MINE ACTION AND YOUTH, PEACE, AND SECURITY

Practical guidance for integrating mine action into youth, peace, and security national action plans

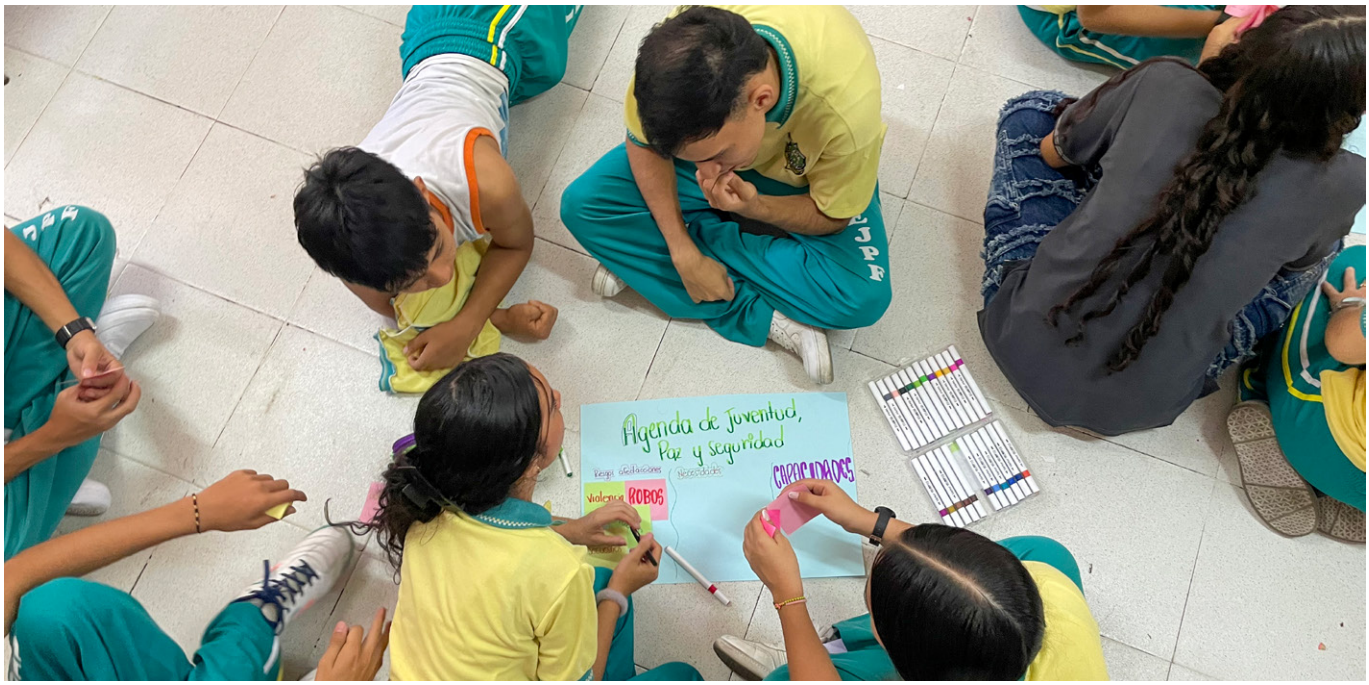
ABOUT THIS SERIES

This brief is one of three complementary publications examining the relationship between youth, peace, and security (YPS) and mine action. Together, they consider the evidence for youth engagement in mine action, opportunities to strengthen the integration of mine action within YPS policy frameworks, and the role of national mine action institutions in enabling meaningful youth participation.

