



# LINKING MINE ACTION AND THE 2030 AGENDA FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

INSIGHTS FROM BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA AND LAO PDR

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# ABBREVIATIONS

<b>APMBC</b>	Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention	<b>FBiH</b>	Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina
<b>BHMAC</b>	Bosnia and Herzegovina Mine Action Centre	<b>FDFA</b>	Federal Department of Foreign Affairs
<b>BiH</b>	Bosnia and Herzegovina	<b>GICHD</b>	Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining
<b>CCM</b>	Convention on Cluster Munitions	<b>HLPF</b>	High-level political forum
<b>CCW</b>	Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons	<b>IMSMA</b>	Information Management System for Mine Action
<b>CM</b>	Cluster Munition	<b>KCL</b>	King's College London
<b>CMR</b>	Cluster munition remnants	<b>KOICA</b>	The Korea International Cooperation Agency
<b>CRPD</b>	Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities	<b>MAPS</b>	Mainstreaming, Acceleration and Policy Support
<b>DC</b>	Demining Commission	<b>IM</b>	Information management
<b>ECOSOC</b>	United Nations Economic and Social Council	<b>MDGs</b>	Millennium Development Goals
<b>EO</b>	Explosive ordnance	<b>MoD</b>	Ministry of National Defence
<b>ERW</b>	Explosive remnants of war		

<b>MOLISA</b>	Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs	<b>SDG</b>	Sustainable Development Goal
<b>M&amp;E</b>	Monitoring and Evaluation	<b>SIPRI</b>	Stockholm International Peace Research Institute
<b>NCSD</b>	National Council on Sustainable Development	<b>SPF II</b>	Safe Path Forward II
<b>NMAA</b>	National Mine Action Authority	<b>UNDP</b>	United Nations Development Programme
<b>NPA</b>	Norwegian Peoples' Aid	<b>UXO</b>	Unexploded ordnance
<b>NRA</b>	National Regulatory Authority (for the UXO/Mine Action Sector in Lao PDR)	<b>UXO Lao</b>	The Lao National Unexploded Ordinance Programme
<b>NSEDP</b>	National Socio-Economic Development Plan	<b>VA</b>	Victim Assistance
<b>NSEDS</b>	National Socio-Economic Development Strategy	<b>VNR</b>	Voluntary national review
<b>NTS</b>	Non-technical survey		
<b>RIA</b>	Rapid Integrated Assessment		
<b>RS</b>	Republika Srpska		

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The 2030 Agenda and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) serve as a common platform for policy development, planning, implementation, financing and reporting on progress towards the SDGs.

For the mine actor sector, the 2030 Agenda provides a comprehensive framework to demonstrate and measure its role as a key enabler for sustainable development, humanitarian action, peace and security.<sup>1</sup> Moreover, it has the potential to support the mine action sector in setting the right objectives, and promoting more efficient, effective and sustainable outcomes.

The universal nature of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs requires that each country adopts them based on their context, reflecting their national circumstances and priorities. With the aim of showcasing the value of connecting sustainable development and mine action at the national level, findings from this research include good practices and actionable insights to support ongoing SDG mainstreaming efforts within the mine action sector.

Through case studies in two countries, Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) and Lao PDR, the study examines the extent to which mine action efforts have been incorporated into national development planning and analyses the experience of national mine action authorities (NMAAs) in the use of the SDG framework across the different stages of their mine action programmes.

The findings related to the integration of mine action in national SDG frameworks underpin how a consistent approach serves to foster coherence in planning efforts, allowing mine-affected countries to showcase the contributions of mine action to sustainable development.

## THREE WAYS TO INTEGRATE MINE ACTION WITHIN SDG FRAMEWORKS

The research identified three concrete ways to better integrate mine action within national SDG frameworks:

- **Establishing mine action-related targets and indicators within the nationalised SDGs.**

Lao PDR included an additional national SDG 18 titled 'Lives Safe from unexploded ordnance (UXO)' which aims to "remove the UXO obstacle to national development" and includes specific targets and indicators.

BiH has plans to create a national SDG 18 titled 'Bosnia and Herzegovina mine free by 2030' with a view to better aligning demining with the development agenda. The draft version of the SDG framework in BiH foresees the inclusion of the additional SDG 18 with three targets, addressing landmines and cluster munitions.

- **Participating in the existing SDG institutional and coordination mechanisms.**

As a result of their role in the SDG nationalization process, the National Regulatory Authority (NRA) was able to successfully integrate UXO as a cross-cutting theme in the SDGs. The participation of the NRA in all of the existing mechanisms translates into awareness raising opportunities, advocating for the sector in relevant fora.

In the case of BiH, the research found that in spite of the different working groups for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, the participation of the mine action sector is limited. This lack of sustained involvement in national SDG processes seems to be related to the complex administrative set-up in the county.

- **Integrating mine action in the 2030 Agenda follow-up and review mechanism - the voluntary national reviews.**

The NRA was actively engaged in the process of the preparation of the Lao PDR's VNR 2018 report and provided relevant data from the UXO sector. The VNR refers to UXO in a comprehensive and consistent manner.

BiH's 2019 VNR also contains some references to mine action and establishes linkages between demining and several SDGs.

## **USE OF SDGs ACROSS MINE ACTION PROGRAMMES**

The study also assessed the experience of NMAAs in terms of using the SDGs across the cycle of their mine action programmes:

- **Strategic planning**

BiH's National Mine Action Strategy 2018–2025 refers to the 2030 Agenda as one of the “strategically important intersectoral issues” and mentions that further analysis will be undertaken to better understand and promote links between mine action and SDGs.

The impact of UXO on socio-economic development and on the achievement of the SDGs is well articulated in Lao PDR's UXO Sector Five-Year Plan 2016–2020, which identifies SDG 18 ‘Lives Safe from UXO’ as the vision of UXO Sector in Lao PDR to 2030. Moreover, the National Strategic Plan for 2010–2020, also known as the Safe Path Forward II (SPF II), highlights how mainstreaming UXO action into broader socio-economic development strategies and programmes is imperative.

- **Data and information management**

BHMAC's information management system "captures outcomes that can document the progress on the SDG contributions", by closely following mine action strategy goals which are in line with the SDGs.

NRA uses the SDG monitoring framework for data gathering. For instance, casualty numbers entered into IMSMA allow to measure the SDG 18 target on casualty reduction.

- **Mine action operations**

Mine clearance is prioritised in BiH according to the country's socio-economic development efforts, as well as with the SDGs. BHMAC plans to tighten the links of survey, clearance, and land release with the SDGs, taking into consideration the socio-economic, humanitarian, commercial, and ecological impact of explosive ordnance (EO) contamination.

The NRA uses the SDG framework in various operational activities such as surveys and assessments, and for the prioritisation of land clearance, amongst others. The SDGs are considered part of a land clearance prioritisation process through the National Socio-Economic Development Plan (NSEDPlan), which itself integrates the SDGs.

- **Resource mobilisation**

For fundraising purposes, linkages with the SDGs have been used to show long-term and sustainable development aspects of mine clearance in both countries. In Lao PDR, donors are particularly interested to see the alignment of SDG 18 with other SDGs.

