

IRAQ PROGRAMME REPORT 2022





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GLOSSARY

AKAF Al-Khebra al-Fania

BMCO Baghdad Mine Clearance Organization

CSC Community Safety Committees

DCA Danish Church Aid

DMA Directorate for Mine Action

EHFR Explosive Hazard First Responder

EHM Explosive Hazard Management

EOD Explosive Ordnance Disposal

EORE Explosive Ordnance Risk Education

ERW Explosive Remnants of War

FSD Federation Suisse Deminage

GCS Global Clearance Solutions

HCT Humanitarian Country Team

HI Humanity and Inclusion

HMA Humanitarian Mine Action

HTO Humanitarian Transition Overview

HRP Humanitarian Response Plan

IDP Internally Displaced Person

IEDD Improvised Explosive Device Disposal

IHSCO Health and Social Care Organization in Iraq

IKMAA Iraqi Kurdistan Mine Action Agency

INGO International Non-Governmental Organizations

IOM International Organization for Migration

ISIL Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant

JCMC Joint Coordination and Monitoring Centre

MA AoR Mine Action Area of Responsibility

NMAA National Mine Action Authorities

NRC Norwegian Refugee Council

NTS Non-Technical Survey

RAC Residential Area Clearance

RMAC Regional Mine Action Centre

SHO Shareteah Humanitarian Organization

T3 Train-the-Trainer

TS Technical Support

TSAP Technical Support Action Plan

UNICEF United Nations International Children's
Emergency Fund



A Message From the Chief Mine Action Programme

Pehr Lodhammar

Having worked with the United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS) in Iraq for the last six years, I have seen firsthand, and often daily, the devastation war and conflict can have on a country. In Iraq, enormous areas, previously productive and used for farming and grazing, have been left contaminated with various types of explosive ordnance, which now pose a direct and deadly threat to the lives of the local population and especially children. The United Nations, has played and continues to play a pivotal role in assisting the Government of Iraq (GoI) and the Iraqi people to emerge from this sad chapter and into a brighter, safer, and more prosperous future, where internally displaced persons (IDPs) can safely return to their homes and families can allow their children to play outside without risking lives and limbs. Over the last six years, the programme has evolved from providing emergency humanitarian mine action assistance and stabilization support in the liberated areas, to supporting durable solutions and focusing on nationalization and localization. Despite the change in focus and terminology, UNMAS Iraq continues with its three pillars of activities: survey and clearance; explosive ordnance risk education (EORE); and technical support (TS). These pillars ensure that Iraqi communities are safe and assist us in our mission to facilitate the safe, dignified, and voluntary return of IDPs to their places of origin.

This year, with the transition to durable solutions and sustainable clearance activities through localization and nationalization, UNMAS has refocused the efforts on to jointly with the GoI work on strengthening the ability of the GoI to efficiently manage mine action activities through coordination and oversight. In 2022, joint work included strengthening of task prioritization systems, the review and update of the National Mine Action Standards (NMAS) in coordination with the mine action sector, and explosive ordnance training activities to support the Ministry of Interior (MoI) for Iraqi police women and men.

For the second year, UNMAS implemented its partnership model by providing grants to international non-governmental organizations (INGOs) which, in turn, partnered with national NGOs (NNGOs) to build and enhance the NNGO capacity and capability. The initial two-years grants will be followed by a third year for some of the grantees to provide sufficient time for additional capability to be realized and consolidated. By mid-2023, UNMAS aims to see these NNGOs fully autonomous and able to carry out survey and Improvised Explosive Device Disposal (IEDD), as well as all other functions any NGO must be able to fulfil to be efficient.

One of my personal and primary goals from the first day I set foot in Iraq, was to increase women's participation in the Iraqi mine

action sector, on all levels. Since then, UNMAS Iraq's efforts have continued to contribute to, and support, women's livelihood in war-affected areas and to increase their involvement in the traditionally male-dominated mine action sector. As a result, this year, we currently have 177 women participating in UNMAS operations, representing 24 per cent of the total national staff across the programme. We now have close to 200 women working with our implementing partners in operational roles from searchers to team leaders. As evidence of the persistence and resilience of the women and men we work with, I will highlight the unfortunate incident that happened on 5 July last year, where a newly laid IED detonated under a minibus with a female and male search team on their way to the worksite. The bus was completely destroyed; and reviewing the pictures, I feared the worst; one would have expected serious injuries and even fatalities. Thankfully, the passengers only sustained minor injuries, as the vehicle and the equipment loaded in the bus absorbed the majority of the blast. Luckily, those injured could leave the hospital on the same day; however, I feared that those involved in the incident would not return to clearance work again, in particular the seven women who were part of the affected search team. Alongside their careers, women in Iraq often bear the burden of also caring for their families and their communities, which can make it more difficult to work in such a dangerous environment. However, despite the shock from the accident and resistance from their families that these women had to face, after a month, all women were back in the field alongside their male counterparts, financially supporting their families and freeing their communities from explosive ordnance (EO) that continues to haunt the Iraqi people. I always say that in Iraq, every day is a school day, meaning that I learn something every day and if I have learnt one thing from this incident, it is what resilience looks like. In Iraq I see it every day!

