



UNMAS IRAQ Programme Report 2017

*'ENABLING SAFE RETURN, STABILIZATION
AND RECONSTRUCTION'*



NEEDS
DRIVEN.
PEOPLE
CENTRED.



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Photo: UNMAS

“The Iraqi children, women and men who are eagerly waiting to return home are our motivation. We know that they need UNMAS support to be able to return to their homes. We keep them in mind in every effort we make, whether in mobilizing resources, providing training to the ministry of interior, issuing contracts and grants, providing risk education in IDP camps or finding and removing IEDs. The explosive hazard management activities have enabled the reconstruction and access to key infrastructure such as the Fallujah New Bridge, which is used by thousands of commercial and private vehicles every day. Another example is the Al Qaysoor Water treatment plant, which was cleared by UNMAS implementing partners and now is providing safe water to 300,000 people in Mosul”

--Pehr Lodhammar, UNMAS Iraq Senior Programme Manager

2017 was a critical year for Iraq, as nearly all the land under Da’esh occupation was liberated by the Government of Iraq. These developments further reinforced the critical work of UNMAS Iraq, in making sure explosive hazards¹ management activities responded effectively to a rapidly changing environment, and were achieving maximum impact in assisting humanitarian and stabilization activities, and supporting the return of displaced people to areas previously occupied by Da’esh.

The following report highlights key activities from 2017. Without the support of generous donors, the work of UNMAS Iraq would not have been possible.



1. For the purpose of this document, explosives hazards refers to landmines, explosive remnants of war and improvised explosive devices.

BACKGROUND

The scale and complexity of the explosive contamination problem in liberated areas is substantial and exceeds existing national capacity to respond. As more areas were liberated, further extensive contamination emerged. During 2017 the ongoing conflict and the continued presence of Da'esh were primary factors impacting security and access. In 2017, UNAMI² recorded 3,298 civilians killed and 4,781 civilians wounded (excluding Anbar civilian casualty figures for November and December, which were not available). The situation impeded the emergency response and hindered civilians from safely seeking assistance. It was therefore recognized that a comprehensive explosive hazard management response was (and continues to be) required to address the problem before any stabilization or fully-fledged assistance efforts can proceed.

The presence of explosive hazards contamination in areas 'liberated' from the Da'esh occupation in Iraq continues to impede security and stability efforts. Since 2015, UNMAS Iraq has been implementing a multi-year, comprehensive response using multi-donor contributions to address the problem of explosive hazards in areas liberated from Da'esh occupation. **The overall objective is to assist humanitarian and stabilization activities supporting the return of displaced people to areas previously under Da'esh occupation, through humanitarian mine action activities.** This will reduce the risks posed by explosive hazards directly supporting stabilization and humanitarian activities, while at the same time increasing national capacities to manage the threat of newly identified explosive hazards. At the strategic level, UNMAS Iraq works directly with mine action authorities to develop effective and sustainable systems and processes. This includes the development of national standards and operational guidelines to support future work within Iraq and in the region and supporting the transition from stabilization to longer term recovery in liberated areas.

United Nations Security Council Resolution S/RES/2367 (14 July 2017) explicitly references the threat of hazardous explosive devices in the preamble; "welcomes efforts by Member States to support the Government of Iraq and its partners in addressing the need to provide risk education, appropriate threat assessments, and conduct clearance of areas of such devices, and encourages Member States to continue such support". This resolution recalls previous resolutions (S/RES/2299 and S/RES/1770) for the UN in Iraq to promote, support and facilitate, in coordination with the Government of Iraq, humanitarian assistance, the implementation of the International Compact with Iraq, improvement of basic service delivery, economic reform and sustainable development. At the global level, Security Council Resolution 2365 was unanimously adopted on 30 June 2017, which among other areas of concern, "expresses grave concern over the threat that landmines, explosive remnants of war and improvised explosive devices pose to civilians, refugees returning to their homes...".

Under UN senior leadership, UNMAS Iraq liaises closely with authorities at central, governorate and district levels. Flexible approaches are being employed to: enable a coordinated explosive hazard threat mitigation response; help Iraq's line ministries prepare realistic contingency plans; support coordination mechanisms in newly liberated areas; assist the safe, dignified and voluntary return of internally displaced persons (IDPs) and support the joint Government-UN assessments to establish priorities. To ensure operational streamlining and effectiveness, UNMAS Iraq works with key counterparts, including the National Operations Centre, Governors and Iraqi military, police and civil defense units. Collaboration in 2017 included: advising on security for international staff engaged in IED clearance in liberated areas; linking implementing partners with UN agencies conducting regular missions to operational areas; advocating for solutions to expedite registration, accreditation and visa processes for international mine action companies and NGOs; as well as faster solutions to address issues on the civilian use of explosives and technical materials for IED clearance.

The overall UNMAS Iraq programme objective is to assist humanitarian and stabilization activities, including supporting the return of displaced people to areas previously under Da'esh occupation, specifically to:

1. Provide **Explosive Hazard Management (EHM)** response in support of humanitarian and stabilization efforts;
2. Deliver **risk education** at the community level and national/regional level; and
3. Enhance Government entities' **capacity** to manage, regulate and coordinate an EHM response.

