention, held in Oslo in November 2019. In addition, the role of UNMAS in surveying explosive ordnance accident sites and recording the impact on survivors and their families, followed by risk education, equipped the Government of **Somalia** and other stakeholders with shared data that can contribute to guiding and tailoring victim assistance activities. In those ways, UNMAS laid the groundwork for nationally and locally run support services that are tailored to the needs of explosive ordnance survivors.

In **Colombia**, as part of the wider humanitarian response and complementing government efforts, UNMAS implemented activities that led to the referral of both women and men survivors — some of whom had been outside the remit of State support or assistance for decades — to assistance pathways provided by the Government of Colombia. Moreover, in the **West Bank**, UNMAS used its platform among victim assistance partners to enhance the database of the Palestinian Mine Action Centre by establishing a referral and medical assistance mechanism for survivors of landmines and ERW. Similarly, in **Gaza**, UNMAS coordinated with relevant actors and specialist organizations, including through its leadership of the Mine Action Subcluster, to strengthen the networks of referral pathways open to survivors — from initial collection of data following accidents, to tracking and following up on available support. Given the need for both social and economic integration of survivors, UNMAS efforts in **Western Sahara** directed funding to the Sahrawi Association of Victims of Landmines to operationalize a sustainable socioeconomic reintegration project that enables survivors to generate income through livestock rearing. In **Mali**, UNMAS partnered with local civil society organizations to craft tailored support services for persons impacted by explosive ordnance — in particular IEDs. That has provided survivors with the tools for new livelihood opportunities, allowing them, for example, to move from market trading to agricultural work closer to home, which has facilitated their reintegration in communities. The comprehensive approach increases survivors' prospects of fully reintegrating into communities and living quality lives after explosive incidents.

In response to distinct conditions and needs on the ground, UNMAS continued to provide direct support to survivors of explosive ordnance throughout 2019. For example, in the **Syrian Arab Republic**, according to available data, for each known explosive accident reported, 1.5 people on average are killed and 2 people are injured, with approximately 1 out of 3 survivors suffering at least one limb amputation. UNMAS provided and assisted in the provision of emergency medical care to increase the rate of survival, as well as trauma surgery, pain management,

SAFE GROUND

TURNING MINEFIELDS INTO PLAYING FIELDS

SAFE GROUND CAMPAIGN

In 2019, the Secretary-General launched the five-year Safe Ground campaign to turn minefields into playing fields. Safe Ground is a global advocacy and fundraising campaign supported by an informal, voluntary Group of Champions, comprised of United Nations Member States, United Nations entities, civil society organizations, sports federations, private sector companies and individual athletes. The campaign tackles two essential and linked challenges: clearing explosive hazards to make the ground safe for people to return and rebuild their communities without fear of injury or death; and raising awareness and mobilizing resources to support those who have acquired a disability because of explosive hazards. Since its launch, Safe Ground projects have started in Afghanistan, Cambodia, Cyprus, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Iraq, Liberia, State of Palestine, Somalia, and Viet Nam.

physical rehabilitation, prosthesis and orthotics services to mitigate impairments for survivors and build the resilience of the Syrian people amid ongoing conflict.

At the international level, UNMAS continued to highlight the needs of survivors and to promote the rights of persons with disabilities, in line with international law. The Safe Ground campaign — an international drive to raise awareness and resources for the victims and survivors of armed conflict through the promotion of sport and the Sustainable Development Goals — is a major lynchpin of these activities.

Abdul Qahir, 27 years, an orthopedic technician, works on a prosthesis at an UNMAS-funded physical rehabilitation centre in Kunar district, Afghanistan. He has been working there since 2014. UNMAS/Cengiz Yar

STRATEGIC OUTCOME 3:

National institutions effectively lead and manage mine action functions and responsibilities

A key indicator of successful stabilization and peacebuilding actions is the robust capacity of national institutions to lead mine action activities. For that reason, UNMAS prioritizes support to national leadership and capacities while working towards the goal of an incremental drawdown of external support. UNMAS is engaged in building the capacities of national institutions in Afghanistan, Colombia, Democratic Republic of Congo, Iraq, Lebanon, Libya, Nigeria, Somalia, South Sudan, State of Palestine, Sudan and Western Sahara.

In **Iraq**, UNMAS gave advice and delivered training on mine action to a number of national bodies, including national mine action authorities, the Ministry of the Interior, and operation coordination centres run by the Government. Training to the Ministry of the Interior encompassed explosive ordnance first response, EOD, IEDD, as well as courses on the use of drones in surveying and clearing land. For the first time, UNMAS delivered a series of mixed explosive hazard first-responder training courses to Iraqi police — an initiative that served to enhance skills in IED threat mitigation and response. Also, since the training was open to both women and men, it helped to create career opportunities for women in a male-dominated field. UNMAS advice and support in **Nigeria** propelled government-led efforts to establish a mine action strategy and develop national mine action standards. Training to Nigerian police and security forces, and civil defence personnel has also strengthened national capacity in the area of EOD and first response to explosive

UNMAS convenes stakeholders in Tripoli to work on victim assistance responses. UNMAS Libya

MILESTONE NATIONAL STANDARDS DEVELOPED IN AFGHANISTAN

In Afghanistan, anti-personnel mines of an improvised nature account for around 50 per cent of explosive ordnance civilian casualties. As part of broader capacity-building work in Afghanistan, and in close collaboration with the Directorate of Mine Action Coordination, UNMAS advice shaped the incorporation of Abandoned Improvised Mines into the Afghanistan Mine Action Standards. This is the first national standard of its kind in the world and will enable mine action operators to clear anti-personnel mines of an improvised nature, while providing guidance to demining organizations in developing their standard operating procedures for clearing such devices.

incidents. In **Western Sahara**, UNMAS assisted the Sahrawi Mine Action Coordination Office with the destruction of the last remaining anti-personnel mines held by Frente POLISARIO. In the **Central African Republic**, UNMAS built specialized storage facilities for weapons and ammunitions, and provided training to the national defence and internal security forces on WAM, which contributed to the restoration and extension of State authority and the implementation of the National Defence Plan (2017) and the Global Plan for Resizing and Redeployment of the Internal Security Forces (2018).