I hosted visits from many of our donors throughout the year. One of the sites that we always return to with our donors is the Al Shifa Hospital Complex in western Mosul, as the complex is a piece of history for UNMAS and was one of our first stabilization priorities and possibly one of our most complex tasks. The clearance of the hospital was completed four years ago, after we had spent almost two years working under the most imaginable difficult conditions, inside and under buildings that could collapse any second, with tons and tons of war debris mixed with IEDs we removed more than two thousand items of unexploded ordnance. We still see the outcomes from the work at Al Shifa and our donors always leave with strong impressions and pictures from what we accomplished there.

It is an honour and pleasure to work with the UNMAS Iraq team and an honour to have served the Iraqi people for a great portion of my life. I am pleased to share the UNMAS Iraq Annual Report for 2022, highlighting our key activities and achievements in the country. I wish to thank all our donors who contributed this year and continue to support us, without this support, the work of UNMAS would not have been possible.

Pehr Lodhammar
Chief Mine Action Programme, UNMAS Iraq



Support for UNMAS in Iraq in 2022 comes from the voluntary contributions of these countries:





VISION

The GoI manages an efficient mine action sector that protects civilians from the threat of EO and enables stabilization and development efforts to proceed unimpeded by EO.

MISSION

UNMAS Iraq supports the development of a sustainable, well-coordinated national mine action sector and reduces the threat of EO to civilians.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS) programme in Iraq was launched in 2015 to assist the Government of Iraq (GoI) in managing the emergency response to the then-ongoing conflict against the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL).

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The UNMAS Iraq programme was established in 2015 at the request of the GoI and the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI) to assist with the extensive and complex EO contamination, including IEDs, following the conflict with the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) as well as explosive remnants of war (ERW) remaining from previous conflicts. Through clearance operations, with a strong focus on capacity development of national mine action operators, gender mainstreaming, as well as provision of TS to the GoI national mine action authorities, UNMAS Iraq contributes to stabilization, restoration of basic services, and the safe and dignified return of IDPs.

The response was delivered mainly through a focused explosive hazard management (EHM) strategy allowing for effective survey and clearance in support of stabilization efforts supplemented with significant EORE efforts to provide civilian awareness of explosive threats. The strategy was implemented in parallel with technical and advisory support provided to relevant GoI mine action authorities and stakeholders to enhance and increase the EHM response capacity. Iraq has moved out of the emergency phase, meaning the country is now better prepared to gradually adopt control, coordination, and implementation of most of its mine action needs. Therefore, the UNMAS Iraq strategy in 2022 focused on supporting the GoI to effectively prioritize tasks implemented increasingly by national actors through providing TS to the national mine action entities and enhancing the capacity development of national mine action actors towards a sustainable and localized humanitarian mine action response. In addition, UNMAS Iraq continued to deliver and disseminate lifesaving messages to the affected communities, IDP camps, local communities, and schools in the areas liberated from ISIL to ensure that communities at risk recognized how to mitigate the threat of EO and could adopt safe behaviours.

In 2022, UNMAS Iraq continued the 'partnership model' where international mine action NGOs work hand in hand with Iraqi NNGOs to develop the national operator's

capacity and generate independent and sustainable national operational organizations accredited to respond to the threats of EO in Iraq. Two NNGOs were fully accredited to implement clearance of EO and operate autonomously.

The humanitarian cluster system in Iraq concluded its role by the end of 2022, as the country transitioned from the emergency to the development phase. UNMAS has led the Mine Action Area of Responsibility (MA AoR) to address EO as one of the main barriers to safe, sustainable, dignified, and voluntary returns of displaced people after the end of military operations in 2017. For over seven years, the MA AoR served as a coordination platform for humanitarian mine action actors in Iraq within the humanitarian cluster system to achieve common objectives, avoid duplication, and prioritize work.

The platform played a critical role in information sharing, advocacy for the needs of affected communities, ensuring the inclusion of mine action in humanitarian response plans, and raising operational challenges with the GoI. Next year the functions will be integrated and led by the national mine action authorities (NMAAs), namely the Directorate for Mine Action (DMA) and the Iraqi Kurdistan Mine Action Agency (IKMAA), who will ensure continued coordination and collaboration between stakeholders.