In the countries studied the process of integrating SDGs into mine action is still unfinished.

However, both have successfully identified and reported on the existing benefits for mine action as a result of the adoption and implementation of the 2030 Agenda. These measurable benefits include enhanced visibility, a more effective resource mobilisation, and increased policy coherence.

As these efforts continue, additional support is required for the mine action sector to achieve a better understanding of the 2030 Agenda and how to leverage its relevant frameworks for the benefit of all.



Mine risk education and SDG 18 in Lao PDR

# PURPOSE AND METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study is to enhance the practical understanding of the linkages between mine action and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and to assess the extent to which the 2030 Agenda has been integrated within the mine action sector. The study is divided in two sections: part one examines how mine action efforts have been incorporated into national development planning, and the second part focuses on the experience of national mine action authorities (NMAAs) and their use of the SDG framework throughout the different stages of their mine action programmes.

To achieve this aim, two countries – Bosnia and Herzegovina and Lao PDR – were chosen as case studies, since both have shown a strong commitment in the nationalisation processes of the 2030 Agenda, including references to mine action. Other factors considered in the selection process were 1) existing GICHD involvement and institutional collaboration with relevant national authorities; 2) United Nations Development Programme's (UNDP) presence on the ground, especially through the UNDP development and mine action programmes, for facilitating liaison and engagement with national stakeholders as well as for providing information about the relevant processes at the national level; 3) explosive ordnance contamination, with a special focus on mines and explosive remnants of war (ERW) contamination including the presence of cluster munitions (CM); and 4) geographical diversity.

The methodology for the research was primarily based on a desk review of the existing literature and documentation, both open source and provided by national authorities. In addition to the documentary analysis, primary information was gathered through unstructured and semi-structured interviews (including a written tailored questionnaire) with NMAAs and UNDP specialists in the selected countries.

Being the first of its kind, the report, with a focus on integration efforts at the national level and involving centrally-led institutions, such as NMAAs, meant that subsequent research could expand on initiatives at the local or provincial levels. Future studies could benefit from understanding the experience of other stakeholders, provincial authorities, operators, and donors, as well as other actors.

The study presents good practices and actionable insights to support ongoing SDG mainstreaming efforts within the mine action sector. Although its findings are not meant to serve as an evaluation of the initiatives undertaken by the selected countries, they are an effective reference to highlight the value of connecting sustainable development and mine action as mutually reinforcing agendas.

# INTRODUCTION

Traditionally, the impact of mine action has been measured and reported based on immediate results, such as the number of items removed, the number of square metres cleared, or the reduction of casualties. However, as an integral part of broader development initiatives, mine action plays a bigger role in the medium and long term, besides pursuing immediate humanitarian objectives in conflict, post-conflict and protracted crises. Monitoring the outcomes and the impact of mine action activities (instead of merely outputs) is essential to measuring mine action's contribution to development, and to better align mine action with broader humanitarian and development planning efforts.

Mine action responds to humanitarian imperatives and is conducted according to a rights-based approach, based on specific legal obligations, originating from the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC), the Convention on Cluster Munitions (CCM), Amended Protocol II and Protocol V of the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW); as well as other relevant human rights treaties such as the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.



## **The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development**

Building upon the achievements and lessons learnt from the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs),<sup>2</sup> in 2015 the United Nations Member States adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development as a new plan of action for the next 15 years.<sup>3</sup> The 2030 Agenda is universal, transformative and rights-based, under the premise that “no one will be left behind”.<sup>4</sup> It contains 17 integrated Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and 169 associated targets which are based on the three core elements of sustainable development – economic growth, social inclusion, and environmental protection – and calls for peace and partnership. There are five critical dimensions at the core of the 2030 Agenda, known as ‘the 5 Ps’: People, Prosperity, Planet, Partnership, and Peace.<sup>5</sup>

Implementation of these treaties and the 2030 Agenda can be mutually reinforcing. By fulfilling the treaty obligations, states are undoubtedly contributing to some specific goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda. On the other hand, the political momentum around the 2030 Agenda can help to accelerate progress towards the effective implementation of the treaty obligations and benefit the mobilisation of resources and partnerships to reach the legal commitments.

These synergies and potential for mine action outcomes in terms of sustainable development have been acknowledged in the most recent review conference of the APMBC. At the time of writing, a similar acknowledgement is contained in the draft Lausanne Action Plan, which will be discussed by the CCM States Parties during the Second Review Conference.

## **Oslo Action Plan**

At the 4th Review Conference of the APMBC in Oslo (2019), all 164 States Parties to the Convention adopted the Oslo Action Plan bringing forward 50 actions for the period 2020–2024, reiterating mine action’s role as “a key enabler for development, humanitarian action, peace and security”. The Oslo Action Plan emphasises that the implementation of the Convention contributes to advancing the attainment of the SDGs. In this context, its Action #6 calls the Convention’s States Parties to “Strengthen partnerships and integrate responses between the mine action community and relevant humanitarian, peacebuilding, development and human rights communities, bearing in mind the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.”

## **Draft Lausanne Action Plan**

110 States Parties to the CCM, observer States, international organisations and NGOs are to convene in November 2020 and February 2021 for the Second Review Conference of the Convention. The informal draft of the Lausanne Action Plan highlights that alongside addressing the humanitarian consequences, the implementation of the Convention is essential for ensuring progress in other areas such as developmental efforts and the Sustainable Development Goals, amongst others.

Moreover, Action #41 of the draft Action Plan states: “When seeking assistance, develop coherent and comprehensive national plans aimed at developing national ownership, based on appropriate surveys, needs assessments and analysis and providing national capacity. These plans will take into account broader frameworks such as the Sustainable Development Goals and respond to the needs and experiences of affected communities and will be built on sound gender, age and disability analysis. These plans should adequately reflect the areas in which assistance is required.”

Today, explosive ordnance (EO) continues to pose a serious threat to civilians causing thousands of deaths and injuries per year. EO can restrict the free movement of people and their activities as well as inhibiting access to natural resources, thus negatively affecting the social and economic development prospects of the affected communities.

In 2019, the GICHD, in cooperation with King's College London (KCL) and the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) conducted a pilot study to depict the socio-economic impact of anti-vehicle mine (AVM) contamination in Angola and the benefits of AVM clearance on sustainable development.<sup>6</sup> The study showed the drastic effects of mine contamination on agriculture, infrastructure and access to social services. Moreover, the Angolan case study emphasised the benefits of mine clearance, across the SDG spectrum.<sup>7</sup>

Despite the evident connection between mine action and development, clear and direct linkages have not been properly identified in the past—mainly because the MDGs had a limited focus on peace and security. In contrast, the 2030 Agenda gives prominence to peace and development, which is also affirmed and articulated by a separate SDG (SDG 16) aimed to promote just, peaceful and inclusive societies.

In 2017, the GICHD and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) conducted a joint study to better understand the linkages between mine action and the SDGs and the extent to which mine action is contributing to and impacting the 2030 Agenda.<sup>8</sup> The study concluded that 12 SDGs are directly linked to mine action, and also found indirect links with another four SDGs.

