



**NEEDS
DRIVEN.
PEOPLE
CENTRED.**

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April 2018

IRAQ

Programme Highlights

Reinforcing Risk Education Messaging as People Come Home



[Iraq] With the upcoming elections in May followed by Ramadan, thousands of people are expected to travel and it is a priority to enable a safe environment for people on the move and promote safe behaviour to avoid accidents.

In collaboration with the Directorate of Mine Action (DMA), 40 billboards with life-saving messages will be placed in strategic points and thousands of brochures and posters will be distributed at key locations such as checkpoints, busy streets and shop entrances.

UNMAS Iraq takes this opportunity to remind people in Iraq: if encountering suspected items, do not touch them, and immediately report to the local authority or via the hotline number 182.

Photo: The design of one the 40 billboards that will be placed in strategic locations. Messages are tailored to specific audiences (displaced communities returning home, children etc.)

UNMAS Divers Clear Fallujah's Iron Bridge

The Iron Bridge was built in 1930 and played an important role during the World War II. Destroyed in June 2016 under the Da'esh occupation, the bridge is now being rehabilitated through the UNDP Funding Facility for Stabilization mechanism. In February 2018 during diving preparations for the restoration of the bridge, suspect explosive devices were spotted under water and all work at the site was immediately halted.

UNMAS employed a specialized Underwater Clearance company to assess the situation. The divers worked for seven days and found and removed two plastic containers filled with home-made explosives and rigged with five detonators.

The teams neutralized and removed the charges using safe methods. The operation very complex and a physically challenging due to the lack of visibility and the strong current of the Euphrates River with currents sometimes up to 4 m/s.

The bridge has a strategic position and serves the only maternity hospital in a 50 km radius. The bridge also provides direct access to the Fallujah's central market with its more than 1,000 stalls and shops relying on suppliers. With the clearance complete, the work on the missing bridge span, has now resumed and will hopefully be finished by the end of May. Fallujah is very close to having its Iron Bridge back in service.

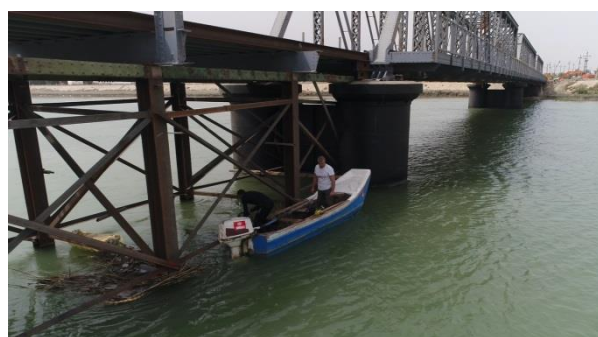


Photo: Divers at the Iron Bridge getting ready to start the underwater operation (© UNMAS)



UNMAS has \$42.8M in secured and pledged funds in 2018 and is **seeking an additional \$216M** to support survey and clearance, risk education, capacity enhancement of Government as well as the Recovery and Resilience Programme and Humanitarian Response Plan.



Thank you to all our donors for their generous support.

4 April: International Day for Mine Awareness and Assistance in Mine Action



Photo: Commemorative ceremony in Baghdad (©UNMAS)

UNMAS celebrated the International Day for Mine Awareness and Assistance in Mine Action with the Directorate of Mine Action (DMA) in Baghdad and the Iraqi Kurdistan Mine Action Agency (IKMAA) in Erbil. Various activities were on the agenda of the two events respectively led by DMA and IKMAA, including speeches by relevant ministries, DMA, IKMAA and UN representatives, a photo exhibition, screening of videos, school activities and booths at the Baghdad Book Fair showcasing risk education material.

In Baghdad, UNMAS also organized the screening of the movie 'The Deminer' directed by Hogir Hirori in the UN Iraq compound, International Zone, which was highly appreciated by the audience (<http://www.thedeminer.com/index.php>).

Mine Action Achievements



Clearance



Survey



Risk Education

UNMAS and partners achievements in April

26,553,734 m² of high priority areas surveyed, 252,904 m² cleared, and 1,407 explosive hazard items removed.

12 assessments and surveys completed in support of stabilization and humanitarian efforts.

1,045 risk education sessions delivered to 21,369 beneficiaries of which 54% were females and 47% were children.

Overall Mine Action sector since April 2015

1,711 km² surveyed, 140 km² cleared and 132,884 hazardous items removed.

Risk education sessions delivered to 1,348,438 beneficiaries from at-risk communities.



*Figures for the Mine Action sector are provided by the Directorate for Mine Action (DMA) and the Iraqi Kurdistan Mine Action Agency (IKMAA). Statistics obtained from the Government databases might not fully reflect the up-to-date numbers as reports are submitted on a rolling basis. For these reasons, the figures reported have to be considered as the absolute minimum and only reflect the achievements of humanitarian actors (not the Iraqi Security Forces)



UNMAS

Established in 1997, United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS) is the recognized 'coordinator' of mine action within the UN system. UNMAS is an office within the Office of Rule of Law and Security Institutions, within the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO). UNMAS operates under UN legislative mandates of both the General Assembly and the Security Council, or at the request of the UN Secretary-General or his designated official, or an affected country. UN Security Council Resolution 2365 (2017) the first stand-alone text on mine action, "Expresses grave concern over the threat that landmines, explosive remnants of war and improvised explosive devices pose to civilians, refugees returning to their homes, ...and stresses the need to undertake appropriate measures to mitigate this danger effectively."