



# EXPLOSIVE HAZARD ANALYSIS REPORT

2020 ANNUAL REPORT

**UNMAS** in Somalia

 **UNMAS**



## Acknowledgements

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## List of Acronyms

AAIA	-	Aden Abdulle International Airport
AMISOM	-	African Union Mission in Somalia
APMBT	-	Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Treaty
CADE	-	Counter-IED Capacity Development
C-IED	-	Counter Improvised Explosive Device
CLO	-	Community Liaison Officer
DDF	-	Djibouti Defense Forces
ECM	-	Electro Countermeasure
EDD	-	Explosive Detection Dog
ETM	-	Explosive Threat Mitigation
EOD	-	Explosive Ordnance Disposal
EORE	-	Explosive Ordnance Risk Education
ERW	-	Explosive Remnants of War
FFE	-	Free From Explosive
FGS	-	Federal Government of Somalia
FHQ	-	Force Headquarters
FMS	-	Federal Member State
FOB	-	Forward Operating Base
HNO	-	Humanitarian Needs Overview
HRP	-	Humanitarian Response Plan
IDP	-	Internally Displaced Persons
IED-TM	-	Improvised Explosive Device Threat Mitigation
IED	-	Improvised Explosive Device
IEDD	-	Improvised Explosive Device Disposal
JUMAN	-	Jubaland Mine Action Network
KDF	-	Kenya Defense Forces
MDT	-	Manual Demining Teams
MEU	-	Mission Enabling Unit

MoIS	-	Ministry of Internal Security
MSP	-	Mogadishu Security Plan
MSR	-	Main Supply Route
MTT	-	Multi-Tasking Team
MVCP	-	Mobile Vehicle Check Point
MoWHRD	-	Ministry of Women and Human Rights Development
NAPVDA	-	National Action Plan for Victim and Disability Assistance
NMAS	-	National Mine Action Standards
NSS	-	National Stabilisation Strategy
NWFP	-	National WAM Focal Point
PBIED	-	Person Borne Improvised Explosive Device
PDT	-	Pre-Deployment Training
RETD	-	Risk Education Talking Device
SAA	-	Small Arms Ammunition
SDG	-	Sustainable Development Goal
SEMA	-	Somalia Explosive Management Authority
SHF	-	Somalia Humanitarian Fund
SNA	-	Somali National Army
SOW	-	Stand-Off Weapons
SSF	-	Somali Security Forces
TCC	-	Troop-Contributing Countries
ToT	-	Training of Trainers
UEMS	-	Unplanned Explosions at Munitions sites
VBIED	-	Vehicle Borne Improvised Explosive Device

## 1. Improvised Explosive Device Threats

While historically there has been a year-on-year increase in Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) use in Somalia, 2020 has noted a drop compared to 2019 and 2018, although it still surpasses 2017, as shown in Figure 1 (below). Four-hundred-and-seventy-two (472) recorded IED incidents in Somalia in 2020 compared to 529 in 2019, 493 in 2018, and 402 in 2017.

As noted in previous years, most IED incidents in 2020 took place on Main Supply Routes (MSRs) in South Central Somalia. Lower Shabelle, Bay, and Banadir regions were once again the most affected. Less than 6% of all incidents occurred north of Galgaduud region. Figure 2 illustrates the frequency of explosive events by region and the emplacement of IEDs – typically targeting Somali National Army (SNA) and African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) – along MSRs.

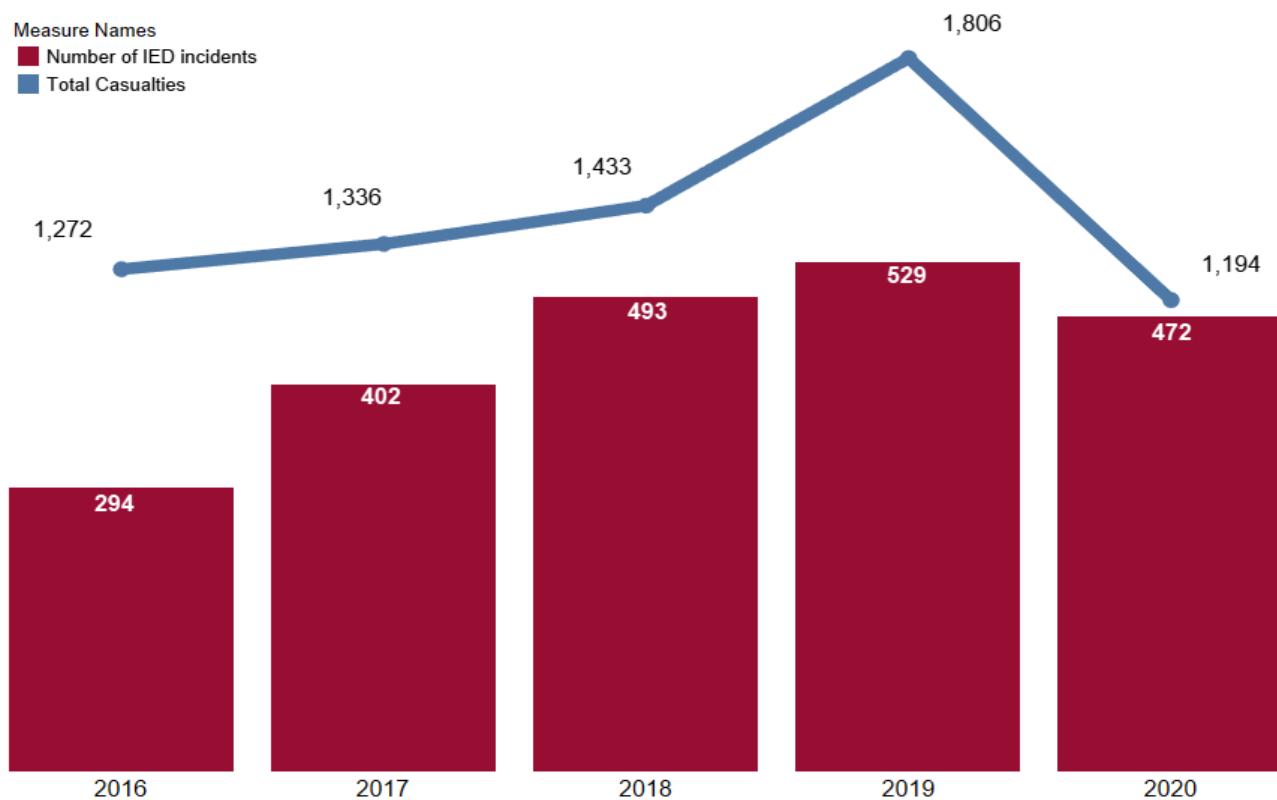


Fig 1: IED incidents between 2016 and 2020 (casualty numbers do not account for the outlier 14 October 2017 Zoobe Junction bombing, which resulted in 655 fatalities and 303 injuries, predominantly civilians)

<sup>1</sup> MSRs are routes designated within an area of operations upon which the bulk of traffic flows in support of military (AMISOM and SNA) operations.

