



The conflict in Sudan continues to escalate, exacerbating the already dire humanitarian crisis. Warring parties continue using explosive weapons, leaving behind massive areas covered in explosive ordnance (EO). Explosive hazards not only kill and injure civilians but also block their access to essential services and livelihoods, even to humanitarian aid as aid workers are equally at risk. In response, UNMAS has been delivering mine action to mitigate the EO threats and enable safe movement and safe delivery of humanitarian aid.

RESPONDING TO LARGE-SCALE RETURN MOVEMENTS

MASS return movements are taking place in key urban cities such as Omdurman, Khartoum and Wad Madani, Al Jazirah following advances made by the Sudanese Armed Forces. Due to heavy bombardment and extensive use of explosive weapons, cities are heavily affected by EO, threatening the lives of civilians. The enormous EO contamination found on and inside roads, homes, schools, medical facilities, and humanitarian bases **not only kill and maim civilians but also restrict free movement, safe access to essential services, infrastructure, and livelihood opportunities**. Humanitarians are also facing the EO threat, hindering the safe delivery of aid to millions in desperate need.

To protect returnees from the threats of explosive hazards, UNMAS has, in partnership with Danish Refugee Council (DRC) and JASMAR, deployed teams to waypoints to disseminate emergency risk awareness messages to those on their way back to Omdurman and Wad Madani. These life-saving messages teach the audience how to recognize the signs of explosive hazards and how to avoid accidents. UNMAS also deployed teams to Khartoum to survey and clear the threats, expanding the safe space, free of EO threats, for civilians and aid actors.

Since 15 April 2023, UNMAS Sudan reached



203,284 affected population



1,231 aid workers

55,963 47,022 54,050 46,249

Girls

Boys

Women

Men

299

Women

932

Men

With life-saving emergency EORE

With EO awareness briefings, technical advice, contamination maps, and more.

ACTIVITIES

Technical Advisory on Explosive Hazards: The Mine Action Advisory Team (MAAT) is providing analysis and advice on the explosive threats and risk awareness to aid workers and joining humanitarian assessment missions to ensure access and safety of humanitarian operators. MAAT is also working hard to integrate mine action into the wider humanitarian response.

Explosive Ordnance Risk Education: EORE teaches how to recognize the signs of EO contamination and how to avoid such threats. Six EORE teams, in collaboration with DRC and JASMAR, are delivering gender/age-tailored EORE sessions to at-risk populations in Northern, River Nile, Kassala, Red Sea, Gedaref, and as of January 2025 also in Al Jazirah with a focus on returnees. To maximize reach, especially in hard-to-reach or inaccessible areas, indirect risk education is expanded through media such as radio, social media, through integration in other aid distributions and through training of trainers to community leaders and community-based organizations.



Coordination: Mine action coordination provides a crucial platform to collect information and requests from partners and supports delivery of a principled, prioritized approach to humanitarian mine action operations. During this quarter, MA partners provided inputs into the Humanitarian Needs and Response Plan 2025. Mine action was also integrated into the inter-agency Community Feedback Mechanism.



UNMAS trained Logistics Cluster truck drivers in EO awareness, enabling their safe delivery of 20 truckloads of food, medical supplies, education equipment and more. (Photo – UNMAS)

Survey and Clearance: As areas affected by conflict become accessible, there is an immediate need for survey and clearance of explosive hazards. This is required to enable safe population movements, safe delivery of humanitarian aid and in support of future recovery efforts. Four non-technical survey teams deployed to Karari localities, north of Omdurman in November. UNMAS is preparing to deploy teams with clearance capacities in the coming weeks.



UXO found in a residential area.
(Photo – UNMAS/DRC/JASMAR)

Information Management: Key to all of the above activities is the systematic collection and management of relevant data. Mapping of EO hazards not only contribute to ensuring the safety of humanitarian actors but also guide their operations planning and prioritization of all mine action activities. During this quarter, three monthly updated EO contamination maps and trend analysis were published.

