

IRAQ PROGRAMME REPORT 2018



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Message from the Senior Programme Manager

Upon request from the Government of Iraq and the United Nations, the United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS) was formally established in June 2015 to lead the efforts, in close collaboration with the Iraqi government, to mitigate explosive hazards in country. Our mission is to facilitate the safe, dignified, and voluntary return of internally displaced persons to their homes. UNMAS achieves this mandate through three different response modalities:

- » First, we provide explosive hazard management in support of humanitarian and stabilization efforts.
- » Second, we deliver risk education at the community, national and regional level to protect the local population from the dangers posed by improvised explosive devices (IEDs) and explosive remnants of war (ERWs).
- » Third, we enhance Government entities’ capacity to manage, regulate and coordinate an explosive hazard management response through training and the provision of advanced technologies. This ensures that we integrate high-risk, humanitarian clearance methods inside governmental response structures, minimizing risk of injury for clearance personnel.

In Mosul alone, we have completed a total of 1,047 tasks. Throughout those tasks, we have found and removed more than 17,000 ERWs, 85 IEDs, 1,035 suicide belts, and 575 main charges. Just in the past six months, we have provided risk education to more than 53,000 beneficiaries. In doing all of this, we include a gender perspective and take the needs of women, girls, boys and men into consideration, a priority for us within our internal organizational processes and our external activities.

We are just getting started, scratching the surface of what needs to be done and a lot of work remains. There is still extensive explosive hazard contamination in liberated areas.

Everything we do at UNMAS, we do in support of the Government of Iraq and with the Iraqi women and men in mind and also the safety of future generations. They are our motivation, and the reason why we are here. They deserve homes that are safe from explosive hazards to return to. They deserve safe streets, safe schools, safe places of worship and safe public infrastructure before they can begin rebuilding their lives.

I am thus pleased to share with you the following report for 2018, highlighting UNMAS key activities and achievements in the country. I would also like to thank all our donors who contributed this year, of which without their generous contribution, the work of UNMAS Iraq would not have been possible.





Here, more than a year after the formal end of fighting that drove out the Islamic State's fighters, the path to recovery runs literally through a three-dimensional minefield with the dangers of war still present everywhere. IEDs are everywhere — lethal needles placed in haystacks of uncleared rubble, some triggered by infrared sensors, some by tripwires.

The work takes a practiced eye and a delicate touch. Tools range from hook-and-line kits used to disarm IEDs to armored heavy equipment that can help dispose of 500-pound bombs buried under several feet of debris. Both tasks take time, lots of it. At the present pace, clearing just Mosul is expected to take teams like ours at least 10 more years.

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BACKGROUND: UNMAS IN IRAQ

The United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS) in Iraq leads the United Nations (UN) efforts in collaboration with the Government of Iraq to mitigate explosive threats and to support capacity enhancement of national and regional mine action authorities.

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Liberated, but not safe.

In Iraq today, an area the size of New York State liberated from the Islamic State of Iraq and Levant (ISIL) in December 2017 remains contaminated by explosive hazards, including landmines, explosive remnants of war (ERW) and improvised explosive devices (IEDs), from conflicts, both past and recent.



Life at a standstill.

These hazards contaminate urban and rural environments, water treatment plants and village wells, factories and farmers' fields, schools and hospitals, roads and bridges. Until cleared of the suspicion of hazards, the areas must be presumed 'unsafe'.



Value statement.

Clearance can be measured as a socio-economic outcome: the 6,500 mostly women workers formerly employed by a textile factory in West Mosul remain without wages until the factory is first cleared, then rehabilitated.



Lethal needles.

The most serious of threats and most time-consuming to remove are home-made, victim-operated, IEDs, lethal "needles" cleverly hidden by ISIL in demolished buildings like so many urban "haystacks" ready to inflict harm.



Grisly truth.

IEDs triggered by infrared sensors have been found under garments hanging from pegs, in air conditioning units, refrigerators. They lie concealed in debris, often attached to the deceased, unwilling human shields used by ISIL in their retreat. Victims have been found by the thousands.



Clearance first.

ISIL remains an active threat both to communities and to those doing de-mining work. Clearance delays work for ISIL as a way to provoke public dissatisfaction, erode public confidence "on the cheap": remaining IEDs stall reconstruction of infrastructure and the restoration of public services.



The importance of two.

In 2018, UNMAS clearance teams removed 18,050 threats from hospitals, schools, public service facilities, etc. across West Mosul, but thousands more remain. "The few" can count for more than "the many". In Fallujah, a month after UNMAS divers safely removed and disposed of two submerged IEDs from the Iron Bridge: now open for public use, what had been a two-hour detour to reach the region's only maternity hospital is, once again, a five-minute trip.



The wait.

Meanwhile, at the end of 2018, 1.8 million internally displaced persons living in camps still wait for a safe, dignified return home to cities like West Mosul, reduced to rubble by the fighting. Risk education programs aim to protect residents and returnees alike, ensuring that everyone regardless of gender or age is aware of the "new type" of explosives relating to IEDs: in pots and pans, in grazing fields, and attached to toys.



Safe home.

According to some estimates and based on work done to date, it may take a decade or more to clear West Mosul of explosive hazards and the rest of the liberated areas have yet to be surveyed and a time estimate established. In the meantime, clearance-and-rehabilitation work proceeds, building by building, street-by-street, field-by-field. The people of Iraq, like people everywhere, deserve a safe home.

STRATEGIC PILLARS

The UNMAS Iraq programme focuses on enabling humanitarian and stabilization interventions to support the safe and dignified return of internally displaced persons (IDPs) to areas previously under ISIL control. This specifically includes the following priority areas.

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Priority Areas of Intervention

- 1

Provide **explosive hazard management** response in support of humanitarian and stabilization efforts
- 2

Deliver **risk education** at the community, regional, and national levels
- 3

Enhance Government entities' **capacity** to manage, regulate and coordinate an explosive hazard management response.

Due to the nature of threats posed by explosive hazards, UNMAS teams are among the first responders allowing the humanitarian community and local authorities to intervene quickly and efficiently to help civilians.

The efficacy of UNMAS work in Iraq cannot be understated. The unprecedented nature of explosive hazard contamination, the sheer magnitude of dispersion, in addition to the unorthodox and innovative ways in which they were planted means that all who are in the near vicinity are at grave risk. While the precise number of lives saved due to UNMAS work cannot be measured, sporadic accidents of IEDs, including a prominent case where one child was killed and two injured in 2018, has shed light on the urgent and crucial work that UNMAS, complemented by other mine action organizations and the Government of Iraq, continue to conduct on a daily basis.