The activities undertaken by UNMAS Iraq in 2017 under these three strategic pillars are outlined in this report. The overall vision for the UNMAS Iraq programme is as follows: Those displaced from their homes can confidently return to areas liberated from Da'esh, following humanitarian and stabilization efforts enabled by UNMAS Iraq, whereby UNMAS Iraq will support the national authorities to manage, regulate and coordinate a response to residual explosive threats in liberated areas.

2. UNAMI has been limited in effectively verifying casualties in certain areas; in some cases, UNAMI could only partially verify certain incidents. For these reasons, the figures reported have to be considered as the absolute minimum.

These activities would not have been possible without the support of all of the UNMAS Iraq donors. The table below illustrates the donor funding provided in relation to the strategic pillars.

Strategic Pillar	Donor 2015 - 2017
Explosive Hazard Management (EHM)	Australia, Denmark, Estonia, EU, German, Italy, Japan, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Portugal, Republic of Korea, and UK.
Capacity enhancement	Canada, Denmark, Estonia, EU, Germany, Italy, Japan, Netherlands, Portugal, Republic of Korea, UK
Risk Education (RE)	Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Italy, Japan, Netherlands, Portugal, Republic of Korea, UK



Throughout 2017, UNMAS Iraq continued to provide an EHM response in support of humanitarian and stabilization efforts. UNMAS Iraq teams deployed to conduct survey and clearance, including Technical and Non-Technical surveys as well as battle area clearance and high-risk search.

UNMAS Iraq operational teams deployed to undertake surveys in liberated areas of Ninewa, Anbar, Kirkuk and Salah ah Din governorates. UNMAS Iraq also worked through partners to conduct surveys, including the Danish Demining Group (DDG) and Iraqi Health and Social Care Organization (IHSCO) which extended the reach of the survey work.

A total of 810 surveys were undertaken in prioritized liberated areas where many of the activities were in direct support of the UN and the Government of Iraq's stabilization priorities. Approximately 500 of these surveys were conducted in and around Ninewa province, including Mosul city. These tasks were primarily prioritized by the UNDP Funding Facility for Stabilization which has the overall objective of supporting the Iraqi government to rapidly stabilize these locations and respond to people's needs in areas that have been liberated from Da'esh. These assessments are required to ensure that stabilization interventions can be undertaken safely, without the risk of EHs to those working on the stabilization interventions or to those returning to the liberated areas. In areas where the surveys indicated that contamination was present or likely, UNMAS Iraq issued task orders for an appropriate asset to deploy to ensure that the explosive hazards were removed.

Throughout 2017, UNMAS Iraq deployed clearance assets following the discovery of explosive hazards. This included work performed by UNMAS Iraq as well as through partners, such as DDG and Optima.

Survey and clearance tasks included:

- **A suspected munitions factory in Bartallah**, which was reported to UNMAS Iraq by the local community while UNMAS Iraq teams were working in the area. An assessment was conducted, which was followed by clearance. UNMAS Iraq teams located over 500 items of ordnance, both improvised and commercially manufactured. In addition, large quantities of component parts used in the construction of IEDs were discovered. This location was in the middle of a residential area, posing a major risk to the neighbourhood currently receiving a large number of IDPs returning to re-occupy their homes.

Throughout 2017, UNMAS Iraq deployed clearance assets following the discovery of explosive hazards. This included work performed by UNMAS Iraq as well as through partners, such as DDG and Optima. UNMAS Iraq undertook the following clearance and survey activities during 2017:

Conducted a total of 810 surveys (including technical and non-technical surveys). This included 507 in Ninewa and 303 in the Anbar and Salah ah Din.

Surveyed 33,972,773 sqm of suspected contaminated land. The majority of this area, 31,258,448 sqm, was surveyed in the governorate of Al Anbar.

Conducted a total of 54 interagency missions to support the work of the UN country team objective and humanitarian and stabilization objectives.

Removed 729 IEDs and 44,373 items of explosive hazards.

Cleared 2,976,413 sqm of contaminated and suspected contaminated land. 1,046,829 sqm of this was in Ninewa, and 1,929,584 sqm was in Anbar and Salah ah Din.

Assessed (and provided clearance where needed) a total of 561 stabilization tasks, including critical infrastructure locations, such as water plants, and hospitals. These tasks were primarily prioritized through UNDP and the Government of Iraq through the Funding Facility for Stabilization program.

Assessed (and provided clearance where needed) a total of 61 humanitarian tasks, in addition to the priority stabilization tasks.



Photo: UNMAS

■ UNMAS Iraq **assessed and cleared 273 high priority electrical transformers**, Following the UNMAS Iraq intervention, UNDP deployed their teams to the cleared sites and are currently rehabilitating the electrical transformers. When rehabilitated, the electrical transformers will provide electricity to the whole population of eastern Mosul with an estimated population of around one million people.