UNMAS Iraq focuses on the following three pillars of activities:

- » Support GoI and national mine action entities with managing, regulating, and coordinating a mine action response through **TS** initiatives;
- » Deliver **EORE** at the community and national/regional level; and
- » Provide **EHM** response in support of humanitarian and stabilization efforts.














In 2022, UNMAS developed, updated, and translated the Iraqi NMAS which are considered the national regulations that govern mine action activities in Iraq, for the DMA to better control and manage mine action activities according to the most recent international standards and norms; also advocated for allocating state budget funding for national partners. Furthermore, UNMAS received formal approval from the Iraq Ministry of Defence and the DMA to examine the introduction of thermite-based disposal which are tools designed to penetrate the case of landmines and EO by focusing 2,500° to 3,500° Celsius of heat on a specific point,

causing the explosives to burn out or deflagrate. It is not classified as 'High Explosive,' can be shipped on commercial aircraft, and cannot be weaponized. It is specifically designed to meet the needs of the EOD community and is particularly suited to humanitarian mine action (HMA).

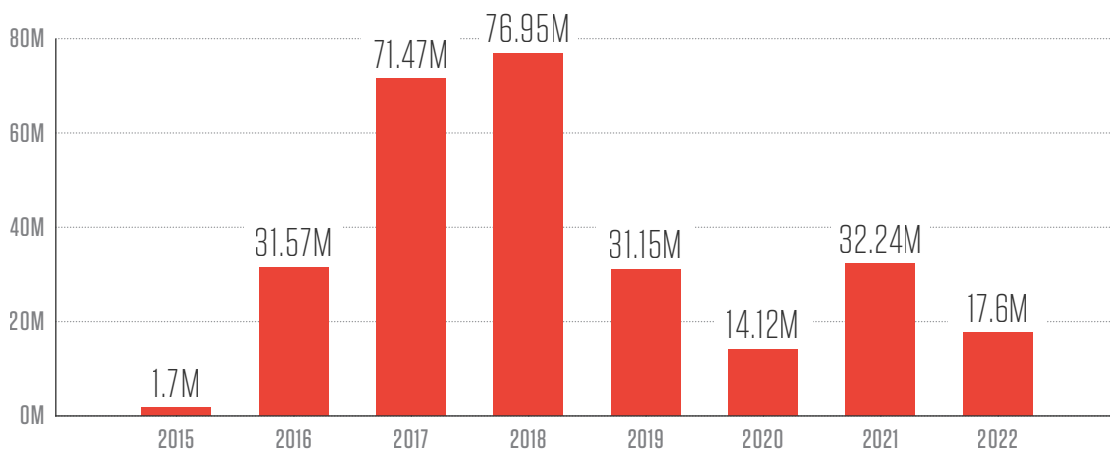
Due to the nature of threats posed by EO, UNMAS Iraq teams are among the first responders allowing the humanitarian community and local authorities to intervene safely, quickly and efficiently to help civilians.

Strategic Pillar/ Donors 2022

PILLAR SUPPORT BY DONOR

	EXPLOSIVE HAZARD MANAGEMENT	EXPLOSIVE ORDNANCE RISK EDUCATION	TECHNICAL SUPPORT
	Australia		
	Belgium		
	Canada		
	Czech Republic		
	Denmark		
	Estonia		
	European Union		
	France		
	Germany		
	Italy		
			New Zealand
	Slovakia		
	Sweden		

FUNDS SECURED PER YEAR SINCE INCEPTION



TECHNICAL SUPPORT (TS)

In 2022, UNMAS Iraq supported the national led mine action responses and enhanced its partnership with Gol mine action authorities to expand the national capacity.

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UNMAS commenced the implementation of the 24-month Technical Support Action Plan (TSAP) in January 2022, which was developed together with, and subsequently endorsed by the DMA in 2021. The TSAP outlines the TS areas of collaboration between UNMAS, the DMA and the IKMAA to improve the capacity of the two entities to lead and coordinate the mine action sector.

UNMAS Iraq continued to provide strategic and technical advice on numerous mine action related matters including, but not limited to, improved coordination of the mine action sector, strengthened prioritization systems, review and update of the NMAS, advocacy, and donor engagement. Two NMAS roundtable workshops were held during 2022: the first workshop was in June; and the second one in October, attended by representatives from DMA, IKMAA, the MoD and UNMAS.

The first of three Prioritization workshops was held from 12 to 13 October with representatives from DMA and the Regional Mine Action Centre (RMAC). All discussed the challenges with the ever-changing priorities between the governorates and ministries; the future workshops will be focused on improving communication between each level.



UNMAS provided mine action management training for the Mol and police, including Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD), IEDD, Explosive Hazard First Responder (EHFR) courses and Non-Technical Survey (NTS) training supported with Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAV). All training was closely monitored by the UNMAS Train-the-Trainers (T3) teams; the leading graduates of each class then go through an additional T3 session to help build the national capacity.