As vital as UNMAS work to create a habitable and safe environment for IDPs to return to, is UNMAS efforts in ensuring that individuals and families who have already returned to their communities prior to them being rendered completely safe, are aware and cautious of contaminated sites, suspicious objects, and ways of contacting the government so that such locations can be surveyed and cleared.

The activities undertaken by UNMAS in Iraq in 2018 under the aforementioned three strategic pillars are outlined in this report. In 2018, the UNMAS Iraq programme began to gender mainstream both its own and its implementing partners' operations. It is the first UNMAS programme to have embraced such an approach in mine action. The overall mission for UNMAS Iraq programme is to support the Iraqi government to ensure that those displaced from their homes can confidently return to safe communities free from explosive hazards.

So long as explosive hazards contaminate areas liberated from ISIL, their legacy will continue to plague Iraq and threaten stabilization and rehabilitation efforts.

FIGURE 1. PILLAR SUPPORT BY DONOR

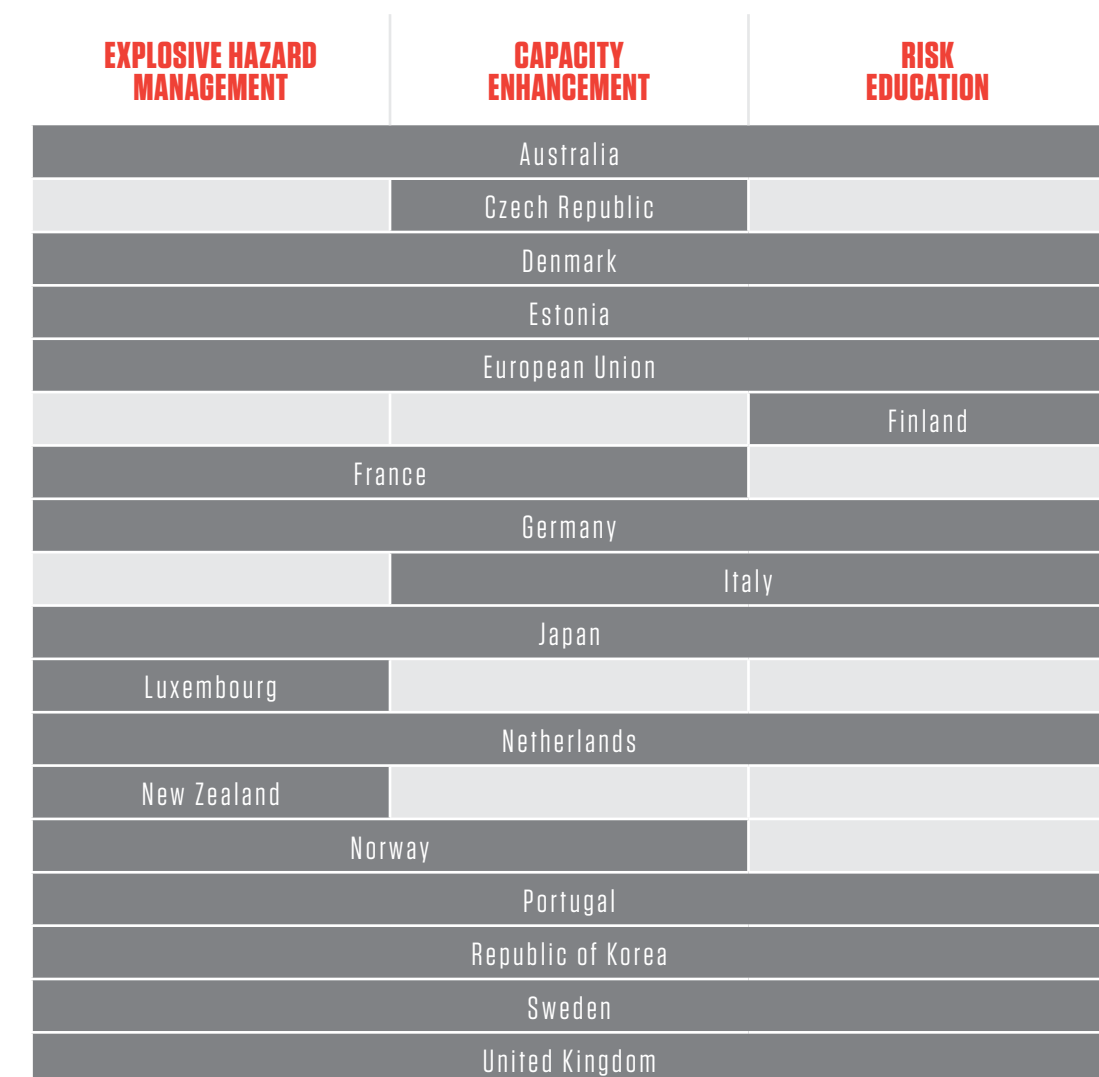
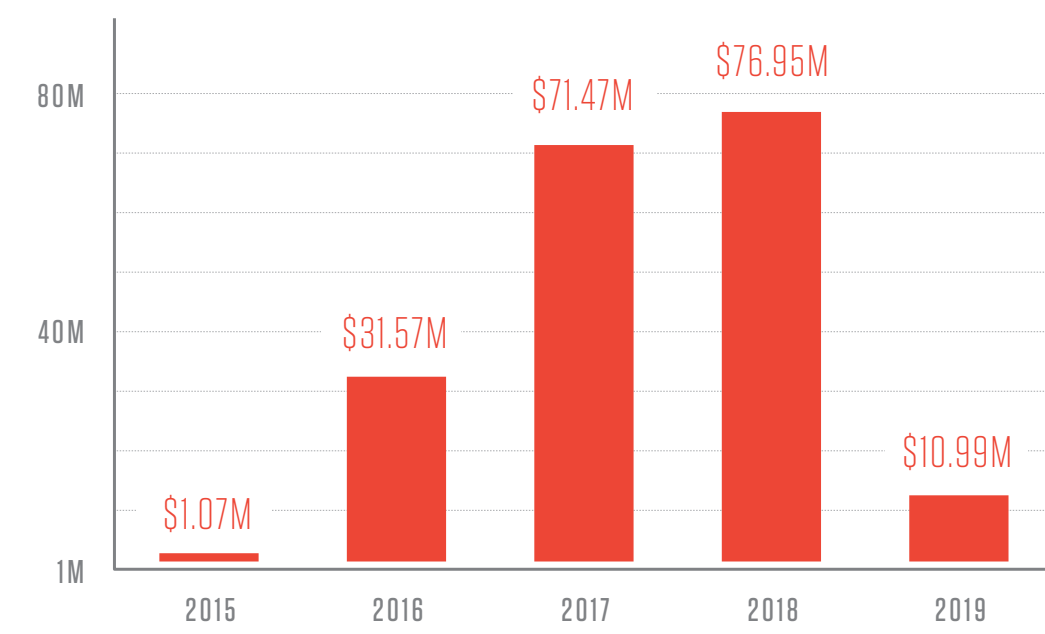