■ **Qara Qosh secondary school**, which was heavily contaminated when the area was re-taken. UNMAS Iraq deployed a team to undertake an assessment and found numerous explosive hazards. In total, 341 mortars and 161 other explosive hazards were found within the school compound. With the assistance of Iraqi Security Forces explosive ordnance disposal teams, all items were removed from the school and transferred to a safe location for disposal. This clearance allowed for the rehabilitation of the school, which serves up to 400 students.



■ One of the largest hospitals in Mosul, **Al Khansa hospital**, was left burned and looted, and required significant rehabilitation. IEDs were also suspected to be present in parts of the hospital. UNMAS Iraq's explosive hazard assessment resulted in the location and removal of one IED component and six mortar rounds. Following UNMAS Iraq's intervention, UNDP started rehabilitation work on the hospital. Al Khansa hospital serves as the main provider for maternity and pediatric care for the region. It is estimated that 500,000 women, girls, boys and men will benefit from improved healthcare services as a result. UNMAS Iraq's interventions at the disused western Mosul hospital complex also enabled the Ministry of Health to remove vital hospital equipment and relocate it to the operational Al Khansa hospital..

■ An assessment of the **Al Qasoor water treatment plant** in eastern Mosul. Following UNMAS Iraq's explosive hazard intervention, engineers were able to safely access and rehabilitate the plant. The rehabilitation and reopening of the Al Qasoor water treatment plant is a key stabilization milestone in Mosul's recovery. The water treatment plant is now providing clean water to over 300,000 people, serving 34 neighbourhoods in eastern Mosul.



■ In July, UNDP requested UNMAS Iraq to assess **Old Water Treatment Plant** in western Mosu. UNMAS Iraq teams found several explosive hazards as well as a remote-control improvised explosive device and removed the items for later disposal. Following clearance, the plant engineers could continue basic remediation safely, and the UNDP team could move forward with complete rehabilitation. The water treatment plant is critical to supplying treated water to large areas of western Mosul, which is a high priority for IDPs and residents.

■ The **train tracks in Fallujah**, which link Fallujah with Abu Ghraib and Baghdad, and run all the way to Basra. While the teams did not find heavy contamination impacting this critical infrastructure, they did find that the tracks ran through an IED belt. Once contamination is cleared and rehabilitation takes place, the tracks will facilitate the movement of both people and resources, reducing the strain on current road transport and enhance commerce and trade amongst all these areas.



- The **Salma Al-Taghalabea School for boys and girls** in Baiji, Salah ah Din, one of the UNDP priority tasks, was assessed to determine whether the school was safe for remediation. The team searched the area, finding damage from explosive hazards, but no dangerous items at the site. Following the UNMAS Iraq assessment, UNDP started rehabilitation of the school, which was attended over 400 students by the end of the year.
- **A kindergarten in western Mosul** with visible items of explosive hazards in the vicinity. While working on survey tasks in support of stabilization priorities in western Mosul in October, UNMAS Iraq teams received information from residents about suspicious items in a nearby kindergarten. When UNMAS Iraq teams went to investigate, they identified various explosive hazards, which were then removed.

Throughout 2017, UNMAS Iraq accompanied UN missions to assess liberated areas. UNMAS Iraq operations staff accompanied missions with OCHA, UNDP and other UN actors to assess the explosive hazard risk and ensure that the areas being visited did not pose an explosive hazard threat. The information gathered was shared with the UN and humanitarian partners to ensure they were informed about the explosive hazard risks in the newly liberated areas.

Among these missions were the following:

- ✓ In January, UNMAS Iraq and UNICEF conducted an assessment of several schools in eastern Mosul that were in need of remediation. This included the Gogjali Primary Boy's School, the Gogjali primary girl's school and the Al Koufa school. UNMAS Iraq assessed all to be safe for UNICEF support.
- ✓ In February, UNMAS Iraq facilitated a UNESCO visit to archaeological ruins in Salah ah Din, including the Temple of Ashur and the Tabirah Gate. The UNESCO team verified the current conditions of the ancient ruins while UNMAS Iraq provided preparatory guidance to the mission team about the potential threat of explosive hazards and assessed the level of explosive hazard contamination at the sites.
- ✓ In April, UNMAS Iraq conducted a mission with OCHA, UNAMI, UNDSS, WHO and UNFPA to establish access to areas recently liberated in western Mosul and to facilitate humanitarian support to three trauma stabilization points, two public health centers and Mosul General Hospital.
- ✓ In May, UNMAS Iraq conducted a mission with OCHA, UNAMI, WFP, WHO and others to Badush to assess potential sites for a field medical hospital and IDP mustering points. The mission also investigated and assessed a water treatment plant. Once UNMAS Iraq determined that explosive hazards didn't pose a risk, the WASH engineer on the mission was able to inspect the plant to determine what kind of remediation would be needed.
- ✓ In July, UNMAS Iraq supported a UN inter-agency mission to assess areas next to the Old City in western Mosul with OCHA and WHO. The purpose of the mission was to support coordination of humanitarian distributions to IDPs from western Mosul and to confirm mustering points. Newly liberated areas were also visited to assess the scale of explosive remnants of war contamination.