To better understand such linkages in practice, the case studies of two countries – Bosnia and Herzegovina and Lao PDR – provide insights regarding their respective national experience.

# MINE ACTION CASE STUDIES



Mine clearance training, Bosnia and Herzegovina, 2019

## BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) is contaminated by mines and explosive remnants of war (ERW) including cluster munition remnants (CMR). Contamination is mainly a result of the Bosnian War from 1992–1995, after the collapse of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. BiH is considered as one of the most heavily mined countries in Europe.<sup>9</sup> In May 2020, BiH completed an EU-funded country assessment aimed at establishing a national baseline level of mine contamination. However, some challenges persist relating to understanding the full extent of the contamination.<sup>10</sup>

There are two responsible bodies for mine action in BiH: the Demining Commission (DC)<sup>11</sup> which acts as the strategic body setting mine action policies, and the Bosnia and Herzegovina Mine Action Centre (BHMACE),<sup>12</sup> as the technical body responsible primarily for operational aspects. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) has been actively supporting mine action efforts in BiH since 1996. Among its recent projects, the Mine Action Governance and Management (MAGMA) project<sup>13</sup> is particularly relevant to the scope of this study.

BiH is a State Party to the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC), to the Convention on Cluster Munitions (CCM), to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) including its Amended Protocol II and Protocol V, as well as to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD).

## LAO PDR

Lao People's Democratic Republic's (Lao PDR) contamination is primarily from ERWs, specifically CMR, as a legacy from the 2nd Indochina war in the 1960s and 1970s. Anti-personnel mines and anti-vehicle mines are also present in Lao PDR but to a lesser extent. The exact level of contamination is unknown; however, it is believed to be widespread according to available information, especially when it comes to CMR. In this sense, contamination caused by unexploded submunitions has been considered the highest in the world.<sup>14, 15</sup> In 2019, Lao PDR estimated its CMR contamination to be more than 8,000 km<sup>2</sup>.<sup>16</sup> A nationwide survey is currently being undertaken in Lao PDR which will enable the establishment of a national baseline and to assess the contamination level.<sup>17</sup>

Lao PDR primarily refers to its mine action sector as an unexploded ordnance (UXO) sector, due to the fact that contamination is predominantly caused by UXO<sup>18</sup> as opposed to landmines. In this study, mine action will be used as an umbrella term and refers to both mine action and UXO sectors, in order to allow for a standardised denomination across the two case studies.

The UXO sector in Lao PDR is managed by the National Regulatory Authority (NRA).<sup>19</sup> UNDP, UNICEF, and other stakeholders supported the establishment of the Lao National Unexploded Ordnance Programme (UXO Lao) in 1996.<sup>20</sup> Under its ongoing project (2017–2021), Moving Towards Achieving SDG 18: Removing the UXO Obstacle to Development in Lao PDR, the UNDP has been providing programmatic and technical support to the national institutions within the UXO sector (the NRA and UXO Lao).<sup>21</sup>

Lao PDR has not acceded to the APMBC, but is a State Party to the CCM, to the CCW including its Amended Protocol II and Protocol V, as well as to the CRPD.



Community meeting, Lao PDR



**PART 1 – IS MINE ACTION  
INTEGRATED IN NATIONAL  
SOCIO-ECONOMIC  
DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORKS?**

# ANALYSING NATIONAL EFFORTS TO ACHIEVE THE SDGs AND THE ROLE OF THE MINE ACTION SECTOR

The 2030 Agenda emphasises the importance of national circumstances and calls for each government to “decide how these aspirational and global targets should be incorporated in national planning processes, policies and strategies”.<sup>22</sup>

Since the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs are universal, each country needs to adapt them to their national context to reflect the national circumstances and priorities.

The process of nationalisation is the initial step to effectively implementing the 2030 Agenda and this should be inclusive and participatory. Through this process, national governments are expected to raise awareness about the 2030 Agenda, as well as to engage and consult with various domestic stakeholders to promote synergies and partnerships. This process can also serve as an opportunity for the mine action sector to influence the definition of national targets and indicators and, therefore, the priorities stated in national development plans.

In order to ensure efficient implementation and monitoring and evaluation (M&E), the nationalised SDGs should first be integrated into relevant strategic planning documents, such as socio-economic development frameworks.

The nationalisation process can be used as an opportunity to reinforce the humanitarian-development-peace nexus as well as to improve coordination between different national stakeholders. It is also an opportunity for sectoral institutions, including national mine action authorities, to review their policies and adopt broader and longer-term approaches. Broad and diverse stakeholder participation is crucial, since this process is often considered as a determining factor for the successful implementation of the SDGs.<sup>23</sup>

The selected case study countries showed a strong commitment to the nationalisation of the 2030 Agenda and have established their own national SDGs, but what has been the role of mine action in support of these efforts?



GICHD and UNDP-led workshop on mainstreaming mine action into the SDGs at the national level in Bosnia and Herzegovina

# INTEGRATING THE SDGs INTO NATIONAL SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORKS

The 2030 Agenda calls for a new approach in planning, delivery, monitoring and reporting for development, but there is no one-size-fits-all on how to better align and integrate the 2030 Agenda into national development policies and programmes.

When looking into the case study countries, it was observed that both have started integrating the SDGs into their national socio-economic development frameworks, but this is still an ongoing process.

For instance, Lao PDR reported in 2016 that nearly 60% of the indicators in its eighth five-year National Socio-Economic Development Plan 2016–2020 (8th NSEDP) were linked to SDGs.<sup>24</sup> After integrating the SDGs into the M&E framework of the 8th NSEDP, Lao PDR aims to integrate the remaining ones in the future 9th and 10th NSEDPs.<sup>25</sup> The 8th NSEDP contains multiple references to unexploded ordnance (UXO), and UXO clearance and victim assistance are integrated into performance indicators and targets.<sup>26</sup>

The draft 9th NSEDP, currently under review, includes UXO with its own output.<sup>27</sup> It is worth mentioning that all ten existing sectoral working groups of the National Round Table Process in Lao PDR,<sup>28</sup> including the UXO Sector Working Group,<sup>29</sup> provided inputs in formulating the 9th NSEDP, which indicates a strong inclusive and participatory approach in planning.<sup>30</sup>

Regarding development plans in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH), the Strategic Framework for BiH (2015) mentions that mines and explosive remnants of war (ERW) are a threat “to the safety, health and lives of civil population and an obstacle to social and economic development at national and local level”.<sup>31</sup> The Framework considers demining of agricultural land and rural areas as one of three measures to improve conservation and efficient use of natural resources.<sup>32</sup>

As part of the nationalisation process, BiH conducted a number of SDG consultations in May 2018 and undertook other analytical and technical SDG efforts including the development of a UN Rapid Integrated Assessment (RIA),<sup>33</sup> SDG Dashboards,<sup>34</sup> UN Mainstreaming, Acceleration and Policy Support (MAPS),<sup>35</sup> Imagine 2030 Workshops, and a high-level SDG conference, amongst others.<sup>36</sup>