FIGURE 2. FUNDS SECURED PER YEAR SINCE INCEPTION





EXPLOSIVE HAZARD MANAGEMENT (EHM)

To support humanitarian and stabilization efforts in areas liberated from ISIL, EHM utilizes a blended approach to respond to extensive explosive hazard contamination. This includes commissioning national and international companies and NGOs alike to survey and clear afflicted areas, in support of and complementing stabilization and humanitarian efforts undertaken by the Government of Iraq and the UN.

Once requested from the UN and Government of Iraq, UNMAS deploys assessment teams, followed by specialized teams to conduct: survey (both technical and non-technical), high-risk search, battle area clearance, mechanical assets, and/or debris management in the suspected area.

In Iraq, UNMAS operational teams deployed to undertake surveys in liberated areas of Anbar, Kirkuk, Ninewa, and Salah al-Din governorates. UNMAS also worked through its partners, which include the Danish Demining Group (DDG) and the Iraqi Health and Social Care Organization (IHSCO), to extend its reach and maximize its outreach in liberated areas.

To support gender mainstreaming into EHM in Iraq, UNMAS provided all implementing partners with a training toolkit on gender and diversity in mine action and with the “UN Gender Guidelines on Mine Action Programs” in English and Arabic (translated by UNMAS in Iraq programme) in order to train their local staff. UNMAS also provided technical assistance to its implementing partners on challenges related to gender in field operations through extensive engagement with partners.

To strengthen the gender mainstreaming approach, the UNMAS Senior Gender Expert revised five UNMAS procurement documents requiring a stronger gender focus for its implementing partners.

The UNMAS Senior Gender Expert also trained UNMAS staff (59 persons) on gender and diversity in mine action, providing practical examples of gender-related issues in different aspects of UNMAS work, for example, procurement, recruitment and the three strategic pillars.

In 2018, a total of 350 surveys of explosive hazards were conducted in the Anbar, Kirkuk, Ninewa, and Salah al-Din governorates, in direct support of high-priority stabilization and humanitarian interventions. In addition, 1,200 clearance tasks were conducted by UNMAS clearance teams to enable the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Government of Iraq to move forward with the rehabilitation of critical infrastructure such as hospitals, schools, and bridges, and for humanitarian actors to proceed with urgent, life-saving efforts. As a result, approximately 14,500 ERWs and 1,500 IEDs, including 1,000 suicide belts, were collected and rendered safe in the areas of UNMAS operations in Anbar, Kirkuk, Mosul, and Tal Afar.



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Socio-Economic Study

The knowledge of the impact of explosive hazard contamination on Iraqi communities is critical for UNMAS to confirm that the task prioritization of its clearance assets in the ISIL-liberated areas is relevant. Therefore, through a non-technical survey grant, UNMAS Iraq requested its implementing partner to deploy teams in the five liberated areas and collect the necessary information. The information gathered during the survey operations improves the current understanding of explosive hazard contamination and allows for the improvement of the prioritization system.



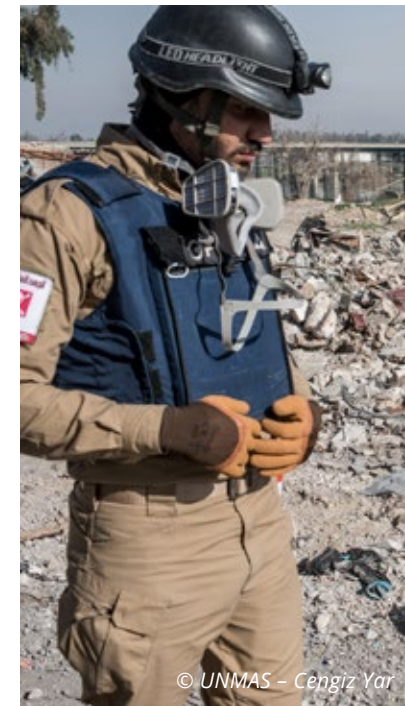
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Development of Clearance Procedures

The context of mine action operations in the ISIL-liberated areas in Iraq differs from the traditional mine action programme common in other parts of the world. It necessitated UNMAS in Iraq and its partners to develop innovative clearance procedures to intervene for complex and extensive explosive hazard contamination that is often mixed in with debris. UNMAS was able to successfully develop the Standard Working Procedures (SWP), in addition to the existing National Mine Action Standards (NMAS).

Residential Area Clearance

The capacity of UNMAS Iraq to conduct clearance of residential areas is a key achievement in 2018. This activity was restricted due to legal constraints which were lifted in the same year following an initiative from the UNMAS Iraq programme. Survey and clearance operations were then conducted in residential areas of Mosul in support of a UNDP rehabilitation pilot study. For the study, a sample of houses with less than 60 percent damage and which contained people living in them were selected to participate. Based on the results of the study, the UNMAS Iraq EHM project successfully developed comprehensive guidelines that include waiver and handover procedures, in coordination and cooperation with UNDP.



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Assessment Missions Supporting UN Agencies

UNMAS remained engaged in 2018 to support UN agencies in line with its mandate. A total of 25 joint assessment missions were coordinated and completed in 2018 by UNMAS, enabling the UN and humanitarian partners to deliver humanitarian aid as soon as liberated areas became accessible.

Cooperation with the Directorate of Mine Action (DMA)

UNMAS in Iraq was and continues to be committed to supporting and cooperating with the national mine action authority, DMA. External quality assurance visits were jointly conducted during 2018. The UNMAS Senior Gender Expert provided technical assistance and training materials (in English and Arabic) to the DMA Gender Unit on how to mainstream gender into mine action operations and programs. UNMAS also provided suggestions on how to make Information Management System for Mine Action (IMSMA) forms and DMA standard operating procedures more gender-sensitive.