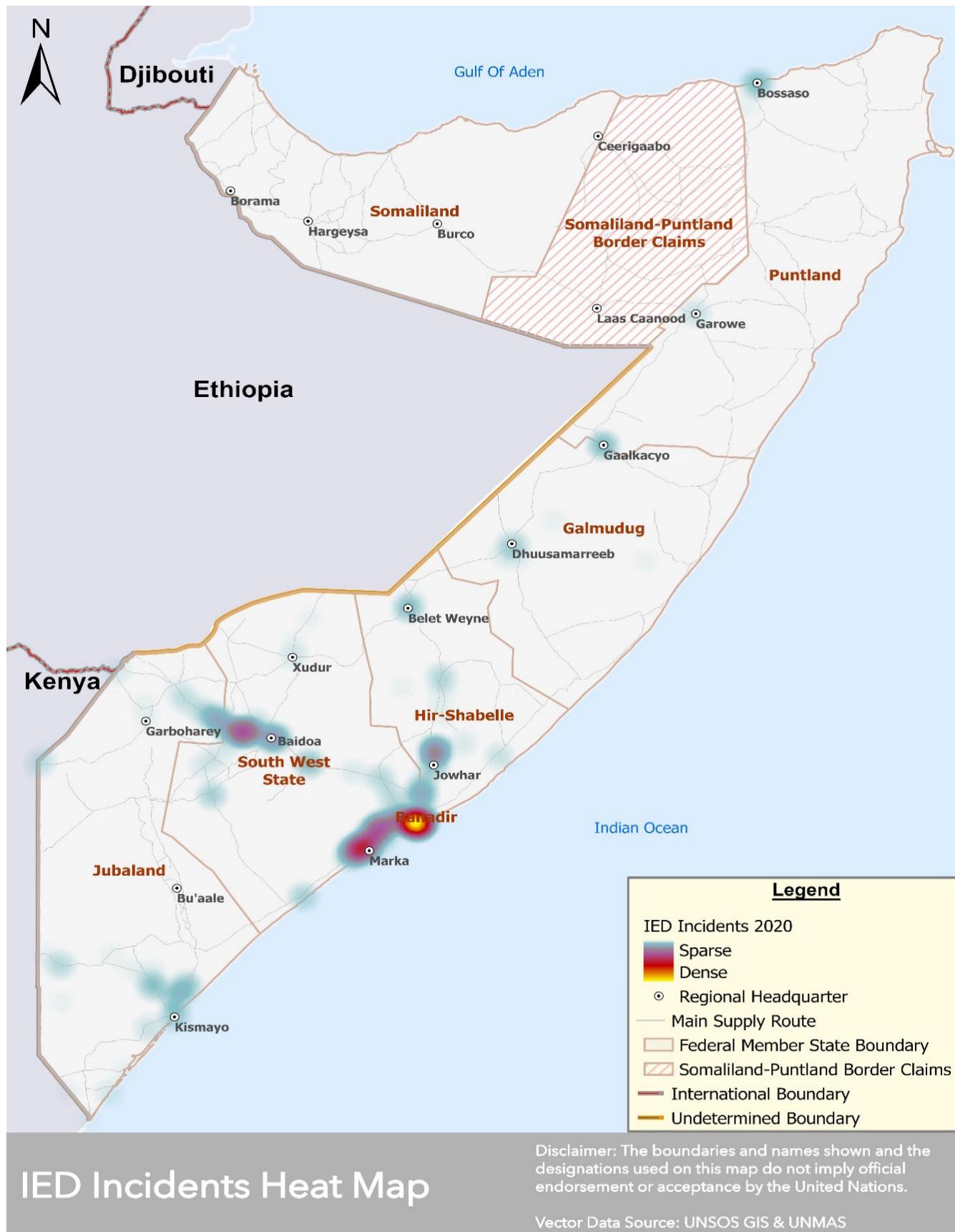
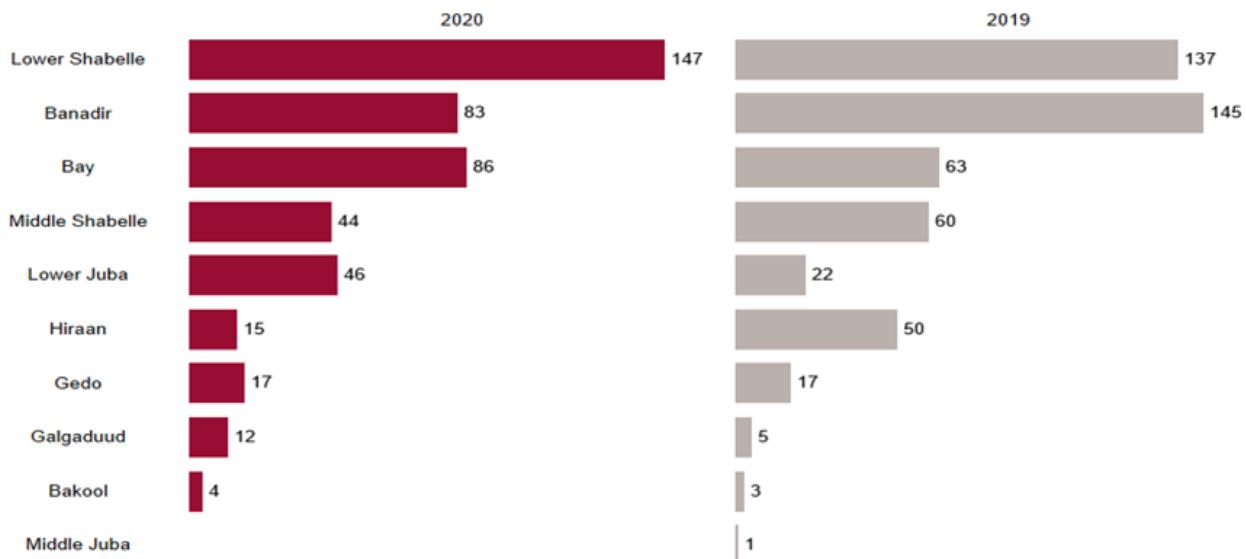


Fig 2: IED incidents in Somalia predominantly along MSRs.



**Fig 3: Regional incidents comparison South Central Somalia – 2020 – 2019**

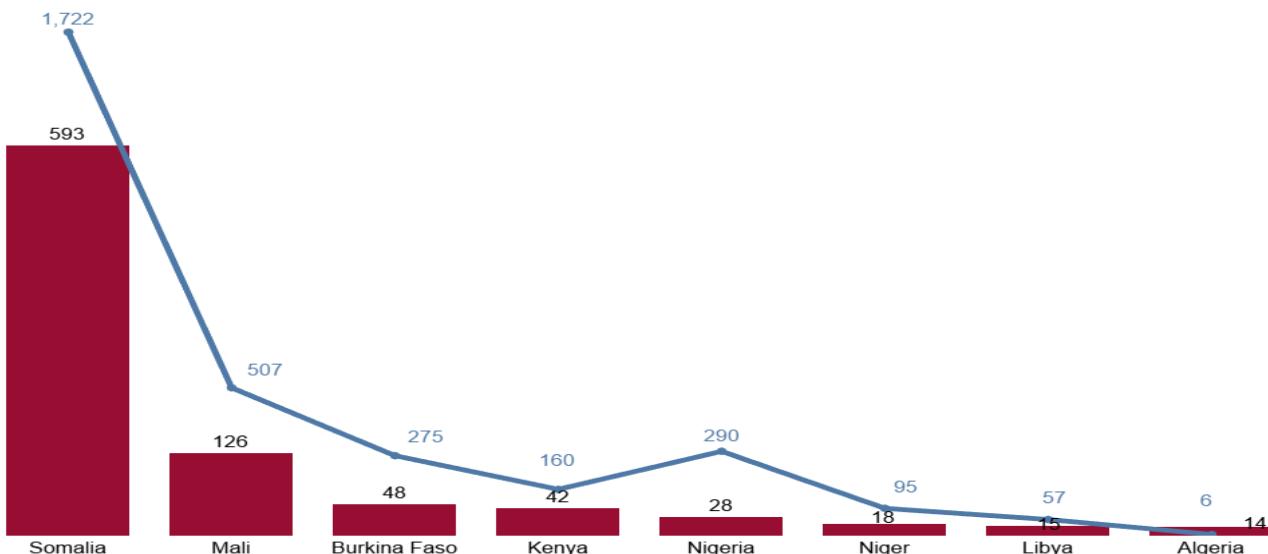
Figure 3 shows that the decrease in incidents in 2020 when compared to 2019 is heavily dictated by a significant drop in incidents in Banadir. This drop in incidents correlates with the continued success of operation Badbaado, which commenced in April 2019, and the maintenance of the Mogadishu Security Plan (MSP) implemented in May 2019. Operation Badbaado is focused on liberating and securing key strategic positions in the neighbouring Lower Shabelle region, while the MSP significantly increased the city's security profile.