In addition, between 2018 and 2019, dedicated sessions were organised for state level institutions, the Republika Srpska institutions, Brcko District and for the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The sessions were aimed at informing and engaging relevant stakeholders in the process of the voluntary national review (VNR) and at creating the SDG framework document.<sup>37</sup> However, the level of participation of the Bosnia and Herzegovina Mine Action Centre (BHMIC) was very limited in the nationalisation processes.<sup>38</sup>

In spite of the progress and the activities conducted so far, SDG nationalisation in BiH is not yet complete, due to the country's complex administrative set-up. In this regard, the institutional ownership of the SDGs "remains a work in progress",<sup>39</sup> but the VNR provides a detailed description of how the government will operationalise SDGs through their strategic documents.<sup>40</sup>

BiH stated that strategic documents at various levels of government will be used to integrate agreed targets for reaching the 2030 Agenda.<sup>41</sup> At the country level, the Strategic Framework for the Institutions of BiH (which the Council of Ministers of BiH is committed to develop) will integrate the SDGs, allowing BiH's institutions to contribute to the implementation of the SDGs.<sup>42</sup>

With the understanding that nationalisation efforts are still in progress, the following section analyses the extent to which mine action has already been incorporated within national SDG frameworks, with the aim of identifying the pending steps for the full inclusion of the sector.

# INTEGRATING MINE ACTION INTO THE SDG FRAMEWORKS

As a contributor to sustainable development, the consistent integration of mine action in the national SDG frameworks will ensure coherence in planning efforts while breaking the sectoral silos. It will also allow for mine-affected countries to include and reflect mine action contributions to sustainable development and to bring mine action closer to broader sustainable development initiatives.

This integration can be achieved in several ways. The research has explored three main options: establishing mine action-related targets and indicators, participating in SDG coordination mechanisms, and integrating mine action in the 2030 Agenda follow-up and review mechanism.

## MINE ACTION-RELATED TARGETS AND INDICATORS

In terms of including mine action-related targets and indicators within the nationalised SDGs, the research identified an interesting approach—the creation of an additional national SDG dedicated to mine action. In fact, Lao PDR launched an additional, separate SDG on UXO, whereas BiH is considering the adoption of a new national SDG on mine action. Although outside of the scope of this study, it was observed during the research that Cambodia, similarly, has an additional 18th SDG titled ‘End the negative impact of Mine/ERW and promote victim assistance’.



In Lao PDR, this approach is part of the legacy from the Millennium Development Goal (MDG) era when Lao PDR integrated the UXO sector into its development agenda and subsequently, in 2010, created an additional MDG 9 focusing on UXO. In 2016, Lao PDR included an additional SDG 18 titled ‘Lives Safe from UXO’ which aims to “remove the UXO obstacle to national development”<sup>43</sup> and which consequently became an integral part of the nationalised SDGs.



Former Secretary-General of the United Nations at the official launch of SDG 18 in Lao PDR

According to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Lao UXO Unit, the nationalisation processes – through SDG 18 – helped Lao PDR to link the UXO sector with the country’s development sector.<sup>44</sup> The UNDP, particularly through its ongoing project,<sup>45</sup> has been providing technical support to the UXO sector national institutions to ensure the attainment of SDG 18 while contributing to other SDGs, in particular, SDGs 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 8, 10, and 11.<sup>46</sup>

In addition, the National Regulatory Authority (NRA) emphasised that “without achievement of the SDG 18, the attainment of other SDGs is jeopardised”. For instance, UXO contaminated land prevents residents from using the land for economic development (SDG 8), food consumption (SDG 2), building schools (SDG 4) or roads and other infrastructure (SDG 9), in addition to presenting safety and security risks due to UXO explosions (SDG 11). All these factors, in turn, affect the attainment of SDG 1 by contributing to poverty in Laos.<sup>47</sup> Therefore, Lao PDR firmly recognises that UXO is a cross-cutting issue.

Considerations of a similar approach, although still at an initial stage, were also observed in BiH. The VNR of BiH mentions the intention to create a national SDG 18 titled 'Bosnia and Herzegovina mine free by 2030' with a view to better aligning demining with the development agenda.<sup>48</sup>

This initiative was also identified in the draft version of the SDG framework in BiH. The document is still under discussion and it aims to define key priority areas and targets for the Agenda 2030 and the SDGs. The draft version of the document foresees inclusion of an additional 18th SDG with three targets addressing landmines and cluster munitions. In addition to referring to an additional national SDG on mines, the document includes demining as one of the drivers under the smart growth pathway.<sup>49, 50</sup>

## **SDG INSTITUTIONAL AND COORDINATION MECHANISMS**

Another significant way of ensuring mine action's integration into the national development processes is the inclusion of mine action stakeholders in the existing SDG institutional and coordination mechanisms. Since the SDGs are interlinked and require various national institutions working together, there is consensus on the fact that no institution alone can address all the challenges related to development. This notion is the pillar behind the importance of cross-cutting institutional and coordination mechanisms to ensure efficiency and consistency for planning, implementing and monitoring the 2030 Agenda.

Such mechanisms present an entry point for the mine action sector to increase its participation and contributions to national decision-making processes, and to anchor their role in the development processes. In turn, policy coherence with inter-agency coordination can help to break the traditional approach of working in silos and generate cross-sectoral synergies.

The type of national institutional approach needed will ultimately depend on each national context. Experience shows that there are different approaches that a country can take; for instance, adapting previous mechanisms of the MDG era to the SDG era (e.g. National Councils for Sustainable Development) or establishing new mechanisms and structures like interministerial commissions.<sup>51</sup>

The case study countries have adopted different institutional mechanisms to ensure coordination and smooth implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

BiH has primarily focused on establishing different working groups to ensure coordination in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. A prime example is the Intergovernmental SDG Working Group of BiH composed of 11 stakeholders, including the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the United Nations in BiH as co-chairs. The working group is still proactively meeting and currently working on finalising the SDG framework in BiH.<sup>52</sup> Other working groups in BiH are the Private Sector Working Group, aimed at fostering cooperation with the private sector, and the SDG Rollout Working Group which is in charge of planning for SDG implementation; the latter has three subgroups, responsible for crafting the VNR, for SDG Indicators, and for drafting an SDG framework in BiH, respectively.<sup>53</sup> However, the BHMACH has not been represented in these working groups.<sup>54</sup>

In Lao PDR, two institutional mechanisms were created to coordinate implementation of the SDGs and to ensure institutional coherence.<sup>55</sup>

- *The National Steering Committee on the implementation of the SDGs* which is chaired by the prime minister<sup>56</sup> and is composed of 26 members from relevant ministries and agencies. The Committee oversees the coordination and implementation of the SDGs through the NSEDP and other ministries' sectoral development plans.
- *The National SDG Secretariat* which is led by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Planning and Investment. The Secretariat works with ministries to track progress on SDG implementation. The Secretariat organised a number of consultations in 2017 and 2018 with all relevant stakeholders.