Since the start of 2022, the UNMAS T3 programme has trained 189 Mol officers in these skills of which 167 officers received passing scores (88 per cent).

Of the **189 officers, 11 were women officers with 100 percent** receiving passing scores. The high rate of success among women is assisting UNMAS Iraq with promoting a better gender balance of students selected by Mol for training.

The EHFR training has become a well-recognized skill within the Mol. The course focuses on training officers on how to take charge of an incident site involving EO or IEDs, protecting the public and securing the area until the correct authorities arrive. It teaches awareness of the various threats



that can be encountered, the importance of establishing the safety cordon and how to recognize key items that may prove to be crucial evidence that should not be disturbed.

The 13-week EOD/IEDD training course provided by the UNMAS Iraq T3 team is one of the most challenging courses, which also has a high failure rate. UNMAS worked closely with the authorities to establish the academic and practical curriculum; all operators who pass are certified as 'Iraq Mol EOD/IEDD Operators' and returned to their units.

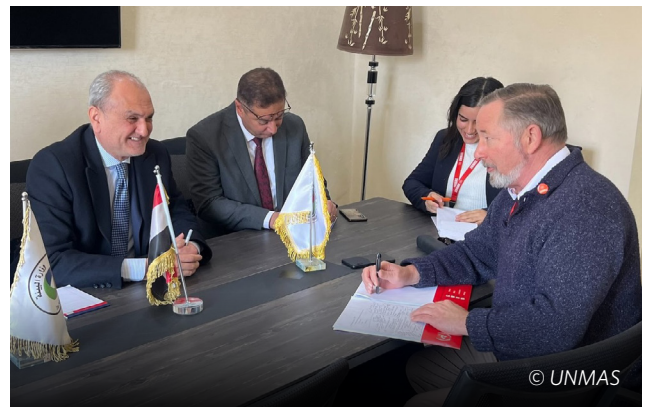
The photo shown above shows the results of a two-day task in Anbar governorate by the Mol EOD/IEDD Teams: a total of 45 IEDs placed by ISIL forces were safely neutralized and destroyed. The personnel involved with the task were trained by the UNMAS Iraq T3 teams. The Mol instructors now carry out most of the training, however, small-group mentoring is still required by the UNMAS T3 teams for fully transferring the skills and the principles.

The UAV training programme introduced by the UNMAS TS team has helped the GoI authorities understand how modern technology can assist in the EO clearance tasks. This was initially only offered to Mol officers, however, during the fourth quarter of 2022, four participants from DMA attended the first joint Mol/DMA NTS UAV course.



The results of this training have been put to practical use by the Mol EOD/IEDD teams for reconnaissance on their tasks. The current UAVs have received a great deal of 'wear and tear' during the training courses; spare parts are harder to come by as they are older models. UNMAS Iraq assessed the potential to replace the existing UAVs with current, smaller versions.

In summary, UNMAS TS provided two Basic Humanitarian Mine Action Management training courses that were conducted in Maysan and Thi Qar governorates in cooperation with Joint Coordination and Monitoring Centre (JCMC) and attended by 67 Mol police officers (59 men and 8 women).



In support of the Mol EOD/IEDD teams, UNMAS provided the following:

3 EOD/IEDD courses
to 62 officers
(61 ♂ 1 ♀)

3 EOD/IEDD T3 courses
to 36 officers (♂)

2 EHFR courses
to 16 officers
(7 ♂ 9 ♀)

2 UAV courses
to 27 officers (♂)

1 UAV T3 course
to 21 officers (♂)

1 Non-technical survey course
to 26 participants (25 ♂ 1 ♀)
from the Mol and DMA supported with UAVs

EXPLOSIVE ORDNANCE RISK EDUCATION (EORE)

In 2022, UNMAS Iraq continued to deliver life-saving messages to the affected communities to mitigate the EO casualties and promote safer behaviour amongst the vulnerable groups.

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key EORE messages and links to social media pages on Facebook and Twitter with life-saving messages.

In parallel, UNMAS continued to strengthen the EORE national capacity to ensure the continuity of EORE messaging in affected communities. Based on this, UNMAS delivered EORE capacity-building training to schoolteachers from the Directorate of Education of Ninewa governorate and community focal points.

More than 500 teachers from the areas of operations were trained and provided with training packages and materials to support their delivery of EORE messages to students in their respective schools. Additionally, **129 (76 male and 53 female) community focal points were trained** from Ninewa Community Police Department and from the local communities to deliver EORE sessions to their affected communities. In Anbar governorate, UNMAS also trained eight religious leaders as community focal points in order to ensure the sustainability of the EORE messaging through mobilization of religious leaders. As a result, the religious leaders started to deliver EORE sessions during Friday prayers to raise awareness and encourage at-risk people to adopt safer behaviour.