Hiraan region also noted a significant decrease in the number of incidents in 2020. This drop is assessed to be due to security operations in 2019 clearing IEDs between population centres not undertaken in 2020. Therefore, the drop recorded in Hiraan in 2020 should be considered a result of the lack of opportunity for armed opposition groups to use IEDs against security forces, rather than any overarching change to the threat picture.

While there was a drop in incidents in Banadir, a significant increase in IED incidents was noted in Bay. These incidents were largely focused along one MSR, leading through Bay and into Gedo region and equated to 11% of all IEDs recorded in 2020 - resulting in Bay having a significant increase in IED incidents compared to 2019. Most of the devices that caused a spike in IED attacks in Bay occurred in April and June 2020, with only 10 of the 52 incidents recorded during this period as IEDs that exploded - with AMISOM finding 22 of the 27 IEDs that targeted their convoy. All other finds were conducted by Ethiopian National Defence Forces (ENDF). This is a considerable achievement highlighting the importance and effectiveness of Counter-IED (C-IED) training and equipment.

Further increases in IED activity were also noted in Lower Juba. However, this was assessed to be an increase of security force activity to establish a new Forward Operating Base (FOB) along an MSR known to be used for illicit trade. In attempts to undermine security force efforts, IEDs were used to stop the establishment of the new FOB and resulted in the overall increase noted in Lower Juba in 2020 when compared to 2019.

While some regions noted an increase in incidents, the overall decrease in 2020 follows from the slowing of the upward trend in the number of incidents in 2019. Previously, IED attacks in Somalia increased by approximately 100 incidents a year from 2016 to 2018; however, 2019 only noted an increase of 36 incidents, with 2020 noting a drop in incidents by 57 when compared to the year prior. While this is undeniably progress, it should be considered against a wider picture of Africa's IED threat. Data provided by partner agencies identified that between May 2019 and April 2020, IED incidents in Somalia (593 incidents) equated to more than all IED incidents recorded in the next eight most active IED threat theatres in Africa combined (291 incidents).



**Fig 4: IED Incident and Casualty comparison between Somalia and the next eight most active IED threat theatres in Africa – May 2019 – April 2020**

However, while the drop in incidents is almost negligible compared to the IED threat in other countries, a significant decrease in IED related casualty numbers has been recorded in 2020. Civilians and AMISOM had the most significant drop in casualty numbers in 2020 than in prior years.

## 1.1 Activities

UNMAS provides IED-Threat Mitigation (IED-TM) support to the AMISOM through embedding technical advisors and mentoring units in all six sectors across Somalia. As a part of the training team, Search mentors, Improvised Explosive Device Disposal (IEDD) mentors, and Medic mentors provided training to AMISOM personnel on IED-TM. UNMAS provided AMISOM with technical advice, core and refresher training packages, and specialised equipment support, thus strengthening AMISOM's IED-TM capacity and capability to conduct operations along the MSRs. UNMAS supported operational activities of the Mission Enabling Unit (MEUs) through mentoring, training, and technical advice. UNMAS enhances convoys mobility through oversight of the MEU, training, first-line maintenance, mentoring, and technical advice.

During the year, UNMAS also conducted pre-deployment training (PDT) in the Troop Contributing Countries (TCCs) before their active service in Somalia. PDT equips the troops with the necessary knowledge to carry out operations in an IED threat environment and understand the threat picture before arriving in Somalia.

<sup>2</sup> IED incident numbers provided by partner agencies - Mali 126, Burkina Faso 48, Kenya 42 (also attributed to aS), Nigeria 28, Niger 18, Libya 15, Algeria 14

UNMAS provided Explosive Detection Dog (EDD) teams to AMISOM to ensure the protection of strategic infrastructure and personnel. Twenty-six EDD teams were deployed across Somalia to enhance security at Airports, Airstrips, FOBs, Training Centers, and UN facilities.

## 1.2 Outputs

- **AMISOM troops are trained to mitigate the threat of IEDs**

To ensure adequate support to AMISOM, UNMAS had a presence in all the sectors. UNMAS also actively engaged with AMISOM's leadership, commanders, and troops, providing technical advice and training.



**Fig 5: Team leader briefing the troops prior to IEDD task during the training**

Technical Advisors engaged operationally at Force Headquarters (FHQ), Mission Headquarters (MHQ), Sector Headquarters (SHQ) to improve IED-TM capabilities of AMISOM troops. Additionally, UNMAS interacted with various partners and stakeholders during various IED-TM meetings, such as C-IED Capacity Development (CADE) meetings, AMISOM Sector Commanders briefings, C-IED Fusion cell meeting, monthly briefings at MHQ and Force Commanders weekly meetings.

Advisory material and technical analysis were provided to AMISOM and relevant stakeholders regularly. UNMAS produced and distributed weekly, monthly, quarterly, annual, ad-hoc reports, IED Awareness reports, and monthly newsletters in French, English, Somali, and Amharic. These advisory materials provided UNMAS partners and stakeholders with the IED threat assessment and analysis in Somalia in 2020, ensuring evidence-based strategic decision making. Cooperation between UNMAS, AMISOM, and other key stakeholders contributed to a reliable partnership that allowed UNMAS to support AMISOM in its operations by analysing IED trends and generating meaningful reports on IED-TM in Somalia.

<sup>3</sup> MEUs support the movements of AMISOM logistically and are critical for clearance of key MSR<sup>s</sup> to support deployment of additional equipment, force protection, engineering and logistics enhance AMISOM operations.

<sup>4</sup> TCCs typically refers to nationalities of troops deployed to Somalia under AMISOM. AMISOM's contingent has troops from Djibouti, Burundi, Ethiopia, Uganda and Kenya.



**Fig 6: Explosive detection dog searching the vehicle at the UN entrance**

UNMAS continued to support AMISOM in protecting strategic assets and infrastructure in Somalia through the EDD component. UNMAS deployed EDDs to conduct searches for explosive materials and ensure Airports, Airstrips, FOBs, Training Centers and UN facilities in Somalia are safe. EDDs also provide a strong visible and psychological deterrent against criminal and terrorist threats.

In 2020, UNMAS deployed 26 EDDs with 26 trained EDD handlers. EDD teams ensured that assets and infrastructures of strategic and economic importance like airports in Mogadishu and in the sectors remain operational. Additionally, EDD teams also enhanced the confidence of AMISOM in search operations of key infrastructures and at entry points in the FOB. In 2020 alone, across all the sectors, UNMAS supported the search of 372,089 vehicles, 102,993 pieces of luggage/cargo, 995 buildings, 1,080,884 m<sup>2</sup> of internal building area, and 41,145,113 m<sup>2</sup> of open area/runways.



**Fig 7:UNMAS mentor delivering Explosive Hazard Awareness Training to officers under African Union Police in Somalia.**

<sup>5</sup> including EUTM, UKMST, United States Military, SNA, and African Union Police

- **AMISOM has increased awareness of current and critical IED trends for operational planning.**

UNMAS provided a comprehensive suite of core and refresher training to AMISOM troops, appropriate equipment and regular mentoring support to AMISOM troops. UNMAS continued to build route search capacity to ensure a specialised response to a wide range of explosive threats. The training provided by UNMAS is tailored to suit the explosive hazard threat in Somalia at that specific period, identified through continual technical analysis of IED incidents in Somalia and the lessons learned from the previous incidents.

In 2020, UNMAS delivered various core training, including IED destroy-in situ course, Explosive Hazard Awareness, Mobility Planning, Search capability, and Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) Capability courses to 3,108 AMISOM personnel. Additionally, 1,642 personnel received refresher training sessions in Medical Capability, EOD Capability, and Search Capability courses. A total of 4,750 troops received training, including 1,150 troops who are part of MEUs. In 2020, UNMAS designed and developed a new course, on Electronic Countermeasure (ECM), for countering remote-controlled IEDs. The ECM training delivery is significant for the safe movement of AMISOM and the conduct of operations.