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Looking Forward

In 2019, UNMAS Iraq is set to commence clearance operations in Kirkuk, Sinjar, and Tikreet.

Survey and clearance tasks conducted in 2018 included:



UNMAS commenced work in the Al Maedan district in January 2018. The Old City of Mosul, in particular the Al Maedan neighborhood, epitomizes the threats posed by explosive hazards with a mix of destruction, rubble, and debris that has defined the area since its liberation from ISIL. The Al Maedan neighborhood is the most damaged part of Mosul's Old City, with a history of human inhabitation of more than two millennia. In the Al Maedan neighborhood alone, UNMAS Iraq's high-risk search and clearance teams, working under extremely challenging conditions, have removed more than 4,241 explosive haz-

ards and 586 suicide belts to date, including many from human remains.

In the Old City, UNMAS has removed more than 33,326 explosive hazards to date. Approximately 33,047 ERWs, 279 viable IEDs, 784 suicide belts and 21,745 small arms ammunition have been removed so far. The UMMAS teams are still finding explosive hazards and suicide belts until today.

While the number of explosive hazards found on surfaces is now reducing, it is estimated that one third of all explosive hazards are underneath the debris.



Founded in 1967, the University of Mosul is a major complex located in East Mosul that had sustained severe damage and total destruction to many of its faculty buildings. Before the ISIL occupation in July 2014, the University hosted close to 30,000 students and comprised 23 colleges, 6 centres, 6 consultancy offices, 5 medical centers, 6 museums, 4,281 teaching staff, 196 degree professors, 1,014 associate professors and 1,261 assistant lecturers.

Various workshops/laboratories were used by ISIL to manufacture IEDs, ammunition, and toxic chemicals. Clearance by UNMAS teams commenced in May 2018 and was running in

tandem with UNDP debris removal, repair and rehabilitation operations. Clearance teams on site were able to reactively respond to all suspected explosive hazards found during UNDP operations, as well as proactively address the residual explosive hazard threats through clearance operations.

A total of 43 explosive hazards were safely removed, along with 130 kg of explosive hazards-related scrap material.

There are currently 37,000 new intake and previously displaced students attending the university, approximately 7,000 students over ideal capacity. Attendance is expected to increase over time as more families return to the area.



The capacity of UNMAS in Iraq to adapt to new environments in a non-traditional mine action context is epitomized in the clearance of the Fallujah Iron Bridge.

The surface and landings of the Iron Bridge were initially cleared by UNMAS teams in August 2016. This bridge not only connects the busy market zone to the other side of the river, but eases traffic pressure on the New Bridge.

In preparation for lifting out parts of the collapsed section by UNDP, during the underwater survey, a diver found what was described as two devices with similarities to IEDs that had been found previously in the Fallujah area. This halted the rehabilitation works at the site.

The support of UNMAS was then requested on an emergency basis by UNDP, for the deployment of clearance teams to render the bridge safe.

UNMAS successfully mobilized underwater clearance experts in less than one month, from 8 to 24 April 2018, which in itself represents a remarkable achievement. The deployed underwater clearance team found and removed two IEDs and was complemented by UNMAS implementing partner, DDG, providing risk education in parallel to all the construction workers.

The clearance operation was a very complex and physically challenging task due to the lack of visibility and powerful currents of the Euphrates River, at times reaching up to four meters per second.

Following the underwater clearance of the diving team, the reconstruction process was able to resume over the subsequent weeks. The Iron Bridge in Fallujah was reopened for traffic in August 2018, allowing the population to reach the maternity hospital within five minutes rather than the two hours it took prior to clearance, facilitating access to thousands of people to the other river bank.

The successful completion of hundreds of survey and clearance tasks in very complex environments that allowed for the rehabilitation of dozens of key infrastructures and supported the return of displaced people without accident in 2018 represents a major achievement for UNMAS in Iraq and its implementing partners.

Statistics:

From 1 January to 31 December 2018, about **350 surveys** of explosive hazards were conducted in Al-Anbar, Salah al-Din and Ninewa Governorates in support of high priority stabilization and humanitarian interventions.

-  Removed approximately **14,500 ERW** and **1,500 IED** including **1,000 suicide belts** in liberated areas.
-  Conducted about **1,200 clearance tasks** enabling UNDP and the Government of Iraq to move forward with the rehabilitation of critical infrastructures.
-  Coordinated and completed **18 joint assessment missions** enabling the UN and humanitarian partners to deliver humanitarian aid.

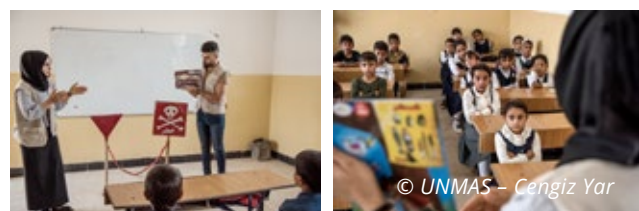
RISK EDUCATION (RE)

Throughout 2018, UNMAS Iraq continued to coordinate delivery of RE through its partners in areas with the highest risk of explosive hazards to IDPs, returnees and other at-risk communities in the Anbar, Diyala, Kirkuk, Ninewa, and Salah al-Din governorates.

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UNMAS issued grant agreements to DDG, IHSCO, AI Bustan, and Humanity and Inclusion (HI) to maximize its reach. RE activities were conducted in close collaboration with the relevant mine action authorities and humanitarian and stabilization actors, to ensure that the most at-risk, displaced, and returning populations received life-saving messages on pertinent action points should they encounter explosive hazards.

In collaboration with DMA, UNMAS designed billboards and installed them along main roads where high traffic movement is expected, especially among IDPs and returnees. Billboards were installed in the Anbar, Baghdad, Diyala, Kirkuk, Ninewa, and Salah al-Din governorates. The billboard designs were shared with other mine action operators to use as well.



IHSCO RE teams in Anbar deliver a RE session for school children.



G4S delivers a RE session for children in Mosul.
DDG delivers a RE session for children at Al Salamiyah Camp.



A billboard installed at Kirkuk City Centre.
A billboard installed in Mosul Centre.

UNMAS also developed a RE book for young children in 2018. The book recounts the tale of four friends who want to play during their summer vacation. However, they need to find a safe area to play due to the explosive hazard contamination in their area. The book is targeted for use in the informal and formal education sector, and can be used by mine action operators as well as other relevant humanitarian actors with appropriate training.