Youth Engagement in Mine Action: Evidence from Colombia, Somalia, and Ukraine provides the evidence base for the series. Drawing on research and experiences from the three countries, it examines how young people are already contributing to mine action, the conditions that enable meaningful participation and leadership, and the barriers that continue to limit opportunities and influence.[1]

This brief, *Mine Action and Youth, Peace, and Security: Practical Guidance for Integrating Mine Action into Youth, Peace, and Security National Action Plans*, focuses on how mine action can be better reflected within YPS policy frameworks. It provides practical guidance for governments and YPS stakeholders on recognizing the implications of explosive ordnance (EO) contamination for young people and integrating relevant mine action priorities, institutions, and actions into the development and implementation of YPS National Action Plans.

Enabling Meaningful Youth Engagement in Mine Action: Practical Guidance for National Mine Action Authorities and National Mine Action Centres focuses on how national mine action institutions can use their existing mandates and functions to create an enabling environment for meaningful, inclusive, and sustainable youth engagement within national mine action programmes.[2]



Consultations with youth during development of Colombia YPS NAP © Fundación LATIR

INTRODUCTION

Young people living in conflict-affected settings are significantly exposed to the impacts of EO, which can restrict safety, mobility, education, livelihoods, psychosocial well-being, and participation in public life. [3] At the same time, young people contribute to mine action as educators, community mobilizers, advocates, practitioners, and leaders. Yet mine action remains largely absent from existing Youth, Peace, and Security (YPS) National Action Plans (NAPs).

The YPS Agenda, established by UN Security Council Resolution 2250 (2015) and subsequent resolutions, recognizes young people as essential actors in peacebuilding, conflict prevention, and recovery. While the YPS resolutions do not explicitly reference mine action, their emphasis on the participation, protection, and empowerment of young people provides a clear basis for considering mine action within YPS NAPs.[4]

This brief aims to support government institutions responsible for designing and coordinating YPS NAPs to better understand the relationship between mine action and the YPS Agenda, strengthen the integration of mine action within YPS NAPs, and improve engagement with mine action stakeholders during NAP development and implementation.

This brief draws on a rapid review of YPS NAPs and regional frameworks from EO-affected contexts, complemented by insights gathered from young people, youth organizations, and mine action practitioners collected during a workshop in Colombia in November 2025. Colombia's experience is also used to illustrate how youth advocacy and cross-sector partnerships can help integrate mine action into YPS policy frameworks.

WHAT IS MINE ACTION?

Mine action encompasses activities undertaken to address the humanitarian, social, economic, and security impacts of landmines and other EO. It plays a critical role in protecting civilians, restoring safe access to land and services, supporting recovery, and enabling long-term peacebuilding and development in conflict-affected communities.

The mine action sector is generally organized around five main pillars:[5]



Land release: the process of applying all reasonable effort to identify, define, and remove the presence or suspicion of EO through non-technical survey, technical survey, and/or clearance. Land release enables land to be safely returned to communities for use.

Explosive Ordnance Risk Education (EORE): activities that seek to reduce the risk of injury from EO by raising awareness among women, girls, boys, and men accordance with their different vulnerabilities, roles, and needs, and promoting behavioural change. Core activities include public information dissemination, education, and training.

Victim assistance: a holistic, integrated approach to addressing the short-, medium-, and long-term needs of people injured by EO, as well as affected families and communities. It encompasses areas such as emergency and ongoing medical care, rehabilitation, psychosocial support, social and economic inclusion, and the realization of rights.

Advocacy: activities that support the reduction of the impact of EO by promoting relevant international norms and instruments and advocating against the use of anti-personnel mines.

Stockpile destruction: the physical destruction of stockpiled EO as part of the continual reduction of such stockpiles, including anti-personnel mines and cluster munitions.

By reducing threats posed by EO, mine action enables displaced populations to return home safely, supports access to education and livelihoods, restores public confidence, and fosters social cohesion, stabilization, and sustainable peace.[6]

WHY MINE ACTION SHOULD BE REFLECTED IN YPS NAPS

EO can create significant barriers to young people's safety, mobility, education, livelihoods, and participation. At the same time, young people themselves can contribute to reducing these risks.[7] Mine action therefore intersects with multiple pillars of the YPS Agenda, as illustrated below.