UNMAS provided PDT to four TCCs. UNMAS deployed training teams to the TCCs who delivered various courses on IED-TM. Due to COVID-19 restrictions, UNMAS had to be innovative and conducted in-mission training for the advance party, deployed three months before the main party. PDT also allows UNMAS to strengthen relations with TCC leadership and allows the mentors to bond with AMISOM troops from start to end of their deployment in Somalia. This process aids the mentoring component, allowing UNMAS mentors to form relationships that enable remote mentoring in instances where locations might be inaccessible to UNMAS mentors. As a result, 425 Burundi National Defence Forces, 200 Uganda People's Defence Forces, 379 Djibouti Defense Forces (DDF) and 201 Kenya Defense Forces (KDF) received PDT, which covered both core and refresher training in 2020.

In 2020, UNMAS supported AMISOM with 7,405 separate vehicular movements for the supplies, patrols, and operations. On average, 97% of these convoy movements were supported by Explosive Ordnance Disposal / Improved Explosive Device Disposal (EOD/IEDD) teams, which contributed to the mobility of AMISOM along the MSRs. UNMAS delivered pre-and post-deployment briefings to convoys and shared the route reports with AMISOM. This enabled convoy commanders to identify vulnerable areas and points to conduct search operations. About 780 AMISOM convoys were provided with pre-deployment briefings, whereas 773 received post-deployment briefings.

MEUs are the mission enablers for AMISOM; UNMAS carries out oversight of AMISOM MEU. MEU has three components, the Heavy Transport Unit, the Engineering Enabling Unit, and the Security Unit. UNMAS continued to enhance convoy mobility through oversight of the MEU, training, first-line maintenance, mentoring, and technical advice. UNMAS supported AMISOM MEU to establish and upgrade FOBs by providing designs and on-site and remote mentoring of AMISOM's MEU.

In 2020, there were 342 MEU supported by Route Search and IEDD teams who had been trained by UNMAS. The MEU teams supported 829 vehicular movements involving 58,847 tonnes of goods transported from Mogadishu to the sectors. UNMAS continues to contribute significantly to the utilization of MSRs that facilitated goods transportation from Mogadishu to the sectors.



Fig 8: AMISOM troops receiving transportation training

- **Somali Security Forces EOD/IEDD teams have increased capacity to safely respond to and dispose of conventional munitions and IEDs**

As part of support to Somalia security institutions, UNMAS provided EOD/IEDD training to 25 EOD units of the Somali Police Force (SPF) in Mogadishu. UNMAS also provided mission-critical equipment to the 14 existing EOD/IEDD teams throughout Somalia. As a result of the ongoing capacity building in explosive management, UNMAS strengthened SPF EOD capacity in Mogadishu to efficiently manage its explosive store. Additionally, UNMAS is also developing Mobile Vehicle Check Point(MVCP)capacity within SPF to improve the SPF's capacity to secure Mogadishu against IEDs. In 2020 UNMAS trained and equipped 39 SPF officers in various aspects of MVCP including use of ECMs.

### 1.3 Outcomes and Impacts

- **Impact on Civilian populations**

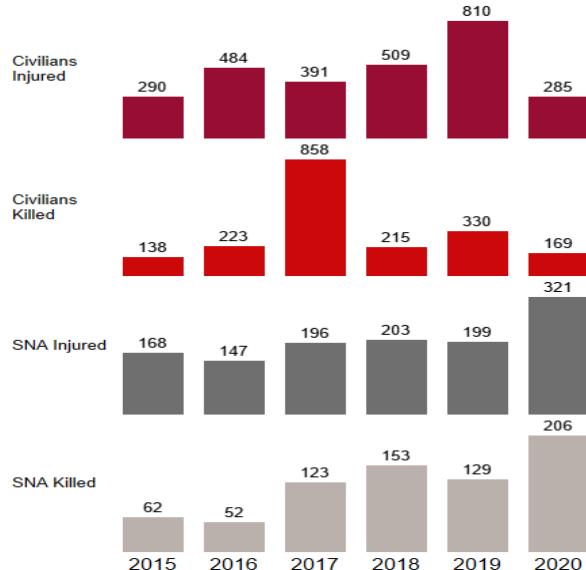


Fig 9: Civilian compared to SNA casualties between 2015 – 2020

Although it is assessed that civilians are deliberately targeted in less than 7% of IED incidents, civilians continue to be significantly impacted by way of casualties, often as the result of indiscriminate attacks. However, in 2020 the frequency of civilian casualties noted a significant drop - with the SNA sustaining the highest number of casualties of any group. This is the first time since 2010 that civilian casualties have been lower than the historically second most impacted group, the SNA

Furthermore, while IED incident numbers still outstrip those of 2017, not only civilian but overall casualty numbers are at the lowest level since

2015. This shift can be attributed to the overall drop in the use of IEDs and, more specifically, a lull in the use of Vehicle Borne Improvised Explosive Devices (VBIEDs). Historically, annual incidents using VBIEDs have made up less than 5% of all IED attacks yet often result in over 50% of all casualties - predominately civilians and most commonly in Banadir. However, in 2020 only 5 VBIED incidents were recorded in Mogadishu, compared to 18 VBIED incidents throughout 2019, directly correlating with the drop in civilian casualties, highlighted in Figure 9.

In years prior and continuing into 2020, UNMAS played an active role in providing evidence through data, statistics, and analytical reports highlighting the impact (i.e., casualties) from VBIEDs, and the urgent need to mitigate it.

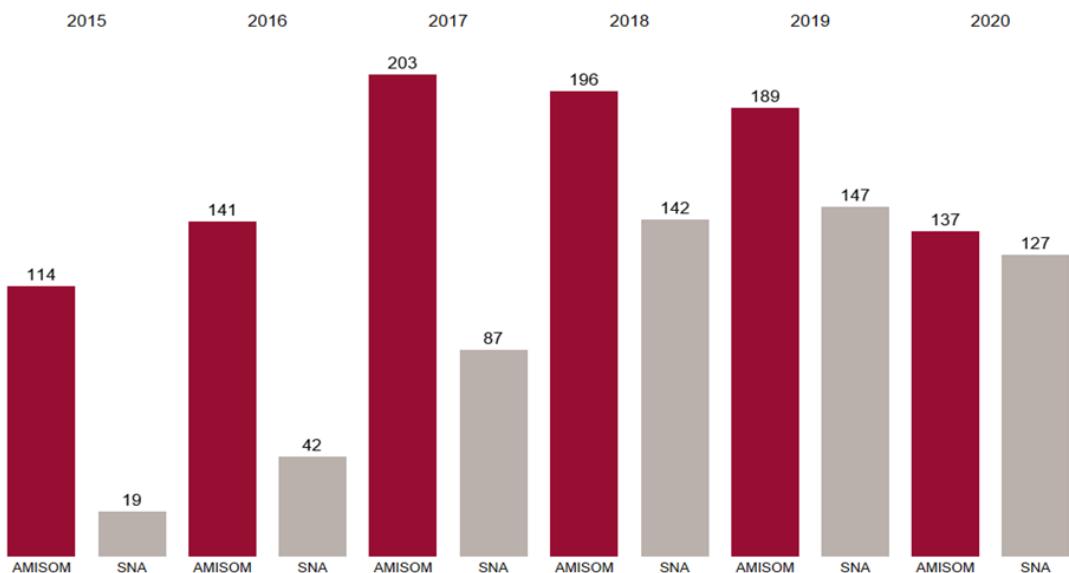
Reductions in VBIED use has resulted in an increase in the use of Person Borne Improvised Explosive Devices (PBIEDs), in what has been identified as a switch in attack methodology. PBIEDs are significantly smaller devices, considerably easier to infiltrate, and are far lower cost to produce. However, while PBIEDs have noted an increase in use against targets which VBIEDs would historically be used to attack, it should be noted that PBIEDs typically use considerably lower yields of explosive material. This switch to an attack methodology that uses considerably lower quantities of explosive material has also resulted in lower collateral civilian casualties. However, regardless of this drop throughout 2020 multiple incidents were recorded, in which smaller devices assessed as targeting security forces, initiated against locals resulting in civilians remaining the second most impacted group by way of casualties in 2020.