In **Libya**, UNMAS strengthened the capacity of national authorities to respond to and mitigate the increasingly complex threat of IEDs. A crucial part of that intervention involved training Libyan Forensic Police to respond to IED incidents, including with regard to the management of hazard scenes and the correct handling of evidence and explosive remnants, which has assisted in judicial prosecution and, in turn, strengthened the rule of law and helped

UNMAS creates safe gun solutions for national security forces in Goma, North Kivu, Democratic Republic of the Congo.
UNMAS/Dorcas Mayala

to prevent future occurrences of such incidents. In pursuit of the goal of full transition of mine action responsibilities to national authorities in approximately five years, UNMAS efforts in **South Sudan** continued to build the capacity of the country's National Mine Action Authority, including through on-the-job technical training, workshops on resource mobilization and project management, and quality assurance mentoring at field sites. UNMAS trained, mentored and equipped explosive ordnance and IEDD teams in **Somalia** to assist in clearing land and saving lives. That ongoing capacity-building has produced results; for example, with the support of UNMAS, small amounts of explosives have been handed over by the Sanctions Committee for Somalia to the Somali Police Force, for disposal. In the **Democratic Republic of the Congo**, a national commission established with UNMAS support coordinated, monitored and evaluated the implementation of the country's National Action Plan for Small Arms and Light Weapon Control (2018-2022). In **Colombia**, UNMAS continued to provide technical assistance and training to all mine action operators, enhancing their ability to contribute to the goal of making Colombia a mine-free country, while upholding humanitarian principles and promoting the adoption of international best practices to increase efficiency and effectiveness. Moreover, in view of the importance of local and regional institutions in effective mine action, UNMAS worked with the Mine Action Centre and regional authorities to brief newly-elected local governments on the presence of and needs relating to explosive ordnance, with a view to ensuring that mine action priorities were reflected in local government programmes. By bolstering capacities at the local and national levels, the prospects of international mine action support being entirely assumed by national authorities are increasing.

Non-technical survey teams identify and map hazardous areas in Colombia. UNMAS

While capacity-building efforts must be led by the needs of respective countries, they must also be closely aligned with international frameworks, such as the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention. UNMAS continues to support countries in their obligations under this and other international humanitarian law instruments. UNMAS is encouraged that Sudan will preside over the 18th Meeting of State Parties to the Convention, and will continue to support the country in this new responsibility in 2020. In 2019, UNMAS worked with the State of Palestine to ensure obligations under the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention were met, including through assisting in the development of its second annual report, and in the compilation of statistics on mine clearance activities in the West Bank. The work of UNMAS in assisting States with aligning their efforts to international norms is not only good for the standing of national governments on the international stage; but it also impacts the safety, quality and responsiveness of mine action on the ground, leading to benefits for affected communities.

CROSS-CUTTING STRATEGIC OUTCOME 1:

Momentum and profile of mine action efforts, including through mainstreaming in humanitarian assistance, human rights, peacebuilding, stabilization and sustainable development, maintained and enhanced

Mine action does not happen in a vacuum. Rather, it facilitates and complements collaboration in cycles of both peace and development. By equipping national actors with the tools to meet their obligations in respect of international humanitarian and human rights law, allowing humanitarian workers to do their jobs, opening space for the advancement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and working to prevent the recurrence of conflict, UNMAS promotes a cross-sectoral approach for advancing all pillars of United Nations work.

As Chair of the United Nations Inter-Agency Coordination Group on Mine Action (IACG-MA), in 2019, UNMAS continued to advocate universalization of, and compliance with, international humanitarian and human rights law relevant to mine action, with the Victim Assistance pillar as a key priority of its advocacy work throughout the year. In the context of the Fourth Review Conference of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention, UNMAS spearheaded the substantive contribution of the United Nations to the work of States Parties during the Conference, which was held in Oslo from 25 to 29 November 2019, and the adoption of the Review Document and the Oslo Action Plan. As noted elsewhere in this report, the election of Sudan to preside over the 18th Annual Meeting of State Parties to the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention — an effort that UNMAS will support throughout 2020 — is a significant sign of national ownership and leadership in the promotion of international humanitarian law related to mine action.

UNMAS actively engaged in the Group of Experts meetings on Protocol V on Explosive Remnants of War and on Amended Protocol II on Mines, Booby-Traps and Other Devices to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons, supporting the technical discussion and universalization efforts

Participants and speakers at an interactive panel discussion at University of Geneva on the International Day for Mine Awareness and Assistance in Mine Action, April 2019. UNMAS/Yelyzaveta Bazhynova

Delegates at UNMAS event "*A World Free of Mines: For a Safer Tomorrow*", 20th anniversary of the entry into force of the Mine Ban Treaty. UN Photo/Loey Felipe

led by the respective presidencies. UNMAS also coordinated the contribution of IACG-MA to the Annual Meetings of the High Contracting Parties to the Convention, to Protocol V and to Amended Protocol II. Throughout 2019, UNMAS continued to leverage its role as the global coordinator for mine action to promote universalization of the Convention on Cluster Munitions, which entailed support to the Annual Meeting of States Parties to the Convention on Cluster Munitions, using its platform to express concerns over the alleged use of cluster munitions, and to reinforce the stigma surrounding their use. Moreover, promotion of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the urgent need to do more and better for survivors of explosive ordnance were key messages relayed throughout UNMAS advocacy work in 2019. The commitment of UNMAS to prioritize Victim Assistance was reflected in the launch, in April 2019, of the Safe Ground campaign, a United Nations-led campaign to raise awareness about the impact of explosive ordnance on individuals and communities, and to increase the support available to survivors and their families.

In 2019, the advocacy and coordination work of local Mine Action Area of Responsibility coordinators ensured the incorporation of mine action into 17 humanitarian responses, targeting 19 million people in need of protection from the impact of explosive ordnance in humanitarian crises. One example of the close integration of humanitarian response planning and mine action was seen in **Libya**, where UNMAS, as an active member of the Humanitarian Country Team, worked to ensure that mine action considerations were taken into account by stakeholders and that explosive hazard mitigation activities were integrated into humanitarian, early recovery and development processes, where needed. Similarly, in **Nigeria**, the role of UNMAS in revitalizing the Mine Action Sub-Working Group and the creation of a Mine Action Technical Working Group spurred broader efforts to harness mine action for humanitarian, development and peace dividends in the country. In the **Syrian Arab Republic**, UNMAS efforts

to integrate mine action into humanitarian response planning involved particularly close cooperation with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), which ensured that national returnee response plans were mindful of the need for explosive ordnance risk education in resettlement activities. In **Afghanistan**, mine action was mainstreamed into multisectoral needs assessments, such as the Whole of Afghanistan Assessment — a United Nations-led study identifying intersectoral needs across all 34 provinces to guide humanitarian programming. That allowed mine action stakeholders to better understand the impact of explosive ordnance contamination on everyday lives — such as psychological well-being or access to basic services — and influence related priority setting. That emphasis, as seen across UNMAS programmes, on the integration of mine action into humanitarian response planning, cooperation frameworks, and the development and peacebuilding work of United Nations Country Teams — alongside complementary efforts to raise public awareness about mine action, for example, through an UNMAS-led campaign in print media outlets and a high-profile event in **Colombia** — served to raise the profile of mine action among international and national stakeholders in both mission and non-mission settings.

