



THE REPUBLIC OF IRAQ NATIONAL MINE ACTION STRATEGY

2023 - 2028

'Mine action enables Republic of Iraq to attain its national humanitarian and development goals and fulfil its international convention obligations'



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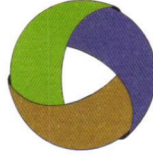
GLOSSARY OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

APMBC	Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention
AP	Anti-personnel
AV	Anti-vehicle
AXO	Abandoned Explosive Ordnance
CCM	Convention on Cluster Munitions
CCW	Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons
CHA	Confirmed Hazard Area
CMR	Cluster munition remnants
CRPD	Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
DMA	Directorate for Mine Action
EO	Explosive Ordnance
EOD	Explosive Ordnance Disposal
EORE	Explosive Ordnance Risk Education
ERW	Explosive Remnants of War
EU	European Union
GICHD	Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining
Gol	Government of Iraq
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
IED	Improvised Explosive Device
IKMAA	Iraqi Kurdistan Mine Action Agency
IOM	International Organisation for Migration
KRI	Kurdish Region of Iraq
IM	Information Management
IMAS	International Mine Action Standards
IMSMA	Information Management System for Mine Action
KRG	Kurdistan Regional Government
KRI	Kurdistan Region of Iraq
MAG	Mines Advisory Group



MoD	Ministry of Defence
MoE	Ministry of Environment
MoI	Ministry of Interior
MoMD	Ministry of Migration and Displacement
MoP	Ministry of Planning
MSP	Meeting of States Parties
NAP	National Action Plan
NDP	National Development Plan
NMAA	National Mine Action Authority
NMAS	National Mine Action Standards
NPA	Norwegian People's Aid
NTS	Non-Technical Survey
QA	Quality Assurance
QC	Quality Control
QM	Quality Management
RMAC	Regional Mine Action Centre
SADD	Sex and Age-Disaggregated Data
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SHA	Suspected Hazardous Area
SOP	Standard Operating Procedure
TS	Technical Survey
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNMAS	United Nations Mine Action Programmes
USD	United States Dollar
UXO	Unexploded Ordnance
VA	Victim Assistance

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ



كومارى عيراق
ومزارتى زيتكه
نوسينكهى ومزير
Republic of Iraq
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جمهورية العراق
وزارة البيئة
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العدد :

التاريخ : / / ٢٠

المقدمة

بمناسبة إطلاق استراتيجية برنامج شؤون الألغام الوطني للأعوام ٢٠٢٣-٢٠٢٨ وهي خارطة طريق مهمة لمواجهة تداعيات الحروب المريعة التي تعرض لها العراق على مر المرحلة المضنية السابقة الامر الذي يتطلب ترجمة هذه الرؤى والمحاور والاهداف الواردة في مضامين هذه الاستراتيجية الى برامج عمل اجرائية عاملة على الارض وتعزيز روح الشراكة مابين كافة الجهات المعنية بتنفيذ هذه الاستراتيجية مما يسهم دون شك في التخلص من مكاره الحروب السابقة وتركاتها والغامها وذخائرها ومخلفاتها الحربية الخطيرة , ويعمل بالتالي على ترجمة مبادئ ومضامين البرنامج الحكومي الهادف الى احداث نقلة نوعية لافتة على صعيد برامج البناء والاعمار والتنمية والازدهار الاقتصادي والاجتماعي والانساني والتنموي عموماً ... ان انجاز هذه الاستراتيجية من قبل وزارة البيئة / دائرة شؤون الألغام والمؤسسة العامة لشؤون الألغام في اقليم كردستان العراق وبدعم فاعل من قبل مركز جنيف الدولي لأزالة الألغام للأغراض الانسانية GICHD مشكوراً فضلاً عن تعاون باقي الشركاء المحليين والدوليين الاخرين لهو تعبير عن مدى مايمثله ملف الألغام من اهتمام عالي وكبير سواء على المستوى الوطني والدولي نظراً لطبيعة التحديات التي يمثلها اليوم هذا الملف والعقبات التي يشكلها امام عجلة البناء والتنمية الاقتصادية والاقتصاد فضلاً عن المخاطر الجسيمة التي يتكبدها العراق جراء سقوط اعداد كبيرة من الضحايا والمصابين بشكل مروع وفيه صور اليمه ومأساوية تحتم بالتالي على الجميع المسارعة والعمل بكل جد ومثابرة ومسؤولية بهدف التخلص منه واغلاقه والوصول الحتمي للحظة اعلان العراق خالياً من هذه المخاطر التي تهدد بشكل يومي الحياة بكل اشكالها ومظاهرها المختلفة ..

والله ولي التوفيق ... والسلام عليكم ورحمة الله وبركاته .

المهندس

نزار ثاميدي

وزير البيئة

٢٠٢٣/٧/

INTRODUCTION

PURPOSE AND OUTLINE

This National Mine Action Strategy (Strategy) presents the strategic orientation for the Republic of Iraq's mine action programme 2023–2028. It replaces the National Strategic and Executive Plan for Mine Action 2017-2021, builds on accomplishments and draws on lessons learnt from the previous strategic period. The strategy supports Iraq's broader humanitarian and development efforts, as outlined in Republic of Iraq's Vision for Sustainable Development 2030, the National Development Plan and the Poverty Reduction Strategy. It reinforces Republic of Iraq's commitment to implementing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and its international convention obligations under the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC), the Convention on Cluster Munitions (CCM), the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) and the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW).

This Strategy provides a brief overview of Republic of Iraq's country context, including fighting history and its explosive ordnance (EO)¹ contamination, before presenting a summary of the humanitarian impact. It then provides an overview of Iraq's mine action programme, including its institutional mine action architecture and the normative framework. A summary of strengths and opportunities is outlined before a brief risk analysis is presented. Key dimensions of the enabling environment and cross-cutting issues are outlined before the Theory of Change, including the vision, mission, key principles and assumptions, is presented. The strategic objective sections are then outlined, presenting strategic narratives and corresponding outcomes, indicators, baselines and targets. The document ends with presenting the Republic of Iraq's commitments to monitoring and evaluation.

METHODOLOGY

In line with the Oslo Action Plan's² Action #2 Develop evidence-based, costed and time-bound national strategies and work plans to fulfil and implement Convention obligations as soon as possible³, this strategy has been developed drawing on updated information and findings from a thorough context analysis.

Eight principles guided the strategy development process:

1. Ensure a consultative and inclusive approach

¹ International Mine Action Standards (IMAS) 04.10 Glossary on Mine Action Terms, Definitions and Abbreviations (Amendment 10, February 2019): Explosive Ordnance (EO) (2018) interpreted as encompassing mine action's response to the following munitions: Mines, Cluster Munitions, Unexploded Ordnance, Abandoned Ordnance, Booby traps, other devices (as defined by CCW APII), Improvised Explosive Devices*

Note: Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) meeting the definition of mines, booby-traps or other devices fall under the scope of mine action, when their clearance is undertaken for humanitarian purposes and in areas where active hostilities have ceased.

² The 2019 Oslo Action Plan is the fourth action plan of the APMBC, following the 4th Review Conference in Oslo, Norway, November 2019.

³ OAP #2: Develop evidence-based, costed and time-bound national strategies and work plans to fulfil and implement Convention obligations as soon as possible

2. Promote national ownership (national authority's effective control and management of all mine action activities)
3. Ensure gender and diversity inclusion
4. Develop a Theory of Change based on context analysis findings
5. Enable monitoring by adopting a Results Based Management (RBM) approach⁴
6. Ensure transparency and accountability
7. Align the strategy with International Mine Action Standards (IMAS)
8. Promote collaboration and coordination

Reflecting international good practice, this strategy was developed in an inclusive and participatory manner under the lead of the Directorate for Mine Action (DMA) and the Iraqi Kurdistan Mine Action Agency (IKMAA), in close collaboration with the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD). A wide range of Iraqi government ministries and national and international organisations participated in the strategy stakeholder workshop, facilitated by the GICHD in Baghdad and Erbil in March 2021.

The strategy stakeholder workshop programme is available in Annex I. Upon the conclusion of the March 2021 workshop, the mine action programme's draft Theory of Change was presented to a wide range of stakeholders, including high-level representatives from the Government of Republic of Iraq and international donors. Subsequent online meetings with DMA, IKMAA, GICHD and expert organisations resulted in consensus on strategic priorities at the objective level. GICHD facilitated additional high-level meetings in Baghdad and Erbil in June and July 2021, before the DMA organised additional inter-ministerial consultations and submitted the final draft for formal approval by the Government of Republic of Iraq in 2023.

In addition to this English version, the strategy is also available in Republic of Iraq's two official languages Arabic and Kurdish, in line with Article 4 of Republic of Iraq's 2005 Constitution.

COUNTRY CONTEXT

GENERAL

The Constitution of the Republic of Iraq for the year 2005 stipulates that the Republic of Iraq is an independent, federal state with full sovereignty. The system of government is republican, representative, parliamentary and democratic. This constitution guarantees the unity of the Republic of Iraq. The total population of the Republic of Iraq is approximately 40 million. The Human Development Report 2020 places the Republic of Iraq in the category of countries with medium human development, ranking 123 out of a total of 198 countries.

⁴ IMAS 07.40 Monitoring of mine action organisations, Second Edition 20 January 2016: Quality management is particularly focused on the quality of products/outputs as part of making sure that work is done correctly. Mine action organisations must also be sure that the right work is chosen to have the required impact that will make a difference to affected people, societies and countries. QM must also focus on this second requirement of making sure that resources are directed to achieving stated strategic goals, not just to keeping people busy.

FIGHTING HISTORY AND EO CONTAMINATION

The Republic of Iraq is one of the most heavily EO-contaminated countries in the world. In 2021, DMA and IKMAA estimated the Republic of Iraq's total EO contamination at just below 3 000 square kilometres, with landmines (conventional anti-personnel (AP)⁵, anti-vehicle (AV)⁶ mines and victim operated improvised explosive devices (IEDs⁷)) representing 57% of the total contamination. In addition, the Republic of Iraq is heavily contaminated by cluster munition remnants (CMR)⁸ and explosive remnants of war (ERW)⁹. Starting in the 1960s, internal conflicts between the Kurdish Movement and the former dictatorial regime resulted in widespread AP, AV and ERW contamination in the Kurdish Region of Iraq. The 1980-1988 war between the Republic of Iraq and the Republic of Iran left behind extensive CMR, particularly in the Republic of Iraq's southern governorates. Borders with neighbouring countries Kuwait and Iran are also heavily contaminated with AP and AT minefields as a result. The 2003 invasion by the United States (US)-led coalition caused new, widespread ERW and CMR contamination throughout the Federal Republic of Iraq.

Most of the Republic of Iraq's CMR contamination¹⁰ is located within the southern governorates of Basrah, Muthanna, and Thi Qar. Vast areas of previously unknown EO contamination, including mines and CMR, are discovered every year, particularly in the southern governorates.

Fighting between the Daesh terrorist gangs¹¹ and Iraq's Security Forces between 2014-2017 resulted in new, widespread and complex EO contamination, including IEDs placed in defensive minefield-type patterns, residential areas and in private houses. DMA estimates that more than 95% of IEDs are anti-personnel mines of an improvised nature, due to their victim activated mechanisms. Iraq's IED contamination, frequently referred to as 'new contamination' in liberated areas, poses unique operational challenges to clearance operators, because of its complex and unpredictable mechanisms.

⁵ Anti-Personnel Mine (APM): a mine designed to be exploded by the presence, proximity or contact of a person and that will incapacitate, injure or kill one or more persons. [APMBC] Note: APM include improvised explosive devices that fit the above definition, IMAS 04.10

⁶ Anti-Tank/Vehicle Mine (ATM/AVM) (2018): a mine designed to be exploded by the presence, proximity or contact of a vehicle. Note: Mines designed to be detonated by the presence, proximity or contact of a vehicle as opposed to a person that are equipped with anti-handling devices, are not considered APM as a result of being so equipped. Note: ATM/AVM include improvised explosive devices that fit the above definition. IMAS 04.10

⁷ Improvised explosive device: a device placed or fabricated in an improvised manner incorporating explosive material, destructive, lethal, noxious, incendiary, pyrotechnic materials or chemicals designed to destroy, disfigure, distract or harass. They may incorporate military stores but are normally devised from non-military components [IATG 01.40:2011].

Note: An IED may meet the definition of a mine, booby trap, and/or other type of explosive ordnance depending on its construction. These devices may also be referred to as improvised, artisanal, or locally manufactured mines, booby traps, or other types of explosive ordnance. IMAS 04.10

⁸ "Cluster munition remnants" means failed cluster munitions, abandoned cluster munitions, unexploded submunitions and unexploded bomblets; CCM (May 2008)

⁹ Explosive remnants of war: Unexploded Ordnance (UXO) and Abandoned Explosive Ordnance (AXO). [CCW protocol V]. Unexploded Ordnance: explosive ordnance that has been primed, fuzed, armed or otherwise prepared for use or used. It may have been fired, dropped, launched or projected yet remains unexploded either through malfunction or design or for any other reason. Abandoned Explosive Ordnance: explosive ordnance that has not been used during an armed conflict, that has been left behind or dumped by a party to an armed conflict, and which is no longer under control of the party that left it behind or dumped it. Abandoned explosive ordnance may or may not have been primed, fuzed, armed or otherwise prepared for use. [CCW protocol V]. IMAS 04.10

¹⁰ DMA estimated Iraq's suspected CMR contamination at 168 869 468 square metres in August 2021.

¹¹ The Daesh terrorist gangs fully controlled Ninawa and was heavily present in seven governorates: Anbar, Ninawa, Salah Adl-Dieen, Kirkuk, Diyala, Baghdad and Babil governorates.

In line with OAP Action #21, the Republic of Iraq acknowledges that it needs to apply all provisions and obligations under the APMBC to anti-personnel mines of an improvised nature, as it does for all other types of anti-personnel mines.¹²

The Republic of Iraq's EO contamination is generally mixed, with AP, AV and ERW frequently discovered in the same areas in the south, a combination of AP and ERW in the KRI, while the liberated areas often see a combination of AP mines (including IEDs) and ERW. This diverse range of contamination poses additional challenges to survey and clearance operations throughout the Republic of Iraq.