UNMAS developed three video clips in 2018, targeting adults, youth and young children. These clips were posted on social media, including governmental sites such as “For a New Iraq”. The clips are also displayed on television screens, along with clips developed in 2017, in high-traffic areas in IDP camps.

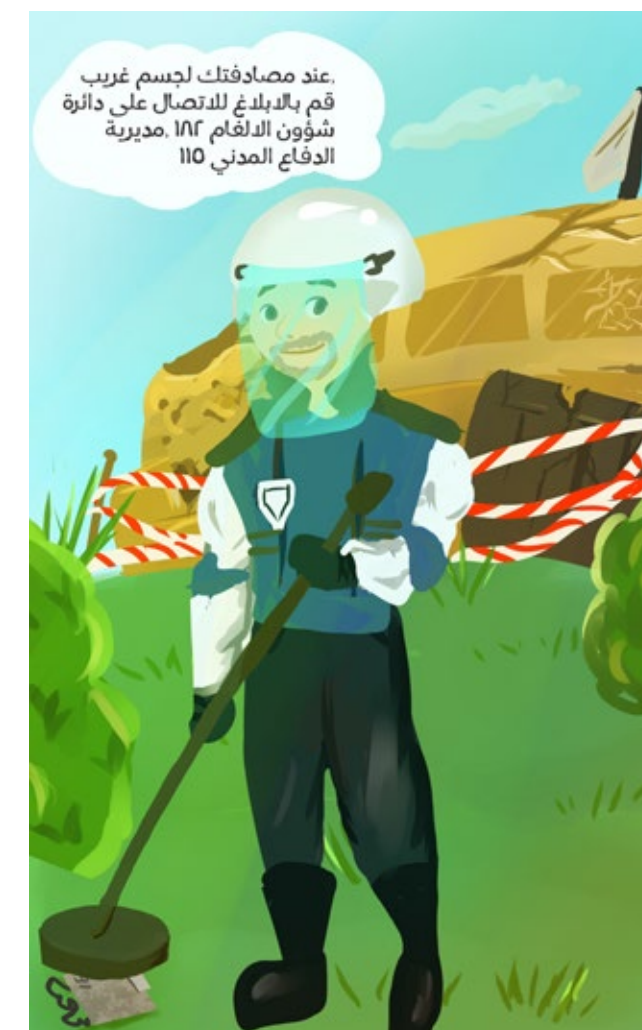


In coordination with DMA, UNMAS has designed school murals broadcasting RE safety messages. The designs will be used as part of a project that was developed by UNDP to rehabilitate schools. The murals will also be shared with all interested actors and where relevant.

All RE materials produced have been reviewed and adapted from a gender perspective.

In collaboration with the radio station Radio One FM in Mosul, UNMAS communicated RE radio messages and conducted interviews with RE actors active in Mosul. The radio

station reaches the entire city, where high rates of IDP returns have and continue to take place. The radio station is the first station established in Mosul following the defeat of ISIL, who forbade radio with the exception of channels used for propaganda purposes under their control.



School murals for primary and secondary schools.



RE interviews on Radio One FM in Mosul with UNMAS implementing partners Optima and IHSCO. Combined together, the interviews garnered over 1000 views on Facebook.

Since May 2018, the UNMAS Iraq programme has been offering Explosive Hazard Awareness Sessions for humanitarian actors. The purpose of these sessions is to provide the humanitarian community with basic knowledge to mitigate explosive hazard threats when operating in areas contaminated by explosive hazards. To support the awareness trainings, UNMAS used virtual reality (VR) goggles to allow participants to experience a film showing threats and safe behaviors in an interactive manner. The feedback for such sessions has been overwhelmingly positive.



Participants pose for a picture with their VR Goggles after attending an explosive hazard awareness training run by UNMAS.

Gender Mainstreaming

UNMAS engaged with all implementing partners to discuss their gender mainstreaming approaches. In addition, UNMAS provided a gender diversity training toolkit in English and Arabic to the RE implementing partners to train their staff on gender and diversity in mine action, and to discuss with them any challenges that may arise during field activities, along with proposing solutions to overcome them.

Support to National Authorities

In 2018, the UNMAS Iraq programme supported both DMA and the Iraqi Kurdistan Mine Action Agency (IKMAA) with specific provisions to their respective RE departments. DMA benefited from a workshop exploring linkages between RE and victim assistance; IKMAA benefited from a training on quality assurance, monitoring and evaluation of RE activities. Both of the trainings included gender-related aspects.



Group picture at the certification ceremony of IKMAA participants.

Support through Implementing Partners

In Iraq, UNMAS implementing partners continue to support those most at risk of encountering explosive hazards, including IDPs and returnees with direct RE sessions and mass media initiatives. In addition, they support humanitarian workers including Cash-for-Work workers, mostly contractors of humanitarian and stabilization actors who are contributing to the cleanup and remediation of the city and critical infrastructure. UNMAS is also joining initiatives promoting peace. Most recently, UNMAS in Iraq participated in a peace concert by providing concert attendees RE messages.

Through direct feedback and personal anecdotes, UNMAS Iraq's implementing partners continue to document stories demonstrating behavior change in individuals after participating in risk education sessions.

Statistics:

From 1 January 2018 to 31 December 2018



422,300 people received risk education and risk awareness training in schools, IDP camps, and other high priority areas



CAPACITY ENHANCEMENT (CE)

In 2018, UNMAS increased its work with Iraqi government authorities to enhance mine action capacity within the country.

The main activities with the Iraqi government have been training, technical support, and assistance on: quality assurance, resource mobilization, and facilitating explosive management operation trainings. All trainings and workshops underwent enhanced incorporation of gender aspects in mine action. UNMAS has worked in close conjunction with the Government of Iraq counterparts involved in supporting mine action to enhance their capacity in EHM operations and response.



Support to Mine Action Authorities

UNMAS works with two governmental authorities responsible for mine action in Iraq: DMA and IKMAA. Divided by geographical locations, DMA's jurisdiction lies within federal Iraq while IKMAA is in charge of mine action in the Kurdistan Region.