Other activities in 2019 directly and indirectly contributed to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the promotion of sustaining peace. Land clearance continued to pave the way for the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals related to water and sanitation (Goal 6), education (Goal 4) and more. For example, in **Gaza**, UNMAS risk assessments facilitated improvement to the water supply infrastructure that provides 55 million cubic metres of quality drinking water to 2 million people, while the removal of ERW allowed for the safe reopening of Al-Bahrain school, which caters to 990 boys. In **Colombia**, UNMAS leveraged mine action as a driver of sustaining peace by enabling the reintegration of ex-combatants into communities through mine action activities, and by facilitating compliance with the mine-related provisions of the Peace Accord. Moreover, UNMAS database searches, onsite visits and provision of at-request support enabled the Committee on Missing Persons in **Cyprus** to excavate previously mined areas within the Buffer Zone, which contributed to reconciliation between the Greek and Turkish Cypriot communities. EOD training targeted at women in **Iraq** and **Afghanistan** not only directly contributed to the achievement of Sustainable Development Goal 5, on gender equality, but, by spurring the participation of women in post-conflict reconstruction and development processes, also served to promote the implementation of the Women, Peace and Security Agenda — a key tenet of sustaining peace.

MINE ACTION IN THE CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC: CONSERVING THE ENVIRONMENT AND DRIVING DEVELOPMENT

Innovations in the context of sustainable development and the fight against climate change are included in infrastructure projects in the Central African Republic. In 2019, UNMAS facilitated the construction of three armouries and one regional ammunition depot, as well as the installation of four temporary storage kits for weapons and ammunition. An important element of that project was the sustainability of those infrastructures, which were tailored to local development realities, including access to electricity and water. As a result, UNMAS integrated the installation of solar panels for electricity, the recycling of rainwater for both routine and emergency requirements, and the procurement of local material in the construction, thereby supporting the sustainability of the project and stimulating the local economy. Those efforts bolstered ongoing climate change efforts and reduced the environment footprint of UNMAS in the country.

CROSS-CUTTING STRATEGIC OUTCOME 2:

Mine action programmes address the specific needs of women, girls, men and boys from diverse groups, while facilitating their empowerment and inclusion

While the effects of explosive ordnance are universally devastating, the needs they create are different for women, girls, men and boys, as well as for different and diverse groups in society. One-size-fits-all mine action risks leaving many people behind; a tailored approach is therefore crucial. Throughout 2019, UNMAS adapted its work — from protection and risk education to victim assistance and national capacity-building — in order to take into account gender, age, economic, cultural or religious considerations in its responses.

Gender was mainstreamed in UNMAS efforts to build national capacity in EOD and response. For instance, following the success of a 2018 pilot initiative, UNMAS continued to provide financing and technical training to the only female demining team in **Afghanistan**. In April 2019, the team started its second clearance project in Bamyan and released an additional 61,344 square metres of land, thereby contributing to making Bamyan the first province to be declared free of all known minefields. Beyond the provision of immediate life-saving assistance, the women set an example through their meaningful and impactful participation in mine action, and have served to demonstrate alternative livelihood pathways for women in Afghanistan. In **Iraq**, the very first mixed team of searchers was established by UNMAS in Sinjar. Emblematic of the role of mine action in dismantling gender and other social barriers,

UNMAS officers celebrate the successful completion of EOD Level 3 training in Denmark. UNMAS/Noble Projects/Nicolai Axelsen

MINE ACTION BREAKS GENDER BARRIERS IN IRAQ

Four years of brutal Daesh attacks on Sinjar led the population to face death, forcefully convert to another religion, witness brutalization or flee. After its liberation, UNMAS training is providing skills for members of the community, including those still living in camps for internally displaced persons to become searchers and improvised explosive devices disposal (IEDD) operators. The training teaches participants to locate and dispose of explosive items in a systematic way, using specialist equipment and under the supervision of international mentors. More than 20 women have enrolled in the training, thereby spurring the participation of women in stabilization efforts in Iraq, and the creation of new opportunities for employment in traditionally male-dominated sectors.

> *"As well as being able to financially support my family, the skills I have learnt will help me, and looking forward, my children will have a much brighter future in this area. This is something, a few months ago, I never imagined possible. The Mayor of Sinjar visited us and told us we are all the future of Sinjar. I realised then, more than ever, how important the job we are trained to do really is".*
>
> 22-year-old woman from Kojo

UNMAS partners provide risk education on explosive hazards at a school in Mosul, Iraq. UNMAS Iraq/Cengiz Yar

the team comprises both Yazidi and Muslim women and men. Following extensive advocacy and consultations with national stakeholders in **Libya**, UNMAS delivered training on Device Scene Incident Management to both men and women forensic police officers, including sessions on gender disaggregated casualty data collection, and gender mainstreaming within police and security services. Through those efforts, UNMAS aimed to ensure that national capacities were elevated in a responsive way to all segments of the community, and contributed to the erosion of traditional barriers and discrimination.

The mainstreaming of gender in the delivery of and support to risk education also gained traction in 2019. In **Gaza**, UNMAS training facilitated the creation of networks of women community risk educators. Those activities equipped women with tools to assert their agency, while building community resilience to the threat of ERW. Moreover, a series of workshops organized by UNMAS in **Colombia** encouraged local communities to identify the differentiated effects of conflict, particularly in relation to explosive ordnance, on Afro-Colombian women and girls, while delivering cross-community training on peer education and safe behaviour. In **Western Sahara**, UNMAS assisted the Sahrawi Mine Action Women's Team in their efforts to deliver mine risk education in camps, and to advocate for increased mine action in the area. Such efforts are not merely good for gender equality, but actually enhance the impact of risk education activities, particularly given that anecdotal surveys have indicated that women play an important role in reporting ordnance sightings in communities — a role which may, in some societies, be hampered by male-only survey or risk education teams.

Consideration of diverse and at-risk groups further influenced UNMAS risk education

Afghan female deminers in Bamyan Province, Afghanistan. UNMAS

activities in 2019. In **Nigeria**, UNMAS disaggregated data by area, age and gender, as well as residential status (internally displaced person, refugee, host community member, returnee), which facilitated tailored explosive ordnance risk education, and enhanced outreach and impact. Similar efforts in the **Syrian Arab Republic** – including disability considerations in data collection – enabled UNMAS and its partners to tailor both messaging and formats of communication. One outcome was the development of a theatrical play to engage young audiences and heighten the retention of risk education messages among children.

In 2019, proactive measures in recruitment processes continued to have a positive impact with respect to gender parity. The number of women working for UNMAS in programmes funded by the United Nations Voluntary Trust Fund for Assistance in Mine Action rose from 23 per cent in 2019 to 28 per cent in 2019, and the number of women in leadership positions increased significantly to 24 per cent, compared to 12 per cent in 2018.