Photo: UNESCO

UNMAS Iraq verified the absence of explosive hazards at the mustering points and identified several explosive threats in newly liberated areas. UNMAS Iraq advised UN agencies to integrate the technical support of UNMAS Iraq into missions to enhance the safety of mission personnel in potentially contaminated areas of Mosul.

- ✓ In August, UNMAS Iraq supported an inter-agency mission together with OCHA, UNICEF, and IOM to establish how humanitarian aid could be provided in response to the Tal Afar emergency.
- ✓ In October, UNMAS Iraq, UNAMI and OCHA traveled to Kirkuk to coordinate humanitarian access. UNMAS Iraq conducted an explosive hazard assessment to determine the level of contamination in the area and facilitate access for future assessments by mine action partners.
- ✓ In November, UNMAS Iraq and OCHA conducted an assessment in Sinjar to better determine the needs of the remaining and returned population. A meeting was held with the Sinjar mayor who indicated that the residual threat of explosive hazards prevents individuals from moving back to their houses. UNMAS Iraq provided this information to a partner organization for priority risk education delivery.

Throughout 2017, UNMAS Iraq continued to manage an online reporting tool, allowing humanitarian partners and other stakeholders to report any suspected explosive hazard contamination. This tool supplements the already existing IDP information call center, which can also be used to report suspected cases of explosive hazard.

DELIVER RISK EDUCATION

Throughout 2017, UNMAS Iraq continued to coordinate delivery of risk education through UNMAS Iraq partners in areas with the highest risk of explosive hazards to IDPs, returnees, and other at-risk communities in Anbar, Ninewa, Kirkuk, and Salah ah Din provinces. UNMAS Iraq issued grant agreements to Danish Demining Group (DDG), the Iraqi Health and Social Care Organization (IHSCO), Mines Advisory Group (MAG) and Bustan. Risk Education activities were coordinated with mine action authorities and relevant UN entities, including the protection cluster, to ensure that the most at-risk displaced and returning populations received lifesaving messages on what to do if they encountered explosive hazards.



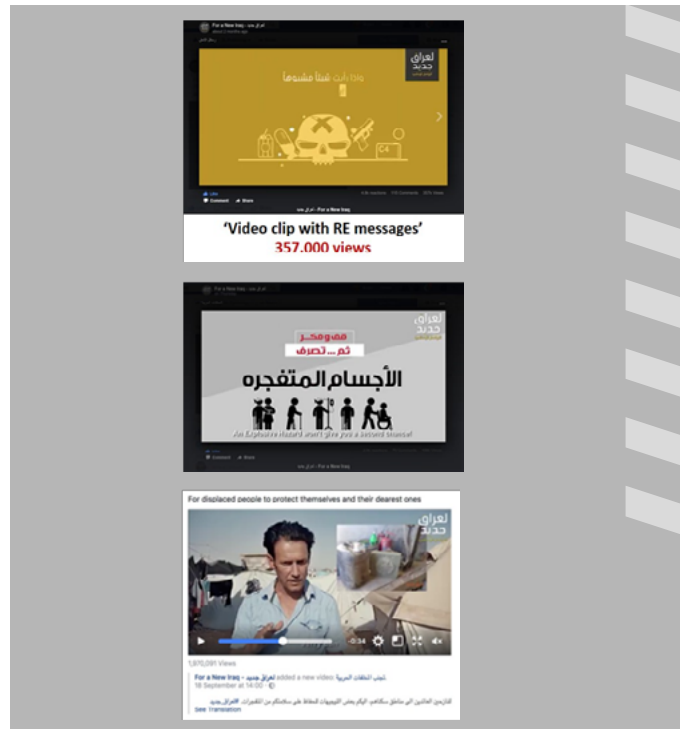
Photo: UNMAS

Risk education activities included:

The development of safety messages, in cooperation with the Iraqi Kurdistan Mine Action Agency (IKMAA), aimed at people transiting through the Erbil airport who may be on their way to newly liberated areas. Between 5 August and 5 September 2017, two LED screens displayed risk messages. One screen was situated inside the airport terminal at the arrival hall and one outside the airport at a main junction along the airport road. In addition, risk awareness cards continue to be distributed at checkpoints on the roads leading to the liberated areas.

- A risk education material design competition was organized by UNMAS Iraq's partner, IHSCO. Children participated in the competition held at Hamam Al-Aleel IDP camp which included drawings, models, handicrafts and song performances.

- IOM, HI and UNMAS Iraq jointly developed video clips to be used on screens within the camps, where available. The videos can be found [here](#) (358K views), [here](#) (480K views) and [here](#) (1.9M views).



LED screen at Erbil Airport with risk messages

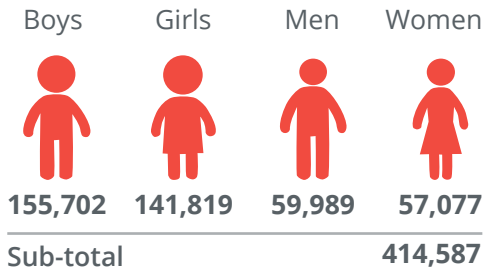


5,000 RE posters inserted in a local Mosul newspaper Al Mustafa for three months started on 10 September 2017

Throughout 2017, UNMAS Iraq continued to deliver risk education to at-risk individuals involved in the humanitarian and reconstruction response in newly liberated areas. This included staff from UNAMI, UN agencies and NGOs. The objective of the trainings was to inform and provide sufficient familiarity for at-risk personnel in the field with the ability to identify the presence of explosive hazards, anticipate where there may be an explosive hazard threat, and to behave safely in the presence of explosive hazards.