The NRA is represented on the Steering Committee by the Minister of Labour and Social Welfare and is also represented in the SDG Secretariat by the NRA Director General.<sup>57</sup>

## 2030 AGENDA FOLLOW-UP AND REVIEW MECHANISM

When considering the different options for integrating mine action in national development processes, the 2030 Agenda follow-up and review mechanism can provide a great opportunity. The 2030 Agenda encourages the carrying out of “regular and inclusive reviews of progress” of implementation at the national and sub-national levels which are to be voluntary and country-led.<sup>58</sup> These reviews, known as voluntary national reviews (VNR), are submitted by each country up to two times within the 15-year time frame.

The VNRs are presented within the ministerial segment of the High Level Political Forum (HLPF) which is convened annually under the auspices of the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC),<sup>59</sup> and serves as the main platform for the 2030 Agenda follow-up and reviews. The VNRs allow each country to assess and report on their national progress as well as to share their own experiences and the lessons learnt in the implementation of the SDGs.

The research looked into the VNRs submitted between 2016 and 2020 by 47 countries contaminated with anti-personnel mine and/or cluster munitions, to understand the general trends and the extent to which mine action is referred in the reports. Interestingly, it appeared that only nine VNRs<sup>60</sup> (less than 20%) contained any reference to mine action, including the two case study countries, BiH and Lao PDR.

This review found that mine action is generally absent from VNRs, in spite of its important role for the achievement of sustainable development in conflict, post-conflict and protracted crises.

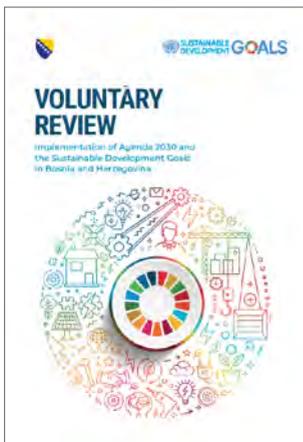
Although an in-depth examination of all VNRs was not part of the scope of this study, the limited review that took place emphasizes the need for additional efforts to enhance the visibility of the mine action sector, and its increased role as part of national sustainable development efforts.



The 2018 VNR of Lao PDR refers to UXO in a more comprehensive and consistent manner. The report has, in addition, a whole separate chapter dedicated to UXO and SDG 18. The VNR states that UXO remains a “daunting barrier to the progress of development in Lao PDR” and that UXO has a cross-cutting impact on the SDGs due to their negative impact on socio-economic development, such as limiting safe access to agriculture and land, or rendering the construction work on schools, hospitals and other essential infrastructures dangerous.<sup>61</sup> Accelerating

progress towards SDG 18 is seen by Lao PDR as one of the cross-cutting strategies to achieve its national development goals.<sup>62</sup>

The VNR of Lao PDR also showcases the progress and challenges in the context of Lao PDR’s 8th NSEDP where SDG 18 is placed among the direct contributors of Outcome 2 ‘Improved living standards through poverty reduction’.<sup>63</sup> The VNR also associates UXO with SDG 2 ‘zero hunger’, and SDG 17 ‘global partnership for sustainable development’.<sup>64</sup>



Regarding BiH, its 2019 VNR contains some references to mine action or demining. In particular, the VNR mentions BiH’s intention to create an additional SDG 18 ‘Bosnia and Herzegovina mine free by 2030’ and states that demining has an impact on SDG 16, and “contributes to addressing SDG1 (Poverty), SDG2 (Hunger), SDG3 (Healthy Lives), SDG8 (Inclusive Growth), SDG9 (Infrastructure), SDG 11 (Human Settlements) and SDG15 (Ecosystems)”.<sup>65</sup>



## **PART 2 – ARE THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS BEING USED BY THE MINE ACTION SECTOR?**

# THE 2030 AGENDA AND SDGs: IMPLEMENTATION AND PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS FOR MINE ACTION

Interviews with national mine action authorities (NMAAs) were held to better understand how the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs have been mainstreamed by the sector. The study provides an opportunity to assess and review the implications that the 2030 Agenda, and its related processes and institutional mechanisms, have on mine action efforts so far. In this regard, the study explores the current state of play in terms of the use of the SDGs by the NMAA for enhancing policy coherence and inter-institutional coordination, data and information management, mine action operations, and resource mobilisation.

## STRATEGIC PLANNING

In 2019 BiH adopted its National Mine Action Strategy 2018–2025. The Strategy refers to the 2030 Agenda as one of the “strategically important intersectoral issues” (alongside gender and diversity), emphasising BiH’s commitment to fulfilling the SDGs. The current Strategy also acknowledges the importance of switching from mere outputs to “wider sustainable development” outcomes.<sup>66</sup>

When it comes to mine action’s role within the development plans of BiH, the national mine action strategy notes that efforts will be made to better understand the influences and possibilities brought by mine clearance, in the sense of enabling both development and contribution to fulfillment of the SDGs and that “relevant information including liaising of mine action and SDGs will be analyzed with a view to raise awareness and resource mobilization for mine action programmes.”<sup>67</sup> For that, the Strategy further emphasises the importance of increasing the visibility of the mine action programme and promoting links between mine action programmes and wider development initiatives.<sup>68</sup>

The Strategy further states, that as a result, the BHMAL and other mine awareness organisations will work in closer cooperation with development stakeholders to enable the realisation of several SDGs.<sup>69</sup> To ensure a smooth coordination with partners, the BHMAL, in accordance with the BiH National Mine Action Strategy (2018–2025), should hold two mine awareness working group meetings annually, however, it was not possible to convene these meetings in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.<sup>70,71</sup>

In Lao PDR, the National Strategic Plan for 2010–2020 titled The Safe Path Forward II (SPF II)<sup>72</sup> guides the UXO sector. The SPF II mentions that it is imperative to mainstream UXO action into broader socio-economic development strategies and programmes to ensure sustainability.<sup>73</sup>

This 10-year strategy was revised in 2015 with the support of the UNDP and other key partners, to better align and integrate UXO into the country's broader socio-economic development plans. After the mid-term review of the SPF II, a few new targets were added including, amongst others, "keeping clearance as a priority of the government's poverty eradication programme".<sup>74</sup>

The SPF II acknowledges that UXO has been hindering the socio-economic development of the country and highlights UXO's negative impact on and the correlation with food insecurity and poverty. The SPF II does not refer to SDGs per se but to the MDGs – as it was adopted in the era of the MDGs – and states that UXO constitutes a significant obstacle to the achievement of the MDGs.<sup>75</sup> The SPF II urges operators to adopt an inclusive approach "so that the [UXO] sector can shift towards an approach centred on people and communities and plan and measure the impact of its actions in terms of socio-economic outcomes leading to poverty reduction".<sup>76</sup>

Similarly, UXO's impact on socio-economic development and on the achievement of the SDGs are well articulated in Lao PDR's UXO Sector Five-Year Plan 2016–2020. The Plan, in addition, identifies SDG 18 'Lives Safe from UXO' as "the vision of UXO Sector in Lao PDR to 2030".<sup>77</sup> In 2018, Lao PDR developed its first sector-wide annual workplan, for clearance in 2019, in an inclusive manner with inputs from all relevant stakeholders.<sup>78</sup> Later, in September 2020, the NRA held a workshop with all UXO operators, for the very first UXO sector-wide annual workplan for every UXO activity for the year 2021.<sup>79</sup>

Analyses of Lao PDR's UXO annual sectoral reports<sup>80</sup> starting from 2015, showed a number of associations between the UXO sector and development, indicating Lao PDR's commitment and efforts to ensure alignment between UXO action, and development. In addition, the research found that there is a better understanding of the role of the UXO sector in Lao PDR and that, as a result, the government of Lao PDR is now embracing its mine action strategy and is ready to implement it.<sup>81</sup>



GICHD strategic planning and prioritisation workshop, Bosnia and Herzegovina, 2016

# POLICY COHERENCE AND PARTICIPATION IN INSTITUTIONAL MECHANISMS

Policy coherence responds to the interdependence between sectors and different ministries or national entities and while respecting national policy space, strives for consistency with international rules.<sup>82</sup> There are two dimensions to policy coherence: one is internal, relating to coherence across sectors and at different levels within one state; and the other relates to the coherence between national frameworks and international commitments.