Ekram Abakar Juma (right), first female Sudanese deminer, clearing mines under a road verification and clearance operation in South Kordofan State, Sudan. UNMAS

LAUNCH OF NEW GENDER GUIDELINES FOR MINE ACTION PROGRAMMES

Following extensive inter-agency consultations, the updated United Nations Gender Guidelines for Mine Action Programmes were published in November 2019. The guidelines are intended to help field operations in mainstreaming gender and diversity considerations throughout the programme life cycle. The guidelines will be available in all six United Nations languages to ensure effective use in a variety of settings and to strengthen the quality and responsiveness of United Nations mine action activities.

RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AND DONOR RELATIONS

The success of UNMAS depends on the continued commitment of Member States to raise their collective voice and ensure that mine action remains at the top of the international agenda in efforts to sustain peace, protect civilians in conflict, deploy emergency humanitarian assistance and advance the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. To meet the increasing demands of the international community for clearance, surveys, risk education and victim assistance, and to advance advocacy and effective coordination, UNMAS requires sustained, multi-year and unearmarked financial and in-kind contributions from Member States.

In 2019, over USD 71.6 million was donated to UNMAS through the United Nations Voluntary Trust Fund for Assistance in Mine Action. In addition to contributions from donor governments at the country level, several UNMAS programmes also received direct support from both global and country-based pooled funds towards the implementation of emergency response activities. UNMAS also benefits from in-kind support from several Member States.

UNMAS recognizes the need to diversify its donor base and continues to seek cash and in-kind contributions from non-traditional funding sources. Through a fiduciary agreement with the United Nations Foundation, UNMAS can accept tax-deductible contributions (within the United States), which enables it to position itself to explore innovative financing opportunities and to mobilize resources from individuals, the business community and charitable organizations.

The shift from predictable, sustainable, flexible and multiyear funding to earmarked contributions continues to impact the ability of UNMAS to deliver on all aspects of its mandate, respond to requests from Member States and United Nations senior management and backstop its programmes at Headquarters.

Federica Mogherini, European Union High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, launches a European Union-funded mine action project in Bouar, Central African Republic – to construct and hand over specialized WAM infrastructure to national authorities.
UNMAS CAR

Over 90 per cent of UNMAS funding is earmarked for specific UNMAS field programmes, which contradicts donor commitments made in the Grand Bargain and impacts the operational flexibility, efficiency and effectiveness of entities such as UNMAS.

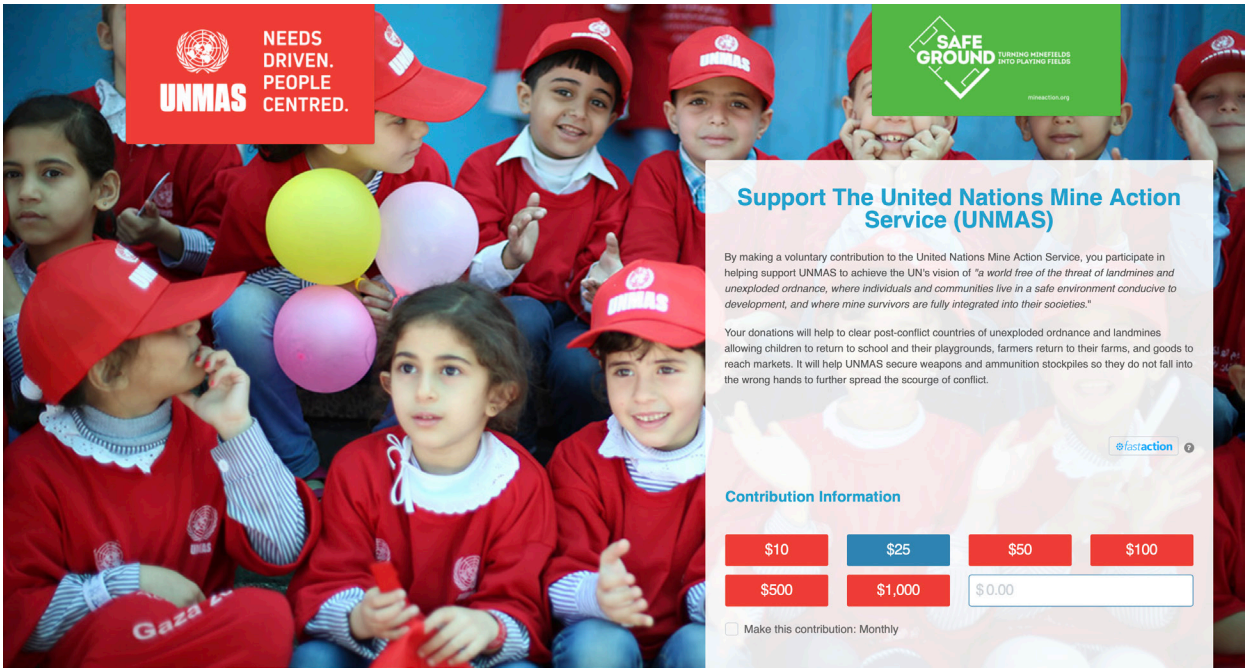
UNMAS fundraising is guided by its resource mobilization strategy, which has resulted in the implementation of robust processes and best practices. Benefiting from the implementation of the United Nations Enterprise Resource Planning (Umoja) and the business intelligence it provides, in 2019, UNMAS continued to play a crucial role in the use of the fundraising and donor relations management module, resulting in a product that is fit for UNMAS purposes and expected to enhance the management of donor relationships and appeals for voluntary contributions.

Reflecting the Secretary-General's reform agenda, UNMAS is committed to transparency and accountability. The United Nations Board of Auditors' financial review of the Voluntary Trust Fund is available online and is shared with all donors; UNMAS has an excellent track record of timely delivery of project-specific narrative and financial reports. UNMAS also continues to participate in successful evaluations and due diligence exercises conducted by Member States to assess UNMAS capabilities and performance.

UNMAS interacts closely with its donors, including key decision makers in permanent missions, ministries and parliaments, to determine shared priorities, discuss results and ensure mine action is considered as a matter of priority in relevant legislative and national budget processes. In 2019, UNMAS organized several WebEx conferences with partners to strengthen understanding of, and access to, real-time information on UNMAS programmes.

In its role as Chair of the United Nations Inter-Agency Coordination Group on Mine Action (IACG-MA), UNMAS coordinates with its United Nations partners and liaises with Member States to recommend agenda items and arrange high-level speakers for the biannual Mine Action Support Group meeting. The meeting is the only platform for the United Nations and the donor community to come together to identify resource requirements and share experiences and knowledge towards addressing the threat of mines, ERW and IEDs. In 2020, UNMAS looks forward to working with the new Chair of the Mine Action Support Group — Germany.

To learn more about how you or your organization can support UNMAS, visit www.unmas.org.