UNMAS Mine Action Technical Advisors have co-chaired the Coordination Mechanism for Mine Action in Iraq (CMMAI) and Technical Working Group (TWG) meetings, ensuring an efficient and open forum for mine action matters. The CMMAI and TWG have been held nine times throughout 2018. UNMAS support to these meetings has ensured cross-ministerial information sharing and enhanced cooperation. The meetings aim at facilitating the technical and strategic coordination of mine action activities among all mine action partners (NGOs, commercial companies, NATO, the Coalition). In 2018, UNMAS in Iraq has employed significant effort in liaising with DMA to ensure operational efficiency of civilian mine action organizations, especially in regards to the national accreditation process. In addition, UNMAS has supported DMA in developing national IED Defeat (IEDD) standards.

IKMAA Liaison Officers have been actively assisting UNMAS to better understand the needs and priorities of IKMAA and have coordinated with IKMAA to facilitate UNMAS staff movement in the liberated areas. The IKMAA Liaison Officers have also been involved in the setup of training courses for IKMAA staff, including coordinating, participating in meetings and following up on the details of the training courses and also arranging the agenda of the training courses for IKMAA staff, in coordination with IKMAA.

Since mid-November 2018, UNMAS have embedded a Mine Action Liaison Officer at DMA, who has the same function as the IKMAA Liaison Officers. The Mine Action Liaison Officer has established good relationships with DMA that will be leveraged in order to better assist, support and complement the work at DMA.

Throughout 2018, UNMAS has provided several trainings

to IKMAA. IKMAA is responsible for EHM in the three northern governorates under the semi-autonomous Kurdish Regional Government (KRG). In the beginning of 2018, UNMAS delivered a number of training opportunities covering operational management. The trainings targeted three primary topics: Operations, Quality Management and Information Management. They also included strategizing the planning and implementation stages to yield most efficient operations possible. The end of the year was focused on Quality Assurance/Quality Control in RE (which included a check-list for gender-related aspects in RE), and a resource

mobilization workshop that aimed to set the stage to start the drafting of an IKMAA Resource Mobilization Strategy.

Support to Ministry of Interior

UNMAS has, in close cooperation with the Ministry of Interior (MoI), developed and delivered course curricula for Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) training, IEDD training and Explosive Hazard First Responder (EHFR) training.



EHFR and EHFR Training of the Trainer (T3)

The UNMAS Iraq programme has delivered EHFR training in Kirkuk and Habannayah. The training is designed to prepare and drill police officers to identify, mark and report when they encounter different explosives hazards. The training has included confirmation, cordon and clearing of the area, command, control and adequate reporting. Ten one-week long training sessions were delivered, resulting in 261 EHFR trained police officers in Habannayah, and four one-week long training sessions resulted in 106 EHFR trained police officers in Kirkuk. The EHFR training was followed by a T3 course, with the purpose to ensure a longer sustainable capacity to respond to explosive hazards within the Iraqi police force. Two week-long T3 training sessions resulted in 16 EHFR/T3 police officers in Kirkuk, and one course in Habannayah resulted in 12 EHFR/T3 police officers.



Female Training

In November 2018, UNMAS conducted its first EHFR training for female police officers with the aim to provide a more inclusive explosive hazard response to affected populations and contribute to promoting equal opportunities within the Iraqi Mine Action sector. UNMAS Iraq and the MoI have endeavored to select participants serving in explosive hazard-contaminated areas where there is significant need of such life-saving skills. Out of 20 participants, 19 police officers hail from the most contaminated areas of Iraq, including Anbar, Diyala, Karbala, Kirkuk, Mosul, and Salah al-Din, etc.

As a result, 20 female police officers received EHFR training, and 10 of them were trained to be trainers of the trainer.

Discussions are ongoing with the MoI to provide future such trainings to female police officers in IEDD Level 1 and Level 2.

Bushra Youssef, a corporal within the Anbar Police Directorate, faced significant socio-cultural pressure and pushback when she initially joined the police force. She initially struggled to acclimate to the male-dominated environment, but has since adjusted and now feels empowered by her career and in her community. Commenting on the training, she said: “After ISIL were defeated, we had to deal with all kinds of explosive hazards in Anbar. This training was very helpful in enhancing our technical knowledge and experience, and will serve as significant added value to both my career and my community.”

The training suited the principles of UN Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325 on women, peace and security and reinforced the idea that female police officers can serve the



security of Iraqi communities and citizens. It was an added proof that Iraqi women – police officers together with civilians already employed in the mine action sector – are playing an active role in the recovery and reconstruction of their country. Iraq is in the process of drafting the new National Action Plan (NAP) under UNSCR 1325 and UNMAS collaborated with the government and other partners involved in the process (Cross Sector Task Force of the Government of Iraq, UN Women, Network 1325, iNAP Alliance 1325, USAID and Aktis Strategy) to include clearance from explosive hazards not only as a priority but as an area where women and men can work together to provide “safe home”.

One grant has been provided to a local organization to run consultation workshops and questionnaires at a local level to assess priorities under UNSCR 1325 and understand people’s needs and attitudes towards EHM and women’s role in the mine action sector.



EOD and IEDD Training

The Iraqi police have lost a large number of EOD and IEDD operators. To help minimize these losses and to enhance the Iraqi police’s capacity to deal with the complex explosive hazard threat, UNMAS in Iraq is committed to provide training to select Iraqi police personnel to become EOD and IEDD operators. This highly specialized and demanding course provides students with the knowledge and skills to deal with the variety of explosive threats encountered in Iraq. The training is delivered jointly with the Iraqi police in the Police EOD Training Facility in Salman Pak, Baghdad. While the police already train EOD and IEDD personnel, the additional support provided by UNMAS through the use of instructors enhances that capability. The training consists of knowledge-sharing from highly-experienced and seasoned professionals, who abide by international accreditation standards in their specialized areas. In addition to the provision of instructors, support is also provided in the form of the training package itself, which includes specialized training aids and equipment.



Institutional Capacity Enhancement

UNMAS has permanently embedded two Mine Action Technical Advisors within the Joint Coordination and Monitoring Center (JCMC), which has made it possible to support and advise Iraqi authorities on mine action-related matters. In Iraq, the JCMC is in charge of the movement and coordination between UNMAS, the government, and relevant NGOs. The Technical Advisors have also conducted training sessions during the year, focused on JCMC national and governorates level. The mine action management training included the development of technical understanding in regards to IEDD response, information management, in addition to day-to-day operational support from UNMAS Iraq Technical Advisors and some gender-related aspects in mine action (ie: outreach to all target groups despite barriers). All activities strive to enhance government authorities’ capacity to better manage, regulate and coordinate their own and partners’ mine action activities.