After years of intense fighting, Iraqi security forces captured the Daesh terrorist gang's last two strongholds of Al-Qa'im and Rawah on 17 November 2017. Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi declared final victory over the terrorist groups in December 2017, following the Iraqi army's capture of the last areas held by the terrorist gangs in the al-Jazira desert bordering Syria,

HUMANITARIAN IMPACT

The Republic of Iraq's many wars have resulted in widespread human suffering for several decades. The recent war with the Daesh terrorist group caused renewed human suffering and large-scale displacement of civilians. Many Iraqis became refugees while millions of internally displaced persons (IDPs) fled to other, more peaceful areas within Republic of Iraq, including IDP camps. At the end of April 2021, the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) estimated that a total of 1,198,940 million Iraqi IDPs remained in 18 governorates. The peak of Iraq's IDP crisis was registered in March 2016, with a total of 3,417,768 million IDPs. In June 2021, IOM estimated that 4,867,050 IDPs had returned to eight different governorates.¹³ While UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) noted that a total of 334,418 Iraqi refugees were protected under its mandate in 2020¹⁴, it is also estimated that several hundreds of thousands of Iraqi refugees fall outside of UNHCR's mandate.

In April 2021, the Government of the Republic of Iraq (GoI) published its National Plan to End Displacement (the Plan) under the auspices of the Ministry of Migration and Displacement (MoMD) and the Ministry of Planning (MoP). The Plan emphasises that addressing challenges related to protracted displacement is a key priority for Iraq's current government. The plan also notes that camp closure is a major objective, as long as appropriate conditions are created for the return of IDPs to their areas of origin. The Plan further states that while many IDPs seek to return to their areas of origin, all are not able, nor willing to do so. In these instances, alternatives to return—such as integration in areas of displacement or relocation to another place within the Republic of Iraq — may be necessary

¹² OAP Action #21: States Parties affected by anti-personnel mines of an improvised nature will ensure that they apply all provisions and obligations under the Convention to such contamination as they do for all other types of anti-personnel mines, including during survey and clearance in fulfilment of Article 5 and disaggregate by types of mines when reporting in fulfilment of Article 7 obligations.

¹³ IOM Displacement Tracking Matrix, Iraq Mission: <http://iraqdtm.iom.int/>

¹⁴ UNHCR, Refugee Statistics: <https://www.unhcr.org/refugee-statistics/download/?url=vmp5Pt>

or preferable by affected persons. These principles largely mirror the Framework on Durable Solutions for Internally Displaced Persons, endorsed by the Inter-Agency Standing Committee in April 2010.¹⁵

A 2018 assessment notes that the war against the Daesh terrorist gangs resulted in the damage of more than 138,000 homes in the Republic of Iraq, half of them beyond repair.¹⁶ Many of these homes were, and continue to be, contaminated by EO, including IEDs. The city of Mosul, hailed as the Daesh terrorist group's capital from 2014 until its liberation in July 2017, experienced extensive destruction, particularly in its old city. Across liberated areas, EO contamination prevents access for humanitarian actors and the delivery of assistance to people in need; it hinders IDPs and refugees' safe and sustainable returns, often resulting in secondary displacement and occupation of other peoples' properties; it impedes resumption of livelihoods and access to agricultural and grazing lands and irrigation systems; and it obstructs access to community infrastructure and basic services including schools, water facilities, hospitals, electrical stations and roads. The assessment further highlights that, on average across affected areas, 22% of IDPs in camps cite EO as a principal reason for not wanting to return to their areas of origin. This figure was as high as 52% in some governorates. On average, 12% of out-of-camp IDPs cite the same.¹⁷ Those who choose to return, do so to environments that are frequently contaminated by EO. This does not only prevent returnees from safely rebuilding their lives but also negatively impacts their mental wellbeing, given the constant presence of EO and the fears it generates.

Acknowledging the GoI's objective to close IDP camps and IDPs' perceptions of EO threats, humanitarian mine action (rooted in the humanitarian principles of neutrality, impartiality, humanity, and independence) plays a key enabling role for broader humanitarian, development and peace efforts in the Republic of Iraq. Given its cross-cutting and facilitating role, mine action can play a central role in the Triple Nexus¹⁸ on the connections between humanitarian, development and peace efforts.

In southern Iraq, EO contamination continues to block land that could otherwise be used for grazing, agriculture, and infrastructure development. The first six months of 2021 saw an exceptionally high

¹⁵ IASC Framework on Durable Solutions for Internally Displaced Persons, 5 April 2010, A durable solution is, as noted by the Framework, achieved when internally displaced persons no longer have any specific assistance and protection needs that are linked to their displacement and can enjoy their human rights without discrimination on account of their displacement <https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/other/iasc-framework-durable-solutions-internally-displaced-persons>

¹⁶ Iraq reconstruction and investment. Part 2 Damage and Needs Assessment of Affected Governorates, World Bank group, January 2018:

<https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/bitstream/handle/10986/29438/123631.pdf?sequence=4&isAllowed=y>

¹⁷ UNMAS Iraq: <https://unmas.shorthandstories.com/MineActionCoordinationInIraq/index.html>

¹⁸ The 'triple nexus' refers to the interlinkages between humanitarian, development and peace actors. In December 2016, UN Secretary General Guterres famously stated that relief, rehabilitation, early recovery, development, peacebuilding and stabilization often overlap, run simultaneously or intersect on the ground. The triple nexus builds on the momentum of global commitments and frameworks in the context of greater resource scarcity. It asks humanitarian, development and peace actors to consider whether they could conduct their work more holistically with one another to enable them to more effectively relieve global suffering, build resiliency and prevent conflict or its reoccurrence. Since its inception, the triple nexus has become an increasing focus of attention for those operating in the humanitarian, development and peace communities, including donors.

Reliefweb:

https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/ICVA_Nexus_briefing_paper%20%28Low%20Res%29.pdf

rate of EO accidents with 40 victims in the southern governorates. Examples from southern Iraq also illustrate how EO accidents that involve animals have a tremendous impact on people's livelihoods.¹⁹

Iraq's IMSMA database includes a total of 34 088 EO casualties; 86% of which are men, 9% women, 3% boys and the remaining 2% girls. Anbar governorate has the highest number of recorded EO accidents, with a total of 10 268 (women: 1508, girls: 624, boys: 797 and men: 7399). Reflecting global accident patterns, men represent the vast majority of direct EO victims in the Republic of Iraq. Proportionally speaking, however, when analysing the percentage killed out of the casualties, disaggregated by sex and age, the results reveal that 79% of all girl casualties died, 43% of women, 64% of boys, while 26% of all men casualties died. This reveals distinct age and gender dimensions related to the risk of dying as a result of an EO accident.

THE REPUBLIC OF IRAQ'S MINE ACTION PROGRAMME

BACKGROUND

The Republic of Iraq's mine action programme was established under the oversight of the United Nations Office of Project Service in the KRI in the mid-1990s. It was one project within UN's Oil for Food Programme, mandated by UN Security Council 98²⁰ as a temporary measure to ease the consequences of UN sanctions on Iraq's civilian population.²¹ Mine action in the Republic of Iraq remained limited to the KRI until the Mine Action Commission was established in 2003. The Commission was housed within the Ministry of Planning and Developmental Cooperation and funded by countries within the international coalition. The DMA was established within the Ministry of Environment (MoE) in 2008.

INSTITUTIONAL MINE ACTION ARCHITECTURE

NATIONAL HIGHER COMMITTEE FOR MINE ACTION

The Supreme National Committee for Mine Action is responsible for approving plans, reports and strategies for mine action. Chaired by the Minister of Environment, its membership comprises the Deputy Minister of Defence, Deputy Minister of Interior, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, Deputy Minister of Finance, Deputy Minister of Planning, Deputy Minister of Health, Deputy Minister of Labor and Social Affairs, Deputy National Security Adviser, Representative of the Iraqi Kurdistan Mine Action Agency, a representative of the General Secretariat for Provincial Affairs, a representative of the Government Coordination and Citizens Affairs Department / the General Secretariat of the Council of Ministers and the Director General of the Department of Mine action / the Ministry of Environment.

THE DIRECTORATE FOR MINE ACTION

The DMA, which remains housed within the MoE, is responsible for planning, coordinating, supervising, and monitoring all mine action activities in 15 governorates²² and is the national authority in Federal

¹⁹ Acknowledging that one camel can be worth as much as USD 7000, the impacts on livelihoods are far-reaching.

²⁰ UN Security Council resolution 986 (1995)

²¹ Office of the Iraq Programme. Oil-for-food: <https://www.un.org/depts/oip/sector-landmines.html>

²² Anbar, Babylon, Baghdad, Basrah, Dhi Qar, Diyala, Duhok, Kerbala, Kirkuk, Missan, Muthana, Najaf, Ninewa, Qadissiya, Salah Al-Din, Thi-Qar and Wasit

Iraq. It is responsible for setting national standards, accrediting and approving mine action organisations' standard operating procedures (SOPs), certifying completion of clearance tasks and preparing the annual transparency reports for the APMBC, the CCM and the CCW.²³ The DMA has three Regional Mine Action Centres (RMACs) covering the north (RMAC-N), the Middle Euphrates region (RMAC-MEU) and the south (RMAC-S)²⁴. RMAC-N, based at DMA headquarters in Baghdad with an office in Mosul²⁵, oversees mine action in five governorates (Anbar, Diyala, Kirkuk, Ninawa and Salah Ad-Din), while RMAC-MEU oversees mine action activities in six governorates (Babylon, Baghdad, Karbala, Najaf, Qadisyah and Wasit). RMAC-S, based in Basrah, coordinates mine action in four governorates (Basrah, Maysan, Muthanna, and Thi-Qar).

IRAQI KURDISTAN MINE ACTION AGENCY

IKMAA functions as a regulator and operator in the KRI and reports directly to the Council of Ministers in KRI. IKMAA, whose Director General has a ministerial rank within the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) structure, is governed by Law No 10, (passed by the Kurdistan National Assembly in 2007), with a mandate to plan, direct, implement and monitor mine action operations in Erbil, Duhok, Suleimaniyah, with regional offices in these areas, each managed by a Director General.²⁶ In addition to its regulatory role, IKMAA also implements survey, clearance and EORE operations.²⁷

NORMATIVE FRAMEWORK

CONSTITUTION OF THE REPUBLIC OF IRAQ

Article 33 of the Republic of Iraq's Constitution (2005) stipulates that 'Every individual has the right to live in safe environmental conditions.'²⁸ This is closely linked with humanitarian mine action's overall objective to ensure land is safe from EO. In addition, several Iraqi laws are applicable to the national mine action programme.²⁹ As of June 2021, the Republic of Iraq's national normative framework allows it to implement all its international convention obligations (APMBC and CCM).

INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN LAW

The Republic of Iraq became a State Party to the APMBC on 1 February 2008. In its first Article 7 transparency report submitted in July 2008, the Republic of Iraq reported that it had no stockpiled AP mines but that it had areas with known or suspected AP mines. In accordance with Article 5, the

²³ DMA: Roles and Responsibilities

²⁴ Established in 2003

²⁵ Established in 2019 with the support of UNMAS

²⁶ Erbil Mine Action Centre (EMAC), Suleimaniyah Mine Action Centre (SMAC), Duhok Mine Action Centre (DMAC) and Garman Mine Action Centre (GMAC).

²⁷ As of September 2021, IKMAA's operational capacities comprised: 36 manual demining teams (eight deminers, two sections leaders, one team leader and one medic); 18 quality assurance teams, 6 mechanical clearance teams, 2 ground preparation teams, 4 EOD teams, and 6 general survey teams. Due to a lack of vehicles, IKMAA's operational teams in 2021 were limited to five manual clearance teams (1 for DMAC, 1 for EMAC, 1 for GMAC and 2 for SMAC) and four EOD teams.

²⁸ Constitution of Iraq, Article 22 (1), 2005

²⁹ 1. Civil Defence Law No. 44 of 2013, 2. Persons with Disabilities & Special Needs Care Commission Law No. 38 of 2013, 3. Military Operations & Terrorism Affected Persons Compensation Law No. 30 of 2009, 4. War Operations Affected Persons Law Amendment No. 57 of 2015, 5. Social Protection Law No. 11 of 2014, 6. Weapon Law No. 13 of 1992 as amended, 7. Environment Protection & Improvement Law (as an ultimate goal to reach a safe environment)

Republic of Iraq undertook to destroy or ensure the destruction of all AP mines in these areas as soon as possible but not later than 1 February 2018. On 6 April 2017, the Republic of Iraq submitted a request to extend its mine clearance deadline; it was granted at the Sixteenth Meeting of States Parties (MSP) in Vienna, Austria and a new deadline was set for 1 February 2028.³⁰

The Republic of Iraq ratified the CCM on 14 May 2013, the convention entered into force on 1 November 2013. The Republic of Iraq reported that it had completed the destruction of stockpiled cluster munition (Article 3) before the CCM entered into force. The Republic of Iraq will submit an extension request to its Article 4 obligations on clearance and EORE, as it will not be able to meet its current deadline of 1 November 2023, given its vast CMR contamination.³¹

The Republic of Iraq became a States Party to the CCW on 28 September 2014, and is a signatory to protocols I-V, amended Article 1 and amended protocol II.³² The Republic of Iraq further ratified the CRPD on 20 March 2013.

PREVIOUS STRATEGIC PERIOD: KEY ACHIEVEMENTS AND CHALLENGES

The Iraqi government declared Thi-Qar governorate in southern Iraq free from AP mines in 2019, marking a significant milestone in the mine action programme. Other achievements include the development and formal approval of national mine action standards (NMAS) on CMR survey (CMRS) in 2018, which allowed the programme to address its CMR contamination in a more efficient manner, in line with international good practice. The full implementation of the CMRS methodology, in combination with the use of new technologies³³, resulted in significant reduction and cancellation in Iraq's four southern governorates under RMAC-S. This has also allowed RMAC-S to plan and task with greater clarity on the remaining suspected contamination problem.

Significant survey and clearance efforts in liberated areas have facilitated broader humanitarian assistance, including in Mosul, which has seen significant reconstruction since its liberation in July 2017. Mine action has played an important role in stabilisation efforts throughout liberated areas, including by clearing residential areas that has facilitated safe reconstruction and IDP resettlement.

The KRI has seen great progress in implementing land release, with a significant increase in cancellation and reduction outputs, leading up to 2020.

Achievements have also been made in IM, including the development and launch of an Online Task Management System, developed with the support of iMMAP. While the system will be further developed and remains to be fully utilised, it has facilitated greater clarity and transparency and is a clear indication that DMA is committed to transfer more of its IM processes online. RMAC-S' IM processes have largely shifted to an online system since early 2019, with improved efficiency and effectiveness as a result. DMA and IKMAA further benefit from an online reporting system that draws

³⁰ Anti-personnel Mine Ban Convention: <https://www.apminebanconvention.org/states-parties-to-the-convention/iraq/>

³¹ Convention on Cluster Munitions: <https://www.clusterconvention.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/Iraq-16.pdf>

³² CCW: <https://geneva-s3.unoda.org/static-unoda-site/pages/templates/the-convention-on-certain-conventional-weapons/high-contracting-parties-and-signatories-ccw/IRAQ.pdf>

³³ Including the large-loop detector

directly on information from Information Management System for Mine Action New Generation (IMSMA NG) and facilitates Convention Article 7 reporting.