A total of 415,765 beneficiaries received risk education in 2017. The table below lists the beneficiaries disaggregated by sex and age for members of the public and type of responders.

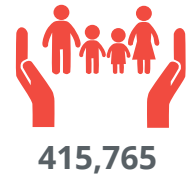
Risk education beneficiaries disaggregated by sex and age (community members)



Humanitarian & stabilization responders

UN staff	574
NGO staff	109
Cash for work employees	495
Sub-total	1178

Total RE beneficiaries



UNMAS Iraq also delivered IED Search and Awareness training to relevant security staff within the UN system. In 2017, UNMAS Iraq contributed to the safety of workers involved in the cleanup and remediation of critical areas by delivering targeted risk education messages to staff working with the UNDP Funding Facility for Stabilization programme. Engineers working to rehabilitate critical infrastructure as well as cash-for-work staff were among the key beneficiaries who received explosive hazard awareness messages. In total, UNMAS Iraq delivered risk education to 495 cash-for-work employees.

The positive impact of risk education was reported back through partners and individuals who received risk education, including the two stories below:

This is the story of Wisam, a young man displaced from his village near Hamam al- Aleel. While staying at an IDP camp, Wisam attended risk education sessions delivered by UNMAS Iraq partner IHSCO. In October, Wisam was able to return to his family home and assess whether it was safe for his family to return. He narrated the experience to the IHSCO risk education team leader:

Before I entered the house, I recalled your messages and followed the right measures to be safe from IEDs I learned from your presentations. I remember the message "what to do upon return". I noticed many IEDs inside the house. I immediately walked away and left the house. I then went to the authorities and informed them about the IEDs in my house. Wisam's experience made him proactive in informing other community members about contamination and the hazards they pose.

Much like Wisam, Ali also received risk education in an IDP camp from one of UNMAS Iraq's risk education partners, DDG. Since 2014, Ali had been living at several different camps, but in 2017, the local authorities approved his return to the village, which had been liberated. Ali entered his house to find it mostly destroyed, and contaminated

with explosive hazards and IEDs. He remembered what to do from the DDG risk education session; he backed slowly out of the house and switched off his phone to ensure he wouldn't trigger any of the items. He went to the closest police station and reported the contamination. He temporarily returned to the IDP camp until the hazardous items could be removed.



UNMAS Iraq's risk education partners have captured many stories shared by participants who have personally been affected by explosive hazards including IEDs, reinforcing the importance of the messaging and the overall work of UNMAS Iraq as well as broader explosive hazard management efforts within Iraq. This included Suhaib, whose uncle was seriously injured when he activated an explosive device simply by opening the door to their house which he was returning to after having been displaced. This also included the story of Rauaa, whose family had remained in Mosul during the war. An explosion killed her mother and brother and injured her and other family members. She hoped the risk education service being delivered by UNMAS Iraq partners would also reduce the risk to other families in the future. Dina was also traumatically impacted when her cousin brought home a grenade he had found on the street, not knowing it was dangerous. The explosion resulted in the death of her cousin and her aunt.

ENHANCE GOVERNMENT ENTITIES' CAPACITY TO MANAGE, REGULATE AND COORDINATE EHM

In 2017, UNMAS Iraq continued to work closely with the Iraqi government authorities to enhance the mine action capacity within the country. UNMAS Iraq's activities with the Iraqi government have included training, technical support and guidance on: quality management standards, facilitating explosive hazard management operations and Mine Ban Treaty obligations. UNMAS Iraq worked closely with the mine action authorities, as well as the Ministry of Interior, the National Operations Center (NOC), the Joint Coordination and Monitoring Cell (JCMC), among others, to advance capacity enhancement work.

SUPPORT TO MINE ACTION AUTHORITIES

As a key component of the capacity enhancement pillar, UNMAS Iraq provided advice and support to the Directorate of Mine Action (DMA) and the Iraqi Kurdish Mine Action Authority (IKMAA) along with their regional offices.

UNMAS Iraq helps DMA improve their planning, tasking, quality assurance, and accreditation processes. UNMAS Iraq continued to support the committee tasked with drafting the National Mine Action Strategic Plan (2017-2021) and worked with the DMA to translate, print and distribute this Strategic Plan. In addition, UNMAS Iraq provided DMA with technical support as requested, including Quality Assurance and Quality Control capacity and facilitated joint deployments with DMA to conduct technical assessments. A Technical Working Group, co-chaired by UNMAS Iraq and established in 2016, continued to provide a forum for the mine action authorities to come together with the operators in-country, national authority and key stakeholders in Baghdad and Erbil to support the emergency response in Anbar, Ninewa, and Salah ah Din. Five meetings were held in the reporting period; two meetings in Erbil and three in Baghdad.