Accordingly, **UNMAS conducted EORE sessions to a total of 96,260 people** (11,601 women, 32,373 girls, 43,218 boys, 9,068 men) in Anbar, Ninewa and Basra governorates.

In Ninewa, UNMAS continued to deliver direct and indirect EORE activities in the prioritized areas in Mosul, Sinjar and Tel Afar districts, as well as Ninewa plains. Indirect activities included distributing EORE materials with tailored messages for children and adults, installing billboards adapted to the age and local context, and delivering EORE messages through loudspeakers, considering different languages in the areas of operations. Moreover, UNMAS transmitted EORE SMS messages in Tel Afar, Hamdaniyah, Sheikhan, Tal Kaif, and in Ba'ashiqa, Mosul city centre, and Sinjar districts, including



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In 2022, UNMAS continued its support to the NNGOs through providing partnership opportunities with international NGOs in order to enhance the organizational and technical capacity of the NNGO. It is capacitated to deliver an effective EORE responses in Iraq, aligned with the priorities of the national authority. In Sinjar district, Humanity and Inclusion (HI), an INGO, contributed to building the overall capacity of Baghdad Mine Clearance Organization (BMCO), a NNGO, through providing workshops and training in Risk Education, Grant Management, Security, Finance, Human Resources, Monitoring and Evaluation and Learning capabilities. Also, HI/BMCO continued the implementation of the direct and indirect EORE activities in the prioritized villages in Sinjar under the supervision of HI. As a part of the EORE activities, HI implemented two quick safety projects aimed at reducing the negative impact posed by EO. The Community Safety Committees (CSC), informal, community-based, voluntary bodies that aim at managing the risks posed by EO through the development of community safety plans were established by HI and BMCO. These committees identify and implement safety projects. The two projects were implemented in Sinjar district based on the community's needs and priorities. The first safety project attempted to directly support scrap metal collectors, as it was identified by the CSC as a key priority. HI supported the collectors through engaging them in vocational training to build their skills in different areas, such as baking, carpentry, and barbering. Following the training, some collectors stopped collecting scrap metal and started working in areas related to the above vocations. The other safety project was the construction of a park which provided support to a youth centre. **UNMAS also provided EORE sessions to 936 cash-for-work workers** (130 women) employed by various UN agencies in Iraq as well as employees of NGOs engaging in high-risk activities. By targeting these individuals, UNMAS enabled a multiplier effect; not only reducing risk to the workers themselves but also enabling them to safely contribute to the recovery of the communities in the most need of assistance. UNMAS also provided EORE sessions to 936 cash-for-work workers (130 of whom were women) employed by various UN agencies in Iraq as well as employees of NGOs engaging in high-risk activities. By targeting these individuals, UNMAS enabled a multiplier effect; not only reducing risk to the workers themselves but also enabling them to safely contribute to the recovery of the communities in the most need of assistance.



Furthermore, UNMAS also continued its TS to the NMAAs to build their capacity in evaluating the EORE activities in Iraq. In May 2022, **UNMAS in collaboration with HI delivered a Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices (KAP) survey training to 14 participants** (13 male and one female) from DMA and IKMAA to build the skills necessary to evaluate the EORE activities in Iraq, improve the national authorities' understanding of their roles in evaluation, improve the national authorities' capacity to use the evaluation tools, improve the national authorities' capacity to use the evaluation data for better planning, management and implementation, and to increase the national authorities' ability/capacity to deploy efficient staff to evaluate the EORE activities. Following the training, the DMA introduced the KAP survey form to the EORE actors in Iraq and requested the support of UNMAS to develop/update the form in order to be used and adopted by all EORE actors in Iraq.

Moreover, as part of institutionalizing and sustained delivery of EORE in Iraq, UNMAS continues to lead an initiative in coordination with DMA and the Ministry of Education (MoE) to mainstream and integrate/update EORE into the school curriculum. The DMA, with the support of UNMAS, held several workshops to review the current EORE messages in some of the curricula and analyse the school curricula in order to identify in which curriculum the EORE messages can be integrated. As a result of the workshops, the DMA, MoE and UNMAS drafted relevant EORE messages to each curriculum, the EORE messages address safe and dangerous behaviours, warning signs, identification of EO, impact of EO and reporting to the national authorities. In addition to the EORE messages, EORE designs/images will also be integrated into the curriculum. The final EORE messages were sent to the Curriculum Directorate in the MoE and will be integrated into the curriculum in 2023.

EXPLOSIVE HAZARD MANAGEMENT (EHM)

Three 24-month “partnership model grants” were funded and implemented in 2020 to increase the capacity of NGOs through a partnership model with INGOs.