2021 further saw strengthened collaboration between DMA and IKMAA, including through the strategy development process.

MAIN ACHIEVEMENTS

STRENGTHS, OPPORTUNITIES, WEAKNESSES AND THREATS

The Republic of Iraq's mine action programme is fully nationally owned, with DMA housed within the MoE in the Federal Government, while IKMAA reports directly to the Prime Minister of the KRG. The Ministry of Defence (MoD)³⁴ and the Ministry of Interior (MoI) play key roles in the Federal Republic of Iraq and are important actors for the Republic of Iraq's future management of residual contamination. The Ministry of Oil allocates considerable funding to survey and clearance operations around oil and gas installations, particularly in the southern parts of the Republic of Iraq, where most of Iraq's oil is extracted.³⁵

Iraq's mine action programme benefits from hundreds of national Iraqi staff that have accumulated invaluable experience and knowledge over the years. These women and men contribute with their expertise to DMA, IKMAA, MoD, MoI and national and international operators in survey, clearance, EORE and victim assistance activities. The mine action programme will seek to capitalise on its national expertise and further strengthen local and national capacities and structures, in line with the localisation agenda.³⁶ The Republic of Iraq has also demonstrated significant commitment and engagement as a State Party to the APMBC and CCM, including by participating in relevant conferences and submitting annual transparency reports in a timely manner.

The Republic of Iraq's context has changed considerably since the previous strategy was developed in 2016, at which time the war with the Daesh terrorist gangs was ongoing. While humanitarian needs continue to be vast, principally driven by the effects of fighting and displacement, the general situation in the Republic of Iraq is more peaceful compared to 2016.

Financial sustainability is a current reality and one of the most prominent risks to the Republic of Iraq's mine action programme as it directly impacts on operations and the extent to which strategic targets may be reached. The effects of COVID-19 greatly aggravated financial challenges in 2020 and 2021, as

³⁴ The MoD is responsible for carrying out demolitions of all EO in Federal Iraq.

³⁵ As of August 2021, it was not possible to get an estimate of the total amount of money that the Ministry of Oil dedicates to survey and clearance operations, though the amount is believed to be significant.

³⁶ Localisation, understood as a commitment to make principled humanitarian action as local as possible and as international as necessary, is one of the eight workstreams of the Grand Bargain. Its overall goal is to provide greater support and funding tools to local and national actors by focusing on enhancing partnerships, strengthening capacities, providing more direct financing, and improving coordination. Swiss Agency for Development Cooperation (SDC) and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), Country-led dialogue on localisation, resource kit, Grand Bargain Localisation Workstream (<https://gblocalisation.ifrc.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/GB-Localisation-Workstream-Country-Level-Dialogue-Resource-Kit-1.pdf>)

resources were diverted to tackle the consequences of the pandemic, both within the Republic of Iraq and globally. Strategic objective four addresses the issue of financial sustainability, with a commitment to developing a resource mobilisation strategy. Limited coordination mechanisms and information sharing are additional challenges that have negatively impacted the programme. Accordingly, these issues are addressed across the four strategic objectives. This Strategy also tackles challenges related to insufficient prioritisation mechanisms, with an outcome on developing a transparent system based on standardised criteria.

More generally, COVID-19 had considerable negative impacts on Iraq's mine action programme in 2020, with DMA suspending all mine action operations in the Federal Republic of Iraq between mid-March and mid-June. As a result, survey and clearance outputs decreased significantly in 2020.

On a more general note, insufficient resources (financial, human, and logistical) and government support to the DMA, IKMAA and mine action structures within the MoD and MoI, significantly impact coordination, management and implementation. While IKMAA has vast operational expertise, a lack of vehicles largely prevented it from deploying survey and clearance teams in 2021, resulting in a critical reduction of survey and clearance outputs in KRI in 2021. Likewise, the Civil Defence which operates throughout the Federal Republic of Iraq, needs strengthened capacities and resources to allow it to efficiently deploy its operational teams.

Concerning DMA, it is widely believed that its mandate as a Directorate and its institutional positioning within the MoE, severely limit its authority and power. It is also considered that an empowered, appropriately mandated DMA would be better positioned to fulfil its responsibilities in a more effective and efficient manner. This issue is elaborated upon further in strategic objective 4.

Another challenge impacting Iraq's mine action programme concerns the environment and the fact that mine action is implemented in extreme environmental and weather conditions. During the summer, temperatures frequently rise above 50 degrees Celsius, whereas freezing temperatures and snow impact operations during the winter, especially in the KRI. Seasonal flooding has further resulted in mines and CMR being submerged in southern Iraq. These environmental conditions pose widespread challenges to operations and the women and men who implement activities. Climate change is expected to continue exacerbating extreme weather conditions with devastating results in the Republic of Iraq, including in communities that are already affected by EO. The Global Environment Outlook 6 report issued by the UN Environment Programme, classifies the Republic of Iraq as the fifth most vulnerable country in the world to decreased water, food availability and extreme temperatures. This will negatively affect food and water security and social and health security in the Republic of Iraq.³⁷

Embracing strengths and opportunities will allow the Republic of Iraq's mine action programme to further develop the programme and minimise identified risks. This Strategy provides new opportunities to strengthen coordination and connections between mine action and broader humanitarian, development and peace efforts, including by reinforcing and further integrating mine action within relevant national plans and strategies. Communicating achievements, challenges and

³⁷ UNEP, Global Environment Outlook 6, 4 March 2019

results based on evidence to relevant Iraqi ministries, partners, international donors and organisations will also provide opportunities to raise awareness which in turn can foster greater collaboration and attract more resources. The adoption of a RBM approach and the development of a clear and transparent prioritisation system will facilitate this, as will the development of a resource mobilisation strategy.

THE ENABLING ENVIRONMENT

The implementation of this Strategy depends on several enabling factors:

QUALITY MANAGEMENT FOR CONTINUAL IMPROVEMENT

QM in mine action focuses on the implementation of effective and appropriate processes to deliver outputs and products in line with specified requirements. It relies upon the availability and use of information as evidence to support decision-making and to inform the planning process, direct implementation, check performance against requirements and to take action to improve the quality and safety of processes, services and products.

IMAS 07.12³⁸ presents several principles that are central to QM in mine action.³⁹ The Republic of Iraq's mine action programme embraces all these principles, reflected in subsequent strategic objective sections. The principles of continual improvement and evidence-based decision making are preconditions for effective and efficient operations across the Republic of Iraq's mine action programme. The driver behind continual improvement processes is the PDCA cycle (plan – do – check – act) which occurs at every level of the programme and within every mine action activity.⁴⁰

Quality assurance (QA) and quality control (QC) are key components of the operational QM process. As of August 2021, DMA had accredited two international NGOs to conduct quality control (QC), due to limited national capacities and resources within DMA structures.⁴¹

MINE ACTION STANDARDS

Standards are a central component of QM and the development and application of IMAS are guided by five key principles, as outlined in IMAS 01.10.⁴² One of these principles is national ownership, which reaffirms that the primary responsibility for mine action lies with the Government of the affected state.

Acknowledging the importance of IMAS-compliant NMAS for effective and efficient operations and recognising their roles in leading the development of NMAS, DMA and IKMAA will ensure that the

³⁸ IMAS 07.12 Quality Management in Mine Action, First Edition, 1 July 2016

³⁹ IMAS 07.12: Key QM principles: 1. Customer focus, 2. Leadership, 3. Engagement of people, 4. Gender and diversity, 5. Process approach, 6. Continual improvement, 7. Evidence-based decision making, 8. Relationship management, 9. Risk management and quality

⁴⁰ IMAS 07.12, *Ibid*

⁴¹ NPA conducts QC in Ninewa governorate in the liberated areas and DDG conducts QC in Basrah, Maysan, Muthanna, and Dhi-Qar governorates in southern Iraq.

⁴² IMAS 01.10 Guide for the application of IMAS, Second Edition 1 January 2003, Amendment 9, March 2018

development, approval and full implementation of IMAS-compliant NMAS is ongoing. This is addressed in further detail in subsequent strategic objective sections.

INFORMATION MANAGEMENT

The principal goal of information management (IM) is to provide stakeholders with timely, accurate and relevant information products that meet agreed requirements. IMAS 05.10 defines IM as the ongoing specification and evaluation of information requirements, the collection, validation, storage and analysis of relevant data followed by the dissemination of information products to stakeholders in a timely manner.⁴³ As highlighted in IMAS 05.10, QM principles should guide the implementation of all elements of IM: organisation, resources, processes, and products.⁴⁴

With technical support from iMMAP, DMA and IKMAA use IMSMA NG to store and analyse all mine action information. DMA requests all its mine action operators to present IMSMA forms in electronic and soft copies. For some activities, results need to be submitted in paper forms every month, after which all information is manually entered into IMSMA by DMA. The main database for Federal Republic of Iraq is housed within DMA's headquarters in Baghdad, with RMAC-S connected online. DMA has started the process of transferring from IMSMA NG to IMSMA Core with support from the GICHD.

Recognising that comprehensive IM processes are a prerequisite to achieving all objectives in this strategy, DMA and IKMAA will ensure that clear and standardised information requirements and processes, that reflect IMAS principles and Convention obligations, are documented in NMAS and that they inform all data collection. This will provide reliable and accurate data for analysis, which will guide evidence-based, transparent and standardised prioritisation and tasking, which in turn will facilitate efficient and effective operational planning and implementation.

Recent efforts to further improve IM processes include the development of an online dashboard that visualises mine action data. In 2019 DMA gave operators access to an Online Task Management System, through which they may request IMSMA data. Inefficient data entry processes, however, hamper the full utility of this online system. The reliance on manual data entry means that DMA allocates significant resources to manually enter all information received from operators. Modifications to these processes, including greater use of electronic IM tools for data collection, could result in greater efficiency. Given the complexity of Iraq's mine action programme, IM processes would benefit from a thorough review to ensure they are well adapted to the Republic of Iraq context and needs.

⁴³ IMAS 05.10 Information Management for Mine Action, Second Edition Amendment 1 February 2020

⁴⁴ IMAS 05.10, *ibid.*

MINE ACTION AND THE BIGGER PICTURE

THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

The 2030 Agenda with its 17 SDGs and 169 targets have since early 2016 shaped global development efforts and policy making. The Agenda is centred around the principle that sustainable development be participatory, inclusive, and non-discriminatory.



FIGURE 1: GLOBAL SDGs, UN

The Republic of Iraq is committed to achieving the SDGs and will promote linkages between the SDGs and the mine action programme whenever possible, with well-developed structures in place to monitor the achievement of the SDGs at a national level.⁴⁵ Survey and clearance of contaminated areas and the subsequent release of safe land are closely linked with many SDGs as most of the EO contaminated areas are near communities with resulting socio-economic, humanitarian, commercial and environmental impacts. Iraq's mine action programme has an opportunity to highlight mine action's facilitating role for development and its contribution to the SDGs.

A 2017 GICHD/UNDP study explores linkages between mine action, sustainable development and the 17 SDGs and identifies numerous connections between mine action globally and several of the SDGs, many of which are relevant to Republic of Iraq's mine action programme.⁴⁶ A full list of mine action's potential contribution to the SDGs is included in Annex II.

NATIONAL PLANS AND STRATEGIES

The Republic of Iraq has demonstrated strong commitment to implementing the 2030 Agenda by aligning and incorporating the SDGs into key national-level development plans and strategies. The Republic of Iraq's Vision for Sustainable Development 2030 (The Republic of Iraq Vision 2030) is the

⁴⁶ GICHD, UNDP; *Leaving no one Behind: Mine Action and the Sustainable Development Goals*: https://www.gichd.org/resources/publications/detail/publication/leaving-no-one-behind-mine-action-and-the-sustainable-development-goals/#.W_bKO-hKibg

roadmap for the country's efforts towards sustainable development.⁴⁷ The Poverty Reduction Strategy 2018-2022 (PRS) and the National Development Plan 2018-2022 (NDP)⁴⁸ are complementary in terms of vision, objectives and implementation period. Despite its facilitating role for broader development and humanitarian efforts, mine action is however not included in any of these national documents. Recognising that mine action is intimately linked with the Republic of Iraq's Vision 2030 vision and is a key enabling factor for many of its goals, DMA will strengthen information sharing and coordination with relevant ministries, including the MoP, to further reinforce connections between mine action and broader development and humanitarian agendas, including the Vision 2030. Likewise, DMA will make every effort to ensure mine action is included in the next NDP, through greater coordination with the MoP and other government ministries. This is elaborated upon further in Strategic Objective 4.

THE GRAND BARGAIN AND LOCALISATION

The Grand Bargain is a unique agreement between some of the most prominent international donors and humanitarian organisations who have committed to empower people in need and improve the effectiveness and efficiency of humanitarian action.⁴⁹ Grand Bargain signatories have since 2016 engaged across eight 'workstreams' or pillars to implement their commitments. Localisation, understood as a commitment to make principled humanitarian action as local as possible and as international as necessary, is one of the eight workstreams of the Grand Bargain. Its overall goal is to provide greater support and funding tools to local and national actors by focusing on enhancing partnerships, strengthening capacities, providing more direct financing, and improving coordination.⁵⁰

Considered as one of the key areas of the Grand Bargain for international donors and aid organisations alike, localisation is now recognised as a key principle, with significant resources directed towards achieving it in practice. Localisation will remain included in the 'Grand Bargain 2.0', which will run until mid-2023 with the objective to ensure 'better humanitarian outcomes for affected populations through enhanced efficiency, effectiveness and greater accountability'.⁵¹ The Grand bargain 2.0 framework provides an overview of how signatories will achieve the strategic objective through four outcome pillars: 1) Flexibility, predictably, transparency and tracking, 2) Equitable and principled partnerships, 3) Accountability and inclusions, 4) Prioritisation and coordination. Iraq's mine action programme is fully committed to the Grand bargain principles and the localisation agenda, reflected in many of the subsequent strategic objective sections.

⁴⁷ Republic of Iraq – Ministry of Planning, Iraq Vision 2030

⁴⁸ Republic of Iraq, Ministry of Planning, National Development Plan 2018-2022

⁴⁹ The Grand Bargain Official website: <https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/grand-bargain>

⁵⁰ Swiss Agency for Development Cooperation (SDC) and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), Country-led dialogue on localisation, resource kit, Grand Bargain Localisation Workstream (<https://gblocalisation.ifrc.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/GB-Localisation-Workstream-Country-Level-Dialogue-Resource-Kit-1.pdf>)

⁵¹ Metcalfe-Hough, V., Fenton, W., Willitts-King, B. and Spencer, A. (2021) The Grand Bargain at five years: an independent review. HPG commissioned report. London: ODI (<https://odi.org/en/publications/the-grand-bargain-at-five-years-an-independent-review>).