CASE STUDIES

DAMAZINE, BLUE NILE

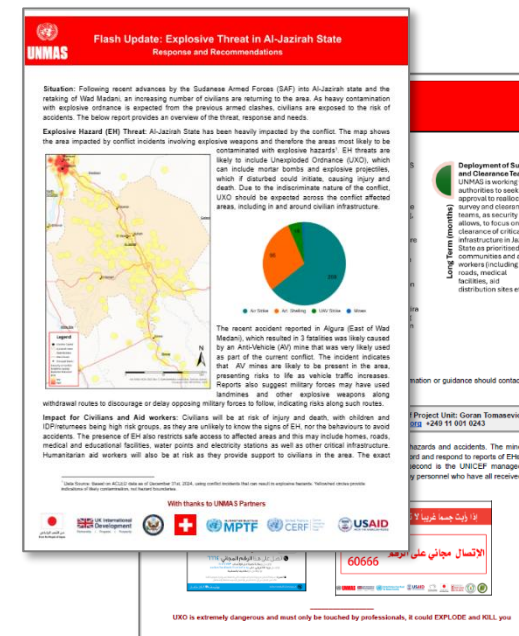
In December 2024, UNMAS conducted an on-site assessment of the Damazine airport in Blue Nile. The Government of Sudan (GoS) closed the entire aviation space in April 2023, and since then the operation of humanitarian flights by the UN Humanitarian Air Service (UNHAS) has been suspended. As part of the UN efforts to expand and improve humanitarian access, OCHA, UNDSS, UNHAS, and UNMAS carried out an assessment mission from Port Sudan to Damazine from 22 to 28 December 2024. Blue Nile being among the states with high severity of needs, resumption of UNHAS operations in the Damazine airport would be key to increase the delivery of humanitarian aid. Leading up to the mission, UNMAS conducted route assessment for the mission and provided assessment analysis and advice, ensuring the safety of the entire delegation from explosive hazards en route. While in Damazine, UNMAS assessed the airport, including through data collection from key informants and visual assessment, concluding that the runway and overall airport infrastructure were free from impacts caused by EO. Based on the results of this EO assessment along with other types of assessment, the mission recommended the resumption of UNHAS operations. With these security restrictions removed, UNHAS and humanitarian leadership are assessing other administrative and logistical considerations, with the hope of re-starting UNHAS flights to Blue Nile in early 2025.



WAD MADANI, AL JAZIRAH

Following the advances of SAF into Wad Madani, an increasing number of civilians began returning to the area. In January alone, EO-related accidents resulted in 18 fatalities and 6 injuries, most of them were children. As heavy contamination with EO is expected from the previous armed clashes, returnees and aid workers responding in the area will be exposed to deadly explosive hazards. To raise awareness of the EO threats within the aid community, UNMAS developed a flash update, outlining the expected types and locations of explosive threats in Al Jazirah state with a heat map and advice on safe behaviors. UNMAS further listed other technical support UNMAS is capable of providing to individual aid agencies. The flash update can be accessed by scanning the QR code. In addition, in February 2025, UNMAS completed an inter-agency assessment of Wad Madani; more updates to follow in the next flash update.

MINE ACTION, ENABLER OF SAFE AID DELIVERY



Scan the QR code to read the flash update!



FUNDING

UNMAS thanks the following donors for their generous support through the United Nations Voluntary Trust Fund for assisting Mine Action in Sudan during the year 2024: The United States Agency for International Development, the Bureau of Political-Military Affairs/Office of Weapons Removal and Abatement, Italian Agency for Development Cooperation, the Government of Japan, the Foreign Commonwealth & Development Office, the Multi-Partner Trust Fund, and the Central Emergency Response Fund. UNMAS also thanks the UN Trust Fund for Human Security for its contribution to an inter-agency programme in South Kordofan and to the Government of Switzerland for the provision of in-kind personnel. To respond to the increasing mine action needs, the Humanitarian Needs and Response Plan shows a funding need for Mine Action of **\$23.5 million for 2025**. As of January 2025, due to the suspension of US funding, UNMAS faces a significant funding crisis and requests for urgent funding support from donors to ensure continued delivery of mine action response in Sudan.



ABOUT

UNMAS first engaged in Sudan in 2002 and has since played a pivotal advisory role in building Sudan's institutional capacity to provide humanitarian mine action support to the people of Sudan and to meet Sudan's obligation under Article 5 of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention ('Ottawa Treaty'). UNMAS Sudan mobilizes funds and supports land release, EORE, victim assistance, and information management in coordination with the National Mine Action Center and ensures mine action activities support humanitarian, development, and peacebuilding needs. Since January, UNMAS has supported the United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in Sudan (UNITAMS). After the drawdown of UNITAMS in February 2024, UNMAS has continued to provide mine action support as requested by the Government of Sudan.

ADVOCACY

In November 2024, at the Fifth Review Conference of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention in Cambodia, UNMAS Sudan and NMAC together with Humanity & Inclusion and DRC convened a side event focused on the explosive hazard threat in Sudan and advocated for greater support to mine action. The event showcased the challenges and best practice solutions including the enabling role mine action plays to support humanitarian efforts, early recovery, development and peacebuilding in such contexts. This is one example of the various advocacy activities conducted by UNMAS to draw greater attention to the harrowing impact explosive hazards are having in Sudan, and the urgent need to expand support to the mine action sector to respond to the growing needs.



FOR MORE INFORMATION:

VISIT <https://www.unmas.org/en/programmes/sudan>

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