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Through this model, by the end of 2022, two national organizations were fully accredited and operational to conduct clearance operations and were able to autonomously manage a fully nationally led mine action response. The model also promotes gender mainstreaming and fosters female participation in the mine action sector. By the end of 2022, **women represented 25 per cent of the technical and support staff** amongst the implementing organizations in a sector previously, and traditionally, dominated by men in Iraq.

These partnership grants completed towards the end of 2022 and two of them were funded for a further year in 2023 to furnish the NNGO with additional management and clearance skills and make them more robust in their ability to compete for funding.



IEDD operator undergoing training assessment, 2022. © UNMAS

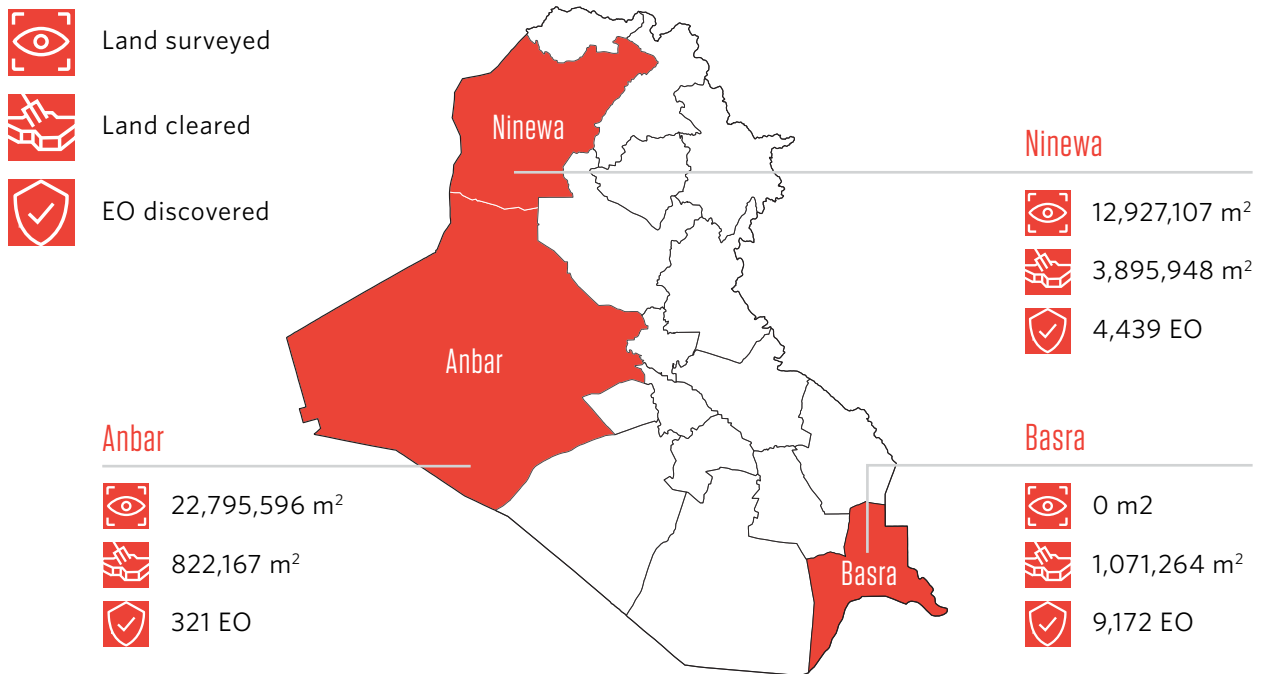
EHM also oversaw three contracts in 2022. Global Clearance Solutions (GCS), an international company, undertook one contract conducting a post-ISIL Residential Area Clearance (RAC) operation in Sinjar and a further contract undertaking clearance in Mosul. These contracts predominantly deal with the contamination caused by the ISIL occupation and the subsequent operations to defeat them. Al-Khebra Alfnea (AKAF), an Iraqi-owned company, conducted clearance of legacy contamination in Basra governorate. This contamination is predominantly from the Iran-Iraq War of the 1980s but also includes some additional contamination from the coalition forces that entered the country in 2003. All three contracts were renewed in 2022 and are due to be completed in 2023. All contractors seek to increase the participation of women in the mine action sector with GCS having women search teams incorporated in their structure since the initial contracts in 2020 and AKAF deploying a female team when the contract was renewed mid-2022. This was especially important in Basra where women had fewer opportunities.



Improvised explosive charges recovered during IED clearance. © UNMAS

Clearance Activities in Iraq

In 2022, UNMAS teams continued clearance activities in the governorates of Anbar, Basra and Ninewa and **cleared 5,789,379 m² of land** and **rendered safe some 14,000 explosives** from agricultural and residential areas.



Partnership Model Grant Completion

There were three partnership model grants undertaken in 2022. In Ninewa, the Federation Suisse Deminage (FSD) partnered with Sharateah Health Organization (SHO) and Danish Church Aid (DCA) partnered with Iraq Health and Social Care Organization (IHSCO); in Anbar, THE HALO Trust partnered with Al Ghad.