The NMAAs of the case study countries reported being familiar with the Agenda 2030, however, no formal training was provided to their staff—only, in some cases, to senior management. Yet both NMAAs stated their strong commitment to the SDGs which they believe provide relevant entry points for the mine action sector. In addition, the Bosnia and Herzegovina Mine Action Centre (BHMIC) reported that mine action should be perceived as an enabler of wider sustainable development initiatives, and that mainstreaming efforts should be strengthened.<sup>83</sup> However, the BHMIC also reported that they were not part of any SDG nationalisation processes, including the preparation of the voluntary national review (VNR).<sup>84</sup>

In the case of Lao PDR, the study found that participation in the 2030 Agenda processes, such as nationalisation efforts, institutional mechanisms and the preparation of the VNR, had a beneficial effect on the unexploded ordnance (UXO) sector. The National Regulatory Authority (NRA) advised that through participation in the SDG nationalisation process, they were able to successfully integrate UXO as a cross-cutting theme in other sectors as well as in the SDGs.<sup>85</sup> The NRA was actively engaged in the process of the preparation of the Lao PDR's VNR 2018 report and provided relevant data from the UXO sector. The NRA was even invited to attend the high-level political forum (HLPF), which created an opportunity to raise awareness, and advocate for the sector at the international level in a relevant forum.<sup>86</sup>

The SDGs have helped the UXO sector in Lao PDR to raise greater awareness, mobilise more funds, and increase coordination and collaboration with other sectors. In addition, they have allowed the country to bring the UXO problem before the international community by creating an additional SDG 18. The NRA reported that due to vast UXO contamination, the targets and indicators contained in SDG 18 also provided an opportunity to address the extensive problem of UXO contamination in a more strategic and organised way, by providing the UXO sector with a comprehensive framework within which to plan and operate.<sup>87</sup>

The lack of sustained involvement on the part of BiH's mine action sector in national SDG processes, as evidenced in the study, requires an understanding of the inherent complexities faced by the country. Given that the country has over 160 ministries and hundreds of specialised institutions at different administrative levels, as well as 145 local administrations, the work done to date is considerable; however, a lot of advocacy work on the engagement with and integration of Agenda 2030 in the regular institutional processes remains to be done.<sup>88</sup>

It is assumed that the ongoing and unfinished nationalisation processes, coupled with national efforts being made to deepen the alignment between mine action and development, will result in the stronger integration and consistent participation of the BiH mine action sector in the future.

Overall, the analysis showed that in the case study countries, interaction between the mine action sector and the SDGs took place primarily at the national level, making national mine action authorities more familiar with the SDGs and, therefore, able to integrate them.<sup>89</sup> However, there is a need to raise awareness among the provincial or local authorities responsible for mine action about the 2030 Agenda and to build and develop capacity on how these authorities can integrate the 2030 Agenda and use the SDG frameworks in their daily duties.

# DATA AND INFORMATION MANAGEMENT

The study looked into the use of SDG-aligned monitoring frameworks and data gathering processes used by the sector for direct reporting on mine action contributions, to understand the benefits and remaining challenges of this adaptation. Information management systems in the case study countries were also observed to understand the extent to which the data management systems were adapted to the 2030 Agenda, with the goal of standardising and measuring mine action outcomes as contributors to the achievement of global and nationalised SDGs.

With regard to this, the BHMACH reported that their information management (IM) system “captures outcomes that can document the progress on the SDG contributions”, by closely following mine action strategy goals which are in line with the SDGs.<sup>90</sup>

Similarly, the NRA reported that their national database system – the Information Management System for Mine Action (IMSMA) – is used for the UXO sector to measure the achievements of SDG targets. In addition, the NRA uses the SDG monitoring framework for data gathering. For instance, the NRA reported that casualty numbers entered into IMSMA allow the achievement of the SDG 18 target on casualty reduction to be measured.<sup>91</sup>

Despite some progress in aligning IM systems with SDG monitoring and reporting frameworks, the research found that IM is still one of the most challenging areas in both case study countries, since the NMAAs face difficulties relating to data collection from different actors, including structuring standards and data disaggregation. These challenges also hinder the establishment of SDG linkages. Among the current challenges identified are a lack of concrete linkages with the SDGs, historic mismanagement of the IM systems, the complicated nature of the IM processes, and lack of specific capacity, especially in terms of SDG-aligned outcomes.<sup>92</sup>

In addition, the NRA stated that one of the main IM challenges was ensuring the accuracy of the data collected. This was reported mainly as a result of having a varying high number of operators in the country which often work in very remote areas, making it difficult to ensure proper coordination and communication.<sup>93</sup>

In this context, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Lao UXO Unit stated that “there is a need for Lao PDR to have a more versatile IM platform which would react, automatically, to changes within the SDGs and would also be able to report on the SDGs”. In addition to this, a need for capacity assessment was also raised to better understand the current IM situation and capacities, and how it can be improved to reach the level where there is strong national ownership, sustainability and donor confidence.<sup>94</sup>

## MINE ACTION OPERATIONS

Operational activities such as survey, clearance, prioritisation and tasking are considered to be at the core of mine action activities. The study analyses the extent to which the NMAAs use the SDGs as an analytical framework to conduct such activities as part of broader development efforts.

The NMAAs of the case study countries do take into consideration socio-economic aspects including sustainable development in national demining operations. Some progress was made in this regard; however, for both case study countries, this is still work in progress.

The BHMAL advised that while taking into consideration socio-economic aspects, the reporting systems and results also serve to record the progress made towards the SDGs, in general terms. Additionally, the BHMAL reported that clearance is prioritised in accordance with the country’s socio-economic development as well as with the SDGs.<sup>95</sup>

The BHMAL also plans to tighten the links of survey, clearance, and land release with the SDGs, taking into consideration the socio-economic, humanitarian, commercial and ecological impact of contamination.

