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UNMAS PALESTINE

Programme Highlights

Mine Action Day - Safe Ground Events 2022



UNRWA students playing during the Safe Ground event in Beit Hanoun.
Photo credit: Mohammad Al-hinnawy/UNRWA

On 10 and 15 May, UNMAS and UNRWA jointly held Safe Ground events in Gaza commemorating the annual International Day for Mine Action and to ensure the children of Palestine are able to play, learn, and live free from the risk of explosive ordnance.

The events were held at two UNRWA schools; one in northern Gaza and one in the Middle Area. The opening included speeches delivered by the Director of UNRWA Affairs/Gaza, Mr. Thomas White, and Ms. Tess Bresnan from the UNMAS Palestine Programme.

The students at each school performed songs and dances for the audience, and also learned how to recognise and avoid suspicious items through games, songs, and messaging.

Emergency Risk Education and Conflict Preparedness and Protection Response in August 2022

In August 2022, in response to the three days of escalation in Gaza, UNMAS Palestine immediately launched an emergency explosive ordnance risk education (EORE) and Conflict Preparedness and Protection (CPP) campaign.

EORE/CPP messaging was disseminated through radio, social media platforms and partner feeds, SMS, and posters displayed at UNRWA installations, in addition to digital content was shared with UNRWA staff and beneficiaries. Nearly 850,000 people in Gaza saw or heard these messages which enabled them to reduce the threat of injury or death from explosive ordnance during and after the conflict.

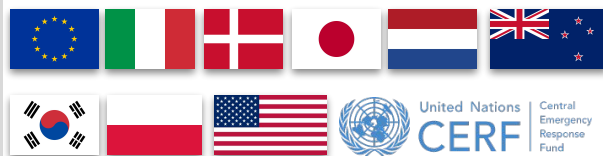
UNMAS has also responded to requests from UN and humanitarian partners to conduct risk assessments of their premises and operational sites to mitigate any threats posed by explosive remnants of war (ERW) contamination post-conflict.



Posters and social media posts distributed in UNRWA installations and various social media platforms during the escalation in August 2022.



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 resource mobilisation 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.

EUROPEAN UNION DELEGATION VISITS UNMAS IN GAZA



UNMAS explains the progress made in the removal of a deep buried to the EU delegation. Photo credit: UNMAS

On 28 June 2022, a delegation from the European Union visited UNMAS operations in Gaza to see one of the deep buried bomb removal sites funded by the European Union NDICI-FPI. The UNMAS Operations Team explained the technical processes of the removal.

UNMAS also briefed them on operations in Gaza, including ERW risk assessments, EORE, and CPP. The current/future needs and priorities were also highlighted during the visit.

REMOVING EXPLOSIVE THREATS IN GAZA

ERW risk assessment is a systematic and investigative process involving the identification of the threat, the probability of an ERW accident, the impact of hazards on local communities, the mitigation measures that can be implemented, and the removal of the detected explosive ordnance. As part of its continued response to the May 2021 conflict, UNMAS removed a deep buried bomb (DBB), after rendering it safe, from a civilian facility in northern Gaza. The DBB was located in tile store, in a densely industrial neighbourhood with approximately 31,500 residents in the vicinity.



A DBB is removed after being rendered safe by UNMAS and ready for destruction. Photo credit: UNMAS.



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."