How mine action advances the YPS Agenda

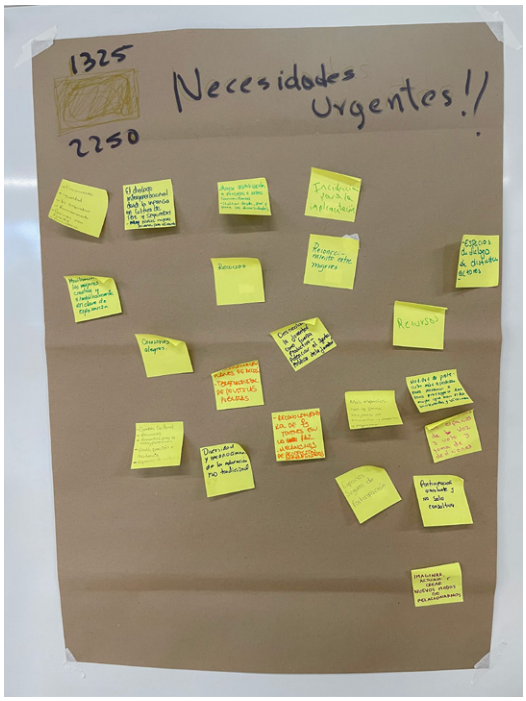
YPS pillar	Contributions of mine action to the YPS Agenda	Examples of youth engagement
PARTICIPATION	Supports young people to influence mine action priorities, planning, and implementation.	Youth participation in community consultations on priorities for land clearance, community liaison, advocacy initiatives, social media outreach, monitoring, and feedback mechanisms.
PROTECTION	Reduces young people's exposure to EO and supports safer access to services and public spaces.	Youth-led EORE campaigns, peer-to-peer education, school-based awareness activities, digital outreach, and community awareness raising.
PREVENTION	Reduces unsafe behaviours and strengthens community resilience through EORE and community engagement.	Youth behaviour-change campaigns, peer education, local prevention initiatives, community risk mapping, and peace messaging.
PARTNERSHIPS & COORDINATION	Strengthens collaboration between young people, mine action actors, governments, and civil society.	Youth participation in national coordination mechanisms; partnerships between mine action operators and youth-led organizations; engagement with schools, universities, and youth advisory groups; and involvement of youth in national consultations and policy dialogues.
DISENGAGEMENT & REINTEGRATION	Supports recovery, reintegration, skills development, and access to livelihoods.	Youth employment in mine action activities (such as survey, geographic information systems (GIS), clearance, EORE, information management, victim assistance, and community engagement roles); internships and vocational training opportunities.

CURRENT GAPS IN YPS NAPS

A rapid review of selected YPS NAPs and regional frameworks from EO-affected contexts found limited explicit integration of mine action within these plans.[8]

The review identified four common gaps:

- Mine action institutions are rarely included in YPS coordination, implementation, or monitoring structures.
- EO contamination is seldom recognized as a barrier to youth participation, education, mobility, livelihoods, and recovery.
- Young people in EO-affected communities are rarely specifically recognized as facing distinct protection and development challenges.
- Opportunities for youth engagement and leadership in mine action are generally absent from YPS implementation frameworks.



What do we urgently need in the YPS NAP? © Fundación LATIR



Consultations with youth during development of Colombia YPS NAP © Fundación LATIR

Mine action integration in selected YPS frameworks

YPS framework	Explicit mine action integration
African Union	None identified
Burundi	Limited victim assistance references
Colombia	References mine victims, EORE, community reconstruction
Democratic Republic of the Congo	References mine victims
Kyrgyzstan	None identified
League of Arab States	None identified
Liberia	None identified
Nigeria	None identified
Philippines	None identified
South Sudan	None identified

Addressing these gaps requires incorporating mine action from the outset of YPS NAP development through relevant objectives, actions, implementation arrangements, and monitoring frameworks.