CONTRIBUTIONS TO UNMAS IN 2019* (FIGURES IN USD)

Donor	Afghanistan	Colombia	Darfur	Democratic Republic of the Congo	State of Palestine	Iraq	Libya	Mali	Nigeria	South Sudan
Andorra										
Australia	274,866					4,252,175				
Belgium						1,661,572				
Benin										
Canada	743,384					938,227	380,525			
Denmark						8,279,697				
Estonia						15,000				
European Union										
Finland						566,500				
France						660,480				
Germany		556,000				2,226,600	53,640			
Italy[a]		389,321			151,541	784,000				
Japan	803,571					1,625,000				1,468,374
Liechtenstein										
Luxembourg										
Netherlands						1,260,531				
New Zealand										
Poland					51,387					
Republic of Korea				1,260,000	124,000				100,000	
Russian Federation										
Slovakia						18,752				
Spain										
Sweden										
Switzerland										
UNA Sweden										
United Kingdom[b]	11,671,200					3,598,319				
United States[c]			141,151							
UN Foundation										
United Nations CERF	299,997	800,131		398,807				200,000		
Trust fund for peace and security in Mali								883,060		
Grand Total	**13,793,018**	**1,745,452**	**141,151**	**1,658,807**	**326,928**	**25,886,853**	**434,165**	**1,083,060**	**100,000**	**1,468,374**

* The Statement of Financial Position based on the International Public Sector Accounting Standards as at 31 December 2019 for the Voluntary Trust Fund for Assistance in Mine Action will be published by the United Nations upon completion of the Board of Auditor's audit in mid-2020.

[a] Contributions from Italy were received in 2020 for 2019 programme activities.

[b] Department for International Development (DFID).

[c] United States Agency for International Development (USAID).

Sudan	Syrian Arab Republic	Western Sahara	Somalia	IED threat mitigation advisory team	Advocacy activities[d]	Unearmarked funding	In-kind support [e]	Totals
						16,943		16,943
	2,833,975			276,000		206,150		7,843,166
	553,857							2,215,429
							✔	
				436,710				2,498,845
				148,236		2,197,867		10,625,800
	15,000							30,000
	886,080							886,080
								566,500
							✔	660,480
	1,709,850						✔	4,546,090
556,174	616,000				166,852			2,663,888
2,000,000	1,401,785		1,000,000			82,085	✔	8,380,815
						24,836		24,836
						776,090		776,090
						3,302,100	✔	4,562,631
						951,900	✔	951,900
						51,387		102,775
50,000				50,000				1,584,000
	1,000,000							1,000,000
								18,752
		64,985						64,985
							✔	
							✔	
						25,000		25,000
2,018,560								17,288,079
353,426							✔	494,577
						1,213,068		1,213,068
								1,698,935
								883,060
4,978,160	**9,016,547**	**64,985**	**1,000,000**	**910,946**	**166,852**	**8,847,426**		**71,622,723**

[d] Earmarked contibutions for ItCBL.
[e] Includes Junior Professional Officers (JPOs) and technically specialized personnel.

PROGRAMME/ACTIVITY	2019 EXPENDITURE*
Afghanistan	15,700,524
Central African Republic	1,684,398
Colombia	1,943,420
Democratic Republic of the Congo	2,621,111
Iraq	63,454,620
Lebanon	296,398
Libya	606,108
Mali	199,439
Nigeria	1,408,333
Rapid Response and Technical Support Capacity	626,901
Somalia	27,778
South Sudan	78,454
State of Palestine	1,172,360
Sudan	13,565,476
Syrian Arab Republic	4,666,584
UNMAS HQ Coordination	3,461,857
Western Sahara	127,443
Total	**111,641,204**

* Data provided above is provisional. Accrued expenses as required under IPSAS reporting are not included. These expenses will be reflected in the audited financial statements of the United Nations, which will be available in the coming months.

UNMAS 2019 SNAPSHOT

19 PROGRAMMES around the world

29 UNMAS STAFF (72% FEMALE) in UNHQ & Geneva

287 INTERNATIONAL STAFF (25% FEMALE)

608 NATIONAL STAFF (21% FEMALE)

+ 7,603 NATIONAL STAFF EMPLOYED THROUGH UNMAS FUNDING

Aggregates

DESTROYED

- 77,000 ERW
- 5,000 landmines
- 2,000 IEDs

CLEARED

- 300,000 sq. km land
- 720,000 km roads

WEAPONS & AMMUNITION STORAGE CONSTRUCTED

- 113

RISK EDUCATION PROVIDED

- Just over 2.8 million people impacted by explosive hazards

VICTIMS ASSISTED

- Almost 2,000

TRAINED

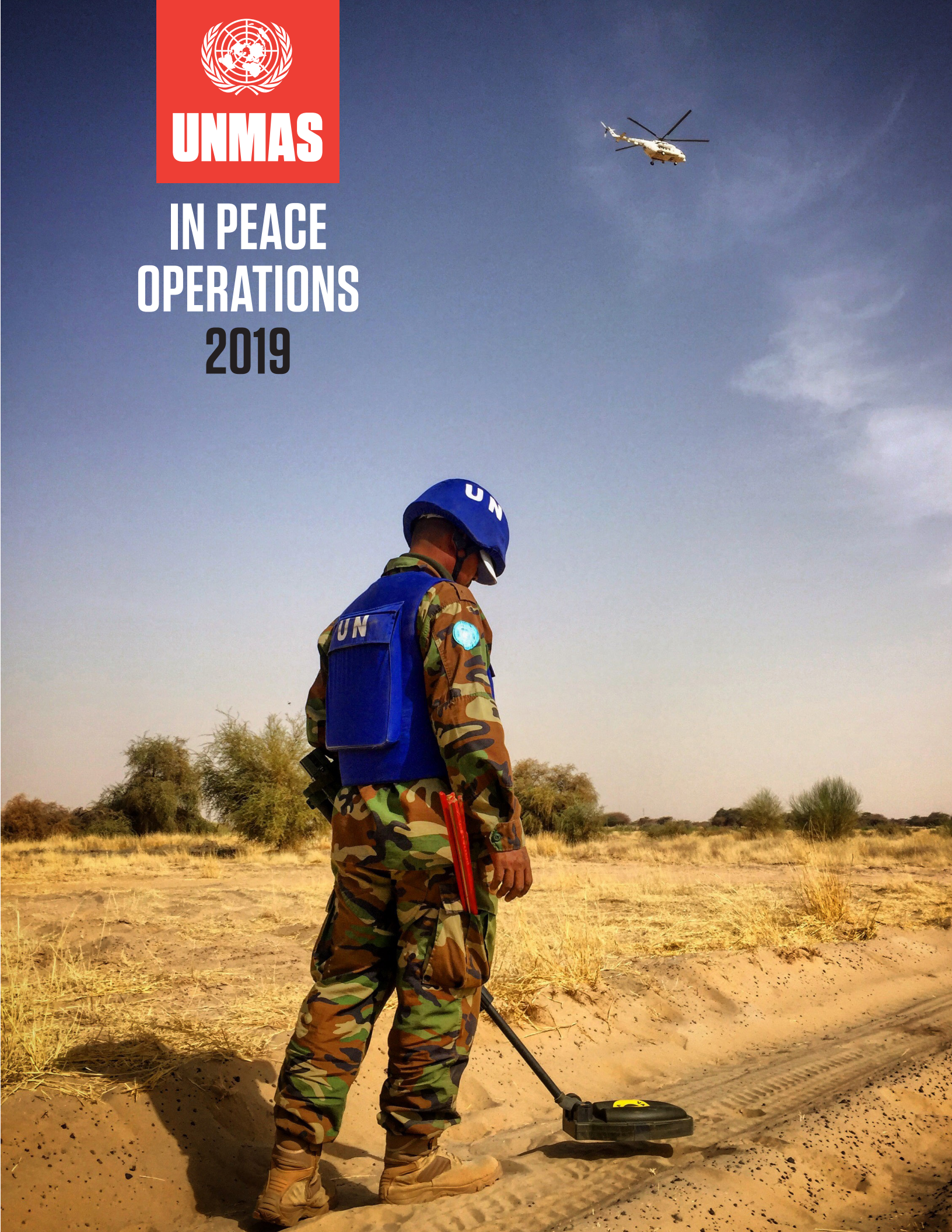
- Almost 3,000 healthcare workers, police, teachers, military personnel

