



During the 60-day ceasefire in early 2025, Mona returned home with her family to retrieve her belongings. While she was there remnants of a missile exploded, leading Mona's right leg and left foot to be amputated.

"It was a harsh lesson—not just for me, but for my entire family. It made us realize, with painful clarity, just how deadly war remnants can be, and how devastated areas can turn into lethal traps for anyone who dares to approach them."

After two years of hostilities, UNMAS welcomes the announcement of an agreement to secure a ceasefire and hostage release in Gaza. **When fighting stops, explosive ordnance (EO) continues to kill and maim.**

As areas become newly accessible after intense fighting, the chances of encountering EO increase significantly. Unfortunately, stories like Mona's are all too common.



UNMAS EOD Officer marks and cordons off EO found during a mission in Gaza city. 14 October 2025.

Expanded humanitarian mine action (HMA) response is critical to minimize the impact of EO and enable the humanitarian community

to respond to the needs of communities recovering from 24 months of conflict. UNMAS works closely with partners to roll out this response and coordinates the operations in Gaza; oPt-wide, UNMAS co-coordinates the Protection Cluster's Mine Action Area of Operations with Humanity & Inclusion, and ensures close coordination with the Palestinian Mine Action Center (PMAC) in the West Bank.

Lifesaving risk education activities

A vital component of the ceasefire response is the strategic expansion of explosive ordnance risk education (EORE) to ensure lifesaving information is accessible to those in need. UNMAS has prepared for this moment to ensure an easily scaled up response. Since March 2025, UNMAS has produced over **400,000 EORE materials**, with 308,000 already pre-positioned with humanitarian partners for distribution, including flyers and stickers on safe return messaging, EO awareness, and victim and incident reporting. In parallel, UNMAS works with international and local HMA partners to deliver in-person EORE sessions and street briefings to communities throughout Gaza, helping them understand the EO threat. UNMAS will continue to coordinate this response so that people gain information relevant to the specific threats during the ceasefire period.



In recent months, UNMAS has expanded its Training of Trainers delivery to **more than 100 facilitators**, growing the EORE workforce, while over **600 humanitarian personnel** have been trained in Explosive Ordnance Risk Awareness and Mitigation. These efforts have enabled immediate outreach through partners operating at health centres, mobile clinics, reception and monitoring points, delivering consistent, life-saving messages. Implemented alongside projects with local implementing partners delivering EORE sessions throughout Gaza, this coordination ensures that more communities receive lifesaving information.

EOD Response for humanitarian partners

With more than 700 missions supported and 600 EHAs conducted in the past two years, UNMAS continues to task Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) Officers to guide **humanitarian convoys passing** through the high risk routes and to **conduct assessments of sites** such as hospitals, WASH facilities, and shelters to determine if they can be used safely without the threat of EO. Gaza is an urbanized

environment having undergone two years of fighting, so rubble and damaged buildings may be contaminated with EO. HMA is therefore a critical consideration for all early recovery efforts in Gaza, from clearing routes for humanitarian access to rehabilitating critical infrastructure to delivering tailored risk awareness sessions to construction workers. Since September 2024, UNMAS has provided critical EOD expertise to agencies such as WFP and UNDP engaging in more than **350 debris management missions**.



UNMAS conducts an EHA of a warehouse in Deir al Balah, August 2025

While UNMAS currently has a strong foundation deployed to continue this robust response, **additional resources may be required** to meet increasing demands, particularly with EOD response. In the first five days after the ceasefire was ratified on 10 October, UNMAS received more than **70 requests** for HMA support on EOD response, increasing by a factor of 17 compared to the days before the announcement.

Under current funding, UNMAS OPT is able to deploy 16 EOD Officers to Gaza - both through its own technical personnel and its implementing partners - to support assessment response. The officers are on standby to dispose of items, once equipment to do so is allowed into Gaza. With this current level of funded resources, UNMAS hopes to maintain a 90% immediate response rate for requests for support, but it is possible that demands will surge far beyond past experience and the **capacity to respond may be delayed unless further resources are surged in**. UNMAS is positioned to receive additional funding from donors immediately to augment and expand its capacity to respond.

Building hope and coordinating humanitarian mine action

As the designated Mine Action Coordinator in Gaza, UNMAS will continue to prioritize and task all HMA actors who deploy, ensuring an effective and aligned response, and has relevant technical standards and guidelines developed to support partners to operate; it also has established coordination and information sharing systems to support any expansion of work.

Challenges

UNMAS is still engaging with Israeli authorities to gain permission to bring in the technical equipment needed to conduct disposal and eliminate the risk that EO poses to communities and to longer-term recovery in Gaza.

Armoured vehicles and other critical equipment remain at the border awaiting approval for entry. Without them any expanded response by the UNMAS OPT team will be hindered.



UNMAS EOD Officer supervises debris removal operations, ensuring the detection and mitigation of explosive hazards. Gaza city, September 2025

For more information including UNMAS funding needs during this period, contact Luke Irving, Chief of Mine Action Programme in the OPT, at luke.irving@un.org

To request mine action support, including EHAs, EORE, or to report an incident, you can submit requests [here](#)