HOW TO INTEGRATE MINE ACTION INTO A YPS NAP

In EO-affected contexts, mine action should be considered throughout the development, implementation, and monitoring of YPS NAPs. Governments can strengthen integration through four practical actions:

1. Recognize EO contamination in the situational analysis. Identify how EO affects young people's safety, mobility, education, livelihoods, participation, and recovery, and reflect these impacts in the evidence and priorities underpinning the NAP.

2. Address the diverse experiences of young people. Consider how EO risks and barriers differ according to sex, age, disability, displacement, location, and other relevant factors. Particular attention may be needed for young survivors, young people with disabilities, displaced and rural youth, young women, and young people from marginalized communities.

3. Integrate mine action into relevant YPS pillars. Where relevant, include mine action-related objectives and actions, such as youth participation in mine action decision-making, youth-focused EORE, support for young EO survivors, youth-led advocacy and prevention initiatives, and skills and livelihood opportunities linked to mine action.

4. Incorporate participation and accountability into implementation. Create opportunities for young people from EO-affected communities to contribute to implementation, coordination, and monitoring, including through consultations, youth advisory structures, and partnerships with youth-led organizations. Participation should be voluntary, accessible, conflict-sensitive, and accompanied by appropriate measures to protect young participants from harm.

Where feasible, monitoring frameworks should include data on youth participation and outcomes disaggregated by age, as well as by sex, disability, and other contextually relevant characteristics.

FROM COMMITMENT TO IMPLEMENTATION

The following examples illustrate how mine action can be translated into practical outputs, activities, and indicators within YPS NAPs. They should be adapted to national priorities, institutional arrangements, and the nature and extent of EO contamination.

Integrating mine action into YPS NAPs in EO-affected contexts: Illustrative examples

YPS pillar	Illustrative output	Example activities	Example indicators*
 **PARTICIPATION**	Young people meaningfully participate in mine action planning, implementation, and monitoring.	• Include young people in consultations on mine action priorities and planning. • Establish youth advisory or consultation mechanisms linked to mine action coordination structures. • Engage youth-led organizations in implementation and monitoring.	• Percentage of relevant mine action consultations that include young people. • Percentage of participating young people reporting that their views influenced decisions.
 **PROTECTION**	Young people are better protected from EO risks and young survivors have improved access to support.	• Deliver youth-responsive EORE through appropriate community, education, and digital channels. • Adapt EORE to reach diverse and marginalized groups of young people. • Strengthen referral and assistance pathways for young EO survivors.	• Percentage of young people demonstrating increased knowledge of safe EO-related behaviours. • Number/percentage of young EO survivors accessing relevant assistance.
 **PREVENTION**	Youth contribute to reducing EO risks and strengthening community resilience.	• Engage young people in community risk mapping and safe EO reporting. • Support youth-led risk prevention and behaviour-change initiatives. • Involve youth organizations in community preparedness and prevention activities.	• Number of youth-led or youth-supported prevention initiatives implemented. • Percentage of participating young people demonstrating safe EO-related behaviours.
 **PARTNERSHIPS & COORDINATION**	Partnerships between youth organizations and mine action actors are strengthened.	• Include youth organizations in mine action coordination and policy consultations. • Develop partnerships between youth-led organizations and mine action actors. • Engage schools, universities, and youth networks where relevant.	• Number of youth organizations participating in relevant coordination or consultation mechanisms. • Number of joint initiatives between youth and mine action actors.
 **DISENGAGEMENT & REINTEGRATION**	Mine action contributes to skills, livelihoods, and reintegration opportunities for conflict-affected youth.	• Create internships, apprenticeships, and training opportunities in mine action. • Recruit young people into appropriate mine action roles. • Link cleared land and mine action activities with youth livelihood and recovery initiatives.	• Number of young people completing mine action-related training, internships, or apprenticeships. • Number/percentage of young people accessing employment or livelihood opportunities linked to mine action.