GENDER AND DIVERSITY

Gender describes socially constructed roles for women, girls, boys and men. It is an acquired identity that is learned, changes over time and varies widely within and across cultures. Diversity relates to differences in values, attitudes, cultural perspectives, beliefs, ethnicity, ability or disability, skills, knowledge, age and life experiences. These differences must be recognised, understood and valued if the mine action programme is to ensure that all groups benefit equally from mine action and that the discrimination experienced by already marginalised groups is not exacerbated. Iraq's mine action programme recognises that women, girls, boys and men may be affected differently by EO contamination due to their roles and responsibilities and that they may therefore have specific and varying needs and priorities. Women, girls, boys and men also often hold distinct information on EO contamination and its impact. Mine action activities and assistance therefore need to reflect the distinct needs of different age, sex and other diversity – including specific ethnic and religious groups - through targeted design for activities to be effective and non-discriminatory and results to be sustainable. The collection, analysis and reporting on sex, age and disability disaggregated data (SADDD)⁵² is a key precondition for this.

The Daesh terrorist group's occupation of and presence in several Iraqi areas have had devastating impacts on women and girls, making them extremely vulnerable. Violence against women and girls, particularly sexual violence, has been a widely used tactic of terror by the Daesh terrorist group, with increased levels of threat, both real and perceived, to women and girls.⁵³ Recognising that many mine action operations are implemented in liberated areas and around IDP settlements, operators must acknowledge the specific vulnerabilities of women, girls, boys and men, as a result of the war with the Daesh terrorist group.

Iraq's mine action programme may anchor its gender and diversity activities and processes in Iraq's normative framework at the national level. Importantly, Article 14 of the Republic of Iraq's 2005 Constitution stipulates that Iraqis are equal before the law without discrimination based on gender, race, ethnicity, nationality, origin, colour, religion, sect, belief or opinion, or economic or social status.⁵⁴ Article 16 further specifies that equal opportunities shall be guaranteed to all Iraqis, and that the state shall ensure that the necessary measures to achieve this are taken.⁵⁵ The Republic of Iraq was the first country in the Middle East and North Africa to adopt a National Action Plan (NAP) for the implementation of the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security.

⁵² Sex, age and disability disaggregated data (SADD). All data should be disaggregated by sex, age and disability, if possible, Children should be defined as those below the age of 18 years (according to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, a child is defined as 'a human being below the age of 18 years). Further disaggregation can be made with reference to cultural background/identity. It is accepted that in some settings, it might prove difficult to capture both disability and cultural-related information: [Standardising Beneficiary Definitions in Humanitarian Mine Action: Second Edition 2020](#)

⁵³ Iraq reconstruction and investment. Part 2 Damage and Needs Assessment of Affected Governorates, World Bank group, January 2018

⁵⁴ Constitution of Iraq, Article 14, 2005

⁵⁵ *Ibid*, Article 16

⁵⁶ UN Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000): Emphasizing the need for all parties to ensure that mine clearance and mine awareness programmes take into account the special needs of women and girls <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N00/720/18/PDF/N0072018.pdf?OpenElement>

the international women's right instruments, and is in line with strategies adopted by the Federal Government of Iraq and the KRG to advance women's rights and to combat violence against women.⁵⁷ DMA's gender focal point, who heads DMA's gender unit (established in 2017), has participated in the development of the NAP. As for challenges related to gender and diversity, Iraq's NDP presents 10 social challenges, out of which two concern gender and diversity.⁵⁸

⁵⁷ Iraq National Action Plan 1325: <http://www.iraqnap1325.org/>

⁵⁸ Iraq NDP, *ibid*, 5. Major social crises and poor protectionist policies have increased the size of vulnerable groups (disabled, elderly, widows, orphans, etc.), causing the rate of vulnerability to rise to over 50% in 2016. The conditions of displacement have also produced complex fragility (vulnerable groups + displacement), linked to the scale of terrorism and violence and the resulting conditions of forced displacement. 6. The gender gap continues to undermine the foundations of development, due to traditional stereotypes of women's roles that are influenced by the dominance of patriarchal culture rooted in the social structure. This has led to low participation of women in economic, social and political activities and limited leadership roles for women in legislative and political institutions.

STRATEGIC ORIENTATION 2023 - 2028⁵⁹

The Theory of Change for The Republic of Iraq's mine action programme 2023-2028 (available in Annex III) is centred around a vision, mission, four strategic objectives, risks and assumptions. Each objective is accompanied by a set out outcomes, with corresponding indicators, baselines and targets.

This strategy will be implemented through a budgeted work-plan and progress will be measured at the outcome level.

VISION

Mine action enables the Republic of Iraq to attain its national humanitarian and development goals and fulfil its international convention obligations to:

1. Freeing the Republic of Iraq of explosive ordnance,
2. Ensuring its people and societies live in safe environments conducive to development; and
3. Addressing EO victims' needs by providing services and rehabilitation and integrating them into society.

MISSION

To manage and sustain a well-coordinated mine action programme in accordance with IMAS and NMAS that promotes adherence to international good practice, continual improvement and innovative approaches in line with the five humanitarian mine action pillars:

1. Survey and clearance,
2. Explosive ordnance risk education (EORE)
3. Victim Assistance (VA)
4. Advocacy
5. Stockpile destruction

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

1. **Land Release:** The release of safe land facilitates effective reconstruction, resettlement and sustainable development
2. **Explosive Ordnance Risk Education:** Awareness is raised and behavioural change promoted among at-risk women, girls, boys and men and marginalised groups to reduce EO accidents, promote safe resettlement and facilitate sustainable livelihoods
3. **Victim Assistance:** Gender and diversity-sensitive, rights-based services and opportunities are accessible to all EO victims on an equal basis
4. **National Ownership, Communication and Coordination:** Strengthened national ownership and effective coordination and information sharing result in raised awareness, greater transparency and increased collaboration

KEY PRINCIPLES, RISKS AND ASSUMPTIONS

The below principles underpin this strategy and are key to achieving all strategic objectives:

⁵⁹ Theory of Change for Iraq's mine action programme 2023-2028 is included in Annex III

- accountability⁶⁰
- continual improvement
- transparency⁶¹
- humanitarian principles: humanity, impartiality, neutrality, and independence⁶²

Iraq's mine action programme will place these principles at the forefront of all planning, implementation, review, and monitoring activities. DMA and IKMAA will ensure that they are adhered to through solid information management and regular coordination with national and international partners, including national government agencies and international donors.

IDENTIFIED CHALLENGES AND RISKS

Eight key challenges may negatively impact the implementation of this strategy:

1. Lack of financial resources
2. Lack of specialised personnel, in line with the size of contamination
3. Limited use modern technology and training on it
4. Environmental and climatic challenges (floods, storms, high temperatures)
5. Lack of international support
6. Geographical challenges (environment and terrain)
7. Unique contamination and response
8. Financial and political instability in the Republic of Iraq

Four main risks may negatively affect the achievement of the strategic objectives, and they are divided into two levels of risk:

LEVEL 1 RISKS:

1. Lack of security and limited access to operations; 2. The discovery of previously unknown EO-contaminated areas

LEVEL TWO RISKS:

1. Inadequate capacities and resources allocated to national authorities to carry out their responsibilities; 2. The effects of potential future epidemics

The achievement of the Republic of Iraq's strategic objectives is based on seven assumptions:

1. Current number of operators will remain
2. Operations will be conducted in line with IMAS-compliant NMA and SOPs
3. The land release methodology will be fully implemented

⁶⁰ Accountability: an obligation or willingness to accept responsibility or to account for one's actions (<https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/accountability>)

⁶¹ Transparent is characterized by visibility or accessibility of information (<https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/transparent>)

⁶² IMAS 01.10 Guide for the application of IMAS **6.2 Humanitarian principles**: In its response to explosive ordnance, mine action is first and foremost a humanitarian concern. Framing of the standards and their application as part of any humanitarian response shall reflect the fundamental humanitarian principles of humanity, impartiality, neutrality, and independence.

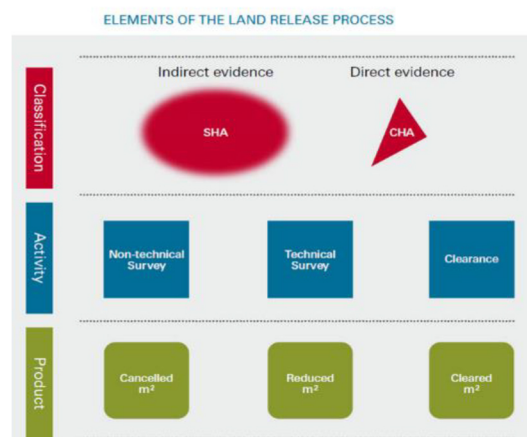
4. The GoI will assume greater national ownership of the mine action programme
5. There will be greater collaboration between DMA and IKMAA
6. All relevant ministries, governorates and directorates will dedicate specific funding for technical survey (TS), clearance and QM
7. All investment contracts for all relevant ministries, governorates and directorates include annexes on land release certificates, approved by DMA or IKMAA⁶³

Strategic Objective 1: Land Release

The release of safe land facilitates effective reconstruction, resettlement, and sustainable development

As a States Party to the APMBC and CCM, The Republic of Iraq is obliged to identify and clear all AP mined and CMR-contaminated areas in line with IMAS-compliant NMA principles and obligations under Articles 5⁶⁴ and 4⁶⁵ respectively. Under its CCW obligations, the Republic of Iraq is further committed to clear, remove, or destroy all ERW, in line with Protocol V.⁶⁶

The Republic of Iraq recognises the critical importance of IMAS in supporting its efforts to complete its international obligations. IMAS 07.11 defines land release as ‘...the process of applying **all reasonable effort** to identify, define, and remove all presence and suspicion of EO through non-technical survey, technical survey and/or clearance. The criteria for “all reasonable effort” shall be defined by the NMAA.’⁶⁷ Land release is an evidence-based decision-making process that helps determine with confidence which land needs further action and which does not. It involves the identification of suspected and confirmed hazardous areas, the cancellation of land through non-technical survey (NTS), the reduction of land through TS and the clearance of land with actual EO-contamination.⁶⁸ A key principle of land release, as stipulated in IMAS 08.10 on NTS, is that survey, including the analysis



⁶³ Depending on the geographical location

⁶⁴ APMBC Article 5. Iraq's current Article 5 deadline is set at 1 February 2028

⁶⁵ CCM Article 4: Iraq's current Article 4 deadline is set at 1 November 2023

⁶⁶ CCW Protocol V, Article 3

⁶⁷ IMAS 07.11 Land Release, First Edition June 2009, 4 Amendment, July 2018:

⁶⁸ IMAS 07.11, *ibid.*

of contamination information should be an on-going process.⁶⁹ Land release should result in disaggregated reporting, distinguishing between the activity (NTS, TS and clearance) and the products they result in (cancelled, reduced and cleared).

As part of planning, prioritisation, tasking and ongoing QM processes, DMA and IKMAA will ensure that all reporting forms include IMAS-compliant land release classifications (suspected hazardous area (SHA) and confirmed hazardous area (CHA)). Areas should be recorded as CHAs only when the existence of EO contamination is confirmed based on *direct evidence* of the presence of EO.⁷⁰ DMA, IKMAA and its partners commit to the full implementation of land release and will ensure that required information is collected, stored, analysed and reported on in line with IMAS-specified classifications, activities and products, as illustrated above.⁷¹ Applying these standards and principles will allow Republic of Iraq to meet its Convention reporting obligations, including Actions #20 and #22 of the Oslo Action Plan.⁷² ⁷³ As of mid-2021, a wide range of national and international stakeholders are involved in land release activities in the Republic of Iraq. DMA and IKMAA oversee all operations in FI and KRI respectively, including planning, tasking and QM. IKMAA further has survey and clearance teams operating in KRI. The MoD in the Federal Republic of Iraq is operational through its Military Engineering Department (responsible for demining), and the MoI has capacities within its Civil Defence and the Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) Directorate (responsible for CMR and ERW contamination). In addition, a total of seven national and seven international operators implement land release activities, with many formalised capacity development partnerships between national and international partners. UNMAS contracts several national and international NGOs and commercial companies to implement land release and EORE activities.

DMA and IKMAA acknowledge that the collection, processing and analysis of information to support decisions about where EO is to be found (and where it is not) and where further efforts should be applied⁷⁵, is central to land release. Comprehensive IM processes are as such a prerequisite to effective and efficient planning, tasking, implementation and reporting. DMA and IKMAA will therefore ensure that clear and standardised information requirements, reflecting IMAS principles and Convention

⁶⁹ IMAS 08.10, Non-technical survey, First Edition, 10 June 2009, Amendment 4, February 2019

⁷⁰ IMAS 07.11 define direct evidence (CHA) as: EO records, where the reliability of such records has been confirmed during previous operations; visual observation of EO parts, fragmentation or craters; detonations during fires or by animals; mine signs, fencing, ancillary equipment (boxes, canisters) etc. associated with contamination; EO accidents or incidents where the location of the event can be accurately determined

⁷¹ IMAS 07.11 Land Release

⁷² OAP Action #22 Report in a manner consistent with IMAS by providing information on the remaining challenges, disaggregating by 'suspected hazardous areas' and 'confirmed hazardous areas' and their relative size, as well as by the type of contamination. Report on progress in accordance with the land release methodology employed (i.e. cancelled through non-technical survey, reduced through technical survey, or cleared through clearance), Oslo Action Plan 2020-2024

⁷³ OAP Action #20 Annually update their national work plans based on new evidence and report on adjusted milestones in their Article 7 reports by 30 April each year, including information on the number of areas and amount of mined area to be addressed annually and on how priorities have been established.

⁷⁴ IMAS 04.10: Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) (2005) the detection, identification, evaluation, render safe, recovery and disposal of EO. EOD may be undertaken: a) as a routine part of mine clearance operations, upon discovery of EO; b) to dispose of ERW discovered outside hazardous areas, (this may be a single item of ERW, or a larger number inside a specific area); or c) to dispose of EO which has become hazardous by deterioration, damage or attempted destruction.

