



## IMPACT

Since 2013, UNMAS Mali has contributed to the:

- **Protection of civilians** from explosive hazards;
- **Improved access** to livelihoods, freedom of movement and economic recovery for the population;
- **Support and enabling of humanitarian access** in a conflict environment;
- **Development of a national Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) response capacity**, notably through the establishment of an Operations Coordination Centre.

 **4,391,584** square meters of land released to communities, **16,685** items of Explosive Remnants of War (ERW) and **112,127** items of small arms ammunition destroyed. Training of **1,326<sup>1</sup>** Malian Defense and Security Forces (MDSF) personnel in explosive ordnance and improvised explosive device disposal (EOD/IEDD) threat mitigation training.

 **466,326** people reached with UNMAS-funded risk education since 2015; awareness messages broadcast in **five** national languages through local radio stations; **1,161** humanitarian workers briefed through explosive hazards awareness sessions; and **416** drivers operating in affected areas (including humanitarian organizations) briefed on the risk of Improvised Explosive Devices (IED).

 **571** tons of obsolete, unsafe and unserviceable ammunition, including **85** obsolete surface-to-air missiles (2014), and nearly **11,500** firearms safely destroyed in support of the Malian authorities. This represents the world's largest ammunition stockpile disposed of by a national authority with UNMAS assistance.

 **68** armouries and ammunition storage areas were built and rehabilitated, and **622** MDSF personnel successfully completed the training in safe and secure weapons and ammunition management (WAM).

## ABOUT

Since the outbreak of conflict in 2012, Mali has suffered from an explosive threat<sup>2</sup>, particularly emanating from IEDs. This threat has had a wide-ranging detrimental impact on the safety and freedom of movement of state authorities, international actors, as well as civilians, in the northern and central parts of the country.

In addition to posing a serious threat to civilians, the contamination limits access to local livelihoods and basic services, hampers the delivery of humanitarian assistance and inhibits freedom of movement of the population. More generally, explosive hazards contamination hinders economic recovery and development.

Since 2017, Mali has experienced a significant increase in IEDs/mines recorded particularly in the centre of the country, which has resulted in high numbers of casualties among civilians and impeding stabilization efforts. Since 2021, there has been a gradual expansion of the explosive threat towards the west of the country. Since July 2013 until the end of February 2023, the United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS) has recorded 1,553 IEDs/mines utilized by non-state armed groups, leaving 1,055 people dead and injuring 2,374 more. In 2022, civilians<sup>3</sup> represented 44% of all IED/mine casualties across Mali (in 2021: 25%) and in 2023 24% of all casualties. Mopti remained the region with most IEDs/mines recorded (46%) and the largest share of casualties (over 60% of the total) in 2023.

<sup>1</sup> The number of MDSF personnel trained has been adjusted in January 2023 following changes in the methodology for beneficiary reporting to avoid double counting for multiple training activities with the same direct beneficiary group

<sup>2</sup> Explosive hazards refer to mines, explosive remnants of war (ERW) and Improvised explosive Devices (IEDs)

<sup>3</sup> Civilian numbers do not include UN civilians

The number of Explosive Remnants of War (ERW) victims reduced from a record of 56 to 18 in 2021. In 2023 so far, one ERW victim was recorded, bringing the total number of civilian victims of ERW identified to 332 since 2012, of whom 67% were children.

In Mali, UNMAS, as part of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA), is mandated by UN Security Council resolution 2640 (2022), which prioritizes: 1. Protection of civilians and stabilization efforts in the centre; 2. Enhancement of national capacities in explosive ordnance threat mitigation; 3. Training of the MINUSMA troops in mitigating the explosive threat.

## ACTIVITIES

**UNMAS vision for Mali:** The population in Mali is safer and more secure as a result of the reduced threat posed by explosive ordnances.



### 1. Protection of civilians through mine action

As the co-lead of the Humanitarian Mine Action Area of Responsibility (MAoR)/Working Group (*Groupe de travail de lutte antimines humanitaire* (GTLAMH), in French) UNMAS coordinates and implements humanitarian mine action activities such as the provision of explosive ordnance risk education (EORE), victim assistance activities within communities and training and continued mentoring in conducting humanitarian mine action activities to Malian civil society organizations. UNMAS also ensures that international mine action partners comply with International Mine Action Standards (IMAS) through quality control and quality assurance from its various field offices in Gao, Kidal, Mopti, Tessalit and Timbuktu.

### 2. Support to national authorities in explosive hazard management

UNMAS supports national authorities in developing technical and operational capacity to safely manage explosive threats, coordinate the response and comply with international standards through the provision of training, specialized equipment and technical support as well as mentoring of MDSF personnel. UNMAS also provides advisory support to the Malian authorities in addition to advising the Permanent Secretariat to Counter the Proliferation of Small Arms and Light Weapons on Mali's international obligations regarding explosive ordnances and weapons and ammunition.

### 3. Making operations safer for MINUSMA civilian and uniformed personnel

UNMAS provides critical explosive threat mitigation support to MINUSMA peacekeepers, through technical advice and delivery of in-mission and pre-deployment training to the troops, and on building sustainability through training-of-trainers and mentoring to enable peacekeepers to operate safely in an asymmetric environment and enable Mission mandate delivery and facilitate freedom of movement – in line with the Secretary General's Action for Peace (A4P+) initiative as well as the Action Plan on Improving the Security of Peacekeepers. Threat-specific specialized training is also provided to MINUSMA EOD companies.

## FUNDING

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#### For more information:

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