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UNMAS PALESTINE

# Programme Highlights

## REMOVING EXPLOSIVE THREATS



UNMAS Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) team responding to a deep buried bomb (Gaza Governorate)

The UNMAS Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) team and their implementing partner has been carrying out operations to excavate and remove the explosive threats posed by deep buried bombs (DBB) to the communities in Gaza.

Since the end of hostilities in May 2021, UNMAS has cleared 7 DBB sites, including schools and residential apartments in highly populated neighborhoods.

In November, UNMAS responded to a bomb site identified in a residential apartment in Gaza Governorate and removed the bomb buried deep in the ground, restoring a safe living environment for the 250 residents in the vicinity of the bomb site. The operations were supported by a medical expert who also provided training to the field workers with casualty evacuation exercises.

## RISK EDUCATION FOR UN AND HUMANITARIAN PARTNERS

The UNMAS risk education team has also been busy providing risk education and conflict preparedness messaging to the staff of UN agencies and humanitarian partners in Gaza to inform them about how to protect themselves during an escalation of hostilities and how to mitigate the threat from explosive hazards.

Since May 2021, UNMAS has provided 17 risk education sessions for 300 personnel (126 women, 174 men) working at the UN and other humanitarian organizations, including UNRWA, Médecins Sans Frontière (MSF) and Islamic Relief.

In August, UNMAS provided Conflict Preparedness and Protection (CPP) training to the NGO, Secours Islamique France (SIF). After attending the CPP session, one of a female staff from the organization expressed her thanks for the training:

*"During the last war, we had to evacuate from our house. I asked my children to get in a row, and my husband and I were at the front and back. This happened randomly out of fear, not knowledge!"*

*I now have real knowledge about how to deal with burns, and small injuries. I didn't know that. Besides, I will use this information from the CPP for better preparedness in case of future emergencies and not to act randomly"*



UNMAS staff delivering Conflict Preparedness and Protection (CPP) session for the staff at the Secours Islamique France (SIF) in Gaza



Informing children how to recognize and mitigate against ERW accidents in Gaza - Children in Gaza are one of the at risk groups for ERW accidents



UNMAS in Palestine is funded bilaterally through contributions to the United Nations Voluntary Trust Fund for assistance in Mine Action. In response to the most recent escalation of hostilities in 2021, UNMAS surged its capacity in Gaza and is resource mobilising for additional funds to allow them to respond to the needs for emergency EOD response, emergency preparedness, and risk education to continue their operations in 2022 and beyond. UNMAS continues to make consistent efforts to raise the additional funds to allow them to respond to these needs, to provide support to reconstruction in Gaza and the Humanitarian Response Plan.



Thank you to all of our donors for their generous support.

## THE CHIEF OF UNMAS GENEVA VISIT PALESTINE



The Chief of UNMAS Geneva Bruno Donat and Chief of Mine Action Programme, Bridget Forster visiting a building destroyed by the air strikes during the May hostilities 2021

The Global Coordinator of the Global Protection Cluster Mine Action (MA) Area of Responsibility (AoR) and Chief of UNMAS Geneva, Mr. Bruno Donat visited Gaza in October 2021. He visited a number of UNMAS EOD tasks around Gaza as well as EORE and CPP projects for adults and children including persons with disabilities delivered by organisations and key partners within the AoR in Gaza (NPA, UNICEF, HI). During the visit, he also attended an MA AoR meeting chaired by the Gaza MA AoR Coordinator, Ms. Hana Albaioumy, of UNMAS.

*"It was heartwarming to witness and participate in these inclusive and interactive sessions for community members with and without disability, and in the case of boys and girls using child-friendly tools and messages including musical performances and games,"* said Mr. Donat

## DISABILITY INCLUSIVE CURRICULUMS

UNMAS has been collaborating with the organizations based in Palestine that support persons with disabilities to make EORE and CPP messaging more inclusive. In Gaza, UNMAS has been consulting with the Atfalna Society to review the current CPP curriculum and assess the accessibility of the activities for persons with disabilities.

For the last two months, the UNMAS EORE team has conducted focus group discussions with persons with disabilities to improve the current materials and reflect the challenges that persons with disabilities encountered during the hostilities in May 2021. In November, UNMAS finalized new CPP materials that incorporate the needs of persons with disabilities and their families to protect themselves during conflict.



The CPP curriculum addresses different needs for the elderly and people with disabilities -



### EOD Support

UNMAS responds to requests for EOD clearance and risk assessment from UN agencies and reconstruction partners in Gaza.



### Emergency Preparedness

UNMAS maintains an emergency EOD response which forms an integral part of UN contingency plans for Gaza.



### Survivor Assistance

UNMAS continues to provide referral and verification of the survivors of ERW accidents.

Established in 1997, the **United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS)** works to eliminate the threat posed by mines, explosive remnants of war and improvised explosive devices by coordinating United Nations mine action, leading operational responses at the country level, and supporting the development of standards, policies and norms. As a specialized service of the United Nations located within the Department of Peace Operations, UNMAS operates under UN legislative mandates of both the General Assembly and the Security Council. UNMAS also responds to specific requests for support from the UN Secretary-General or designated official. UN Security Council Resolution 2365 (2017) the first stand-alone text on mine action, *"Expresses grave concern over the threat that landmines, explosive remnants of war and improvised explosive devices pose to civilians, refugees returning to their homes, ...and stresses the need to undertake appropriate measures to mitigate this danger effectively."*