⁷⁵ IMAS 07.11, *ibid*.

obligations, inform all data collection. This will allow for thorough data analysis that will guide evidence-based, transparent, and standardised prioritisation and tasking which will facilitate operational planning and implementation. This is in line with the Republic of Iraq's Convention obligations (Article 7, and Oslo Action Plan's Action #9⁷⁶ and #27.⁷⁷

The Republic of Iraq's land release objective is accompanied by six outcomes, each representing a strategic priority. Firstly, in compliance with its Article 5 and 4 commitments, the Republic of Iraq will continue to gain greater clarity on its remaining AP mine (including anti-personnel mines of an improvised nature) and CMR contamination by continuously updating its evidence-based contamination baselines. This will be achieved through a database clean-up, a desk-top analysis of IMSMA and through inclusive consultations with women, girls, boys, and men in affected areas. Clearance assets can then be allocated to areas that have confirmed contamination. This will support Oslo Action Plan's Action #18⁷⁸ and is aligned with its two related indicators.⁷⁹

The second strategic priority concerns the Republic of Iraq's commitment to develop a prioritisation system based on clear and transparent criteria. This system will inform all planning and tasking procedures, with criteria aligned with Iraq's broader humanitarian and development priorities, including efforts to promote safe reconstruction, resettlement and livelihoods activities in liberated areas, as well as broader development initiatives in other parts of the Republic of Iraq. Survey and clearance operations should be planned and implemented in line with these criteria, thereby strengthening mine action's alignment with, and contribution to, broader humanitarian, development and peace efforts, while ensuring steady progress towards the Republic of Iraq's convention obligations.

Thirdly, DMA and IKMAA commit to continually improve all survey and clearance operations by developing, reviewing and fully implementing IMAS-compliant NMAS, including on Land Release, IEDD, Residential Area Clearance, QM and Post-clearance Documentation.⁸⁰ This supports Oslo Action Plan's Action # 5.⁸¹ Capitalising on the above, the fourth outcome focuses on the continuous implementation of NMAS-compliant survey and clearance activities. These activities have largely been prioritised for liberated areas since 2017, facilitating broader humanitarian and stabilisation efforts. As a result,

⁷⁶ OAP Action # 9: Establish and maintain a national information management system containing accurate and up-to-date data at the national level on the status of implementation. The design and implementation of information management systems will ensure that they are nationally owned, sustainable and take into account the need for data that can be accessed, managed and analysed post-completion.

⁷⁷ OAP Action #27: Take appropriate steps to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of survey and clearance, including by promoting the research, application and sharing of innovative technological means to this effect.

⁷⁸ OAP Action #18: States Parties that have not yet done so will identify the precise perimeter of mined areas, to the extent possible, and establish evidence-based, accurate baselines of contamination based on information collected from all relevant sources no later than by the Nineteenth Meeting of States Parties in 2021

⁷⁹ OAP Action #18: Indicator 1: the percentage of affected States Parties that have established an accurate and evidence-based contamination baseline no later than the Nineteenth Meeting of the States Parties in 2021 (and by each year thereafter if not all affected States Parties have done so by 19MSP) Indicator 2: the percentage of affected States Parties who report having established their baseline through inclusive consultations with women, girls, boys and men

⁸⁰ Several NMAS were reviewed in line with IMAS in 2020, but remain to be formally approved, circulated and fully implemented.

⁸¹ OAP Action # 5: Keep national mine action standards up to date in accordance with the latest International Mine Action Standards (IMAS), adapt them to new challenges and employ best practices to ensure efficient and effective implementation.

limited funding has been allocated to address conventional mine and CMR contamination in the KRI and southern Iraq. The programme will seek to attract more funding to address Republic of Iraq's extensive conventional mine and CMR contamination, with Basrah governorate comprising the vast majority of the Republic of Iraq's conventional contamination. Given its widespread variety of EO contamination, including dense and complex IED and conventional contamination, Iraq's mine action programme is well placed to contribute with good practice and lessons learnt to the global mine action sector, something the programme will capitalise on.

The fifth outcome concerns strengthening community confidence in released land and post-clearance land-use, capitalising on community liaison capacities and considering the different needs and perspectives of women, girls, boys and men, in line with Oslo Action Plan's Action # 3⁸². DMA and IKMAA will reinforce and standardise all handover procedures, including by ensuring timely handover ceremonies, appropriate information sharing and broad gender and diversity inclusion and participation. With a view to identify, document and gain clarity on post-clearance land use and the extent to which women, girls, boys and men benefit from the released land, all operators are requested to conduct post-clearance impact assessment on all tasks in line with gender and diversity considerations and international good practice.⁸³ Operators will share findings from these impact assessments with DMA and IKMAA for further dissemination to the GoI and international donors to raise awareness of mine action's broader benefits and impact.

Lastly, the Republic of Iraq will ensure that its national survey and clearance capacities are further strengthened, including through increased national funding to develop and sustain national NGOs, and formalised capacity development partnerships between national and international partners. These efforts will reinforce the localisation⁸⁴ of humanitarian mine action and promote greater sustainability. This is particularly important given identified risks related to funding. The Republic of Iraq will also reinforce its institutional⁸⁵ national survey and clearance capacities for its future management of residual EO contamination⁸⁶, and commits to develop a strategy on the management of residual contamination⁸⁷, specifying appropriate processes, roles, and responsibilities, in line with Oslo Action Plan's Action #26.⁸⁸

⁸² OAP Action #3: Ensure that the different needs and perspectives of women, girls, boys and men are considered and inform all areas of Convention implementation and mine action programmes, in order to deliver an inclusive approach. Strive to remove barriers to full, equal and gender balanced participation in mine action and in Convention meetings.

⁸³ Standardising Beneficiary Definitions in Humanitarian Mine Action, Second Edition, October 2020:

https://www.globalprotectioncluster.org/wp-content/uploads/Standardising_Beneficiary_Definitions_2ndEd_OCT_2020.pdf

⁸⁴ The localisation agenda in humanitarian action derives its impetus from the World Humanitarian Summit in 2016 where the call was for humanitarian action to be 'as local as possible, as international as necessary'.

⁸⁵ Including MoI and MoD structures

⁸⁶ IMAS 04.10 Glossary of mine action terms, definitions, and abbreviations⁸⁶ presents several definitions that are central to understanding residual contamination.)

⁸⁷ In the case of the APMB, 'residual contamination' should be understood as unknown anti-personnel mine contamination under a State Party's jurisdiction or control after all known or suspected mined areas have been processed and considered fit for normal human use.

⁸⁸ OAP Action #26: Ensure that national strategies and work plans for completion make provisions for a sustainable national capacity to address previously unknown mined areas, including newly mined areas discovered following completion. In addressing these areas, they will consider the commitments made at the Twelfth Meeting of the States Parties as contained in the paper «Proposed rational response to States Parties discovering previously unknown mined areas after deadlines have passed.

Strategic Objective 1: Land release				
The release of safe land facilitates effective reconstruction, resettlement and sustainable development				
Outcomes	Indicators	Baselines	Targets	
1.1. Clarity on the remaining EO contamination problem Ongoing database clean-up and evidence-based surveys clarify the extent of the remaining contamination problem and facilitate effective and efficient operational planning, tasking, and implementation. ⁸⁹	An evidence based CMR contamination baseline is updated and reported on, on a yearly basis	CMR contamination (September 2022): 189,602,502 square metres ⁹⁰	An evidence based CMR contamination baseline is updated every year and reported on in annual Article 7 reports and strategy monitoring reports	
	An evidence-based AP mine contamination baseline is updated and reported on, on a yearly basis. ^{91,92}	AP Mine contamination ⁹³ (September 2022): 1,189,087,651 square metres and 530,764,933 square metres of IEDs ⁹⁴ Confrontation area: 467 516,176 square metres ERW (Mixed UXO and AXO) 701,071,094 square metres	AP mine contamination ⁹⁵ (September 2022): 1,189,087,651 square metres and 530,764,933 square metres of IEDs ⁹⁶ Confrontation area: 467 516,176 square metres ERW (Mixed UXO and AXO) 701,071,094 square metres	An evidence-based AP-mine contamination baseline is updated every year and reported on in annual Article 7 reports and strategy monitoring reports as of 2023 ⁹⁵
1.2. Clear, standardised and transparent criteria guide prioritisation, tasking and implementation Survey and clearance operations are prioritised based on clear, standardised and transparent criteria	Existence of a prioritisation system with clear and transparent criteria	As of September 2022, no standardised prioritisation criteria exist	Clear, standardised, and transparent prioritisation criteria guide all tasking and operational planning as from mid-2023	
1.3. Survey and clearance operations are continuously improved The development, formal approval, review and full implementation of IMAS-compliant NMAS facilitate effective and efficient operations ⁹⁶	Existence of approved and disseminated IMAS-compliant NMAS on ⁹⁷ :	As of the end of 2022, there are 24 updated National Mine Action Standards (NMAS)	Annual review meetings chaired by DMA and IKMMA to ensure NMAS are up-to-date and implemented	
1.4. NMAS⁹⁸-compliant survey and clearance activities are implemented and reported on Survey and clearance activities are prioritised, implemented and reported on in line with annual	APMBC Article 7 transparency reports submitted by 30 April every year, in accordance with IMAS ⁹⁹ ✓ Number of m ² cancelled through NTS ✓ Number of new SHA's recorded/year ✓ Number of m ² reduced through TS ✓ Number of CHAs confirmed ✓ Number of m ² confirmed as CHAs ✓ Number of m ² cleared Application of the provisions of the APMBC to anti-personnel mines of	2022 survey and clearance outputs: Landmines and IEDs: ¹⁰⁵ ✓ Number of m ² cancelled through NTS: 36,015,022 ✓ Number of m ² reduced through TS: 23,887,706 ✓ Number of m ² cleared: 11,072,971 APMBC Article 7 transparency report submitted by 30 April in 2023	Survey and clearance work-plans are developed and updated on an annual basis. ¹⁰⁶ All survey and clearance results are reported in a disaggregated manner, in compliance with IMAS APMBC Article 7 transparency report submitted by 30 April every year,	

⁸⁹ OAP #18

⁹⁰ Iraq Article / report CCM

⁹¹ In line with OAP Action #18, indicator 1: the percentage of affected States Parties that have established an accurate and evidence-based contamination baseline no later than the Nineteenth Meeting of the States Parties in 2021 (and by each year thereafter if not all affected States Parties have done so by 19MSP)

⁹² OAP Action #21

⁹³ Including conventional AP mines, mines of an improvised nature and AV mines when these are mixed with AP mines.

⁹⁴ 98% of which are victim-activated

⁹⁵ OAP Action #18

⁹⁶ OAP Action # 5.

⁹⁷ OAP Action #5, indicator 1: The percentage of affected States Parties that have updated their national standards to address new challenges and ensure the employment of best practices, taking into consideration the latest IMAS.

⁹⁸ Updated, developed and reviewed, in line with IMAS.

¹⁰³ OAP Action #22: indicator 1 the percentage of affected States Parties reporting on the remaining challenge and progress made in accordance with IMAS and 2 the percentage of affected States Parties providing survey and clearance data in Article 5 extension requests and Article 7 reports that disaggregates by type of contamination

¹⁰⁵ Iraq 2021 APMBC Article 7 Transparency Report

¹⁰⁶ OAP Action #20.

work-plans ⁹⁹ , IMAS and treaty commitments ^{100 101 102}	an improvised nature (survey, clear and report) ¹⁰⁴ CCM Article 7 transparency reports submitted by 30 April every year Existence of annual work plans Square metres cleared through BAC	2020 survey and clearance outputs CMR: ¹⁰⁶ ✓ Number of m ² cancelled and reduce through NTS & TS: 14,643,504 ✓ Number of m ² cleared: 33,620,603 CCM Article 7 transparency report submitted by 30 April in 2022 Square metres released through BAC ¹⁰⁷ in 2022: 19,268,737	CCM Article 7 transparency report submitted by 30 April every year
1.5. Safe land is handed over and land use is documented Standardised, NMAS-compliant handover procedures facilitate sustainable land-use, documented by gender and diversity-sensitive impact assessment surveys, ¹⁰⁹ conducted in line with good practice	Number of handover procedures conducted in line with NMAS within one month after completion Existence of standardised impact assessment survey, categorising six types of land use, in line with good practice ¹⁰⁹ Number of impact assessment surveys conducted between six to 12 months after handover Number of direct SADD beneficiaries/land use category ¹¹⁰	Number of handover procedures conducted in line with NMAS in 2020 Number of impact assessment surveys conducted in 2020, reported in SADD Number of direct beneficiaries (SADD)/land use category in 2020 ¹¹¹	Completed areas are handed over, in line with NMAS within one month of completion Post-clearance impact assessments conducted on 100% of handed over tasks within 12 months of handover
1.6. National survey and clearance capacities are strengthened National survey and clearance capacities are strengthened ¹¹² and a strategy on the management of residual contamination is developed	Number of national survey and clearance organisations operating independently Number of formalised capacity development partnerships between national and international NGOs Existence of strategy on management of residual contamination ¹¹³ Existence of sustainable survey and clearance capacities in Federal Republic of Iraq ¹¹⁴ Existence of sustainable survey and clearance teams in KRI ¹¹⁵	Seven national survey and clearance NGOs operational in the Republic of Iraq in mid-2021 Three land release capacity development projects between international organisations/companies and national NGOs (September 2021)	Annual increase of formalised capacity development projects between national and international partners Seven or more national survey and clearance NGOs operate independently/year Strategy on management of residual contamination developed by 2025

⁹⁹ OAP Action #19: Develop evidence-based and costed national work plans, including projections of the number of areas and the amount of mined area to be addressed annually to achieve completion as soon as possible, and no later than their Article 5 deadline, to be presented at the Eighteenth Meeting of the States Parties in 2020.

¹⁰⁰ OAP Action #22

¹⁰¹ OAP Action #21: States Parties affected by anti-personnel mines of an improvised nature will ensure that they apply all provisions and obligations under the Convention to such contamination as they do for all other types of anti-personnel mines, including during survey and clearance in fulfilment of Article 5 and disaggregate by types of mines when reporting in fulfilment of Article 7 obligations.

¹⁰² OAP Action #27

¹⁰⁴ OAP Action #21, Indicator 1: the number of States Parties that apply the provisions of the Convention to anti-personnel mines of an improvised nature (for the purpose of this indicator: survey, clear and report)

¹⁰⁶ Iraq 2021 CCM Article 7 Transparency Report

¹⁰⁷ IMAS 04.10: Battle Area Clearance (BAC) (2005)

the systematic and controlled clearance of hazardous areas where the hazards are known not to include mines.

¹⁰⁹ Standardising Beneficiary Definitions in Humanitarian Mine Action, Second Edition, October 2020

¹¹⁰ Direct beneficiary definitions in line with Standardise Beneficiary Definitions, *ibid*

¹¹¹ *ibid*

¹¹² OAP Action #26

¹¹³ In support of OAP Action #26, indicator 1: the percentage of affected States Parties that include provisions for addressing previously unknown mined areas in their national strategies and/or completion plans

¹¹⁴ In support of OAP Action #26, indicator 2: the percentage of affected States Parties that report having put in place sustainable national capacities to address the discovery of previously unknown mined areas

¹¹⁵ *ibid*.