- **Impact on AMISOM Troops and Somali Security Forces**

The decrease in civilian casualties reported in 2020 directly correlates with the SNA increased ownership of national security regionally and more specifically as part of Operation Badbaado, in conjunction with the MSP. The result of this extended operational footprint of the SNA forces has resulted in a considerable increase in SNA forces casualties compared to previous years, as noted in Figure 9. This increased number of casualties correlates with a greater level of IEDs targeting against SNA forces, noted since 2018<sup>6</sup>, shown in Figure 10. However, the effectiveness of IED strikes in 2020, by way of casualty impact, against SNA forces has noted an increase with the frequency of targeting remaining consistent against a spike in casualties. This is partly due to SNA forces relying less on AMISOM support in areas of operations historically either held largely by AMISOM forces or recently liberated.

Further to note, while the reported targeting of AMISOM has noted a drop, it is still more frequent than the targeting of SNA forces; however, AMISOM casualties remain considerably lower. These trends continue to highlight the urgent need to provide C-IED training to SNA forces, particularly to realise the longer-term goals of withdrawing AMISOM troops from Somalia and establishing SNA forces at all FOBs currently manned by AMISOM. The comparison in 2020 between the number of casualties impacting AMISOM – who receive extensive UNMAS C-IED training and equipping – and that of SNA forces is significant.

<sup>6</sup> These numbers include federal state armed forces.



**Fig 10: IED incidents targeting AMISOM and SNA - 2015 - 2020**

## Key Messages

There continues to be evidence of increased targeting of SNA forces resulting in significant casualties in 2020 compared to AMISOM. The casualty rates for SNA highlights the need for UNMAS to continue strengthening SNA capacity and capability in IED-TM in line with the Transition Plan. UNMAS continues to build Somali security institutions through mentoring and training in IED-TM to enhance sustainability. Civilians continue to incur significant casualties, hence the need to continue Explosive Ordnance Risk Education (EORE) efforts as part of wider stabilisation efforts in Somalia.

<sup>7</sup> The latter part of quarter three 2018 the SNA liberated and secured the coastal town of Marka in the lower Shabelle district with operation Badbaado also focused in Lower Shabelle starting in April 2019. Although these are not the only examples of SNA increasing their level of activity with increased SNA movement noted throughout the regions.

## 2. Explosive Remnants of War/Mine Threats

Somalia still has a residual threat from Explosive Remnants of War/Mine (ERW/mines) following decades of civil conflicts. Most Confirmed Hazardous Areas (CHA) are minefields located along the Somalia-Ethiopia border, where explosive hazards continue to threaten the civilian population and hamper socio-economic development. The ERW/mines present an opportunity for armed groups to harvest explosives as potential sources for constructing IEDs, which have been used consistently to target security forces in Somalia. Explosive hazards also threaten the lives of approximately 1.72 million internally displaced population and returnees in Somalia. In Somalia, children are at a relatively higher risk of falling victim to ERW accidents than adults. In 2020 alone, a total of 24 ERW/mines related victims were recorded, with 71% of the casualties being children, an increase from 59 victims, of which 83% were children in 2019. There is also evidence of community practices that increase the risks to communities, such as harvesting of explosive material for sale and domestic stockpiling.

Similarly, evidence suggests the possibility of explosive material being harvested from ERW/mines to construct IEDs, creating challenges to the wider explosive threat mitigation (ETM) efforts. These risk-taking practices are aggravated by economic necessity and the lack of awareness in the communities. UNMAS continues to exert efforts on the mine action pillars/activities: (a) survey/clearance, (b) EORE (c) stockpile destruction, (d) victim and disability assistance (e) advocacy and support to strengthen the coordination capability of the national mine action authorities. UNMAS introduced a new innovative approach in EORE using Risk Education Talking Device (RETD) to reduce the impact of IEDs on civilian population.

In March 2020, the threat of COVID-19 was experienced in Somalia, significantly limiting mobility in the area of operations. Consequently, UNMAS in line with World Health Organisation (WHO) and United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) developed simplified COVID-19 awareness messages delivered to the communities as an add-on to the EORE messages. The messages were designed to assist the vulnerable population in remote locations to understand the prevention of COVID-19 and reduce its spread in the communities.

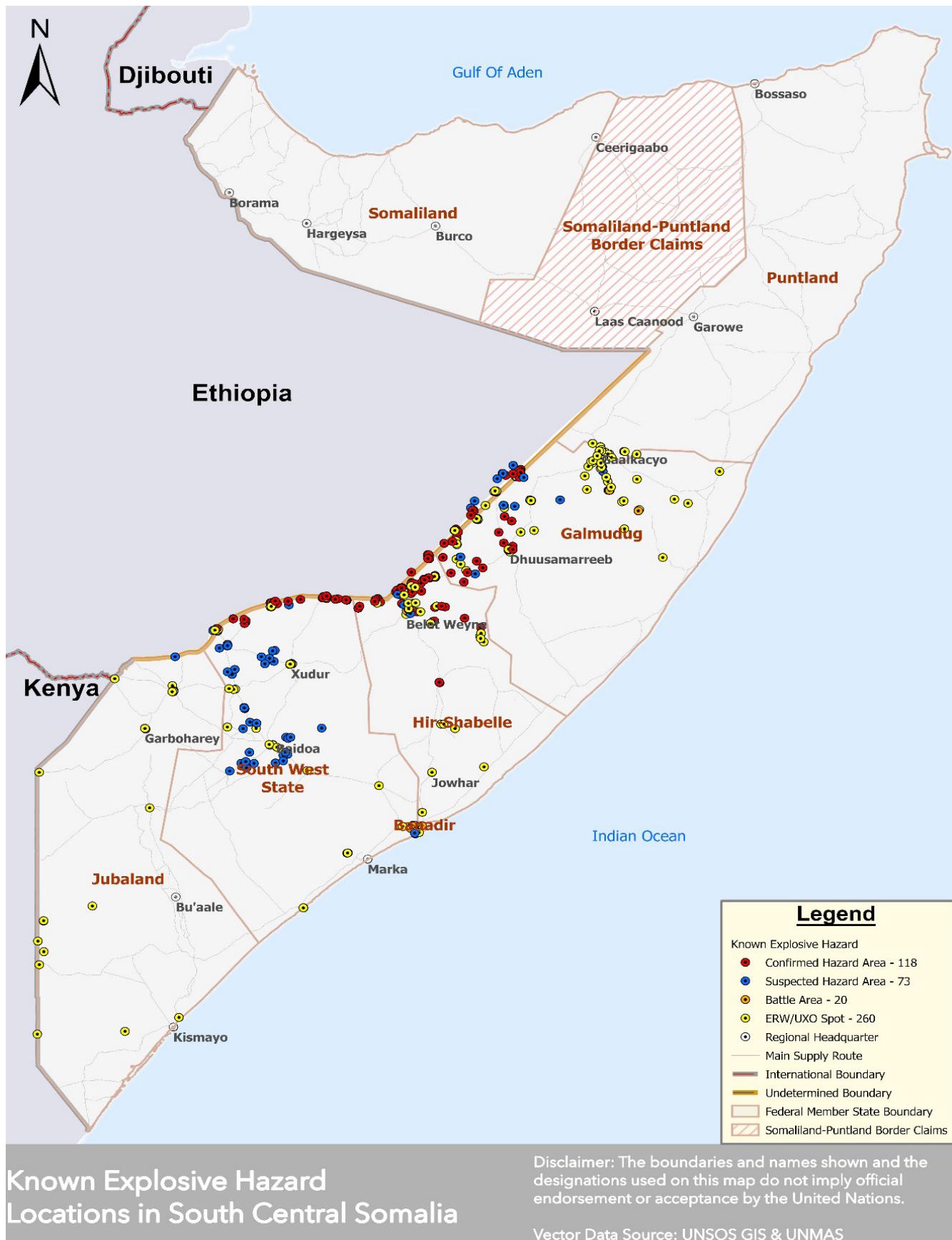


Fig 11: Recorded Explosive Hazard Threats in South Central Somalia

<sup>8</sup> A team composed of personnel trained and equipped to conduct survey of an area suspected and confirmed to be contaminated with explosive hazards, able to evaluate the hazard status of the objects and dispose of them accordingly.