At the beginning of 2017, UNMAS Iraq supported the Government of Iraq draft an extension request for the Article 5 of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on their Destruction.

Throughout 2017, UNMAS Iraq also provided support to IKMAA, which is responsible for explosive hazard management in the three Northern provinces. IKMAA requested support in reviewing and updating several of their technical standards. Towards the end of the year, UNMAS Iraq worked with IKMAA to plan a study tour, which will take place in 2018. The objective of the study tour is for IKMAA to develop an in-depth understanding of how other mine action authorities fulfill their function.

TRAINING

UNMAS Iraq developed course curricula and delivered several targeted training to Government of Iraq entities, including the police and the mine action authorities. These

included the following courses: Basic IED Disposal (IEDD), IEDD management, Explosive Hazard First Responder training, and Training of Trainers version of the Explosive Hazard First Responder course.

Basic IEDD: UNMAS Iraq developed a basic IEDD training course which was delivered twice during the year to mine action authorities. The course comprises two phases: Phase 1 covers basic explosive theory, explosive ordnance design, IED components and device types through to IEDD tactics and procedures for IEDD operations. Phase 2 covered equipment training, including practical instruction and assessment, and handling of explosives and explosive weapons including live firing of detonation cord cutting charges and improvised disrupters. Students were given formative assessments in the use of metal detectors, hook & line techniques, operator search, competency in wearing the bomb suit and the electrical means of initiation prior to live firing and training tasks.

Basic IEDD for Managers: UNMAS Iraq developed and delivered an IEDD awareness managers course to IKMAA in March. The first week of the training covered predominantly theory-based lessons to develop awareness of IEDD operations and the underpinning philosophies and principles.

Risk Education Managerial Skills training – Baghdad:

In October, UNMAS Iraq developed and delivered the Risk Education Managerial Skills Training in Baghdad. The training was developed in coordination with the DMA and included presenters from DMA for certain sessions. The objectives were set through conversations with the participants, and included the following: (1) understand the different phases of risk education project cycles and their inter-relationships (2) understand how to put together a case study and their importance in understanding outcomes (3) review knowledge about developing and testing risk education materials (4) increase skills in data management and presentation (5) highlight various ways of leveraging social media in risk education. Topics included: risk education tools and techniques, risk education project cycle, case studies, development and field testing of new and innovative materials, information management in risk education and report writing/proposal development. Five participants were from DMA (three of whom were female) and nine were from various accredited risk education organizations, including UNMAS Iraq partners.

Risk Education Managerial Skills Training – Erbil:

In December, UNMAS Iraq delivered another Risk Education Managerial Skills Training in Erbil. The curriculum was developed and delivered in coordination with IKMAA to ensure it met their needs. The objectives of the workshop were to (1) increase skills and knowledge on communication and leadership (2) better understand how to compile a case study and their importance in outcome reporting (3) review knowledge on risk education material development and testing (4) improve understanding of data management and IMSMA reporting (5) highlight the important of the use of media and social media in risk

education (6) understand the UNMAS/UNOPS process for proposals. A total of 15 individuals participated, four from IKMAA's head office, seven from IKMAA's sub-offices and eight from accredited NGOs.

Explosive Hazard First Responder Training/Explosive Hazard First Responder Training of Trainers:

UNMAS Iraq worked in partnership with the Ministry of Interior to deliver an Explosive Hazard First Responder Training targeted for the Al Anbar police, which took place at the Al Anbar police Academy in Habbaniyah. The training course was designed to familiarize the police officers with various explosive threats they could encounter while undertaking their work. This included the confirmation, appropriate response, command and control, together with the required reporting. Six week-long sessions were delivered, training a total of 161 police officers from the Al Anbar Iraqi Police Force. The Explosive Hazard First Responder Training sessions were followed by a training of trainers' course, to enhance the longer term capacity for response within the police force.

VICTIM ASSISTANCE

UNMAS Iraq supported the Government of Iraq to undertake a victim assistance study. The study was titled "Analysis of the Humanitarian Mine Action Victim Assistance situation and health facility capacity analysis in the Ninewa, Anbar and Salah ah Din provinces of the Republic of Iraq." The study aimed at satisfying the following objectives:

1. Conduct desk research on existing victim assistance strategies developed by the governmental and non-governmental authorities and stakeholders;
2. Develop the necessary tools and mechanisms to detect, quantify and record injuries from explosive hazards in the target areas;
3. Assess the capability of the existing health/rehabilitation structures to cope with the needs;
4. Consult with concerned authorities and other stakeholders, share results with them, and involve them in future interventions.

The assessment aims to strengthen the Government's victim assistance planning capacity by analyzing, collecting data about victims of explosive hazards, and assessing the capacities to provide care in the three governorates of Ninewa, Salah ah Din and Al Anbar. Stakeholders involved in the study included the Ministry of Health and Environment Directorate of Mine Action, the International Committee of the Red Cross, Handicap International Iraq, and the Iraq Red Crescent Society as well as numerous mine action NGOs.