RAPID RESPONSE/TECHNICAL SUPPORT INTERVENTIONS

- Burkina Faso, State of Palestine

UNMAS

IN PEACE OPERATIONS 2019



Overview of UNMAS work
in United Nations peacekeeping and
special political missions in 2019.

Please see reverse
for UNMAS Annual Report 2019
on the United Nations Voluntary Trust Fund
for Assistance in Mine Action.

SMIT_MITR

Smart IED Threat Mitigation Technology Roadmap

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Cover: photo: UNMAS trains Cambodian EOD teams in Timbuktu to facilitate mobility of the United Nations peacekeeping mission in Mali. UNMAS/Imre Gelencser

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* Information provided in alphabetical order of mission acronym.

ABBREVIATIONS

AMISOM	African Union Mission in Somalia
A4P	Action for Peacekeeping
EOD	Explosive ordnance disposal
ERW	Explosive remnants of war
IED	Improvised explosive device
ISIL	Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant
MINURSO	United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara
MINUSCA	United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic
MINUSMA	United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali
MONUSCO	United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo
UNAMI	United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq
UNAMID	African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur
UNFICYP	United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus
UNMHA	United Nations Mission to Support the Hudaydah Agreement
UNIFIL	United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon
UNISFA	United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei
UNMAS	United Nations Mine Action Service
UNMISS	United Nations Mission in South Sudan
UNSMIL	United Nations Support Mission in Libya
UNSOM	United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia
UNSOS	United Nations Support Office in Somalia

JOINT MESSAGE FROM THE UNDER-SECRETARY-GENERAL FOR PEACE OPERATIONS AND THE UNDER-SECRETARY-GENERAL FOR POLITICAL AND PEACEBUILDING AFFAIRS

The United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS) is an integral component of nine peacekeeping operations and contributes significantly to the Secretary-General's Action for Peacekeeping (A4P) initiative. In 2019, UNMAS helped to improve the safety and security of peacekeepers by clearing and verifying the safety of patrol routes in the Abyei area, Lebanon, South Sudan and Western Sahara, and by training peacekeepers — before and after deployment — to mitigate the threat of improvised explosive devices (IEDs). The number of peacekeeper fatalities from IED incidents in Mali has fallen from 24 in 2016 to 5 in 2019, thanks in large part to UNMAS efforts, while the framework for a whole-of-system approach to the urgent threat of IEDs has been finalized. UNMAS also contributed to the protection of civilians, ensuring that weapons and ammunition used by security services are safely managed and stored in the Central African Republic and the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

UNMAS is active in special political missions, mapping explosive ordnance contamination in Libya, and helping to ensure the safety of United Nations personnel and civilians in Somalia. In Somalia, UNMAS also provided technical and training to enhance the capacity of AMISOM troops to mitigate the threat posed by IEDs, while strengthening the United Nations-African Union partnership.

Mine action is an essential enabler of peacekeeping, peacebuilding and humanitarian efforts. While located within the Department of Peace Operations, UNMAS has an explicit, system-wide mandate and serves as the coordinator for the Inter-Agency Coordination Group on Mine Action and the Mine Action Area of Responsibility within the Global Protection Cluster. In that capacity, UNMAS led the update of the United Nations Gender Guidelines for Mine Action Programmes, and ensured that Humanitarian Response Plans in 17 countries included mine action, thereby targeting 19 million people in need of protection from the impact of explosive ordnance in humanitarian crises.

In a number of non-mission settings, from Burkina Faso to Nigeria, Colombia to the State of Palestine, UNMAS guidance to national institutions and non-governmental organizations on weapons and ammunition management, IED threat mitigation, explosive ordnance risk education,assistance to victims and survivors of explosive incidents, and implementation of relevant disarmament and human rights treaties is helping to ensure the extension of State authority, build confidence in peace processes, and empower communities to retain mobility and pursue their livelihoods in spite of the threat posed by explosive ordnance.

Mine action creates the conditions needed for the work of peace operations to succeed. The role of UNMAS in this endeavour will be crucial for many years to come.

UN Photo

Rosemary A. DiCarlo,
Under-Secretary-General
for Political and Peacebuilding
Affairs

UN Photo

Jean-Pierre Lacroix,
Under-Secretary-General
for Peace Operations

Chair, United Nations Inter-Agency
Coordination Group on Mine Action

ACTION FOR PEACEKEEPING

In 2019, UNMAS contributed to the realization of the goals contained in the Action for Peacekeeping (A4P) initiative by helping to ensure that peace operations are fit for purpose so as to effectively implement their complex mandates in situations where there is an explosive threat.

UNMAS protected United Nations personnel and assets in 12 political and peacekeeping mission settings. For example, in the Abyei area and South Sudan, route clearance and verification facilitated mission mobility as well as the delivery of humanitarian assistance. Through pre-deployment and in-mission training in Mali and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, UNMAS built the capacity of peace operations to mitigate the threat of IEDs, which led to a measurable improvement in the **safety and security of peacekeepers**. In MINUSMA, troops detected and neutralized more IEDs than ever before, with the rate of detection rising from 11 per cent in 2014 to nearly 50 per cent in 2019. This improved **performance** reduced IED fatalities among peacekeepers from 24 in 2016 to 5 in 2019, despite an increasing number of incidents, and reflects the increased ownership of troop-contributing countries in explosive threat mitigation.