## 2.1 Activities

### • Survey and Clearance

In response to the explosive hazards identified, UNMAS deployed four mobile explosive ordnance clearance teams (Multi-tasking teams - MTTs) across South-West, Hirshabelle, and Galmudug. The MTTs focused on supporting AMISOM's mobility and the community by identifying and removing explosive hazards as ETM strategy. MTTs conducted survey and clearance activities to reduce the threat of explosive hazards by removing potential explosive material sources. They responded to known hazards and attended to new callouts.

UNMAS deployed six Manual Demining Teams (MDTs) in South-West, Hirshabelle, and Galmudug. The teams located and dispose of anti-tank mines in the minefields, including low-content mines. This was carried out as a stabilisation effort by building the capacity of impacted communities to remove explosive hazards and facilitate the safe resumption and continuance of economic activities when cleared land is released. These efforts contribute to the safety of communities from the threat posed by explosive hazards.

### • Explosive Ordnance Risk Education (EORE)

UNMAS maintained 23 Community Liaison Officers (CLOs) and 40 EORE facilitators deployed to districts across the Federal Member States (FMS), particularly in Galmudug, Hirshabelle, South-West, and Jubaland. The EORE facilitators assessed explosive hazards and delivered EORE to the local communities, internally displaced persons, and returnees, promoting safe behaviours. A Training of Trainers (ToT) on EORE was also provided to the focal points within organisations working in support of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) and returnees, who then coordinated the EORE in communities. The EORE sessions were also delivered through face to face presentations compounded by leaflets and radio broadcast reaching a wide range of participants. UNMAS also provided EORE, mainly focusing on schoolchildren, schoolteachers, and community education committees. Additionally, UNMAS incorporated WHO approved public health-related messaging to raise the 'communities' awareness of the threat posed by COVID-19. The COVID-19 prevention messages included basic hygiene routines, maintaining physical-distancing protocols, and limiting participants in a gathering.

The CLOs also conducted route surveys in support of communities, security forces and other stabilisation partners. CLOs assess MSR<sup>9</sup>s for explosive hazards, vulnerable points, vulnerable areas, and road conditions. These activities are done in support of the mission, humanitarian agencies, stabilisation partners and the FMS to facilitate the implementation of the Transition Plan. Continuous MSR assessments enable stakeholders to be updated on the road conditions for convoy planning operations, thereby enabling safe access to communities.



Fig 12: MTT operator setting up demolition of UXO



Fig 13: MDT deminer excavating an AT

<sup>9</sup> CLOs teams in explosive ordnance affected communities who exchange information on the presence and impact of ERW/mines.

- **Disability and Victim Assistance**

In line with the United Nations Mine Action Strategy (2019-2023) Strategic Outcome 3, UNMAS Somalia continued to support the Federal Government of Somalia (FGS) through the Somalia Explosive Management Authority (SEMA). UNMAS supports SEMA in assessing explosive ordnance accident sites and recording the impact on survivors and their families, followed by emergency EORE to the affected communities. Accident and Victim data was shared with protection stakeholders, for linkages with the appropriate referral pathways and relevant service providers, and for the development of assistance initiatives by partners working to support explosive ordnance victims.



**Fig 14: CLO delivering EORE messages to IDPs**

Working together with UNSOM, UNMAS supported SEMA and Ministry of Women and Human Rights Development (MoWHRD) to finalise the National Action Plan for Victim and Disability Assistance (NAPVDA) expected to be endorsed by the FGS in 2021. The Ministry of Internal Security (MoIS) and the MoWHRD, with support from UNMAS, will implement the NAPVDA. Additionally, victim assistance has been included in the Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) for 2021 in collaboration with Protection Cluster.

- **Advocacy**

Most annual advocacy events were virtually held this year due to the COVID-19 pandemic. SEMA participated in the States Parties to the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Treaty (APMBT) meeting. UNMAS supported the FGS through SEMA in preparing ‘Somalia’s deadline extension request to Article 5 of the APMBT.’ ‘Somalia’s deadline expires in October 2022 and will have to submit a comprehensive deadline extension request by March 2021 for approval.

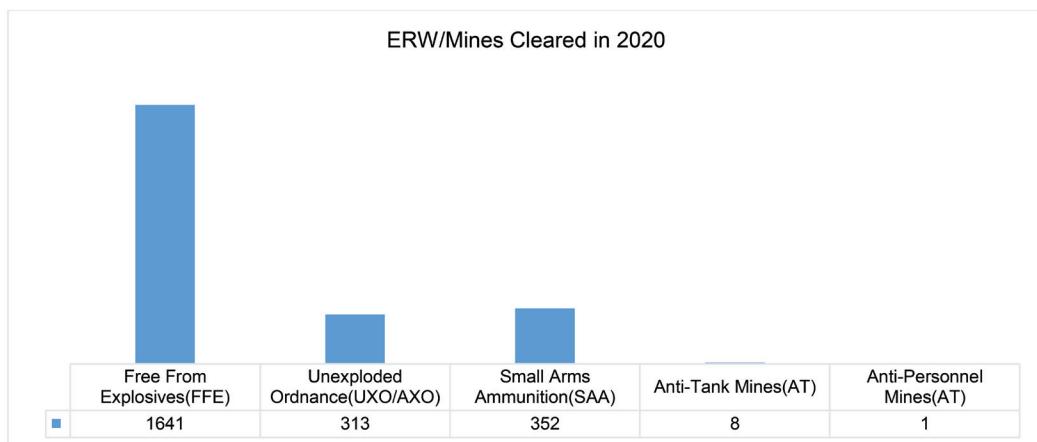
Additionally, UNMAS continued to build the national mine action ‘authority’s capacity and provide appropriate equipment and training. UNMAS partnered with local Mine Action NGOs, such as Jubaland Mine Action Network (JUMAN), to strengthen their capacity in delivering mine action services. Further advocacy and resource mobilization efforts were also carried out, resulting in a portfolio of mine action projects being included in the Somalia Humanitarian Fund (SHF), Humanitarian Needs Overview (HNO), and Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP) for 2021.

## 2.2 Outputs

- **Land is released for productive use**

In 2020, four mobile MTTs reached over 335 task sites in four FMS, whose tasks included non-technical survey, battle area clearance, and spot clearance. Spot clearance activities involved removing ERW/mines, making them inaccessible to armed groups that potentially harvest them for manufacturing IEDs. In 2020, MTTs released an area totalling 8.6 sq. km of battle area sites across the four FMS. The teams also deployed in Banadir Region and verified several significant and strategic locations, including the proposed site for Mogadishu Blood Bank.

The demining teams manually cleared 771,940 sqm along the Ethiopian border areas with evidence of legacy landmines. The clearance teams cleared explosive ordnances from blocked land resources and infrastructure to ensure a safer living environment for the communities. Clearance of legacy landmines and ERW plugs into the broader ETM efforts and reduces the sources of explosive material used as parts for IEDs. The latter complement the wider National Stabilisation Strategy (NSS) and is aligned to the Transition Plan.



**Fig 15 – ERW/Mines cleared in Somalia in 2020**

Figure 15 shows categories of explosive hazards that were cleared by the teams in 2020. Of the different categories, 70% of the ERW cleared were Free From Explosive (FFE), 15% were Small Arms Ammunition (SAA), 14% were Unexploded Ordnance (UXO), and 1% landmines. A total of 352 SAA, 313 UXO, and 9 landmines (1 AP and 8 AT) were cleared. Although FFEs do not pose a danger directly to communities, there is evidence that armed groups harvest them and use them as casings when constructing IEDs. The removal of FFE is a necessary step in mitigating the threat of explosive hazards in Somalia and reduces the repeated callouts from the community who often confuse FFEs for ERW/mines.

