



UNMAS

United Nations Mine Action Service

Occupied Palestinian Territory

April 2024 Newsletter



[Photo caption: UNMAS EOD Officer supports interagency mission to resupply a bakery with fuel] ©UNMAS

April Achievements

25 Explosive Hazard Assessments conducted

16 Interagency Missions Supported

1 Training of Trainer EOORE Session provided

Humanitarian staff in Gaza won the **Secretary-General Award 2023** under the "UN Values and Behaviours" category. This is a recognition of their **exceptional commitment amidst the ongoing conflict.**

"We pay tribute to the more than 13,000 colleagues from across the system who are serving in Gaza. Day in and day out, they are alleviating indescribable human suffering with their unwavering devotion to humanity, even at the risk of their own lives. They reflect the best of us." said the Secretary-General.

In Focus - Support to Humanitarian Security

The scale of the explosive threat in Gaza is impacting the ways in which humanitarian actors can access areas of the Strip. To mitigate risks posed by explosive ordnance, UNMAS Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) Officers were requested by the UN Department of Safety and Security to join all humanitarian UN interagency missions into the Middle and Northern parts of Gaza.

As a result of UNMAS EOD Officer support, humanitarian partners have been able to access previously inaccessible sites in likely heavily contaminated areas. For example, in April, EOD officers joined WFP convoys to deliver fuel and goods to bakeries in Jabalia which had been non-functional for weeks. Regularly, these missions support fuel deliveries to hospitals, replenishment of medical supplies to health facilities, and food deliveries to the Middle and Northern areas.

To build capacity and enable the humanitarian community to provide more assistance, UNMAS rolled out Hazardous Environment Training (HET) sessions. International NGO and UN Security Officers are trained to recognise explosive threats and to employ safe behaviours, enabling them to advise convoy personnel in lower risk areas where UNMAS EOD Officers may not be required.

Mine Action Coordination

The month of April was marked by several coordination initiatives aimed at improving joint efforts to respond to the threat posed by explosive hazards in Gaza. On 16 & 17 April, UNDP, UNEP and UNMAS organized a "Debris Management & Humanitarian Mine Action" workshop in Amman, including participants from FSD, The Halo Trust, HI, MAG, NPA, among others. This was the first time that a debris management pre-planning coordination effort has taken place at such an early stage.

See the full announcement [here!](#)




Scan here and engage with the UNMAS Palestine Mapping Tool

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In the same week, on 18 April, the Gaza Mine Action Area of Responsibility (MA AoR), which was re-established in December 2023, held its first in-person one-day workshop. The discussions aimed to create a framework for the mine action response in Gaza and the exercises included a comprehensive analysis of the mine action context, mapping of operational capabilities, operational scenarios and response strategy, as well as the integration of mine action into the clusters' response.

Lastly, on 30 April, several organizations including UNMAS, UNDP, UNOPS, the MA AoR and Humanity & Inclusion collectively organized a side-event at the International Meeting of Mine Action National Programme Directors and United Nations Advisors (NDM-UN) and gave a presentation on '[Gaza Cross-Sectoral Coordination. Mine Action as an Enabler](#)'.

The Essential Role of Information Management Tools

In a context that is marked by multiple issues with access to key locations, inability to conduct large scale survey or assessment, high levels of insecurity and difficulties with connectivity, Information Management has taken a central place in our approach to the current response to supporting other sectors and ensuring mine action is an enabling activity for other humanitarian activities. In April, several tools were created and shared with the humanitarian community in order to provide a more coordinated response to the threat posed by explosive hazards in Gaza:

- [Prioritization Mapping Application for Gaza](#) | This mapping tool aims to support prioritization and planning of humanitarian mine action activities and overlays primary and secondary data from a range of sources and is continuously refined.
- [EHA Request Form](#) | Request an Explosive Hazard Assessment (EHA) of UN/NGO humanitarian buildings/sites/areas that have been impacted by EO or soon to be occupied or used by humanitarian actors to ensure it is safe for use and that no explosive hazards or threats are present.
- [EORE Request Form](#) | Request Explosive Ordnance Risk Education (EORE) training sessions to promote specific safe behaviors for the EO threat in the Gaza context which vary in detail and length are tailored to specific audiences (UN or NGO personnel, UN security personnel, etc).

The month of April also saw an important agreement between OCHA and UNMAS allowing automated and real-time data sharing between the UNMAS IMS Prioritization Mapping Tool and OCHA's DataHub.

UNMAS Palestine has provided EOD support at UN and humanitarian sites and delivered EORE to the civilian community and humanitarian workers since 2009. The current emergency response includes limited EOD intervention (without clearance), support to humanitarian security efforts, EORE and continued co-coordinating the MA AoR under the Protection Cluster. In the West Bank, UNMAS supported the establishment of the Palestinian Mine Action Center (PMAC) in 2012, and continues to provide capacity enhancement support.