COORDINATION

Coordination was critical to the work under each strategic pillar undertaken by UNMAS Iraq throughout 2017.

During the year, UNMAS Iraq coordinated the mine action sub-cluster under the Protection Cluster. UNMAS Iraq, as the lead of the mine action sub-cluster, brought together all national and international non-government organizations and operators involved in mine action in Iraq (including actors that are involved in IED threat mitigation), supported effective coordination of humanitarian mine action and ensured inclusive planning and strategic development of activities. During the year, UNMAS Iraq chaired monthly mine action sub-cluster meetings. The mine action sub-cluster focused on the emergency response to newly liberated areas, in particular Mosul. UNMAS Iraq also advocated for mine action within the UN system and across the humanitarian community, including by presenting on the activities of the mine action sub-cluster at the National Shelter Cluster meeting, and delivering risk education training to several humanitarian/NGO employees, who were deploying to support IDPs at planned mustering points. In addition, UNMAS Iraq attended the Grey Area Coordination meetings, hosted by iMMAP, attended to by DMA and IKMAA in addition to all partners, commercial and NGO, while they were taking place. These meetings were critical to coordinating the EHM response in liberated areas of Ninewa province in particular.

UNMAS Iraq also advocated on behalf of the mine action community to national authorities, ensuring critical operations in Iraq are facilitated to the fullest extent possible

UNMAS Iraq, together with the Government of Iraq and relevant stakeholders, focused on five key challenges in 2017:

- Increasing the number of operators in federal Iraq to address the shortage of registered and accredited NGOs in liberated areas. Increasing this would free up specialized IEDD capacity to engage in complex and high risk IEDD tasks in urban environments. Temporary accreditation was pursued as a potential solution.
- Increasing the availability of explosives or 'energetics' for civilian entities. UNMAS Iraq will work with the Ministry of Defence (MOD) to establish and maintain strong liaison relationships.
- Reducing restrictions on movement and access to sites, which continue to be critical obstacles for humanitarian activities.
- Improving information management to enhance the collection, entry, analysis and availability of explosive hazard information across Iraq.
- Increasing availability of quality equipment for high risk operators. Importation of high tech equipment would reduce the risk to operators.

UNMAS Iraq supported the national mine action authorities in overall coordination functions when requested. This included co-chairing ad hoc meetings on issues important to the sector, while bolstering coordination functions within various government offices to facilitate the work of explosive hazard management operators.

VISIBILITY

Throughout 2017, UNMAS Iraq continued to profile and advocate the generous contributions of its multiple donor partners. The importance of explosive hazard management in Iraq was mainstreamed through high level documents, briefing notes and presentations to the Government of Iraq, other UN entities and the international community, as well as through social media advocacy. UNMAS Iraq ensured mine action was regularly highlighted to member states by actively briefing the donor community in Sweden, Denmark, Germany, Switzerland, Ireland, Jordan, Turkey and Beirut in addition to briefing local representatives in Erbil and Baghdad every two months. UNMAS Iraq hosted multiple in-country events highlighting donor contributions including: 4 April Mine Action day events in Erbil and Baghdad; a Press Tour to commemorate “Fallujah: One Year On” looking at 12 months of UNMAS Iraq’s work in Fallujah; a commemorative event in Erbil on 3 December marking 20 years since the signing of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Treaty; and the launch of the Directorate of Mine Action National Strategic and Executive Plan for Mine Action 2017-2021 on 7 December. Furthermore, the UNMAS Iraq programme contributed at three Mine Action Support Group events and coordinated a briefing in Geneva co-chaired by the Permanent Representative of Iraq which highlighted the operational challenges of NGOs in Iraq and the unique nature of the explosive hazard threat. UNMAS Iraq also briefed at the Geneva Centre for Security Policy (GCSP) “Building Capacities on Arms Control for MENA Region” during which the donors supporting UNMAS Iraq were highlighted.

Summary in numbers for 2017:

20 media engagements
100 social media posts
40 press releases
10 donor field visits

GENDER AND CONFLICT SENSITIVITY

All UNMAS Iraq activities are developed with consideration of the conflict situation and sensitivities required to ensure operational results in line with the programme strategy, which includes a commitment to humanitarian principles and gender mainstreaming.

Many of the assessments and subsequent clearance undertaken by UNMAS Iraq are prioritized by UNDP and the Government of Iraq for the UNDP Funding Facility for Stabilization programme. The methodology used for the UNDP Funding Facility for Stabilization programme includes a robust conflict assessment at the outset, to ensure the interventions planned recognize the local conflict dynamics. UNDP ensures that vulnerable communities, including minority populations, are receiving specific support.

The UNMAS Iraq’s project activities take into consideration conflict sensitivities when recruiting and training local personnel. For example, mandatory conflict sensitivity, as well as gender and disability considerations are required all contractors and grantees and must be included within project design. Furthermore, through mine action management training, supporting the development of national strategies and developing technical guidelines and Standard Operating Procedures with national and regional authorities, UNMAS Iraq has advocated for stronger gender and diversity considerations to be taken into account to ensure that women, men, boys and girls benefit equally from all mine action activities implemented in Iraq.



