



## PRESS RELEASE

### UNMAS South Sudan welcomes support from the Government of Japan to strengthen the National Mine Action Authority



Caption: The 2025 International Mine Awareness Day, held on 4 April, was co-funded by the Government of Japan

#### Juba, South Sudan, 28 May 2025

The United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS) recently welcomed a contribution from the Government of Japan to support the National Mine Action Authority (NMAA) of South Sudan in strengthening its capacity to coordinate and oversee the mine action sector.

South Sudan faces severe challenges from explosive ordnance contamination, endangering civilian lives and delaying humanitarian assistance. This contamination impedes recovery efforts, with children disproportionately affected, making up nearly 80% of casualties last year.

Contaminated land also hinders access to critical infrastructure and obstructs the safe return of refugees and returnees.

As the government-mandated body for mine action, the NMAA plays a pivotal role in leading the national response, yet continues to operate with limited resources amidst ongoing humanitarian, environmental, and political challenges. With support from the Government of Japan, UNMAS will provide targeted technical assistance, on-the-job training, and mentorship to strengthen the NMAA's operational planning and quality assurance capabilities.

This contribution from Japan also supported the commemoration of International Mine Awareness Day (IMAD) 2025, highlighting Japan's commitment to humanitarian mine action and public outreach efforts that raise awareness and advocate for a safer South Sudan.

*“Since 2011, the Government and people of Japan have been steadfast allies of South Sudan, providing the vital funding that contributed to clearing explosive hazards and strengthening national mine-action capacity, a lasting testament to Japan’s friendship and global humanitarian leadership.”* Zehrudin Sukanovic, Chief Mine Action, UNMAS South Sudan

The initiative also promotes South-South cooperation by facilitating a knowledge exchange with the Cambodia Mine Action Centre (CMAC), enabling NMAA personnel to benefit from regional expertise and best practices. Furthermore, the project will further integrate cross-cutting issues in mine action by supporting gender mainstreaming efforts, which include implementing the NMAA's Gender Equality and Diversity (GED) policy work plan and launching a Women in Mine Action Network.

This contribution from Japan represents a critical step forward in advancing South Sudan's efforts to clear all known anti-personnel landmine contamination by 2030, safeguard communities, strengthen national ownership, and build a safer, more inclusive future for all communities across the Country.

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