* Indicators should be disaggregated by sex, age, disability, and other contextually relevant characteristics, where appropriate.

INVOLVING MINE ACTION STAKEHOLDERS IN YPS NAP DEVELOPMENT

Mine action stakeholders should be engaged from the outset of YPS NAP development in EO-affected contexts. Relevant actors may include national mine action authorities and centres, mine action operators, EORE and victim assistance actors, survivor associations, youth-led organizations, and humanitarian and development partners working in affected communities.

Why engage mine action stakeholders?

Mine action institutions, operators, survivor organizations, youth groups, and EORE practitioners can provide evidence and operational knowledge on contamination, accident trends, community priorities, and the barriers faced by young people. Their involvement helps ensure that YPS priorities and actions are evidence-based, realistic, and responsive to the needs of affected communities.

Young people from EO-affected communities, including young survivors and those involved in mine action, should be directly involved in consultations and decision-making. Consultation methods should be accessible, inclusive, and context-appropriate, with measures in place to support safe and meaningful participation.

Engagement should continue beyond the NAP development phase. Young people and mine action stakeholders can contribute to implementation, monitoring, review, and accountability.



Women peacebuilders from different generations exchange perspectives in Colombia, building connections between the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) and Youth, Peace and Security (YPS) agendas. © Fundación LATIR



Facilitating a youth consultation to gather young people's perspectives and priorities for the development of Colombia's YPS NAP © Fundación LATIR

COLOMBIA: FROM YOUTH ADVOCACY TO POLICY INCLUSION

Colombia provides a practical example of how youth advocacy and collaboration between youth and mine action actors can create opportunities to integrate mine action into a YPS NAP.

Creating an entry point

During the development of Colombia's YPS NAP, young people and mine action actors identified a gap between the national YPS process and the experiences of young people living in areas affected by anti-personnel mines and other EO.

In November 2025, the Colombian Campaign Against Landmines (CCCM) and the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD) convened a workshop in Bogotá bringing together young people from mine-affected territories, youth organizations, mine action practitioners, civil society, and institutional stakeholders. Participants examined how EO affects young people's safety, mobility, education, livelihoods, and participation, while also highlighting the roles young people already play in risk education, prevention, advocacy, and local peacebuilding.

Following the workshop, participating youth worked through the Colombian Coalition on Youth, Peace and Security (CCJPS) to advocate for the explicit inclusion of mine action in the NAP. They called for recognition of the impacts of EO on young people and for greater opportunities for young people from affected communities to not only contribute to prevention, risk education, victim assistance, advocacy, and recovery, but also benefit from mine action activities.

What changed?

Mine action is reflected in the NAP in a limited but significant way. The situational analysis recognizes that children, adolescents, and young people are affected by anti-personnel mines and unexploded ordnance. The action matrix also includes an objective under the cooperation pillar to promote the involvement of young people in risk prevention, education, and community recovery in areas affected by anti-personnel mines. This objective is accompanied by an indicator on risk education and mine action programmes implemented with youth participation in priority municipalities.[9]

In addition, the NAP includes commitments to formalize and finance the CCJPS as part of the monitoring architecture. While not specifically focused on mine action, this creates a mechanism through which young people, including those connected to mine-affected territories and mine action organizations, can contribute to monitoring and accountability.

Despite these advances, mine action remains only partially integrated into the NAP. Of the more than 50 programme-level objectives included in the action matrix, only one specifically addresses mine action; its placement under the cooperation pillar also means that mine action's potential contribution across other YPS pillars–including participation, prevention, protection, and disengagement and reintegration–is not explicitly reflected.

What Colombia's experience shows

Youth advocacy can open policy space. Young people from affected communities can identify gaps in policy processes and advocate for issues that may otherwise receive limited attention. In Colombia, this advocacy helped bring mine action into the YPS policy process.