UNMAS Iraq teams provide accountability to affected populations where possible. Field activities require beneficiary consent and participation, and operational staff are required to solicit feedback and complaints. UNMAS Iraq clearance teams are accompanied by a community liaison capacity to ensure that beneficiaries are informed about the activities and able to provide feedback. Community Liaison Officers are both male and female where possible, which helps ensure that both men and women in communities are able to offer feedback, especially related to their distinct engendered needs and priorities. UNMAS Iraq risk education implementing partners also solicit feedback at the end of their sessions from the beneficiaries. Finally, beneficiary populations are able to lodge complaints with the National Authority should an issue arise related to UNMAS Iraq work in their communities.

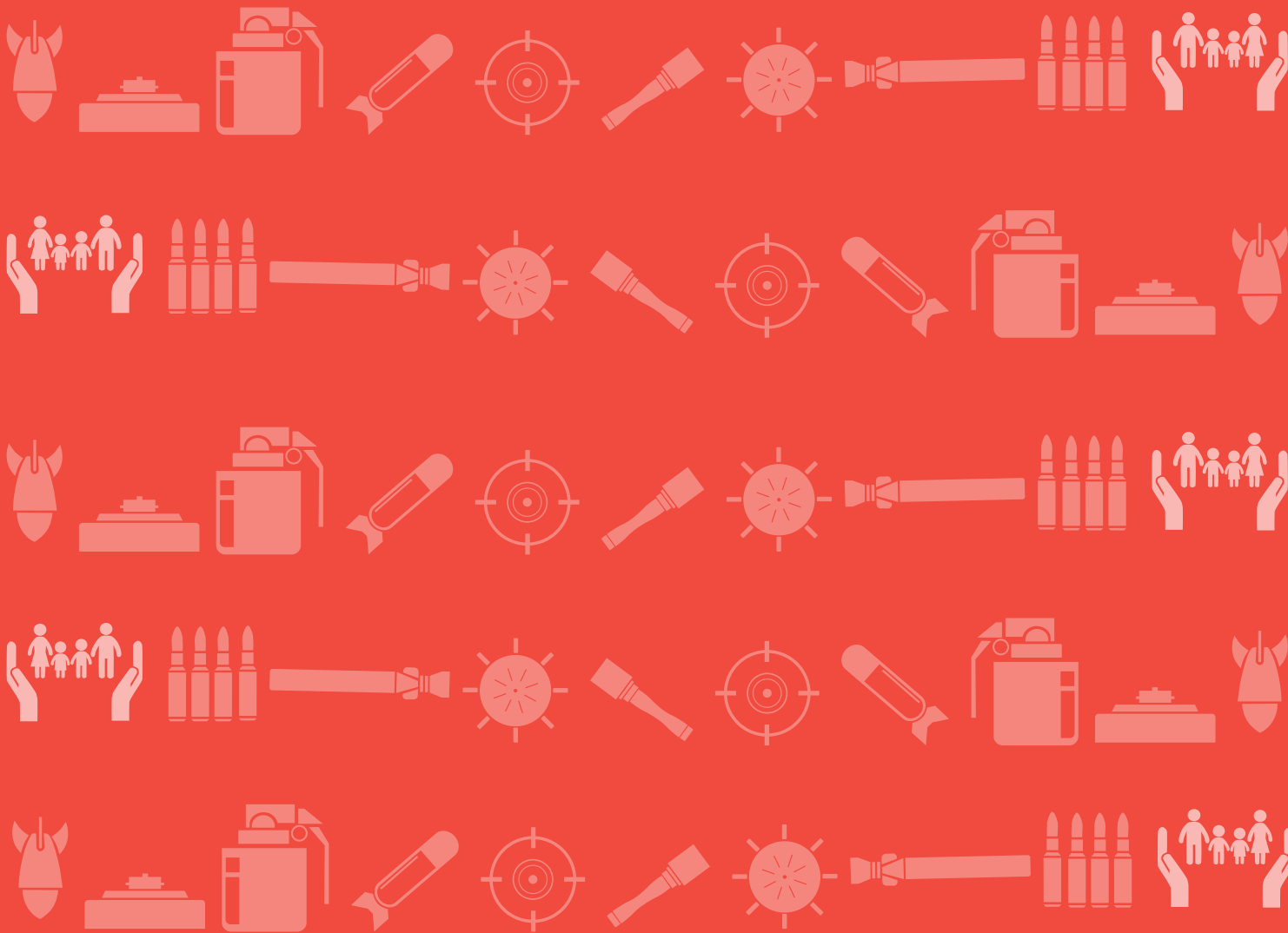


FACES OF UNMAS IRAQ

"Especially in the poor countries that just have war, we're clearing the mines and supporting the staff. The countries that have these wars have a lot of problems; especially the children. They are suffering everyday and we want to help them."
- Ahlam Abed

"I get to work in an environment doing something I like and something people can benefit from, plus I get to expand my knowledge in IEDs, mines, and explosives. In two years I'll amass a great amount of knowledge in this job."
- Ahmed Sabah





UNMAS

**NEEDS
DRIVEN.
PEOPLE
CENTRED.**