The partnership grants in Ninewa achieved their primary aims, although bureaucratic delays in achieving certifications





had reduced the amount of time for direct mentoring. In Anbar, unfortunately, THE HALO Trust and Al Ghad faced challenges to gain mine action certifications for Al Ghad to undertake independent operations resulting in clearance remaining under THE HALO Trust accreditation. The areas cleared in Al Anbar adjoined residential areas and as a result of the clearance new construction was commenced.

Grant	M ² Cleared 2022	EO recovered 2022	Female Staff Number and % of workforce
DCA/IHSCO	98,836	213	16 women / 39%
FSD/SHO	852,778	1,092	12 women / 21%
HALO/Al Ghad	719,974	184	5 women / 15%

Post ISIL Clearance Activities

GCS operations in Ninewa focused on clearance of extensive improvised mine lines (Victim Operated Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) running around the perimeter of Mosul city planted by ISIL in Tal Kaif district, North West of Mosul. This was implemented using mechanical clearance assets and manual search techniques. The clearance team was the target of a terrorist attack in July. An IED detonated under the team minibus carrying the all-women search team. GCS offered extensive support to the injured team members and their families in order to help them to make the transition back to work easier.





In Sinjar, RAC operations continued to facilitate access to safe houses for the safe and voluntary return of IDPs to their areas of origin. This project adopts a modular approach to clearance, with dedicated search and clearance assets deployed across multiple sites to increase efficiency and effectiveness. The teams also utilised mechanical assets to support and facilitate the clearance of rubble as well as remains of partially or completely war-damaged and collapsed buildings. The team worked initially in Barbarosh, a suburb of Sinjar, but towards the end of the year, they moved operations to the village of Ain Talawi. This village is contaminated and deserted. The clearance included the farmland around the village, allowing the returning villagers a means of income through agriculture.

 Contract	 M² Cleared 2022	 EO recovered 2022	 Female Staff Number and % of workforce
GCS Mosul	1,668,860	2,859	12 women / 27%
GCS RAC Sinjar	1,275,474	275	12 women / 27%

Legacy Contamination Clearance

In southern Iraq, the UNMAS Iraq teams in Basra cleared over two million square meters of land, located between Shalamcha highway and Al Salehiya main road, close to the Jasem River in the Shatt al-Arab area. The area is heavily contaminated with unexploded ordnance, anti-personnel mines and anti-tank mines dating back to the Iran-Iraq War of the 1980s. This clearance is conducted utilizing mechanical mine clearance assets where possible while some areas require manual clearance. The level of contamination

exceeds that seen following the ISIL occupation in the north of the country and even with the age of the mines, they remain functional, as the numerous accidents against both people and animals that occur every year attest to. When the contract was renewed, through a competitive process, in mid-2022, additional mechanical clearance assets and an additional female search team were contracted. This enabled clearance operations to be accelerated.

 Contract	 M² Cleared 2022	 EO recovered 2022	 Female Staff Number and % of workforce
AKAF Basra	1,071,264	9,172	9 women / 16%



COORDINATION

Mine Action Area of Responsibility (MA AoR)

In 2022, the humanitarian cluster system in Iraq commenced the transition from emergency response to the development phase.

In 2022, the Humanitarian Country Team (HCT) set the timeline for the deactivation of the humanitarian cluster system in Iraq. UNMAS Iraq developed a transition plan for the MA AoR focusing on capacity building, policy development and sustainable coordination in line with the UNMAS TSAP. UNMAS engaged the DMA to eventually transfer the functions of the MA AoR to the DMA.

As part of the transition plan, during 2022, the DMA co-chaired seven MA AoR coordination meetings. The meetings brought the mine action community together to discuss operational updates, requests for mine action support from sectors and raised some challenges with the DMA such as access issues and fuel supply in Ninewa due to governmental restrictions.

In February 2022, UNMAS conducted an introduction to protection workshop to raise awareness of protection aspects and child protection principles to national mine action actors as part of the protection actors. A total of **20 participants from the DMA and NNGOs participated in the workshop** which was held in close collaboration with the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF)- led Child Protection Area of Responsibility.

To address issues related to housing, land and property in mine action, in May 2022, UNMAS organized a two-day workshop in cooperation with Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC). The DMA, humanitarian actors and commercial companies discussed challenges faced by mine action operators when implementing clearance and survey in private properties and possible actions to overcome them. UNMAS aimed to assist the DMA to prepare technical guidance related to the national mine action standard on building clearance.