In addition to this, BiH will put efforts into better understanding the contributions of land release in terms of sustainable development and the achievement of the SDGs.<sup>96</sup>

The NRA reported that in Lao PDR, the SDGs are part of a land clearance prioritisation process through the National Socio-Economic Development Plan (NSEDP), since land is cleared according to the priorities identified in the NSEDP, which itself integrates the SDGs. The NRA uses the SDG framework in various operational activities such as surveys and assessments, and prioritisation of land clearance, amongst others.<sup>97</sup>

In addition, the NRA reported that the SDGs, in particular SDG 5 and SDG 10, guided the UXO sector in the framework of providing assistance to UXO victims and survivors, including indirect victims. The NRA further pointed out that all persons with disabilities, regardless of the cause of their disabilities, receive assistance.<sup>98</sup>



Clearance site, Lao PDR

## RESOURCE MOBILISATION

Mine action is a sector of intensive resources requiring significant financial investment. For instance, in 2017 alone, BiH spent a total of 32 million BAM (around 19 million USD) on mine action activities.<sup>99</sup> On top of that, in order to implement its Mine Action Strategy 2018–2025 and to fulfil clearance obligations by 2027, BiH declared that it will need 336.2 million BAM (around 202 million USD).<sup>100</sup> Showcasing medium and long-term impacts could make donors more inclined to provide such levels of financial support.

Already in 2017, the GICHD-UNDP study identified that resource mobilisation was of great concern within the sector and that linking expected results and referencing concrete contributions to the SDGs can play a significant role in resource mobilisation.<sup>101</sup>

As the mine action sector has been diversifying its fundraising sources and accessing broader development and humanitarian aid funds, referencing development outcomes seems instrumental. In this regard, the study explored the experience of the mine action sector in BiH and Lao PDR over recent years, to assess the extent to which the sector has been using the SDGs for fundraising purposes and to understand their views on whether further alignment with the SDG framework, or whether demonstrating development outcomes, could increase their chances of obtaining funds.

The study found that the NMAAs of BiH and Lao PDR have indeed been using the SDGs for fundraising purposes, particularly when it comes to land release, by showing the long-term and sustainable development outcomes of clearance.

Both the BHMAL and the NRA reported having integrated SDGs in their proposals to potential donors. In this context, the NRA advised that they included SDG 18 (Lives Safe from UXO) in every concept paper drafted for donors as it helped to mobilise funds. Moreover, the NRA also reported that donors were particularly interested to see the alignment of SDG 18 with other SDGs. In this regard, Lao PDR undertook two recent projects: one on gender mainstreaming in the UXO sector by integrating SDG 18 and SDG 5,

and the second project aimed at linking SDG 18 with SDG 1, SDG 5, SDG 8, and SDG 10 by providing vocational training assistance to persons with disabilities, including UXO survivors, in Lao PDR.<sup>102</sup>

As stated by a representative of the UNDP Lao UXO Unit, “Everything we say, and everything we do [in Lao PDR], it is all linked into the SDGs.” The UNDP Lao UXO Unit also added that there was an expectation from most of the donors to see linkages between the SDGs and development in UXO project proposals, particularly if the fund is linked to development cooperation of donor countries. In addition to this, the existing linkages between the UXO sector and development, at the national level, allow the UXO sector to easily identify UXO-related linkages and then present them to the donors at the drafting stage of proposals.<sup>103</sup>

### **Impact of COVID-19 on resource mobilisation**

With devastating consequences on the health and well-being of millions of people, COVID-19 is also impacting the economy of countries throughout the world. For many developed countries, this has resulted in a reduction of their international aid and of various donor contributions for the humanitarian and development fields, including the mine action sector.

The research found that BiH and Lao PDR have also been facing competing priorities and financial cuts in funds by international donors. In addition, the research identified a shared sentiment that the economic consequences of COVID-19 will be prevalent for the next couple of years.



7<sup>th</sup> meeting of State Parties to the Convention on Cluster Munitions, side-event on SDG 18, Geneva, 2017

# CONCLUSION

The 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) provide an opportunity for the mine action sector to participate in and influence national socio-economic development efforts, while enhancing the coordination and visibility of mine action contributions to sustainable development. By providing a comprehensive framework, the SDGs have the potential to support mine action in setting and monitoring the right objectives while promoting more efficient, effective and sustainable outcomes.

Considering that the two countries studied, Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) and Lao PDR, are in an advanced stage in terms of SDG nationalisation efforts, they serve as relevant cases to assess the benefits and challenges for the mine action sector stemming from the adoption of the 2030 Agenda five years ago.

While mainstreaming efforts are still ongoing and more time and resources might be needed, the national mine action authorities (NMAAs) of both countries were able to identify and report existing benefits for mine action with regard to the nationalisation and the operationalisation of the 2030 Agenda, such as enhanced visibility, more effective resource mobilisation, and increased policy coherence.

With regard to the nationalisation efforts, the study analysed different efforts and existing mechanisms for better linking, planning, and monitoring of mine action outcomes in terms of the SDGs. The research found that both countries aimed at integrating, to a different extent, mine action related targets and indicators in national strategic planning efforts, including the establishment of a distinct SDG 18 in the case of Lao PDR.

While in global terms, mine action seems to be poorly integrated in the voluntary national reviews and with no major role in the follow-up and review mechanism, BiH and Lao PDR are two of the few countries that provided insights on the linkages of mine action and sustainable development, and positioned mine action efforts as an enabler and accelerator of the SDGs.

Accordingly, it is acknowledged throughout this research that the SDGs serve as entry points for mine action stakeholders, allowing them to increase their substantive role in national socio-economic development planning processes as well as their visibility. In particular, Lao PDR reported that the 2030 Agenda positively impacted the unexploded ordnance (UXO) sector by contributing to raising awareness about the UXO problem both nationally and internationally, to mobilise more funds, as well as to increase coordination and collaboration with other sectors.

Finally, when it comes to SDG mainstreaming and practical operationalisation examples within the cycle of mine action, using the SDG framework for survey and clearance can help operators, particularly in the prioritisation process. However, the study found that alignment is not complete and there are still challenges in this process. The main one is the lack of familiarity with all the 2030 Agenda processes and how its frameworks can be used. More support is required, particularly at the provincial and local levels.

The study concluded that linking mine action and the 2030 Agenda has clearly benefitted fundraising efforts. In this context, the study also found that unfortunately there is a shared sentiment among NMAAs that COVID-19 will have a significant and long-term impact on their funding and in the resources available to strengthen their mainstreaming efforts. Therefore, the importance of fostering synergies and improved reporting of mine action contributions to broader sustainable development remains a crucial undertaking, to ensure the sustainability and relevance of the sector's work.