Partnerships strengthen youth advocacy. Collaboration between youth organizations and mine action actors can combine lived experience, technical knowledge, and operational evidence–strengthening the case for policy change.

Institutional engagement matters. In Colombia, mine action was incorporated primarily through youth-led advocacy rather than systematic involvement of the national mine action authority. Engaging the authority earlier could have helped identify opportunities to integrate mine action more comprehensively into the NAP.

Policy recognition is only a first step. Colombia's YPS NAP creates an important entry point for mine action, but limited integration demonstrates the need to translate recognition into clear objectives, responsibilities, resources, and indicators during implementation.



Participant of YPS and Mine Action workshop, Colombia, November 2025
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CONCLUSION

Mine action and the YPS Agenda are closely connected. In EO-affected contexts, contamination can restrict young people's safety, mobility, education, livelihoods, and participation. At the same time, young people themselves can contribute to risk reduction, recovery, and peacebuilding.

Yet mine action remains largely absent from YPS NAPs. Governments developing or revising YPS NAPs have an opportunity to address this gap by recognizing the impacts of EO on young people, engaging mine action institutions and young people from affected communities, and incorporating relevant actions and indicators into YPS priorities.

Colombia's experience shows that youth advocacy can help bring mine action into YPS policy processes. More systematic integration can help ensure that young people living in EO-affected communities are not only protected from risk, but also able to participate in and shape decisions affecting their safety, recovery, and future. Integrating mine action into YPS NAPs is therefore not simply about improving coordination between two sectors; it can also contribute to more inclusive, resilient, and sustainable peacebuilding in EO-affected communities.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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ENDNOTES

1 Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD), Fundación LATIR, and Campaña Colombiana Contra Minas (CCCM), *Youth Engagement in Mine Action: Evidence from Colombia, Somalia and Ukraine* (Geneva: GICHD, 2026).

2 GICHD, Fundación LATIR, and CCCM, *Enabling Meaningful Youth Engagement in Mine Action: Practical Guidance for National Mine Action Authorities and National Mine Action Centres* (Geneva: GICHD, 2026).

3 United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), "80 Per Cent of Adolescents Can Identify Explosive Ordnance Risks, but Too Many Expose Themselves," press release, 4 April 2025, https://www.unicef.org/ukraine/en/press-releases/80-cent-adolescents-can-identify-explosive-ordnance-risks-too-many-expose-themselves; Watchlist on Children and Armed Conflict, *Explosive Weapons and the Children and Armed Conflict Agenda* (New York: Watchlist on Children and Armed Conflict, 2024), https://watchlist.org/wp-content/uploads/explosive-weapons-and-the-children-and-armed-conflict-agenda_final_digital.pdf; United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS), *Impact of Explosive Ordnance on Children in Syria* (Damascus: UNMAS, 2020), https://www.unmas.org/sites/default/files/eo_impact_on_children_in_syria_wos_child_protection_mine_action_aors_december_2020.pdf.

4 United Nations Security Council Resolutions (UNSCRs) 2250 (2015), 2419 (2018), and 2535 (2020). UNSCR 2535 defines youth as persons aged 18–29 years, while recognizing variations in national and international definitions.

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GICHD

The GICHD works to reduce risks to communities stemming from explosive ordnance, with a focus on landmines, cluster munitions, explosive remnants of war, and unsafely and insecurely managed conventional ammunition. As an internationally recognized centre of expertise and knowledge, the GICHD helps national authorities, international and regional organizations, NGOs and operators in around 40 affected countries and territories to develop and professionalize mine action and ammunition management.

Through its work, the GICHD strives for the fulfilment of international obligations, for national targets to be reached, and communities' protection from and resilience to explosive harm to be enhanced. These efforts support sustainable livelihoods, gender equality and inclusion. They save lives, facilitate the safe return of displaced populations, and promote peace and sustainable development.

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