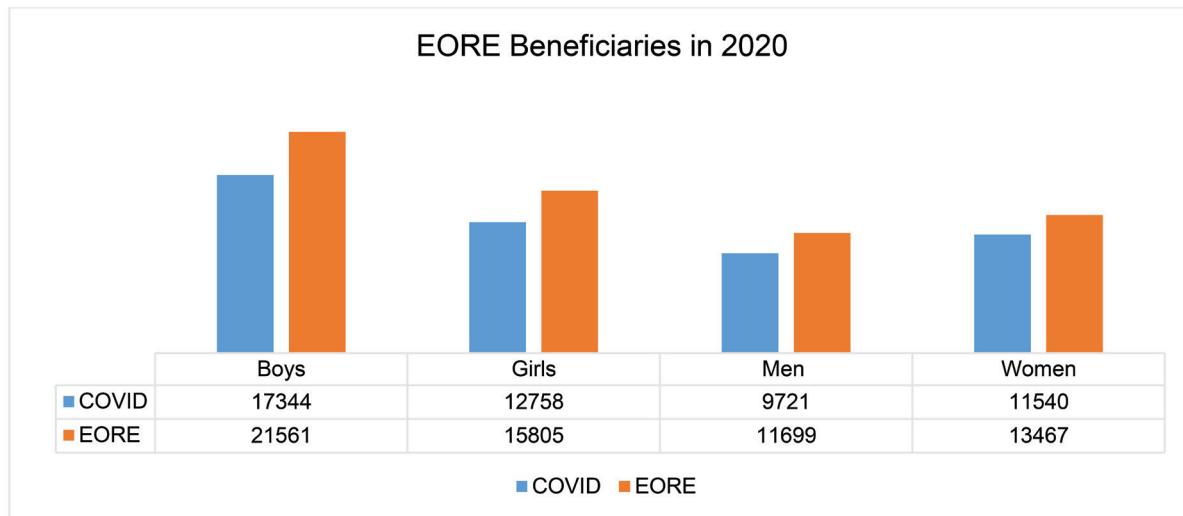
Somalia registered more anti-tank mines in 2020 compared to 2019. The anti-tank mines found in Somalia are from previous wars, and some had very low metal content, which requires caution. There is limited information on the minefields and the nature of contamination , hence it is extremely challenging to plan clearance activities. Demining teams and MTTs covered an area totalling 9.3 sq. km. Across the districts, the clearance activities restored access to land, resulting in resumption and creation of new livelihood opportunities.

- **Risk Education is delivered to conflict affected communities**

CLOs conducted EORE, assessment of explosive hazards, village assessments, and route surveys – covering over 344 villages, through which they identified 341 non-functional public facilities. The teams carried out 327 route surveys covering 4,381 km and delivered 11,237 EORE sessions, reaching 62,532 participants in 2020. About 60% of the participants were children (both boys and girls) of various age groups, while 40% were adults. As an add-on to the EORE sessions, the EORE facilitators delivered sessions to provide WHO-approved public health awareness messages on preventing COVID-19 among the vulnerable communities and in remote locations. A total of 10,375 COVID-19 awareness sessions reaching 51,363 beneficiaries were reached in 2020.

<sup>10</sup> Mines and ammunition that have been subjected to render safe procedures, have had all explosives removed and certified safe.

<sup>12</sup> In Beletweyne district, Hiran Region – the clearance teams detected mixed anti-tank mines, both metallic (TM-46, USSR origin) and plastic (PRB M3, Belgian origin) anti-tank mines, within the same task site.



**Fig 16: EORE delivered to local communities in 2020**

UNMAS continued engagement with stakeholders through various coordination structures in the mission and taking part in international engagements to highlight the progress in dealing with ERW/mines in Somalia.

### 2.3 Outcomes and Impacts

UNMAS community-based approach in Mine Action provided increased employment opportunities and significant cash injection into the communities, mainly to vulnerable youths. Clearance activities led to improved safety and increased the economic environment due to the resumption of commercial activities. Clearance activities contributed to the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). UNMAS operations contributed to the achievement of SDG 16 and 17, but they are also within a broader outlook that complements other SDGs. With the objective 'to leave no one behind' especially the most vulnerable and marginalised, mine action in fragile contexts lays the foundation for sustainable peace. In promoting a transformational process, UNMAS assists communities, create jobs, reduces violence, increases access to services and enables development operations to take shape.

Clearance of explosive ordnance from CHA and the release of 8.6sq km to the community enabled them to regain access to land resources. Similarly, clearance activities contributed to supporting AMISOM operations by making these devices unavailable to armed opposition groups, reducing the potential sources of IED components that can be manufactured and used against AMISOM and Somali Security Forces (SSF). It also facilitates improved safety and security, allowing communities to re-build their lives and other sustainable development activities. EORE contributes to increased risk awareness and reduces risk-taking behaviours by the local populace.

UNMAS interventions enabled and supported the FGS' strategy on Mine Action and their commitment to international treaty obligations. There has been improved national management and coordination capability, capacity, and responsiveness of SEMA at FMS and FGS levels.

## Key Message

Responding to the threat of explosive hazards in Somalia is crucial, despite the various challenges. Community-based clearance approaches have proved to be effective, considering the security situation. It empowers Somalis, creates jobs, and contributes towards socio-economic benefits within the community.

Raising awareness of the threat of explosive hazards is also key, but more importantly, there is a need to build robust systems for supporting victims and survivors. The NAPVDA provides a suitable platform for building and embedding support for victims and survivors holistically. The inclusion of victims and disability assistance in the HRP for 2021 is a good starting point.

As Somalia is preparing for an extension request for the implementation of article-5 in the APMBT which expires in October 2022, it is crucial to consolidate and strengthen efforts to support clearance of landmines, EORE and capacity building for the national mine action institutions to enable Somalia to fulfil its mine action related treaty obligations.

## **3. Small Arms and Light Weapons/Weapons and Ammunition Management**

### **3.1 Activities**

UNMAS continues to assist the FGS with promoting the development of a comprehensive national Weapons and Ammunition Management (WAM) system and supports UNSOS, UNSOM and UN agencies with WAM-related advice. Through direct support to the National WAM Focal Point (NWFP), UNMAS assisted the FGS with notifying the UN Sanctions Committee regarding progress towards its compliance with sanction obligations. UNMAS also enhanced SPF capability in Mogadishu and enabled the provision of equipment and training to SNA IEDD teams. UNMAS provided technical advice to UNSOM and donors regarding storing bulk stocks of high explosive ammunition within Aden Abdulle International Airport (AAIA). UNMAS also participated in the National WAM Consultative Meeting and continued to enhance internal understanding of WAM-related matters. UNMAS assisted the NWFP with drafting the second of its two annual reports to the UN Sanctions Committee detailing progress made with Somalia's compliance with the UN Arms Embargo. Direct support was also provided to the National WAM Consultative Meeting that the FGS convened.

### **3.2 Outputs**

- **FGS and FMS develop increased capacity to safely and securely store and manage ammunition and explosives in accordance with national and international standards.**

UNMAS drafted two Advance Delivery Approvals for the NWFP relating to the provision of explosives to SPF EOD teams. These included increased storage allowance and resulted in explosives, and related accessories supplied to SPF EOD teams in Mogadishu. Further support of this process included providing explosive safes and related training and mentoring focused upon safety and accountability.

UNMAS supported the drafting of the Security Council Advance Delivery Notifications with the Office of the National Security Advisor (ONSA) relating to the provision of training and equipment by UNMAS to SPF EOD and SNA IEDD teams. UNMAS supported FGS to commit the compilation of a full ammunition inventory and conduct of a technical assessment to identify and ultimately mitigate Unplanned Explosion at a Munitions Site (UEMS) risks. UNMAS participated in the National WAM Consultative Meeting to validate the National WAM Baseline Study results and actively engage FMS WAM representatives.