# ENDNOTES

- 1 Oslo Action Plan, APLC/CONF/2019/5/Add.1
- 2 In September 2000, the United Nations Member States adopted the United Nations Millennium Declaration to reduce extreme poverty, hunger, child mortality as well as to promote gender equality, and all through a global partnership. The Declaration set out eight measurable goals, known as the Millennium Development Goals, to be reached by 2015.
- 3 United Nations. 2015. *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*. UN Doc. A/RES/70/1.
- 4 Ibid.
- 5 Ibid.
- 6 GICHD, KCL and SIPRI. 2019. *The Socio-economic Impact of Anti-vehicle Mines in Angola*.
- 7 Ibid, p. 32.
- 8 GICHD and UNDP. 2017. *Leaving no one behind: Mine action and the Sustainable Development Goals*.
- 9 Mine Action Review. 2020. *Clearing the Mines. Bosnia and Herzegovina*.
- 10 Ibid.
- 11 Established within the Ministry of Civil Affairs, the Demining Commission represents the sector internationally and is the strategic body setting mine action policies. The Demining Commission is composed of representatives from three ministries (Civil Affairs, Defense, and Security) and supervises the work of the BHMAL which serves as a technical body to the Commission.
- 12 The BHMAL which was established by a 2002 Decree of the Council of Ministers serves as a technical body to the Demining Commission and is responsible primarily for operational aspects of mine action activities.
- 13 UNDP. MAGMA Project. Available at [https://www.ba.undp.org/content/bosnia\\_and\\_herzegovina/en/home/democratic-governance-and-peacebuilding/MAGMA.html](https://www.ba.undp.org/content/bosnia_and_herzegovina/en/home/democratic-governance-and-peacebuilding/MAGMA.html) [accessed October 2020].
- 14 Mine Action Review. 2019. *Clearing the mines*, p. 310.
- 15 Mine Action Review. 2019. *Clearing Cluster Munition Remnants*, p. 60.
- 16 CCM Extension Request by Lao PDR. February 2019. *Part A Executive summary*. Available at <https://www.clusterconvention.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/Part-A-Executive-Summary.pdf> [accessed May 2020].
- 17 Mine Action Review. 2020. *Clearing Cluster Munition Remnants*. Lao PDR.
- 18 Unexploded ordnance (UXO) are munitions (bombs, rockets, artillery shells, mortars, grenades and the like) that have been used but failed to detonate as intended.
- 19 The NRA was established in 2004 in partnership with the UNDP. The NRA is a national focal point for the Lao PDR UXO sector and a coordinator for both national and international clearance operators. In addition, the NRA has a high-level inter-ministerial board consisting of representatives from 11 ministries and reporting directly to the office of the prime minister.

- 20 Lao National Unexploded Ordnance Programme (UXO Lao). Organization. Available at <https://www.uxolao.org/background-2/> [accessed 18 October 2020].
- 21 UNDP. Lao PDR. *Moving Towards Achieving SDG 18: Removing the UXO Obstacle to Development in Lao PDR*. Available at [https://www.la.undp.org/content/lao\\_pdr/en/home/projects/Moving-Towards-Achieving-SDG-18-Removing-the-UXO-Obstacle-to-Development-in-Lao-PDR11.html](https://www.la.undp.org/content/lao_pdr/en/home/projects/Moving-Towards-Achieving-SDG-18-Removing-the-UXO-Obstacle-to-Development-in-Lao-PDR11.html).
- 22 United Nations. 2015. *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*. UN Doc. A/RES/70/1.
- 23 UN Moldova and Government of the Republic of Moldova. *Toolkit for the Nationalisation of Sustainable Development Goals*. March 2017, p. 4. Available at [https://www.md.undp.org/content/moldova/en/home/library/sdg/na\\_ionalizarea-agendei-de-dezvoltare-durabil-in-contextul-republ/ghid-privind-na\\_ionalizarea-obiectivelor-de-dezvoltare-durabil.html](https://www.md.undp.org/content/moldova/en/home/library/sdg/na_ionalizarea-agendei-de-dezvoltare-durabil-in-contextul-republ/ghid-privind-na_ionalizarea-obiectivelor-de-dezvoltare-durabil.html) [Accessed June 2020].
- 24 Lao PDR. *8<sup>th</sup> Five-Year National Socio-Economic Development Plan (2016–2020)*. Ministry of Planning and Investment. June 2016.
- 25 Lao PDR. *Voluntary National Review on the Implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*. July 2018, p. 6.
- 26 Lao PDR. *8<sup>th</sup> Five-Year National Socio-Economic Development Plan (2016–2020)*. Performance indicators and targets of Outcome 2, Output 1 – Improved Living Standards through Poverty Reduction using the 3-Builds Directions.
- 27 Communication from the NRA. 26 October 2020.
- 28 The Round Table Process was launched in 2000 and is led by the Ministry of Planning and Investment. High-level round table meetings take place currently every five years, alongside implementation meetings which are held on a yearly basis. The Round Table Process serves as an inclusive forum to bring together all stakeholders to ensure coordination when it comes to the country's national development plans. Within this process, there are currently ten sector working groups based on thematic areas, serving as key coordination platforms for the respective sectors.
- 29 The UXO Sector Working Group (SWG) is one of ten SWGs and is chaired by the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare and the National Regulatory Authority for the UXO & Mine Action Sector in Lao PDR, with the United Nations Development Programme and the United States of America as co-chairs. The UXO Sector Working Group meets bi-annually and serves as one of the mechanisms to strengthen coordination, international assistance and resource sharing of the UXO sector by bringing together all government and development partners relevant to the sector. The UXO SWG includes three sub-sector working group: Clearance, Victim Assistance, UXO/Risk Education. <https://rtm.org.la/sector-working-groups/overview/>.
- 30 Request for sector working group inputs. Formulation of the 9th NSEDP.
- 31 Bosnia and Herzegovina. *Strategic Framework for BiH*. Sarajevo, August 2015, p. 50.
- 32 Ibid, p. 99.
- 33 RIA is a study that supports countries in mainstreaming the SDGs in planning across governance levels and determining their relevance in terms of the country context, different levels of governance and interlinkages across targets (BiH Voluntary Review 2019).
- 34 SDG Dashboards were created for the state and entity level and a Dashboard initiated for Brcko District (BiH Voluntary Review 2019).

- 35 RIAs and UN MAPS were used to assess the state of alignment of the SDGs with the priorities in the country.
- 36 Bosnia and Herzegovina. *Voluntary Review. Implementation of Agenda 2030 and the Sustainable Development Goals in Bosnia and Herzegovina*. April 2019.
- 37 Ibid, p. 26.
- 38 Communication from the BHMAC. 9 October 2020.
- 39 Bosnia and Herzegovina. *Voluntary Review. Implementation of Agenda 2030 and the Sustainable Development Goals in Bosnia and Herzegovina*. April 2019, p. 10.
- 40 Ibid, p. 27.
- 41 Ibid.
- 42 Ibid.
- 43 More information on SDG 18 with its targets and indicators are available at <https://www.clusterconvention.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/Annex-5-SDG-18-1.pdf>
- 44 Communication with the UNDP Lao UXO Unit. 21 August 2020.
- 45 Project titled, Moving Towards Achieving SDG 18: Removing the UXO Obstacle to Development in Lao PDR. More information can be found at [https://www.la.undp.org/content/lao\\_pdr/en/home/projects/Moving-Towards-Achieving-SDG-18-Removing-the-UXO-Obstacle-to-Development-in-Lao-PDR11.html](https://www.la.undp.org/content/lao_pdr/en/home/projects/Moving-Towards-Achieving-SDG-18-Removing-the-UXO-Obstacle-to-Development-in-Lao-PDR11.html).
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