The UNMAS Mine Action Technical Advisors held three trainings for JCMC offices, one for the JCMC headquarters in Baghdad, one for the Kirkuk JCMC office, and one for the Baghdad JCMC office. In each course, the head of the respective JCMC office attended the training, as well as representatives from multiple ministries and governmental departments. The overall feedback from the participants was positive, with everyone welcoming such trainings and acknowledging the value of these courses in enhancing their explosive hazards response and capability. Many of them look forward to follow-up, and more advanced trainings in the future.

Statistics:



» **840 police officers**
» Including **48 female police officers** trained in First Response to identify, mark and report explosive hazards and **23 UN security staff** trained to safely respond to IED and explosive hazard threats.



» **6,000 UNDP cash-for-work employees**
» **1,000 governmental staff**
» **1,400 UN and NGO staff** trained to recognize and behave safely in the presence of explosive hazards while working in high-risk environments such as Mosul.

COORDINATION

Iraq Mine Action Area of Responsibility (MA AoR):

During 2018, UNMAS coordinated the MA AoR within the Iraq Protection Cluster. The Iraq MA AoR continued to bring together national and international humanitarian mine action organizations, academic institutions, UN agencies and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC).

Furthermore, the Iraq Mine Action AoR supported and coordinated with the national mine action authorities DMA and IKMAA on issues of concern to the humanitarian mine action sector in country. In doing so, the Iraq MA AoR supported effective and efficient coordination of humanitarian mine action and ensured inclusive needs-based planning and strategic development of activities. Through the UN Cluster System, Iraq MA AoR continues to advocate for the following:

- » Increasing the number of operators in Federal Iraq to address the shortage of registered and accredited humanitarian mine action partners in liberated areas. Increasing this would free up specialized IEDD capacity to engage in complex and high-risk IEDD tasks in urban environments. Temporary accreditation was pursued as a potential solution, followed by the pursuit of permanent accreditation for humanitarian mine action NGOs;
- » Increasing the availability of specialized equipment to render items safe in Federal Iraq. UNMAS continues to engage with the Ministry of Defense (MoD) on the issue and works towards establishing and maintaining strong liaison relationships;
- » Reducing restrictions on movement and access to sites, including visa issues for international staff, access through check points, seizing of humanitarian mine action activities by government entities or armed actors, and JCC movement requirements which continue to pose critical obstacles and obstruction of humanitarian activities;
- » Improving information management to enhance the collection, entry, analysis and availability of explosive hazard information across Iraq; and
- » Increasing availability of quality equipment for high risk operators. Importing high technology equipment would reduce the risk to operators.

The Iraq MA AoR continues to support the UN humanitarian response since 2016, during and post the conflict with ISIL. Within its mandate, the Iraq MA AoR focuses on support for the most vulnerable populations, including IDPs in and out of camp, returnees, and host communities in areas of most severe humanitarian need, as well as throughout Iraq.

The Iraq MA AoR brings together national and international NGOs, UN Agencies, ICRC, and academic institutions to help mitigate humanitarian crises. In 2018, the Iraq MA AoR numbered 17 members: six national NGOs (Baghdad Organization, IHSCO, Maysan Organisation, Mine and UXO Impact Relief [MIR], Orchard Association for Child Protection and Education [OACPE, Spirit of Soccer), eight international NGOs (Dan Church Aid [DCA], DDG, Swiss Foundation for Mine Action [FSD], HALO Trust, HI, Information Management and Mine Action Programs [iMMAP], Mines Advisory Group [MAG], Norwegian People's Aid [NPA]), two UN agencies (UNICEF and UNMAS), and the ICRC. The Iraq MA AoR is chaired by UNMAS, and has elected and endorsed a co-coordinator: NPA, as well as an Information Management Officer (IMO): iMMAP. Both the co-coordinator and IMO are Arabic-speaking, and the co-Coordinator is based in Baghdad to provide a specific focus on supporting national NGOs to access UN Cluster Coordination mechanisms. This approach supports the "localization" commitments made by the signatories to the Grand Bargain following the World Humanitarian Summit in 2016. Furthermore, the Iraq MA AoR collaborates with the government entities and national mine action authorities, DMA and IKMAA, on matters pertaining to the humanitarian mine action sector in Iraq.

In 2018, the Iraq MA AoR supported the drafting and publication of the Humanitarian Needs Overview (HNO) and the Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP). With an objective to ensure the humanitarian mine action response is supporting the most vulnerable, especially in priority areas with identified response gaps, the Iraq MA AoR approved six projects under the HRP, matching two of the HRP Projects to the first Standard Allocation under the Iraqi Humanitarian Pooled Fund (IHF). Additionally, the Iraq MA AoR, together with DMA and IKMAA, has revised and supported the 2019 Portfolio of Mine Action Projects, which will be launched at the 22nd UN Advisors and National Directors Meeting in February 2019 in Geneva.

The Iraq MA AoR has also provided members with a presentation on gender and diversity in mine action and shared a training toolkit in English and Arabic on the same topic. In addition, UNMAS distributed to members printed and electronic copies of the UN gender guidelines for mine action programs translated into Arabic.

The Iraq MA AoR has revived its humanitarianinfo.org page and will continue to share up-to-date information on the status, studies, and factsheets of concern for the humanitarian mine action sector in Iraq, to encourage transparency of the work of the sector in Iraq.

In addition to conducting ad hoc emergency meetings when necessary, the Iraq MA AoR continues to hold monthly members meeting to discuss needs, issues and challenges, solutions and advocacy strategies, and resource mobilization in order to coordinate and streamline across the humanitarian mine action sector, the UN Cluster system and the national mine action authorities.

The MA AoR continued to serve as a platform for all humanitarian mine action partners, represent all members of the sub-cluster, advocate on their behalf and serve as a link to the UN Cluster system, the government entities, and wider humanitarian sector. In light of that, the Iraq MA AoR coordinator has visited partner operations and had bilateral meetings with MA AoR members around Iraq to gain a full understanding of operational challenges and successes. This initiative will continue in 2019 as well to allow the MA AoR Coordinator to keep updated and acquire a deeper understanding of the realities partners face on the ground to better represent the concerns of both national and international organizations. In 2018, the Iraq MA AoR has hosted presentations from HI on Victim Assistance in Iraq; UNMAS on Gender Mainstreaming in Mine Action in Iraq; Real-Time Accountability Partnership (RTAP) on Gender Mainstreaming within the UN Cluster System; Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD) on “Mapping Processes in Urban Environment”; Gender and Mine Action Programme (GMAP) on “Gender in Mine Action and Iraq Baseline Assessment.”