### **3.3 Outcomes and Impacts**

With support from UNMAS, the FGS continued to improve both its WAM capabilities and compliance with important aspects of the UN Arms Embargo and reporting to the UN Sanctions Committee. UNMAS provided support to SPF EOD teams in Mogadishu to respond to explosive hazards and trained and equipped SNA IEDD teams. Broad understanding of UEMS risk within the UN compound has been enhanced. UNMAS continues to support processes that will harmonise FGS WAM processes across the FMS, including through the conduct of WAM Workshops and endorsement of the draft SALW and Private Security Company legislation awaits parliamentary approval.

## Key Message

UNMAS maintained consistent technical and policy-related WAM support to the FGS that has assisted the government in areas including technical capacity, compliance with international standards and treaties, and improved compliance with relevant UN resolutions. In this respect and the context of continuing development of national WAM capacity, UNMAS remains well-positioned to maintain or expand its support, increasing SNA IEDD capacity and capability and the safe management of bulk ammunition stocks.

## 4. Analysis of Stand-Off Weapons in Somalia

### 4.1 Significant Stand-Off Weapons attacks in 2020

Stand-Off Weapons (SOWs) used by armed opposition groups in Somalia include 60mm and 81/82mm, plus B10 (originally designed as an anti-tank weapon) but previously also used in the indirect fire role. Most SOW attacks occur against AMISOM FOBs in rural areas in South Central Somalia, with 114 incidents recorded throughout 2020.

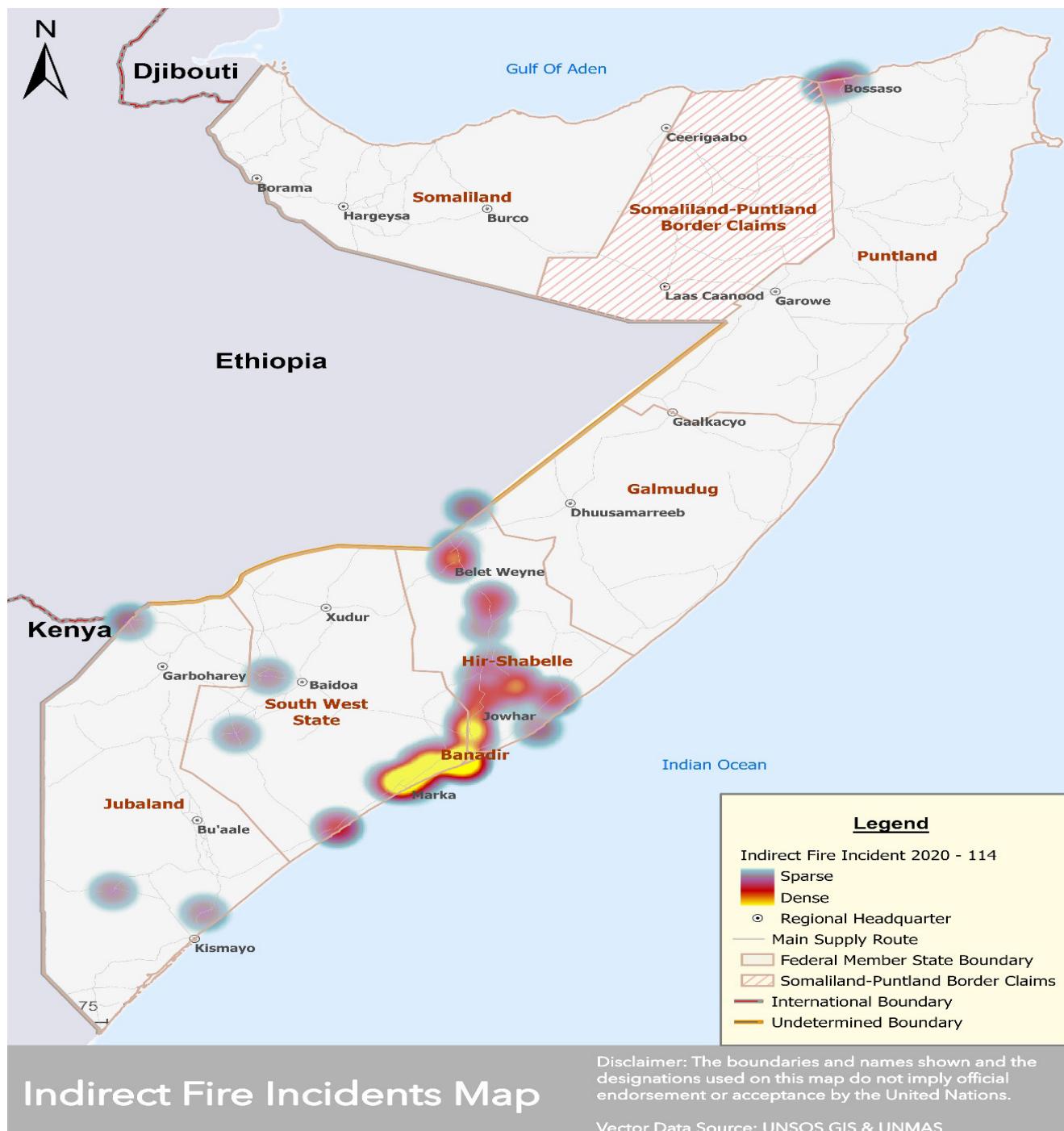


Fig 17: -Comparison Stand-off Weapons incidents regionally - 2020

SOW attacks in Mogadishu are relatively rare, with only seven such attacks recorded in 2020, six of which impacted AAIA, including four incidents in which mortars landed inside the UN compound (all incidents were 60mm mortars). It was assessed at the time that this increase in the use of mortars correlated with a decrease in the use of VBIEDs in an attempt for the group to maintain its relevance as an entity entirely capable of carrying out high profile attacks.

In 2020, Lower Shabelle and Hiraan regions in South Central recorded the highest SOW incidents. Lower Shabelle had 20 mortar attacks, while Hiraan region recorded 21 attacks as shown in Figure 17. The attacks in Lower Shabelle are likely a result of the operations being conducted to push armed opposition groups north of river Shabelle to protect the MSRs in Sector 1. Figure 17 illustrates the density of attacks in Lower Shabelle and how they spread along the MSRs into Beletweyne through Middle Shabelle and Hiraan regions. These attacks are primarily focused on fixed point locations (primarily FOBs), although there have been few instances of attacks on convoys or foot patrols. There is, however, a significant difference in capability between the eight attacks in Mogadishu and those experienced in other locations. The mortar attacks in Mogadishu appear to have been executed with the level of accuracy and competency compared to incidents in other locations, with further IDF incidents presenting a persistent threat.

## Conclusion

In 2020, Somalia recorded the lowest number of IEDs since 2017 and lower civilian casualties from IEDs compared to 2019 due to a lull in the use of VBIEDs in urban areas compared to previous years. However, the SNA bore a heavy toll in casualties from IEDs in 2020, becoming the highest impacted group during the year. UNMAS continues to support key partners and stakeholders in operational and strategic matters related to explosive hazard threats. Training, equipping and mentoring of AMISOM in IED-TM continued during the year, with a recent extension of support to the SNA in line with Somalia Transition Plan. UNMAS support to the SNA combines tactical and operational level capacity with long term institutional support. UNMAS will continue to monitor the emerging and evolving IED threats, strengthening data collection and technical analysis for informed decision-making. Coherent approaches under one UN approach will be promoted with the various stakeholders allowing the common narrative and complementarity of effort on the explosive hazard threat within Somalia.

UNMAS continued with EORE activities through community-based initiatives to mitigate the threat of ERW/mines whilst carrying out mine clearance activities to promote and sustain access to land resources. UNMAS initiated an innovative approach of using RETD in EORE targeting inaccessible locations with the aim of reducing civilian casualties and the impact of ERW/mine.

<sup>12</sup> UN compound impacted by 60 mm mortars on the 17 February, 18 March, 26 April and 09 May 2020



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