

United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS) in Colombia newsletter informs about the main technical assistance activities carried out through the projects implemented in the country to strengthen the mine action sector, in conjunction with the <u>Office of the High Commissioner for Peace (OACP, in Spanish)</u> - **Descontamina Colombia.**

OACP assigns to HUMANICEMOS DH a second municipality of Caquetá to expand their humanitarian demining operations



UNMAS Colombia trains and evaluates the capacities of HUMANICEMOS DH personnel.

Reference photo / UNMAS Colombia Archive

On 10 December 2020, the OACP announced the allocation of a second municipality to HUMANICEMOS DH to expand its mine action operations. It is Solita, Caquetá, located 70 kilometers from La Montañita, the first municipality assigned to this humanitarian demining civil organization. **HUMANICEMOS DH** held the first meeting at the end of January with the municipal authorities of Solita to learn about the local context and begin to coordinate the start of operations in the coming months. This new allocation is a sign of confidence in the capacities that this organization has developed, composed and led by people in the process of reintegration, which emerged after the peace accord between the Government of Colombia and the FARC-EP.

UNMAS and the OACP agree on a work plan to strengthen the mine action sector in 2021

In the context of the 2020-2022 work plan agreed between the OACP and UNMAS, the Operations and Technical Assistance area of UNMAS Colombia agreed on a work plan for 2021 with the Humanitarian Demining component of the OACP, with the objective of continuing to strengthen the capacity of the mine action sector. The annual plan includes the development of refresher courses in Non-Technical Survey, Technical Survey and Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) Level 2 or 3, which will be taught by UNMAS to the personnel of humanitarian demining organizations. It is also contemplated to support the design of the annexes of the new Colombian Technical Standards that will manage the entire mine action sector from this year, among other tasks.



Photo: Regional Coordination Project / UNMAS

Tadó, municipality of Chocó, now has an anti-personnel mine Victims Assistance Referral Pathway established

On January 26, the Local Coordinator visited the municipality of Tadó, Chocó, in the Colombian Pacific coast, to socialize to the local authorities the antipersonnel mines Victims Assistance (VA) referral pathway, prepared in coordination with the *Corporación Paz y Democracia*, an operator of Explosive Ordnance Risk Education (EORE). At the meeting, printed material of this VA Route was delivered, which will be used for dissemination in the communities of Tadó and will facilitate services to victims of explosive ordnance. The printing of the VA Routes was funded by UNICEF. In this meeting, representatives of the Tadó Mayor's Office, the official responsible for victims, governors of ethnic communities and community leaders participated.



Photo: Mauricio Morillo / UNMAS Colombia



Photo: Alejandra Botero / UNMAS Colombia

Community leaders of Nariño sensitize vulnerable populations to accidents with anti-personnel mines

15 community leaders of the municipalities Roberto Payán, Barbacoas and Tumaco, in the department of Nariño, held awareness days on EORE and shared accident prevention messages during January, to some 150 people from the communities most vulnerable to possible accidents with explosive ordnance. The sessions held in these municipalities are relevant, as 159 events with explosive ordnance were registered in 2020, resulting in 43 new victims in these municipalities, of the 57 registered in the Nariño department during last year. These sessions had the support of the *Colombia Transforma* programme funded by USAID, and technical assistance from the Local Coordinator of UNMAS in Nariño.

UNMAS trains HUMANICEMOS DH staff about the regulations of the mine action sector

On January 18, 19 and 20, the Local Coordinator of UNMAS in Caquetá gave workshops to strengthen knowledge on mine action public policies, with an emphasis on Regional Coordination and VA, for the HUMANICEMOS DH team. The training, which is part of the **Regional Coordination Project**, was carried out in compliance with biosecurity measures at the HUMANICEMOS DH regional base in La Montañita, Caquetá. During the meetings, the participants interviewed residents of the area to obtain inputs for the construction of a VA Route in the community, which could be used to assist in possible accidents with antipersonnel mines and in other catastrophic events that require community coordination.

The UNMAS Colombia Team



Diana Sorzano Coordinator of the Regional Coordination Project

Diana joined the UNMAS Colombia team last January. She has 15 years of experience in the public and private sectors in peace operations, armed conflict, mine action and work with vulnerable populations in Spain and Colombia. Diana has worked in projects for Human Rights mainstreaming of minority populations in municipalities of the Community of Madrid, Spain. She has also worked in the Ombudsman's Office and in the Presidential Program for Mine Action in Colombia. Her main function now with UNMAS is to coordinate the **Regional Coordination Project**, which seeks to strengthen the presence of the OACP in the territories most affected by explosive ordnance in Colombia. During 2020, this project benefitted 17 departments of the country.

About UNMAS Colombia

Since 2010, UNMAS has supported the National Mine Action Center of Colombia, under the direction of the OACP, humanitarian demining, victim assistance and explosive ordnance risk education organizations, to increase the capacity of the mine action sector and strengthen its coordination and regulatory frameworks, considering best global practices. UNMAS works in Colombia with the support of the **European Union**, through the **European Trust Fund for Peace**; and the Governments of **Germany, Italy and Republic of Korea**, whom we thank for their contributions in 2021.