In 2019, UNMAS worked alongside national authorities in the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Mali to strengthen national capacities and ensure that weapons and ammunition are stored safely and securely. In several contexts, including in the Central African Republic, Cyprus and Darfur, weapons and ammunition management and mine action have contributed to **sustaining peace** and building confidence in the aftermath of conflict. In Yemen, UNMAS standby mine action expertise supported the United Nations Mission to support the Hudaydah Agreement (UNMHA) in liaison with the parties to achieve progress on the mine action-related aspects of the Stockholm Agreement.

As an integral part of every peacekeeping operation with a **protection of civilians** mandate, UNMAS saved lives by mitigating context-specific explosive threats, ranging from landmines and explosive remnants of war (ERW) to IEDs and unsecured weapons and ammunition. For instance, UNMAS supported UNMISS in weapons search operations, and destroyed confiscated weapons and ammunition in and around protection of civilian sites, to protect people from physical violence and contribute to a protective environment.

In line with the emphasis of A4P on improving peacekeeping **partnerships**, the work of UNMAS in Somalia has helped to deepen United Nations–African Union cooperation through the delivery of explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) and the provision of IED threat mitigation training, mentoring and specialized equipment to AMISOM forces.

Moreover, UNMAS contributed to the implementation of the **Women, Peace and Security** agenda by continuing to incorporate gender considerations in recruitment processes. Those efforts led to an increase, from 22 per cent in 2018 to 25 per cent in 2019, in the number of women working for UNMAS in peace operations, including in male-dominated technical areas. In Somalia, a focused outreach process led to the recruitment of women in a number of technical positions, including as trainers and mentors in EOD and improvised explosive device disposal.

UNMAS will continue to tangibly contribute to A4P in 2020.

UNITED NATIONS MISSION FOR THE REFERENDUM IN WESTERN SAHARA (MINURSO)

Pursuant to Security Council resolution 2494 (2019), UNMAS facilitated MINURSO efforts to monitor the ceasefire along the eastern side of the 1,465 km berm dividing Western Sahara. In 2019, UNMAS continued to enable safe passage for MINURSO military observers and civilian personnel by clearing minefields and cluster munition strike areas, as well as by verifying the safety of routes used by MINURSO. Crucial mine action information continued to be recorded in the Information Management System for Mine Action and shared with MINURSO personnel and other local partners to enable a better understanding of the threat posed by mines and explosive remnants of war, thereby facilitating safer movement.

UNITED NATIONS MULTIDIMENSIONAL INTEGRATED STABILIZATION MISSION IN THE CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC (MINUSCA)

Pursuant to Security Council resolution 2499 (2019), UNMAS — as a component of MINUSCA — contributed to the protection of civilians, as well as to the restoration and extension of State authority in the Central African Republic. In 2019, UNMAS continued to provide technical assistance to the National Commission for the Fight against the Proliferation of Small Arms and Light Weapons, which resulted in the finalization and validation of a National Strategy for the Fight against the Proliferation of Small Arms and Light Weapons as well as a budgeted National Action Plan. Those strategic documents will shape the Commission's priorities and activities in responding to prevailing needs until 2023.

As part of its efforts to assist in reducing the proliferation of small arms and light weapons, UNMAS trained 101 members of the national defence and security forces in weapons and ammunition management, rehabilitated nine storage facilities for the Internal Security Forces and completed the deployment of two specialized weapons and ammunition storage kits for the Central African Armed Forces. Capacity-building in weapons and ammunition management contributed to the implementation of the National Defence Plan (2017) and the Global Plan for Resizing and Redeployment of the Internal Security Forces (2018), and played a role in the context of the arms embargo. In relation to the embargo, national capacity in weapons and ammunition management was a key factor in the assessment and review of the embargo measures set out in Security Council resolution 2488 (2019). Bolstered capacity to manage weapons and ammunition also increased the accountability of national defence and internal security forces, and strengthened their reputation among communities, in addition to improving compliance with international and national standards for weapons and ammunition management and helping to mitigate potential risks related to poor management.

UNITED NATIONS MULTIDIMENSIONAL INTEGRATED STABILIZATION MISSION IN MALI (MINUSMA)

Pursuant to Security Council resolution 2480 (2019), UNMAS enhanced the capacity of MINUSMA civilian and uniformed personnel, as well as national and local actors to mitigate the risks posed by explosive hazards, in particular IEDs. As explosive hazard threats expanded and intensified, particularly in central Mali, UNMAS continued to provide critical explosive threat mitigation support to enable freedom of movement for MINUSMA and to reduce peacekeeping casualties in a high-threat environment, in accordance with the new A4P initiative launched by the Secretary General in 2019, and the recommendations of the Santos Cruz Report (2017). Efforts continued to focus on enhancing the preparedness of the Mission's uniformed units through pre-deployment and in-mission training, and on building sustainability through Training of Trainers sessions and mentoring. Since 2013, UNMAS training and technical support has greatly contributed to making operations safer: MINUSMA troops are detecting and neutralizing more IEDs than ever before, from only 11 per cent of devices detected in 2014 to nearly 50 per cent in 2019, effectively reducing the risk and number of related fatalities, including the number of troops killed.

In 2019, UNMAS continued to build the capacity of national authorities to mitigate explosive threats, notably through training Malian military engineers in explosive search and detection activities. Malian instructors who had previously been trained through Training of Trainers programmes on IED threat awareness delivered over 50 training sessions to their own troops, demonstrating a steady increase in the national training capacity. UNMAS also contributed to the protection of civilians by supporting an increased number of training sessions to defence and security forces, and the provision of equipment to respond to the threat of IEDs across the country, especially in the central regions, which have been increasingly affected by those types of hazards.

UNITED NATIONS ORGANIZATION STABILIZATION MISSION IN THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO (MONUSCO)

Pursuant to Security Council resolution 2463 (2019), UNMAS carried out EOD that assisted MONUSCO in carrying out operations and protection of civilians in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. By working to build weapons and ammunition management capacities among troop-contributing countries, as well as by carrying out awareness training on the threat posed by IEDs and explosive hazards to both uniformed and civilian personnel, UNMAS mitigated risks caused by improper or poor storage of contingents' weapons and ammunition, and contributed to the safety and security of the peacekeeping mission in the face of explosive hazard threats.

In 2019, UNMAS continued to focus on national capacity-building in close cooperation with the National Commission for Small Arms and Light Weapons Control and Reduction of Armed Violence. By conducting assessments of the Congolese National Police commissariats and sub-commissariats, installing weapon safes, carrying out weapons marking, and delivering training on weapons and ammunition management, UNMAS activities served to strengthen the capacities of national police and security forces to safely store and manage weapons and ammunition. UNMAS also destroyed surrendered weapons, in support of national disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes.