Strategic Objective 2: Explosive Ordnance Risk Education

Awareness is raised and behavioural change promoted among at-risk women, girls, boys, and men and marginalised groups to reduce EO accidents, promote safe resettlement and facilitate sustainable livelihoods

EORE refers to activities that seek to reduce the risk of injury from EO by raising awareness of women, girls, boys and men in accordance with their different vulnerabilities, roles and needs, and promoting behavioural change. Core activities include public information dissemination, education and training.¹¹⁶ EORE's overall objective is to reduce EO risks to a level where people can live safely and facilitate economic and social development free from the constraints of EO contamination.¹¹⁷ As a States Party to the APMBC, CCM and CCW, The Republic of Iraq has committed to implementing EORE in line with IMAS and international good practice.

The EORE global pillar has seen increased attention in recent years, including dedicated sections in the APMBC Oslo Action Plan¹¹⁸ (section VI Actions #28 to 32) and the CCM draft informal Lausanne Action Plan¹¹⁹ (section VI Actions #27 to 30). The global EORE sector has also made significant progress in reviewing tools, methodologies, and approaches, and in creating connections with other sectors. Examples include the reviewed IMAS 12.10 on EORE¹²⁰, the Technical Note for Mine Action (TNMA) on Risk Education for Improvised Explosive Devices¹²¹ and the Guidance on Standardising Beneficiary Definitions in Humanitarian Mine Action¹²² (Edition 2). The sector has further benefited from greater use of digital tools and behaviour change approaches.¹²³ Iraq's mine action programme acknowledges these important developments and will capitalise on them to the extent possible.

Addressing the Republic of Iraq's wide range of EO contamination has required a variety of EORE approaches and methods, including emergency campaigns. The conflict with the Daesh terrorist group, which resulted in widespread contamination and extensive displacement, meant that EORE activities have largely been prioritised in liberated areas since 2017. While EORE will continue in liberated areas, the mine action programme will strive to expand EORE activities in southern Iraq, given its vast contamination and high number of accidents.

The Republic of Iraq's EORE programme comprises several national and international stakeholders. At the national authority level, DMA and IKMAA have dedicated EORE departments that are responsible for overseeing, prioritising and implementing EORE in their respective areas. As of August 2021, a total of eight national and seven international operators were accredited to implement EORE activities.

¹¹⁶ IMAS 12.10 Explosive Ordnance Risk Education (EORE), Second Edition 1 April 2010, Amendment 3, September 2020: https://www.mineactionstandards.org/fileadmin/user_upload/IMAS_12-10_Ed2-Am.3.pdf

¹¹⁶ [Oslo-action-plan-en.pdf \(osloreviewconference.org\)](#)

¹¹⁷ IMAS 12.10, *ibid.*

¹¹⁸ [Oslo-action-plan-en.pdf \(osloreviewconference.org\)](#)

¹¹⁹ <https://undocs.org/en/ccm/conf/2020/14>

¹²⁰ *Ibid* footnote 1.

¹²¹ [Draft TNMA 12.10/01 Risk Education for Improvised Explosive Devices](#), 1st Edition June 2018

¹²² [Standardising Beneficiary Definitions in Humanitarian Mine Action: Second Edition 2020](#)

¹²³ Review of new technologies and methodologies for EORE in challenging contexts: www.eore.org

UNMAS has a dedicated EORE unit and funds EORE activities implemented by national and international companies and NGOs. Many international and national partners collaborate, including through formalised capacity development partnerships, a key focus of UNMAS-contracted EORE projects.

The Republic of Iraq's mine action programme recognises that solid information management processes are a precondition for effective and efficient EORE activities. A thorough EORE needs assessment, and the continuous collection, storage and analysis of SADD can reveal important trends regarding activities at the time of EO accidents, risk taking behaviour and possible seasonal dimensions. A solid understanding of these aspects – based on evidence – allow operators to tailor EORE messages and supporting materials, develop priority-setting mechanisms and implement and monitor EORE interventions - in line with principles outlined in OAP Action #29. IMAS 12.10 provides useful guidance on EORE needs assessments.¹²⁴ An example from RMAC-S in southern Iraq illustrates how the analysis of EO accident data allowed the mine action programme to better understand the profile and behaviour of the victims and target EORE accordingly. The analysis revealed that most EO victims from January – July 2021 did not live in areas where the accidents had taken place. Many victims were male shepherds who had taken their sheep for grazing to greener areas, travelling far away from their homes, unaware that these areas were contaminated by EO. Other victims had ventured into areas far from their homes to collect truffles, unknowingly entering contaminated spaces. Once the analysis of accident data revealed these circumstances, EORE actors responded by increasing the number of mobile EORE teams which allowed them to target shepherds and truffle pickers in their home areas.

The EORE strategic objective is accompanied by five strategic outcomes, each representing a strategic priority. Firstly, gaining clarity on EO accident patterns and EORE needs through more effective and efficient information management processes, in line with international good practice, is a key priority. These efforts will build on progressive work implemented by several EORE operators throughout the Republic of Iraq. Close coordination with VA stakeholders will be instrumental for ensuring data gathering processes are streamlined, supporting the OAP's Action #28.¹²⁵ Secondly, these efforts will inform the delivery of tailored and targeted EORE activities, throughout the Republic of Iraq, with priority given to liberated areas to support the safe resettlement of IDP and refugee returnees. Close coordination with broader humanitarian actors as per OAP's Action #28 is instrumental to ensure returnee data is shared and EORE activities are planned and prioritised accordingly, thereby supporting Iraq's broader humanitarian goals. Efforts will also be made to streamline, promote, record, analyse and report on behavioural change, including the standardisation of EORE pre and post SADD surveys.

¹²⁴ IMAS 12.10 EORE: 'National authorities and EORE operators should base their projects on a careful assessment of needs and capacities. The purpose of an EORE needs assessment is to identify, analyse and prioritise the local EO risks, to assess the capacities and vulnerabilities of the women, girls, boys and men in the affected communities and other stakeholders, and to determine the options for conducting EORE.'

¹²⁵ OAP Action #28 Integrate mine risk education activities with wider humanitarian, development, protection and education efforts, as well as with ongoing survey, clearance and victim assistance activities to reduce the risk to the affected population and decrease their need for risk-taking.

Reporting on EORE beneficiaries will be done in line with the newly adopted Guidance on Standardising Beneficiary Definitions in Humanitarian Mine Action.¹²⁶

The third outcome focuses on strengthened coordination. Current mechanisms will be reinforced, including the quarterly DMA-Chaired Risk Education Working Group. Coordination will ensure that roles and responsibilities are clear and complimentary, and that EO data is stored, analysed, and shared effectively and efficiently. The fourth outcome concerns the continual improvement of Iraq's EORE programme; EORE NMAS will be updated in line with IMAS 12.10¹²⁷, approved and fully implemented. Lastly, DMA/MoE, and IKMAA will take the lead in further strengthening local and national capacities and structures, promoting greater localisation and sustainability, in line with OAP Action #31.¹²⁸ Existing initiatives, including training teachers, mainstreaming EORE messages into the national school curricula and training and establishing community volunteers and focal points will be built on further.

¹²⁶ [Standardising Beneficiary Definitions in Humanitarian Mine Action: Second Edition 2020 | MAG \(maginternational.org\)](#)

¹²⁷ IMAS 12.10 EORE

¹²⁸ OAP Action #31 Build national capacity to deliver mine risk education and reduction programmes with the ability to adapt to changing needs and contexts, including the delivery of such programmes to affected communities in the case that previously unknown mined areas are discovered.

Strategic Objective 2: Explosive Ordnance Risk Education				
Awareness is raised and behavioural change promoted among at-risk women, girls, boys, and men and marginalised groups to reduce EO accidents, promote safe resettlement and facilitate sustainable livelihoods				
Outcomes	Indicators	Baselines	Targets	
2.1. Clarity on EO accidents and EORE needs Clarity is gained on the nature of EO accidents and EORE needs through needs assessments, including gender and diversity analysis reflecting international good practice ^{129, 130}	Number of EORE needs assessments, including EO-victim data, conducted The existence of an EORE Theory of Change	As of 2022, EO accident information is collected and stored in IMsMA, but not always in a standardised manner	Needs assessment conducted in all contaminated areas of the Republic of Iraq on an ongoing basis EORE Theory of Change is developed by the end of 2023	
2.2. Prioritised at-risk groups benefit from tailored EORE At-risk women, girls, boys, and men are continuously identified, consulted, prioritised and targeted through tailored EORE ¹³¹	Number of people six years of age or older in attendance for all core messages of the session, SADD ¹³² Estimated number of people reached through mass and digital media EORE, SADD when possible EO casualty SADD Existence of standardised pre and post EORE surveys	Number of people six years of age or older in attendance for all core messages of the session, in 2022 (SADD): women: 28,095 girls: 54,613 boys: 67,446 men: 33,583 EO casualty SADD in 2020 64: Injured: 30 (4 women, 2 girls, 14 boys, 14men) Killed: 23 (2 women, 3 girls, 6 boys, 12 men) Unknown: 11	At risk women, girls, boys and men are prioritised and targeted on a monthly basis	
2.3. Strengthened coordination and integration of EORE Quarterly EORE coordination meetings (chaired by DMA), including the MoE, facilitate clear roles and responsibilities, information sharing and EORE's integration into other sectors	Monthly coordination meeting agendas and minutes	Lack of regular EORE coordination meetings as of August 2021	Quarterly EORE coordination meetings, chaired by DMA, organised as of January 2023, minutes taken and circulated	
2.4. Continuous improvement of EORE EORE is continuously improved, by ensuring methodologies, technologies, materials and NMAS reflect good practice and are IMAS and treaty-compliant	Number of new or updated EORE material/year Existence of IMAS-compliant EORE NMAS	As of August 2023, NMAS on EORE is updated, in line with IMAS 12.10, pending formal approval	Annual review meetings chaired by DMA and IKMAA to ensure EORE material is relevant and context specific National EORE NMAS approved by mid-2023	
2.5. Strengthened national EORE capacities and structures National and local EORE capacities and structures are developed to strengthen sustainability and localisation of EORE activities ^{133 134}	Existence of school curricula with EORE messages mainstreamed Number of community volunteers trained and active (at the governorate level) Number of national organisations implementing EORE	EORE stakeholders reviewed and updated EORE messages included in national school curriculum in 2021 ¹³⁵ An estimate 200 community EORE volunteers were established in liberated areas (August 2021) Eight national companies and organisations implement EORE (August 2021)	Updated EORE messages are mainstreamed into national school curricula by early 2023 Community-based EORE volunteers established in all EO-affected governorates by 2025 Eight or more national actors implement EORE activities	

¹²⁹ OAP Action #29 Provide context-specific mine risk reduction and education programmes to all affected populations and groups at risk. Ensure that such programmes are developed on the basis of a needs-assessment, that they are tailored to the threat encountered by the population, and that they are sensitive to gender, age, disability and diversity.

¹³⁰ This will be conducted in close collaboration with VA stakeholders, capitalising from one EO victim needs assessment survey

¹³¹ OAP Action #29

¹³² OAP Action #30 Prioritise people most at risk by linking mine risk reduction and education programmes and messages directly to an analysis of available casualty and contamination data, an understanding of the affected population's behaviour, risk pattern and coping mechanisms, and, wherever possible, anticipated population movements.

¹³³ Standardising Beneficiary Definitions, *Ibid*

Strategic Objective 3: Victim Assistance

Gender and diversity-sensitive, rights-based services and opportunities are accessible to all EO victims on an equal basis

Victim assistance (VA) in mine action includes activities that address the needs and rights of EO victims. It comprises emergency and ongoing medical care, rehabilitation, psychological and psycho-social support, and socio-economic inclusion. VA also includes data collection, laws, and policies.¹³⁶ The term ‘victim’ refers to persons either individually or collectively who have suffered physical, emotional and psychological injury, economic loss or substantial impairment of their fundamental rights through acts or omissions related to the use of EO. Victims include people injured and killed, their families, and communities affected by EO.¹³⁷ ¹³⁸ VA requires that existing healthcare and social service systems, rehabilitation programmes and legislative and policy frameworks are sufficient to meet the needs and protect the rights of all EO victims – including EO survivors and family members of deceased and/or injured victims. It is vital that rehabilitation centres are sufficiently resourced and supported to facilitate the long-term rehabilitation of EO victims.

VA in the Republic of Iraq is guided by a normative framework rooted in the Republic of Iraq’s laws and international conventions:

National legal framework ¹³⁹	International framework
✓ The Social Care law no.126 (1980)	✓ The APMBC <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Oslo Action Plan
✓ Article 32 Republic of Iraq Constitution (2005) ¹⁴⁰	
✓ Military Operations & Terrorism Affected Persons Compensation Law No. 30 (2009)	✓ The CCM <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Lausanne Action Plan
✓ The Care of Persons with Disabilities and Special Needs Act no 38 (2013) ¹⁴¹	✓ The CRPD
✓ War Operations Affected Persons Law Amendment No. 57 (2015)	✓ CCW Protocol 5
✓ Social Protection Law No. 11 (2014)	✓ IMAS 13.10 Victim Assistance in Mine Action

¹³⁶ IMAS 13.10, Victim Assistance in Mine Action, First Edition

¹³⁷ IMAS 13.10, *ibid.*

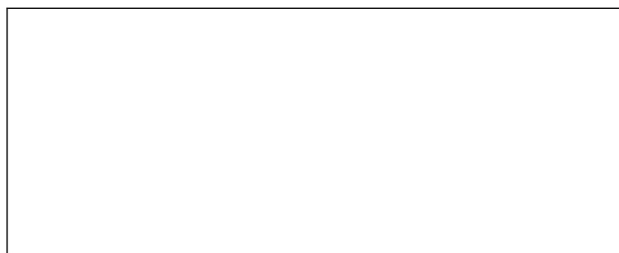
¹³⁸ The term ‘victim’ carries legal significance with respect to the APMBC, CCW and CCM.

¹³⁹ All national laws cover all persons with disabilities

¹⁴⁰ According to Iraqi law, there should be no discrimination against persons with disabilities.

¹⁴¹ Act no 38 (2013) defines a victim as ‘any person who lost the ability, wholly or partially, to participate in the society’s activities in a way similar to other people, as a result of going through a physical, mental or sensory impairment that leads to a lack in their functional performance.’

