



# UNMAS

# Occupied Palestinian Territory

## March Newsletter: Adapting to Evolving Needs



### In Focus:

With the ceasefire collapse in mid-March, UNMAS presence was critical - and required - for all humanitarian missions to mitigate the explosive ordnance threat. EOD Officers facilitated a range of missions, including rotations to reduce the humanitarian personnel footprint in Gaza, standby support in the north as part of the Mission Support Team, and other lifesaving humanitarian responses.

On 23 March, five ambulances, a fire truck – and a clearly marked UN vehicle which arrived following the initial assault – were all hit by Israeli fire, after which contact was lost with teams.

A complex, week-long recovery mission ensued, for which UNMAS EOD expertise was requested. Two UNMAS Officers guided the vehicles along the safest routes and provided advice about how to navigate any EO threats. When the mass grave in which the bodies had been buried was located, UNMAS Officers were the first to approach the site to ensure that there were no EO items present that could pose a threat. UNMAS Officers found no EO, allowing 15 bodies to be recovered and returned to their families.



UNMAS conducts an EHA of a damaged building housing displaced people, April 2025.



UNMAS conducts an EHA of a shelter displaying EORE posters. North Gaza, March 2025.



Credit: FAO

### EORE:

Integrating risk education into other forms of humanitarian delivery - such as food distributions, provisions of basic needs or shelters - is an effective way of raising awareness of how to respond to explosive threats. UNMAS worked with FAO to deliver, along with provisions of fodder and fertilizer, risk education leaflets and posters to farmers and fishers. These groups are particularly vulnerable to explosive threats as they spend time in open spaces which may be contaminated with EO. They were grateful that FAO could provide them with key information about how to mitigate these risks.

Through collaboration with partners and donors, UNMAS remains committed to safeguarding civilian lives and securing a safer future for communities in OPT. **UNMAS OPT** appeals to donors to continue supporting our work in providing a mine action response in Gaza and the West Bank. Invitations to provide further information about UNMAS requirements are welcome.

Thank you  
for your  
support  
in 2025!



### For more information:

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Programme Mr. Luke Irving  
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Website



YouTube



X (Twitter)



Facebook



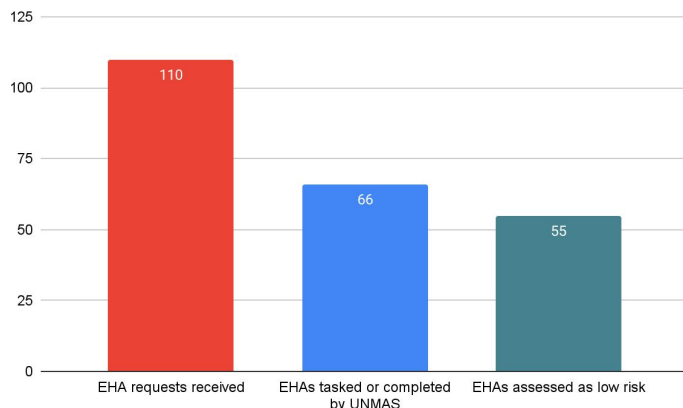
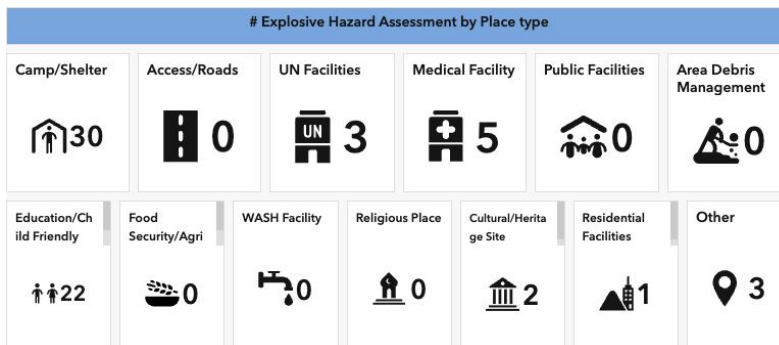
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The ceasefire conditions in early March allowed UNMAS to identify **237,000m<sup>2</sup> of land** as low-risk from explosive ordnance through **66 explosive hazard assessments (EHAs)**, enabling humanitarian activities to take place on this land. Assessments of educational and child friendly facilities benefited **8,500 children**, while assessments of camps impacted almost **40,000 people** throughout Gaza.



During and in the run-up to the ceasefire, UNMAS received hundreds of EHA requests from humanitarian partners hoping to expand their operations in the more conducive security environment. Due to the scale and immediacy of this spike, UNMAS could only respond to approximately 60 percent of requests.

EHAs were halted when hostilities re-escalated in mid-March and EOD teams shifted their focus to interagency mission support. UNMAS supported **35 missions**, including support to lifesaving medical missions and critical operations, and standby emergency support in northern Gaza as part of the Mission Support Team.

### Explosive Ordnance Risk Education

UNMAS trained **132 humanitarians** in risk education delivery, enabling messages to reach more people. Meanwhile, UNMAS implementing partner,

Palestinian Organization for Development, provided awareness sessions to **24,973 civilians** throughout Gaza, sharing lifesaving messaging with people.



# Reported Confirmed EOs

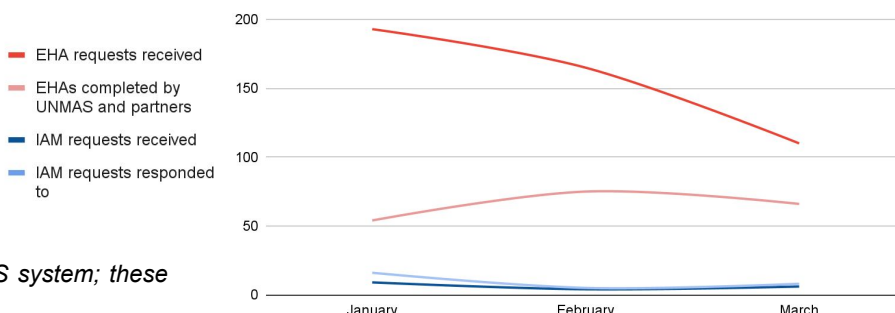
# 2

	Conflict-related casualties reported in March (WHO)	EO victims reported in March*
Killed	2,780	1
Injured	2,011	8
Total	4,791	9

During **one** EHA, teams came across dangerous explosive ordnance. They cordoned the area off and marked it with warning signs to ensure nobody approached. They also provided risk education to communities, disseminating lifesaving information.

### Response in 2025 to date

During the January-March ceasefire, EHA requests surged. However, these were halted with the re-escalation of hostilities in March. The threat caused by this re-escalation meant that UNMAS presence was needed on all interagency missions, shifting the focus of operations.



### Threat since 7 Oct 2023

# Reported Confirmed EOs

# 457

# of EO per Governorates



EO victims reported since Oct 2023\*

Killed	26
Injured	171
Total	197

\*These are only incidents that have been reported into UNMAS system; these figures are likely much higher.