In September, UNMAS, in partnership with the UNICEF-led Child Protection Area of Responsibility, facilitated a workshop on "Psychological Support to Children for the DMA to enhance the skills of EORE and victim assistance teams who are constantly in direct contact with children in explosive ordnance affected areas". The workshop focused on the psychological support aspects for children particularly as they represent a large percentage of the casualties in Iraq.

UNMAS met with the MASC members to discuss the transition plan, present TS to the national mine action authorities, advocacy efforts, and agree on coordinating the TS activities delivered by humanitarian mine action actors. It was agreed to share the planned TS efforts to coordinate such initiatives and avoid any duplications.

To ensure continuation of coordination with humanitarian, stabilization and development partners, UNMAS hosted the Durable Solutions Technical Working Group to present the durable solutions structure and coordination efforts. UNMAS conducted a mapping of MA AoR members' engagement in the durable solutions coordination structure. It was concluded that a good representation of the mine action actors in the area-based coordination groups at the district level.

UNMAS contributed to the development of the Humanitarian Transition Overview (HTO), outlines the residual humanitarian needs and defines the HCT's priorities for programming. The Overview also helps donors and agencies prioritize support in 2023. The HTO will replace the Humanitarian Response Plan (HRP), which had been the basis for humanitarian programming in Iraq for the past nine years.



VISIBILITY

Throughout 2022, UNMAS continued to profile and advocate for the generous contributions of its multiple donors and partners. The importance of mine action in Iraq was mainstreamed through high-level documents, briefing notes, and presentations to the GoI, other UN entities and the international community, as well as through social media advocacy.

Highlights of 2022

- » [My Sinjar Reflections Book Award](#)
- » [Pehr Lodhammar Interview with Rudaw](#)
- » [Second International Donor Conference for Mine Action in Iraq](#)
- » [UNMAS Director visit to Iraq](#)
- » [Partnership Model](#)

Factsheets

- » [Quarter one](#)
- » [Quarter two](#)
- » [Quarter three](#)
- » [Quarter four](#)

Press Releases

- » [New Zealand contribution enables UNMAS Iraq to continue supporting the Government and the National Mine Action Operators](#)
- » [Belgium supports humanitarian demining in Iraq and Syria with EUR 2 million](#)
- » [The Government of Italy continues its support to explosive hazards management activities in Iraq](#)
- » [France Renews its Commitment to Protecting Civilians Impacted by Explosive Ordnance in Iraq](#)
- » [Belgium Provides an Additional EUR 1,000,000 for UNMAS Activities in Iraq](#)
- » [The European Union Provides an Additional USD Eight Million for UNMAS Activities in Iraq](#)
- » [France Renews Its Commitment to Protecting Civilians Impacted by Explosive Ordnance in Iraq](#)
- » [The Federal Republic of Germany provides additional contribution to UNMAS in support of the mine action sector in Iraq](#)
- » [The Government of Sweden renews its support to explosive hazards management activities in Iraq](#)

A Story From UNMAS Iraq

Nadia's story

In 2014, on a sunny summer day, six-year-old Nadia was playing outside with her friends when the ISIL arrived in Sinjar, located in the North West of Iraq, close to the Syrian border. On the same day, the family fled Sinjar to evade what would follow.

Nadia and her siblings faced many difficulties during their escape. *"We went to the mountain and thought that we could pass the border, but we did not know that we would stay in the middle of two ISIL posts,"* she recalls. Nadia and the family remained there for eight days. Nadia started crying remembering those days and said that ISIL taped their mouths so they could not talk to each other. *"I can't describe how I felt that time, as we were either dying because of hunger and thirst or ISIL would kill us,"* she stated.

Tragically, Nadia's grandmother died on the mountain as she was sick and could not cope with the situation. Eventually they found a dangerous way to escape from ISIL through an abandoned village later to Sharia village outside Duhok governorate. They lived in the village for more than a year, and after liberation, they decided to return to their house in Sinjar.

In 2016, Nadia and her family were happy to return, but still lived in fear due to lack of security and the constant threat from EO. *"We returned to Sinjar because, in the village, we lived in people's houses, but once we reached our neighbourhood in front of our house, an IED exploded."* She recalls.

Nadia was one of the survivors but lost one of her eyes, and she still has difficulties walking. In the explosion, Nadia lost her childhood and had to live with the impact of trauma.

"Nadia had difficulties sleeping in the beginning and had nightmares as she was remembering what we went through, and did not interact with anyone or make any friends," Nadia's mother said.

Nadia is recovering and has returned to school as she feels safer after the clearance completed by UNMAS and its implementing partners. When she grows up she would like to become a lawyer to work with people's rights.

Residential clearance operations allow UNMAS and partner organizations to enable people to safely return to their places of origin and by extension also support economic development and growth in the areas of intervention.



UNMAS in Iraq would like to thank all of its donors who contributed to explosive hazard management, explosive ordnance risk education, and technical support activities in 2022.



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