- ✓ Law 22 (2011), issued by the Kurdistan Regional Parliament on the rights and privilege persons with disabilities and people with special needs (applicable in the Kurdish Region of Iraq only)



As a State Party to the APMBC, CCM and CRPD, the Republic of Iraq has committed to adopt a rights-based approach to victim assistance, with the understanding that VA's overall mission is the full and effective participation of EO victims in society on an equal basis to others. While this approach draws on several key principles, three points are particularly important:¹⁴²

1. Achieving the mission of VA requires a long-term perspective and a holistic approach. The timeline for VA goes beyond a State Party's achievement of obligations under the APMBC and the CCM.
2. Realising the full and effective participation of all individuals, including EO victims, in society on an equal basis to others, means integrating VA into broader contexts, including national policies, plans and legal frameworks.
3. Ensuring VA efforts are effective, efficient and well-coordinated relies on clear roles and responsibilities among key government actors

The APMBC's Oslo Action Plan's chapter VII on VA presents nine action points and 14 related indicators. Key principles and commitments underpinning these include dedicating a national entity to ensure VA's integration into broader national frameworks and safeguarding effective coordination. Principles also include collecting, storing and analysing all victim data in a sex and age disaggregated manner, ensuring social and economic inclusion, long-term rehabilitation, psychological and psycho-social support, non-discrimination, the full and equal participation of mine victims in society and the integration of VA into broader national policies, plans and legal frameworks related to persons with disabilities to facilitate sustainability.¹⁴³

Several national government entities are involved in VA in the Republic of Iraq, including IKMAA, DMA, the Ministry of Health (MoH), the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (MoLSA) and the Ministry of Youth and Sport. The National Commission of Persons with Disabilities and Special Needs, which was established in 2013 within the MoLSA, is the main government lead on VA. In addition to these national actors, international organisations Humanity and Inclusion (HI) and the International Committee for the Red Cross (ICRC) are also involved in VA. EO-victim data is stored in several different national databases, including those managed by DMA, IKMAA, MoLSA and MoH.

¹⁴² APMBC: Five key examples of the role of mine action in integrating victim assistance into broader frameworks, 2014: https://www.apminebanconvention.org/fileadmin/pdf/publications/VA_Role_of_Mine_Action_in_Integrating_VA_into_Broader_Frameworks_2014-01-23.pdf

¹⁴³ These and other key principles are also highlighted in a victim assistance publication by the APMBC Implementation Support Unit: The Role of mine action in integrating victim assistance into broader Frameworks: <https://reliefweb.int/report/world/five-key-examples-role-mine-action-integrating-victim-assistance-broader-frameworks>

The Republic of Iraq fully supports the principle that specialised VA efforts are short-term solutions that should be implemented only until they are effectively integrated into broader frameworks. The Republic of Iraq recognises that the VA responsibilities of its mine action programme are more of a facilitating role, focusing on information management and coordination. Consequently, the mine action programme commits to addressing strategic challenges related to information management, coordination, awareness raising and standardisation. Firstly, to strengthen standardisation and relevance of data, EO-victim SADD will be collected based on clear information requirements. Secondly, recognising the importance of consolidating data, DMA and IKMAA will ensure that EO victim SADD is integrated into one centralised database. This will enable better data access and dissemination among relevant stakeholders, which in turn will facilitate more effective analysis, planning and reporting. Thirdly, appreciating the importance of sound coordination; the roles and responsibilities of VA government entities will be clarified, with the National Commission of Persons with Disabilities and Special Needs designated as the government lead. This entity will be responsible for chairing quarterly meetings with relevant VA government stakeholders and international partners, which will facilitate information sharing and VA's integration into broader government sectors frameworks and policies, in line with international good practice. These efforts will directly support the achievement of Republic of Iraq's National Disability Action Plan¹⁴⁴ and the Oslo Action Plan's actions # 33, 34, 35 and 41.¹⁴⁵

¹⁴⁴ This plan, which will be developed in the second half of 2021 will replace the 2019-2021 National Disability Action Plan.

¹⁴⁵ OAP Action #33: Ensure that a relevant government entity is assigned to oversee the integration of victim assistance into broader national policies, plans and legal frameworks. The assigned entity will develop an action plan and monitor and report on implementation based on specific, measurable, realistic and time-bound objectives to support mine victims. This involves the removal of physical, social, cultural, political, attitudinal and communication barriers to access such services; and the use of an approach that is inclusive of gender, age and disability and takes diverse needs into account in planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of all programmes.

OAP Action #34: Carry out cross-governmental efforts to ensure that the needs and rights of mine victims are effectively addressed through national policy and legal frameworks relating to disability, health, education, employment, development and poverty reduction, in line with the relevant provisions of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

Action #35: Establish or strengthen a centralised database that includes information on persons killed by mines and persons injured by mines and their needs and challenges, disaggregated by gender, age and disability, and make this information available to relevant stakeholders to ensure a comprehensive response to addressing the needs of mine survivors and victims.

Action #41: Ensure the full inclusion and effective participation of mine victims and their representative organizations in all matters that affect them, including in rural and remote areas.

Strategic Objective 3: Victim Assistance
Gender and diversity-sensitive, rights-based services and opportunities are accessible to all EO victims on an equal basis

Outcomes	Indicators	Baselines	Targets
3.1. Standardised data collection Clarity is gained on the extent and needs of EO victims through an IMAS-compliant, standardised needs assessment ¹⁴⁶ , reflecting international good practice ¹⁴⁷	Existence of one standardised victim needs assessment survey form, reflecting international good practice Number of victim needs assessment surveys conducted, disaggregated by sex and age	Victims needs assessment are implemented throughout Republic of Iraq but are not always standardised	All EO victims are recorded, using one standardised form, as from mid-2023
3.2. EO victim data integrated into one centralised database EO victim SADD is continuously collected and integrated into one centralised database, facilitating greater access to, and analysis and sharing of, data ¹⁴⁸	Existence of one centralised database that includes EO SADD victim data	As of May 2021, several national databases include EO victim data (DMA, IKMAA, MoH and MoLSA)	EO victim accident SADD is continuously collected, updated and integrated into one centralised national database, established by the end of 2023
3.3. Strengthened coordination and collaboration Bi-annual VA coordination meetings (chaired by the National Commission of Persons with Disabilities and Special Needs) ensure clear roles and responsibilities, awareness raising, information sharing and VA's integration into broader national policies, plans and legal frameworks ¹⁴⁹	Bi-annual VA coordination meeting minutes Existence of clear roles and responsibilities, including government VA lead Existence of a designated government VA lead	As of August 2021, ad-hoc VA coordination meetings organised from time to time	Quarterly VA coordination meetings Chaired by government lead, with minutes taken and circulated
3.4. VA is continually improved The development and implementation of a NMAS on VA will strengthen VA's normative framework and facilitate more effective and efficient VA, in line with international good practice	Existence of IMAS ¹⁵⁰ compliant NMAS on VA	The Republic of Iraq published IMAS-compliant NMAS on VA ¹⁵¹ in June 2022	VA NMAS developed in line with IMAS by mid-2022

¹⁴⁶ Based on clear information requirements, in line with international good practice and Convention obligations

¹⁴⁷ TN on Minimum Data Requirement, Annex IMAS 05.10 IM

¹⁴⁸ OAP #35

¹⁴⁹ OAP Action #33

¹⁵⁰ As of August 2021, the draft IMAS on VA was pending final approval

¹⁵¹ DMA has created an internal committee to develop this standard. Other national and international stakeholders will be invited to support the development of the NMAS.

Strategic Objective 4: National ownership, communication and coordination

Strengthened national ownership and effective coordination and information sharing result in raised awareness, greater transparency and increased collaboration

The Republic of Iraq acknowledges that strong national ownership and effective coordination and information sharing are preconditions for achieving all strategic objectives in this strategy. As a State Party to the APMBC and CCM, the Republic of Iraq fully supports the principle of national ownership and is committed to taking on greater ownership of its contamination problem and its national mine action programme.

This strategic objective is underpinned by four strategic outcomes. Firstly, greater national ownership¹⁵² will be achieved by strengthening DMA and IKMAA and ensuring these national entities are empowered, appropriately structured and sufficiently equipped and resourced to allow them to fulfil their responsibilities in the most effective manner. This supports Action#1 of the Oslo and Lausanne ¹⁵³ Action Plan, on demonstrating national ownership, including by making financial commitments.¹⁵⁴ In that regard, the Government of Iraq will ensure that an appropriate national mine action law, that is context specific, reflects international good practice and the Republic of Iraq 's Convention obligations, is developed and formally approved. Regarding DMA, there is widespread belief that its current mandate as a Directorate and its institutional positioning within the MoE should be revised to empower and strengthen it and to allow it to implement an appropriate mandate with sufficient institutional authority. This strategy mandates an external assessment that will explore DMA's legal mandate and its positioning within the Government of Iraq. The assessment report will summarise findings and recommendations on desired changes and will be presented to the National Higher Committee for Mine Action.

Secondly, acknowledging the importance of solid collaboration between DMA and IKMAA for a unified mine action programme, regular and structured coordination meetings will be formalised. This will facilitate greater information sharing, including the exchange of good practice and lessons learnt, and will allow for effective monitoring and reporting on results. Greater collaboration will further ensure

¹⁵² OAP: 'The States Parties have defined national ownership as entailing the following: 'maintaining interest at a high level in fulfilling Convention obligations; empowering and providing relevant State entities with the human, financial and material capacity to carry out their obligations under the Convention; articulating the measures its State entities will undertake to implement relevant aspects of Convention in the most inclusive, efficient and expedient manner possible and plans to overcome any challenges that need to be addressed; and making a regular significant national financial commitment to the State's programmes to implement the Convention'.

¹⁵³ Lausanne Action Plan (LAP) Action #1 : Action #1: Demonstrate high levels of national ownership 2 in implementing the Convention's obligations, including by integrating implementation activities into national development plans, poverty reduction strategies, humanitarian response plans and national strategies for the inclusion of persons with disabilities, as appropriate, by enhancing national capacity to carry out obligations and/or making financial and other material commitments to the national implementation of the Convention . *LAP will be adopted during the Second part of the CCM Second Review Conference of States Parties, expected to be held in September 2021.

¹⁵⁴ OAP Action#1: Demonstrate high levels of national ownership, including by integrating Convention implementation activities into national development plans, poverty reduction strategies, humanitarian response plans and national strategies for the inclusion of persons with disabilities as appropriate, and by making financial and other commitments to implementation.

streamlined reporting processes, in line with the Republic of Iraq's Convention reporting obligations. DMA and IKMAA will also take the lead in promoting Iraq's mine action programme internationally, by ensuring representation at international conferences and meetings, sharing results and updates and interacting with donors. Greater national coordination will further allow the Republic of Iraq to continue reporting on progress and challenges in implementing the Conventions, including on cooperation and assistance, by submitting informative, evidence based APMBC and CCM Article 7 reports by 30 April every year, in line with Oslo Action Plan's action #8.¹⁵⁵

Thirdly, recognising the importance of regular and structured coordination with international donors and operators, DMA will, in close collaboration with IKMAA, take the lead in establishing a national coordination platform and organising bi-annual coordination meetings with relevant Iraqi ministries, international donor representatives and national and international operators to ensure strengthened coordination and information sharing. This supports Oslo Action Plan's Action #43 on national coordination efforts¹⁵⁶ and is in line with Grand Bargain principles. These meetings will provide DMA and IKMAA with opportunities to present achievements, clarify remaining challenges and coordinate activities. They will also give DMA and IKMAA the chance to strengthen their ownership of the mine action programme, reinforce mine action's visibility within the Government of Iraq, promote linkages between mine action and broader humanitarian, development and peace efforts, including the SDGs, and explore partnerships to facilitate more sustainable results. DMA and IKMAA will also continue their collaboration with the MoP and advocate for the inclusion of mine action into relevant broader national plans and strategies, including Iraq's National Development Plan and the Poverty Reduction Strategy. Highlighting mine action's facilitating role will result in strengthened connections between mine action and humanitarian, development and peace efforts, needs and priorities, in line with Oslo Action Plan's Action #6 on enhanced partnerships and integrated responses between mine action and other sectors.¹⁵⁷ This initiative is also in line with the Triple Nexus approach.

Lastly, resource mobilisation will be an ongoing effort, both nationally and internationally. The programme will seek to increase national funding from the Government of Iraq, expand its international donor base and explore other sources of funding. As such, the Republic of Iraq will develop a resource mobilisation strategy which will bring greater clarity on funding targets and key principles that will guide all resource mobilisation efforts in the mine action programme. This supports Oslo Action Plan's Action #43.¹⁵⁸

¹⁵⁵ OAP Action#8 Provide quality information on progress and challenges in implementing the Convention, including on cooperation and assistance, by 30 April each year in line with Article 7, employing the Guide to Reporting (APLC/MSP.14/2015/WP.2, <https://bit.ly/Guide-Reporting>), and during formal and informal meetings.

¹⁵⁶ OAP Action #43 States Parties implementing their obligations under the Convention will strengthen national coordination including by ensuring regular dialogue with national and international stakeholders on progress, challenges and support for implementation. They will consider establishing an appropriate national platform for regular dialogue among all stakeholders

¹⁵⁷ OAP Action #6 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.

¹⁵⁸ OAP Action #43 States Parties seeking assistance will develop resource mobilisation plans and use all mechanisms within the Convention to disseminate information on challenges and requirements for assistance, including through their annual Article 7 transparency reports and by taking advantage of the individualised approach. States Parties will share the outcomes of the individualised approach with the wider mine action community in order to maximise its impact.

Strategic Objective 4: National Ownership, Communication and Coordination
Strengthened national ownership, and effective coordination and information sharing result in raised awareness, greater transparency and increased collaboration

Outcomes	Indicators	Baselines	Targets
4.1. DMA and IKMAA are empowered to perform their responsibilities Greater national commitment to mine action will strengthen national authorities to carry out their responsibilities and facilitate a conducive environment for mine action	Existence of updated mine action legislation, governing mine action in Republic of Iraq An external assessment report on DMA's institutional positioning	As of June 2022, mine action legislation has not been formally approved by Government of Iraq	Appropriate Iraqi mine action legislation developed and passed by the end of 2023 External assessment report on DMA's institutional positioning, conducted by the end of 2023
4.2. Collaboration and coordination between DMA and IKMAA are strengthened Regular coordination will facilitate greater information sharing, exchange of good practice and lessons learnt and more effective monitoring of strategy implementation and reporting on progress and challenges ¹⁵⁹	Existence of Memorandum of joint cooperation between DMA and IKMAA, clarifying coordination, information sharing and exchange of good practice and lessons learnt Number of DMA and IKMAA coordination meetings/year APMBC Article 7 transparency reports submitted by 30 April every year, drawing on the guide to reporting ^{160 161} CCM Article 7 transparency reports submitted by 30 April every year Compliance report of CCW and its additional protocols reports by 31 March National platform established by mid-2023	As of June 2022, no formalised memorandum of joint cooperation between DMA and IKMAA As of June 2021, no formalised coordination meetings between DMA and IKMAA APMBC Article 7 transparency report submitted by 30 April in 2023 CCM Article 7 report submitted by 30 March in 2023 Compliance report of CCW and its additional protocols submitted by 31 March in 2023 No national platform as of 2022	Memorandum of joint cooperation, formalising DMA's and IKMAA's partnership is developed and approved by the end of 2023 Quarterly coordination meetings organised between DMA and IKMAA APMBC Article 7 transparency report submitted by 30 April every year CCM Article 7 transparency report submitted by 30 March annually Compliance report of CCW and its additional protocols submitted by 31 March every year Bi-annual mine action national platform coordination meetings organised as of 2023
4.3. Strengthened coordination and information sharing Regular mine action coordination meetings facilitate greater collaboration and information sharing among stakeholders	Number of mine action donor coordination meetings organised/year Number of mine action operator meetings organised/year	DMA and UNMAS organised one mine action donor conference in October 2020	Quarterly mine action operator coordination meetings organised as of 2023
4.4. Mine action is included in broader national plans and strategies Improved coordination, collaboration and information sharing facilitate greater awareness of mine action within the GoI and its inclusion in relevant national plans and strategies	Number of Iraqi national plans and strategies that include mine action	Mine action is not included in the Republic of Iraq Vision 2030, the National Development Plan 2018-2022 or the Poverty Reduction Strategy 2018-2022	Mine action is included in Republic of Iraq's next National Development Plan (2022-2026) Mine action is included in Republic of Iraq's next Poverty Reduction Strategy
4.5. Greater clarity on funding targets and resource needs DMA takes the lead in developing a resource mobilisation strategy that will clarify key principles and the mine action programme's funding gaps and targets until 2028 ¹⁶²	Existence of a government-approved resource mobilisation strategy	As of June 2021, there was no resource mobilisation strategy for the mine action programme	Resource mobilisation strategy developed and approved by the end of 2023

¹⁵⁹ OAP #8, *ibid*.

