



UNMAS

Occupied Palestinian Territory

December Newsletter: Mitigating explosive risks



In Focus:

On 30 December, UNMAS conducted an explosive hazard assessment (EHA) of a historical building located on hospital grounds in the Old Gaza City. UNESCO had planned to restore the damaged area so that the site could be used as a public space for hospital staff and patients, as well as the neighbouring Christian community. When beginning to move the rubble, an architectural engineer had found what appeared to be explosive ordnance (EO), and halted all works. UNMAS subsequently visited the site and confirmed the presence of EO, and confirmed that there would be a high risk posed should the works continue. While this halted reconstruction efforts at the site until the item can be dealt with safely, the assessment prevented a possibly severe accident causing serious injury or damage.

With the right tools approved for entry to Gaza, or with approval to move the item to a location that would pose less threat, UNMAS could further minimize or eliminate the risk and enable works to continue. While this is not yet possible, risk assessments such as these prevent further deadly harm in the wake of two years of tragic conflict.

Expanding awareness among humanitarian partners

Throughout December, UNMAS continued to accompany interagency missions (IAMs) throughout Gaza, enabling partners to navigate explosive threats to reach conflict-affected people with humanitarian aid. While this remains a key part of the humanitarian mine action response in Gaza, UNMAS teams are also training UN Security Officers in day-long Mission Explosive Risk Awareness sessions, so that they can identify and mitigate the risks of explosive threats while leading missions along routes that UNMAS has previously assessed. In December, UNMAS trained 13 Security Officers, expanding the capacity of total trained Security Officers to 65. One participant noted: "I'm now fully aware of how to enter a location and to be more cautious."



Training and awareness sessions such as these enhance the capability of the humanitarian sector to navigate explosive threats. This makes humanitarian personnel safer, enabling the sector to continue delivering lifesaving services in support of humanitarian and early recovery efforts in Gaza.

Important Sectoral Update: On 31 December, 37 INGOs – including a number of HMA organizations – were given 60 days to cease operations in the OPT as a result of a new INGO registration process. This will significantly limit the HMA capacity in the OPT. The UN urges Member States to press authorities to lift all impediments that continue to undermine humanitarian operations in the OPT. Read the full statement [here](#).



**2026 Flash Appeal:
Mine Action Needs**

**\$110 million
for Gaza**

UNMAS extends its sincere appreciation to the donors who supported the programme in 2025. Looking to 2026, UNMAS invites partners to read the [2026 Flash Appeal](#).

Thank you
for your
support
in 2025!



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[Website](#)



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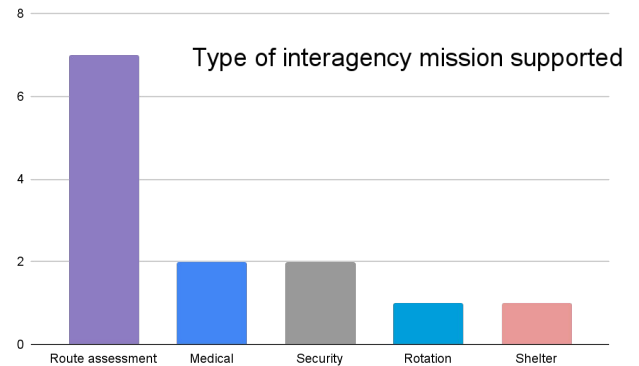
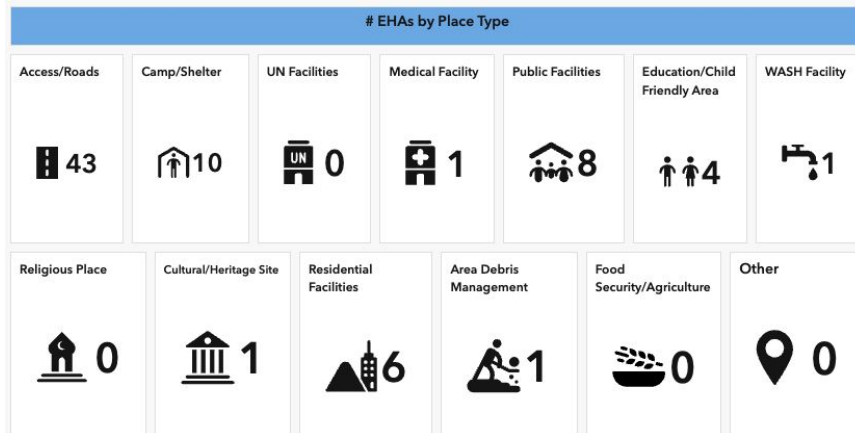
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UNMAS conducted **75 explosive hazard assessments (EHAs)** and supported **44 IAMs**, including 31 days spent as part of the UN Emergency Response Team. More than half of tasks were in support of debris management efforts, including assessments to enable opening of access along key routes through clearing away the debris. UNMAS also responded to urgent requests for support when individuals identified suspected EO. On 1 December, returnees residing in northern Gaza encountered two suspicious items inside their makeshift shelters. UNMAS deployed an EOD Officer who confirmed that the items were dangerous, cordoned off the items and delivered a risk awareness briefing to the residents. Since the ceasefire, requests such as these have become more frequent as people are having to live alongside deadly EO threats. Risk mitigation measures are critical to lower the EO threat in this high-risk period.



Explosive Ordnance Risk Education

UNMAS implementing partner delivered EORE to **52,161 conflict-affected people**, enhancing the safety of Palestinians in Gaza.

Total Beneficiaries
52,161

Number of Sessions
1,904

Direct beneficiaries of EHAs

586,000

	Conflict-related casualties reported in December (WHO)	EO victims reported in December*
Killed	1,159	0
Injured	247	4
Total	1,406	4

UNMAS identified **21 EO items at nine sites** in Gaza. Although unable to move or dispose of the EO, where conditions permit, UNMAS marked and cordoned the items off to mitigate the risk to community members and allow continued access.

Meanwhile, UNMAS delivered EO risk awareness sessions to **285 humanitarian personnel** from over five different organizations in Gaza. This allows humanitarian partners to continue lifesaving delivery in a safe manner.

Response in 2025 to date

While UNMAS continued to face cancellations (20) and denials (10), the increased EOD capacity since 10 October has enabled the sector to continue responding to historic requests for support that were unable to be completed previously due to security, access and capacity challenges prior to the ceasefire.

Threat since 7 Oct 2023

EO identified

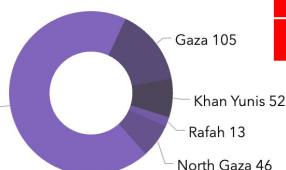
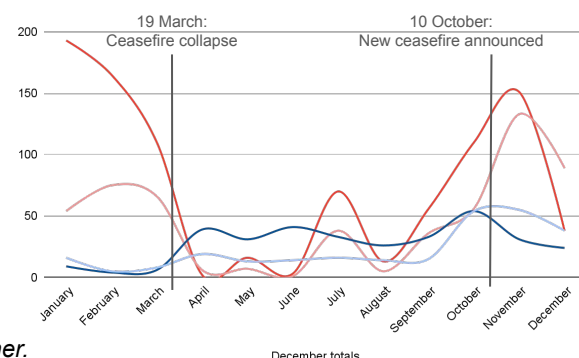
688

of EO per Governorates

EO victims reported since Oct 2023*

Killed	72
Injured	396
Total	468

- EHA requests received
- EHA requests completed by UNMAS and partners
- IAM requests received
- IAMs completed



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