VISIBILITY

Throughout 2018, UNMAS Iraq continued to profile and advocate for the generous contributions of its multiple donor partners. The importance of EHM in Iraq was mainstreamed through high-level documents, briefing notes, and presentations to the Government of Iraq, other UN entities and the international community, as well as through social media advocacy.

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The UNMAS Iraq programme ensured mine action was regularly highlighted to member states by actively briefing the donor community in France, Germany, Jordan, Kuwait, Switzerland, Thailand, and USA in addition to briefing local representatives in Erbil and Baghdad every two months.

UNMAS in Iraq hosted multiple in-country events highlighting donor contributions including: International Day for Mine Awareness and Assistance in Mine Action, International Day of Yoga, and a RE Virtual Reality Experience Session. Furthermore, the UNMAS Iraq programme contributed to the Annual Photoville Exhibition in New York City, USA, with photos highlighting mine action clearance operations, behind-the-scenes challeng-

es, and the impact of UNMAS clearance activities to the local community. In addition, UNMAS Senior Programme Manager, Pehr Lodhammar, has published numerous op-eds in myriad languages and conducted several interviews on UNMAS mine action activities in Iraq, and the extensive contamination in the liberated areas, including: New York Times, BBC, The Guardian, Deutsche Welle, Le Monde, Sky News, The Sun, ZDF, etc.

In 2018, UNMAS Iraq also launched its new series of Shorthand stories for the public, a unique audio-visual platform of storytelling that seeks to both engage the reader and simultaneously convey the complex environment of explosive hazard management in Iraq.

VIDEO: 60 SECONDS IN IRAQ



Right click to view video fullscreen. If the video does not play, please view it on YouTube at <https://bit.ly/2Hqxnbc>

Highlights of 2018

Media Engagements (Articles/Interviews):

- » [Press Briefing – Geneva](#)
- » [New York Times – After the Battle: A Warning From Mosul](#)
- » [Deutsche Welle Interview: Pehr Lodhammer](#)

Newsletters:

- » [January](#)
- » [May](#)
- » [November](#)

Shorthand Stories:

- » [UNMAS in Iraq](#)
- » [Faces of Mine Action](#)
- » [Coordination Intricacies in Iraq](#)

Videos:

- » [Mosul – One Year of Clearance](#)
- » [What does “The Right to Peace” mean to you?](#)
- » [Photoville Exhibit: Safe Home](#)
- » [Women in Mine Action](#)

Visits:

- » [UNMAS & UNDP Danish Field Visit to Mosul](#)
- » [UNMAS Norwegian Visit to Mosul](#)
- » [UNMAS JCMC Field Visit to Mosul](#)

Summary in Numbers for 2018:



43 media engagements

(This figure includes press events, press conferences, and interviews)



654 social media posts

(This figure highlights all UNMAS Iraq activities, including events, donor field visits, etc.)



18 press releases

(This figure includes new donor agreements and important milestones reached)



18 donor field visits (This figure does not include internal visits such as those of the SRSG and/or DSRSG)



20+ press field visits

(On average, UNMAS conducts two press visits per month)

NETWORKING AND ADVOCACY

UNMAS strengthened its network at different levels and especially in relation to gender equality. UNMAS is now a member of the UN Gender Task Force and International Gender Group and established close working relations with the women empowerment directorate (under Council of Ministers) and with the Female Training Institute of the Mol.

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Taking into consideration Iraqi Labour Law that limits women to be employed in “harmful jobs” but also recognizing that Iraqi civilian women are already active in mine action operations, UNMAS advocated with national authorities, women machineries and civil society, in addition to UN agencies involved in the drafting of the new NAP under UN-SCR 1325, to support the NAP process and have women’s positive contribution in making Iraq more safe, fully recognized, and valued. UNMAS played an active role in the drafting of the new NAP: this highlighted UNMAS role in the

process, allowing it to be recognized as a valid stakeholder (both for its technical assistance and expertise).

In addition, UNMAS senior management have attended numerous meetings and conferences to discuss the current landscape in Iraq in terms of explosive hazard contamination. This included involvement in the Kuwait International Conference for Reconstruction of Iraq, UNESCO International Conference of NGO’s, and several high-level meetings with donors in Jordan, USA, and Thailand, for example.



GLOSSARY

CE	Capacity Enhancement
CMMAI	Coordination Mechanism for Mine Action in Iraq
DCA	Dan Church Aid
DDG	Danish Demining Group
DMA	Directorate of Mine Action
EHFR	Explosive Hazards First Responder
EHM	Explosive Hazard Management
EOD	Explosive Ordnance Disposal
ERWs	Explosive Remnants of War
FSD	Swiss Foundation for Mine Action
GICHD	Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining
GMAP	Gender and Mine Action Programme
GOI	Government of Iraq
HI	Humanity and Inclusion, Previously Handicap International
HNO	Humanitarian Needs Overview
HRP	Humanitarian Response Plan
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
IDP	Internally Displaced Persons/People
IED	Improvised Explosive Devices
IEDD	Improvised Explosive Device Defeat
IHF	Iraqi Humanitarian Pooled Fund
IHSCO	Health and Social Care Organization in Iraq
IKMAA	Iraqi Kurdistan Mine Action Agency
iMMAP	Information Management and Mine Action Programs
IMO	Information Management Officer
IMSMA	Information Management System for Mine Action

ISIL	Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant, Also known as “Da’esh”
JCMC	Joint Coordination and Monitoring Center
KRG	Kurdish Regional Government
MA AoR	Mine Action Area of Responsibility
MAG	Mines Advisory Group
MIR	Mine and UXO Impact Relief
MoD	Ministry of Defense
Mol	Ministry of Interior
NAP	National Action Plan
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NMAS	National Mine Action Standards
NPA	Norwegian People’s Aid
NTS	Non-Technical Survey
OACPE	Orchard Association for Child Protection and Education
SWP	Standard Working Procedures
RE	Risk Education
RTAP	Real-Time Accountability Partnership
T3	Training of the Trainer
TS	Technical Survey
TWG	Technical Working Group
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNMAS	United Nations Mine Action Service
UNSCR	United Nations Security Council Resolution
VR	Virtual Reality

UNMAS in Iraq would like to thank all its donors who contributed to explosive hazard management, risk education, and capacity enhancement activities in 2018.



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