



United Nations Mine Action Service ([UNMAS](#)) in Colombia newsletter informs about the main technical assistance activities carried out through the projects implemented in the country to strengthen the mine action sector, in conjunction with the [Office of the High Commissioner for Peace \(OACP, in Spanish\)](#) - **Descontamina Colombia**.

The impact of anti-personnel mines in Colombia

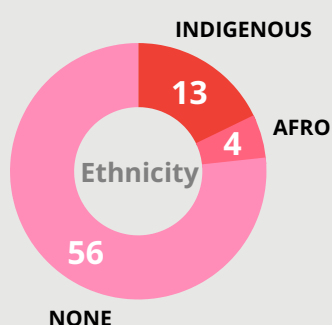
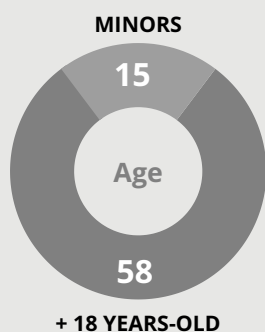
Colombia registered 73 new victims of anti-personnel mines during the first half of 2021, according to statistics of the Office of the High Commissioner for Peace (OACP, in Spanish), a slightly lower figure compared to the same period in 2020, during which the OACP registered 78 new victims. During this period, the month in which the most victims were recorded was in February, with 26 casualties.



DEPARTMENTS WITH THE MOST REGISTERED VICTIMS

1. NORTE DE SANTANDER: 17
2. NARIÑO: 13
3. ANTIOQUIA: 11
4. VALLE DEL CAUCA: 8
5. CAUCA: 7

Once again, it is observed with concern that **64% of the new victims of anti-personnel mines recorded are civilians (45)**, which highlights the indiscriminate nature of these internationally prohibited weapons and the flagrant violation of the principles of distinction and precaution on the part of those who install these artifacts. **Of the 45 civilian victims, 17 (38%) were members of indigenous groups or Afro-descendant communities**, which highlights the disproportionate impact that anti-personnel mines have on ethnic minorities, which in turn are the most vulnerable populations in Colombia.



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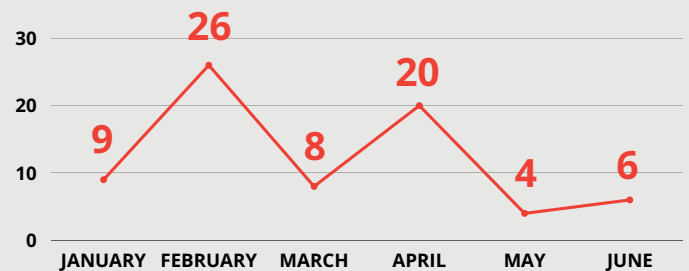


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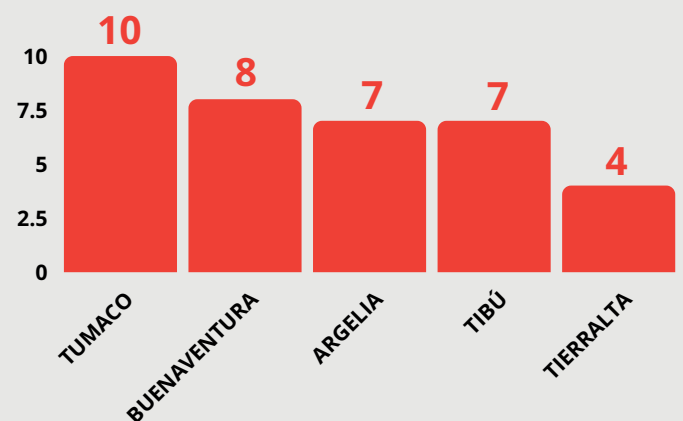


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REGISTERED VICTIMS PER MONTH



MUNICIPALITIES WITH MORE REGISTERED VICTIMS



As of June 30, 2021, the Colombian authorities have registered a total of 12,062 victims of anti-personnel mines and Unexploded Ordnance (UXO) since 1990, the year in which the official registration began. To learn more about the impact of anti-personnel mines in Colombia, [UNMAS share the following viewer with the figures and historical statistics of the national government](#).

The work of UNMAS in Colombia



With this training, UNMAS promotes the implementation of best practices in the sector, to maximize the positive impact on communities affected by explosive ordnance.

