



UNMAS

United Nations Mine Action Service Occupied Palestinian Territory

December 2024 Newsletter



UNMAS EOD Officer conducting an assessment of explosive ordnance found in the Khan Youni Training Centre, Gaza. 30 Dec 2024 © UNMAS

December Achievements

95 Explosive Hazard Assessment requests responded to for:

- **11** humanitarian sites (shelters, medical facilities)
- **15** interagency missions
- **69** EHAs canceled, aborted or denied

5 Explosive Hazard Assessments coordinated

41,684 boys, girls, women and men received EORE-CPP

119 UN and humanitarian workers received EORE and training of EORE facilitators

For more information:

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In Focus - Looking back at 2024 and our priorities for 2025

As 2024 comes to an end, UNMAS looks back at the previous 12 months of operations in Gaza and the West Bank. Conflict continued to impact civilians throughout the Territory and cause extensive explosive ordnance contamination with short- and long-term impacts. In response and despite challenges, UNMAS provided mine action support to civilians and the humanitarian community, along the pillars of coordination, explosive hazard response, risk education and capacity enhancement.

In April, UNMAS was designated by the Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator to serve as the designated coordinating body for humanitarian mine action in Gaza. In 2024, this focused on setting up the Mine Action Area of Responsibility for Gaza, developing and helping to establish technical working groups as well as initiating further coordination procedures to support in prioritization and tasking of humanitarian mine action actors as more actors are able to operate in Gaza. As we move into 2025, UNMAS responsibilities as the Mine Action Coordinating Entity are further developing.

In the West Bank, UNMAS continued to build on capacity building support to the Palestinian Authority, conducting training and supporting the development of mine action strategies and national coordination mechanisms.

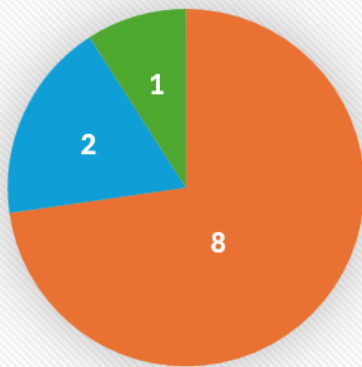
While the number of humanitarian mine action actors in Gaza remains limited, UNMAS is prioritizing the opening of the sector for other humanitarian mine action actors to enter Gaza, providing support to help these organizations get set up in Gaza through advisory logistical support, acceptance of in-kind EOD Officers from NGOs and advocacy.

Explosive Hazard Assessments

To ensure the continuity of humanitarian operations and enhance safety at UN project sites and along routes, UNMAS EOD Officers continued to conduct EHAs at the request of the humanitarian community.

UNMAS experienced challenges in conducting mine action operations throughout Gaza in December. **66** requests to complete operations were denied, and **three** had to be aborted or cancelled due to security concerns or challenges related to movement and access. Despite this UNMAS completed **11** EHAs at IDP shelters and UN facilities and conducted route assessments for **15** interagency missions including those bringing food and fuel into and around Gaza.

Explosive Hazard Assessments



■ IDP Camp/Shelter ■ UN Facilities ■ Access/Roads



Children attend educational sessions at a Temporary Learning space built on an old children's playground. UNMAS conducted an EHA of the site in November to ensure the space could be built on and used safely. Khan Younis, Gaza, 11 Dec 2024.

In November's newsletter, UNMAS told the story of an EHA that the team conducted in a school playground, that a community member wanted to convert into a Temporary Learning Space to address the fact that there are no available or functioning schools in the area.

In December, UNMAS heard from the community member who had requested the EHA. He told the team that the learning space was now up and running successfully, already providing support to hundreds of children. He expressed his gratitude for the team's prompt support and said that without UNMAS EHA services, this learning space would not have existed. This was an impactful reminder of the real, fast-acting and tangible benefits of mine action operations in Gaza.

Delivery of Risk Education for the Local Community

UNMAS continued to support the delivery of explosive ordnance risk education (EORE) to the local community in Gaza and awareness sessions to the humanitarian community. UNMAS implementing partners provided **1,773** EORE sessions to **41,684** at-risk civilians, while the UNMAS Risk Education team conducted **four** EORE awareness sessions and **one** training of EORE facilitator sessions, reaching **119** humanitarian workers from a range of NGOs, INGOs and UN agencies.

UNMAS oPt appeals to donors to continue supporting our work as we enter 2025. Invitations to provide further information about UNMAS requirements are welcome.

Thank you for your support in 2024 so far!

United Nations Central Emergency Response Fund
oPt HF occupied Palestinian territory Humanitarian Fund