UNITED NATIONS ASSISTANCE MISSION FOR IRAQ (UNAMI)

Pursuant to Security Council resolution 2470 (2019), UNMAS contributed to enabling the humanitarian and stabilization efforts of the United Nations and government actors in Iraq. Through explosive hazard detection and removal, UNMAS assisted in creating the conditions necessary for effective coordination and delivery of humanitarian assistance to communities, and the safe, orderly and voluntary return or local integration, as appropriate, of refugees and displaced persons, including to areas previously occupied by Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL). UNMAS provided technical advice and practical support to national actors on the mitigation of explosive hazard threats, thereby building the capacity of the Government to provide essential civil and social services, and to coordinate critical reconstruction and assistance programmes.

AFRICAN UNION-UNITED NATIONS HYBRID OPERATION IN DARFUR (UNAMID)

Pursuant to Security Council resolution 2495 (2019), UNMAS facilitated the implementation of the mandate of UNAMID, particularly with respect to the protection of civilians, through clearance and survey activities to mitigate the threat of ERW, and through the delivery of risk education to communities throughout Darfur. The ongoing de-escalation in violence increased UNMAS access to contaminated areas, with clearance activities enabling safe returns of previously displaced communities and an increase in socioeconomic activity. In 2019, UNMAS continued to be involved in preparations for the upcoming transition of UNAMID, including by verifying that sites to be handed over to the Government of Sudan were free of explosive ordnance and by ensuring that explosive hazard clearance is incorporated into the priorities of the United Nations country team, particularly with regard to humanitarian assistance and recovery operations.

UNITED NATIONS PEACEKEEPING FORCE IN CYPRUS (UNFICYP)

Pursuant to Security Council resolution 2483 (2019), UNMAS activities such as mine action planning and coordination, technical guidance and advice on explosive hazards, training on risk awareness to UNFICYP personnel, and advocacy and awareness raising helped to mitigate the threat posed by landmines and ERW to both peacekeepers and local communities, while contributing to the goal of a mine-free Cyprus. In 2019, UNMAS surveying activities allowed for the handover of 18 sites in both the north and the south that had been previously designated as suspected hazardous areas — a positive step that took place earlier than the anticipated 2020 deadline, and contributed to overarching confidence-building. UNMAS technical expertise continued to support reconciliation efforts, including by guaranteeing the safety of excavation work carried out by the Committee on Missing Persons and by providing technical guidance to inform UNFICYP dialogue facilitation efforts.

UNITED NATIONS INTERIM FORCE IN LEBANON (UNIFIL)

Pursuant to Security Council resolution 2433 (2018), UNMAS delivered quality assurance monitoring training and validated UNIFIL Military Demining Units, which continued to ensure that the Mission conducts safe and efficient demining in compliance with both National Mine Action Standards and International Mine Action Standards. UNMAS delivered safety briefings on mitigating the threat posed by landmines and ERW to UNIFIL uniformed and civilian personnel and humanitarian actors in order to reduce the risk of explosive incidents. UNMAS also assisted the Lebanon Mine Action Centre to coordinate explosive ordnance risk education activities for UNIFIL and national and international civil society actors, promoting safe behaviour among local populations in areas of known or suspected presence of mines and other ERW.

UNITED NATIONS INTERIM SECURITY FORCE FOR ABYEI (UNISFA)

Pursuant to Security Council resolution 2497 (2019), UNMAS facilitated the activities of the Joint Border Verification and Monitoring Mechanism along the safe demilitarized border zone between Sudan and South Sudan. In 2019, UNMAS continued to identify and clear mines in the Abyei area and the safe demilitarized border zone, contributing to UNISFA force mobility and freedom of movement, and the safe delivery of humanitarian aid. UNMAS risk education and outreach activities facilitated safe voluntary returns and safe passage for local and transiting populations, including cattle herders. By destroying confiscated weapons and ammunitions and building the capacities of UNISFA in weapons and ammunition management, UNMAS contributed to the enforcement of a "weapons-free" Abyei and mitigated threats against civilians and mission personnel.

UNITED NATIONS MISSION IN SOUTH SUDAN (UNMISS)

Pursuant to Security Council resolution 2459 (2019), UNMAS survey and clearance activities mitigated the threat posed by explosive hazards, including landmines, cluster munitions, and ERW facing uniformed and civilian mission personnel, as well as communities across the country. Clearance continued in areas designated for returnee resettlement or construction of civilian facilities, such as schools, water points and markets. UNMAS also enabled the delivery of life-saving aid and humanitarian assistance through the clearance of roads, airstrips, food-drop zones and helicopter landing sites. UNMAS delivery of explosive ordnance risk education to communities served to raise awareness of the dangers posed by explosive hazards. By providing equipment, including explosive detection dog services, UNMAS also continued to secure UNMISS Juba premises and the aviation terminal by enhancing entry control and increasing security measures.

UNITED NATIONS SUPPORT MISSION IN LIBYA (UNSMIL)

Pursuant to Security Council resolution 2486 (2019), UNMAS technical guidance and expertise in weapons and ammunition management supported UNSMIL and Libyan authorities to stem weapons proliferation by securing uncontrolled arms and related materiel. UNMAS surveys, EOD and risk education also enhanced the safety of UNSMIL and humanitarian actors in carrying out their duties. In response to the outbreak of hostilities in and around Tripoli, UNMAS humanitarian mine action and coordination activities improved the safety of humanitarian operations and better protected civilians from explosive hazards. UNMAS also supported the Libyan Mine Action Centre in their coordination of humanitarian mine action organizations operating in Libya. UNMAS provided awareness training on IEDs and technical support to the United Nations Guard Unit in Tripoli on the safe and secure storage of ammunition, which, given the Unit's proximity to UNSMIL, was vital to the security of Mission personnel. UNMAS further provided case-by-case technical expertise, risk management guidance, and explosive hazard awareness training to UNSMIL staff and the wider humanitarian community in preparation for activities in newly accessible contaminated areas, which enabled more timely and safer assistance to affected communities.

UNITED NATIONS SUPPORT OFFICE IN SOMALIA (UNSOS) AND UNITED NATIONS ASSISTANCE MISSION IN SOMALIA (UNSOM)

Pursuant to Security Council resolutions 2461 (2019) and 2498 (2019), UNMAS supported UNSOS and UNSOM by contributing to efforts to establish sustainable explosive threat mitigation capacity at Federal Government and Federal Member State levels in Somalia. UNMAS provided technical guidance and expertise to assist the development of national policies to strengthen mitigation efforts with respect to explosive threats and to enhance support to survivors. Training and guidance to national authorities, including the Somali Explosive Management Authority (SEMA) and Somali security forces, helped to build national capacities in the area of explosive threat mitigation and weapons and ammunition management.

Pursuant to Security Council resolution 2472 (2019), UNMAS also provided explosive threat mitigation assistance to the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM). By delivering training and providing specialized equipment, UNMAS assisted AMISOM to carry out operations and protect key infrastructure, despite the high threat of improvised explosive devices. In accordance with the Somali Transition Plan, UNMAS also contributed to the efforts of AMISOM to mentor, assist and train national security forces in joint operation settings.