UNMAS and FSD provides actualization courses about demining to mine action organizations in Colombia

At the request of the OACP, between July 12 and 23, UNMAS and the Swiss Foundation for Demining (FSD) provided seven training sessions on Non-Technical Survey (NTS) and Technical Survey (TS) to mine action organizations that operate in Colombia. These sessions were held within the framework of the recent update of the National Mine Action Standards (NMAS) and **their objective was to improve the knowledge of the personnel to strengthen the efficiency in land release**. An average of 75 representatives from the Army's Humanitarian Demining Brigade, the Marine Corps Explosives Group, civil humanitarian demining organizations, the Ministry of Defense and the OACP participated in each virtual session. **These trainings were supported by Germany.**



UNMAS developed the necessary pedagogical material for HUMANICEMOS DH staff to provide these courses. Photo: HUMANICEMOS DH

HUMANICEMOS DH concludes the first training in humanitarian demining given by ex-combatants

On July 8 and 9, 12 ex-combatants in the process of reintegration passed the evaluations that will allow them to carry out Manual Clearance tasks, one of the components of humanitarian demining. This course, which lasted for three weeks, is a new milestone reached by HUMANICEMOS DH, since **it is the first time that ex-combatants give training to other ex-combatants in process of reintegration without the support of instructors from UNMAS**. The evaluations were carried out by the External Monitoring Component (CEM) of UNMAS with the support of the OACP, the entity that will issue the official accreditation so that these 12 people can carry out these tasks. HUMANICEMOS DH is a mine action organization that emerged after the 2016 Peace Agreement, which has the financial support of the European Trust Fund for Peace and technical assistance from UNMAS.



UNIÓN EUROPEA



Photo: courtesy Humanity & Inclusion and UNICEF / Archive. Image used for Explosive Ordnance Risk Education.

UNMAS invites a virtual event: "Mine action as a response for the protection of the rights of children and adolescents"

Analyze the psychosocial consequences of anti-personnel mines and explosive ordnance in children and adolescents, as well as some remarkable experiences in psychosocial support for this population, will be some of the topics that academics, children protection actors and the mine action sector will discuss in **a virtual event that will take place on Thursday, August 19 at 10:00 am**. This event is organized by the Mine Action Area of Responsibility (MA AoR), in alliance with the Child Protection AoR, the Catholic University of Colombia and the Colombian Association of Psychology Faculties (ASCOFAPSI, by its spanish acronym). Representatives of OACP, UNMAS, UNICEF, Corporación Infancia y Desarrollo, and other key stakeholders will participate.

The UNMAS Colombia team



Pablo is a civil engineer with a master's degree in project management, with 20 years of professional experience. In 2006 he joined the mine action sector in Colombia as a UNICEF consultant. **In 2007 he led the creation of the Mine Action Presidential Program (PAICMA, in Spanish) and the first units that today make up the national capacity to carry out humanitarian demining. He was in charge of the creation of the National Mine Action Standards with which the first non-governmental organizations were accredited.** Pablo represented Colombia as a technical expert before the Ottawa Convention, the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons and the Convention on Cluster Munitions; and he was a member of the IMAS Review Board for four years.

Pablo, who has received training and has worked in countries such as Norway, USA, Jordan, Kenya, Cambodia, Afghanistan and South Sudan, **joined UNMAS Colombia in 2014**, where he has had a leadership role in the implementation of the pilot demining projects between the government of Colombia and FARC-EP guerrilla in the framework of the peace negotiations, and later in the formulation and design of HUMANICEMOS DH, a mine action organization composed and led by ex-combatants in the process of reintegration as a result of the Peace Agreement of 2016. Pablo has been in charge of the UNMAS Programme in Colombia since 01 July, making it the first UNMAS programme that is completely led by national personnel.

About UNMAS Colombia

Since 2010, UNMAS has supported the National Mine Action Center of Colombia, under the direction of the OACP, humanitarian demining, victim assistance and explosive ordnance risk education organizations, to increase the capacity of the mine action sector and strengthen its coordination and regulatory frameworks, considering best global practices. UNMAS works in Colombia with the support of the **European Union**, through the **European Trust Fund for Peace**; and the Governments of **Germany, Italy and Republic of Korea**, whom we thank for their contributions in 2021.