¹⁶⁰ APLC/MSP.14/2015/WP.2, <https://bit.ly/Guide-Reporting>

¹⁶¹ OAP Action#8, Indicator 1

¹⁶² OAP Action #42: States Parties seeking assistance will develop resource mobilisation plans and use all mechanisms within the Convention to disseminate information on challenges and requirements for assistance, including through their annual Article 7 transparency reports and by taking advantage of the individualised approach. States Parties will share the outcomes of the individualised approach with the wider mine action community in order to maximise its impact

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Monitoring and reviewing this strategy provides opportunities to identify challenges and opportunities and make modifications to the strategic objective monitoring framework (outcomes, indicators, baselines, and targets). Monitoring is an ongoing process that uses systematic data collection on indicators to provide stakeholders with information about the extent of progress and the achievement of objectives, measured against the established baselines.

In line with international good practice, DMA and IKMAA will, in close collaboration with national and international stakeholders, be responsible for monitoring the implementation of this strategy.¹⁶³ Effective information management with clear information requirements and reporting systems, and sound coordination and collaboration with relevant stakeholders are preconditions for this. DMA and IKMAA will take the lead in developing a monitoring framework that will facilitate continuous monitoring against strategy targets and indicators. Progress will be discussed and reported on during DMA and IKMAA's quarterly coordination meetings, results of which will be summarised at the end of every year in annual strategy monitoring reports and referenced in Article 7 transparency reports.

DMA and IKMAA will request an external review of this strategy by the end of 2024 to take stock of achievements made, identify challenges, and make necessary modifications to ensure the strategy remains relevant to the Republic of Iraq's context.

¹⁶³ IMAS 07.40, Monitoring of Mine Action Organisations, Second Edition, 20 January 2016 Monitoring systems should reflect the requirements of overall strategic goals and objectives. The structure and implementation of mine action monitoring systems should be informed by the national mine action strategic plan (NMA SP) or equivalent and have the capacity to deliver information relevant to strategic decision-makers. Monitoring systems should include assessment of performance and progress against strategic policies, objectives and targets.

ANNEXES

ANNEX I: REPUBLIC OF IRAQ, STRATEGY STAKEHOLDER WORKSHOP PROGRAMME 15-18 MARCH 2021, BAGHDAD AND ERBIL

Day 1 Monday 15 March: Setting the Scene				
Time	Theme	Content	Responsible	Method
09.00 – 10.00	Opening and Introductions	Formal opening of the workshop and welcome	Government of Iraq/DMA Donor Representative (Netherlands)	
		Workshop objectives	Ms Åsa Massleberg, Strategic Planning Programme Manager, GICHD	
10.00 – 11.00	Setting the scene and connecting the dots: Mine Action and National and International Frameworks	Republic of Iraq mine action programme: current state of play	DMA, IKM/AA	Presentations Group discussions Questions and Answers
11.00 – 11.20	Coffee Break			
11.20 – 12.10	Setting the scene and connecting the dots: Mine Action and National and International Frameworks	Republic of Iraq's APMBC obligations: strategic considerations and way forward Republic of Iraq's CCM obligations: strategic considerations and way forward	Mr Juan Carlos Ruan Director, APMBC Implementation Support Unit (ISU) Ms Sheila Mweemba, Director, Convention on Cluster Munition ISU	Presentations Group discussions Questions and Answers
12.10 – 12.30	Introduction to strategic planning	Strategic Planning Process: key components, good practices and lessons learnt	Ms Åsa Massleberg, GICHD	Presentation
12.30 – 13.30	Lunch Break			
13.30 – 14.30	National Strategic and Executive Plan for Mine Action 2017-2021	Assessment findings: achievements and challenges, good practices and lessons learnt	DMA/GICHD	Presentations Discussions
14.30 – 14.50	Coffee Break			
14.50 – 15.50	Continual improvement: Sharing good practice	Improvised Explosive Device Clearance: Good Practice Information Management: Strategic considerations Gender and Diversity: Good practice and strategic considerations	Mr Ian Robb, Technical Advisor, Urban IEDs Standards, GICHD Mr Henrik Rydberg, IM Standards and Solutions, GICHD Ms Mayssa Hajjaj, Advisor, Gender and Diversity, GMAP, GICHD	Presentations Group discussions Questions and Answers
15.50 – 16.00	Closure of day 1	Closure of the day, overview of tomorrow's objectives	GICHD/DMA	

Day 2 Tuesday 16 March: Analysing the Context and Developing the Theory of Change					
Time	Session	Content	Responsible	Method	
09.00 – 09.10	Recap from day 1	Key points from day 1	DMA, GICHD	Summary	
09.10 – 11.00	Analysing the Context	Introduction to context analysis tools	Åsa Massleberg, GICHD	Presentation	
		Mine Action Paradigm shift, Stakeholder, SWOT, PESTLE	Working groups	Group discussions	
11.00 - 11.20	Coffee Break				
11.20 – 12.30	Analysing the Context	Stakeholder, SWOT, PESTLE	Working groups	Group discussions	
		Group work presentations, feedback, and discussions	Working groups	Presentations Group discussions	
12.30 – 13.30	Lunch				
13.30 – 13.50	Introduction to Results based Management (RBM)	What is RBM and Theory of Change?			
13.50 – 15.10	Exploring Vision and Mission	How do vision and mission differ?	Åsa Massleberg, GICHD	Presentations Group discussions	
		Brainstorm on vision and mission key words Feedback and discussions	All	Group discussions	
15.10 – 15.30	Coffee Break				
15.30 – 15.50	Strategy structure	Present strategic objectives Feedback and discussions	DMA GICHD	Presentations Group discussions	
15.50 – 16.00	Closure of day 2	Closure of the day, overview of tomorrow's objectives	GICHD		

Day 3 Wednesday 17 March: Developing the Theory of Change				
Time	Session	Content	Responsible	Method
09.00 – 09.10	Recap from day 2	Key points from day 2	DMA, GICHD	Summary
09.10 – 11.00	Context analysis: strategic objectives	Participants are divided into strategic objective working groups. Each working group conducts a SWOT and stakeholder analysis	Working groups	Group work
		Continued, presentations, feedback and discussions	Working groups	Presentations, discussions
11.00 - 11.30	Coffee Break			
11.30 – 12.10	Context analysis: strategic objectives	Continued, presentations, feedback and discussions	Working groups	Presentations, discussions
12.10 – 12.30	Effective and Efficient Mine Action: How do we know?	Ensuring the strategy can be monitored	GICHD, Åsa Massleberg	Presentation
12.30 – 13.30	Lunch Break			
13.30 – 15.30	Drafting strategic objective tables	For each strategy goal, each working group develops: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Goals/Objectives • Outcomes • Baselines • Indicators • Targets 	As above.	Group work
15.30 – 15.50	Break			
15.50 – 16.00	Closure of day 3	Closure of the day, overview of tomorrow's objectives	GICHD, DMA	
Day 4 Thursday 18 March: Developing the Theory of Change and Agreeing on Next Steps				
Time	Session	Content	Responsible	Method
09.00 - 09.10	Recap from day 3	Key points from day 3	DMA, GICHD	Discussions
09.10 – 11.00	Strategic objective tables Presentations	Strategic objective working groups present results	Working groups	Working group presentations Discussions
11.00 – 11.20	Break			
11.20 – 13.00	Analysing Risks and Assumptions	Risk analysis: introduction	Mr Ian Robb, GICHD	Presentation

		Strategic objective working groups identify risks and assumptions	Working groups	Group work
		Presentation of risks and assumptions	Working groups	Presentations Discussions
13.00 – 14.00	Lunch Break			
14.00 – 15.00	Republic of Iraq Mine Action Programme: New Theory of Change	Presentation of Iraq's Mine Action Programme's Strategic Theory of Change	DMA, GICHD	Presentation Discussions
	Way ahead	Agree on next steps, define roles and responsibilities	DMA, GICHD	Presentation
15.00 – 15.30	Break			
15.30 – 17.00	Workshop closure	Present the strategic planning process, key observations and the new Theory of Change to the Government of Iraq and International Donor representatives	Government of Iraq GICHD	

ANNEX II: MINE ACTION'S PROSPECTIVE CONTRIBUTION TO SDGs

FIGURE 2 PROSPECTIVE CONTRIBUTIONS OF MINE ACTION TO THE SDGs

1 NO POVERTY 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Productive use of previously contaminated land provides livelihood opportunities and generates income, unlocking beneficiaries from poverty. • Safe access to economic and natural resources builds resilience of previously affected communities. • Victim Assistance ensures social protection systems and measures for survivors.
2 ZERO HUNGER 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Released agricultural land enables communities to grow crops, improving food security and nutrition. • Safe routes (re-)open access to markets and opportunities for value addition.
3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safe access to healthcare facilities and services in previously affected communities improves health and well-being.
4 QUALITY EDUCATION 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safe access to education for women, girls, boys and men in previously affected communities promotes literacy and numeracy. • Through Victim Assistance, survivors enjoy equal access to education, including through disability-sensitive education facilities.
5 GENDER EQUALITY 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Removing explosive hazards and providing education on safe behaviour reduce violence against women and girls. • Employing women in mine action and their participation in setting priorities and plans empowers women as agents of change in political, economic and social life.
6 CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Land release promotes safe and equitable access to drinking water and sanitation previously denied to communities.
7 AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Land release permits development of power infrastructure, making energy services accessible for previously affected communities.
8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Land release enables safe access to natural resources, promoting economic growth and sustainable tourism. • Mine action provides decent work and transversal skills for affected communities, including youth.

9 INDUSTRY, INNOVATION
AND INFRASTRUCTURE



- The removal of explosive hazards fosters industrialisation and the development of sustainable and resilient infrastructure.
- Mine-free roads provide access to transportation systems, integrating enterprises into value chains and markets.

10 REDUCED
INEQUALITIES



- Handing over released land to beneficiaries, particularly the poor, generates income growth, reducing inequalities and promoting inclusion of all, particularly survivors.
- Through international cooperation, mine action donors support countries where need is greatest, addressing inequalities between countries.

11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES
AND COMMUNITIES



- Re-establishing safe access to housing and basic services for all, mine action contributes to the reconstruction of safe and inclusive cities and human settlements.
- Environmentally-sensitive mine clearance contributes to the protection and safeguarding of cultural and natural heritage.

12 RESPONSIBLE
CONSUMPTION
AND PRODUCTION



- Safe access to previously denied natural resources enables their sustainable and efficient management and use.

14 LIFE
BELOW WATER



- Environmentally-sensitive underwater clearance restores degraded aquatic ecosystems and supports their healthy and sustainable use.

15 LIFE
ON LAND



- Environmentally-sensitive mine clearance contributes to conserve, restore and sustainably manage biodiverse terrestrial ecosystems.

16 PEACE, JUSTICE
AND STRONG
INSTITUTIONS



- Removing explosive hazards and providing education on safe behaviour reduce violence and casualties everywhere.
- Mine action develops effective capacities, institutions, and promotes national ownership, including through international cooperation.

17 PARTNERSHIPS
FOR THE GOALS



- National, regional and international partnerships in mine action (e.g. governments, private sector, academia and civil society) enhance the exchange of resources, expertise, innovation and technology.
- Mine action information enhances the availability of timely and disaggregated data for SDG measurement, monitoring and progress reporting.

ANNEX III: REPUBLIC OF IRAQ MINE ACTION PROGRAMME 2023-2028 THEORY OF CHANGE

Vision

Mine action enables Iraq to attain its national humanitarian and development goals and fulfil its international convention obligations to: 1: freeing Iraq of explosive ordnance, 2: ensuring its people and societies live in safe environments conducive to development and 3: addressing EO victims' needs by providing services and rehabilitation and integrating them into society.

Mission

To manage and sustain a well-coordinated mine action programme in accordance with IMAS and NMAS that promotes adherence to international good practice, continual improvement and innovative approaches in line with the five humanitarian mine action pillars: 1. Survey and clearance, 2. EORE 3. VA 4. Advocacy and 5. Stockpile destruction.

Strategic Objectives

1. Land Release

- The release of safe land facilitates effective reconstruction, resettlement and sustainable development

2. Explosive Ordnance Risk Education

- Strengthened coordination and national ownership result in raised awareness, greater transparency and increased collaboration

3. Victim Assistance

- Gender and diversity-sensitive, rights-based services and opportunities are accessible to all EO victims on an equal basis

4. National Ownership, Communication and Coordination

- Strengthened national ownership and effective coordination and information sharing result in raised awareness, greater transparency and increased collaboration

Risks

1.Insecurity and limited operational access

1.Financial and political instability in Iraq

1.Insufficient international and national funding

1.Inadequate capacities within, and resources allocated to, national authorities to carry out their responsibilities

1.Continued impacts from COVID-19

1.Previously unknown EO contamination will be discovered

Assumptions

1.Current number of operators will remain

1.Operations will be conducted in line with IMAS-compliant NMAS and SOPs

1.Land release will be fully implemented

1.The GoI will assume greater national ownership of the mine action programme

1.There will be greater collaboration between DMA and IKMAA

1.All relevant ministries, governorates and directorates will dedicate specific funding for technical survey (TS), clearance and QM

All investment contracts for all relevant ministries, governorates and directorates include annexes on land release certificates, approved by DMA or IKMAA



GICHD