

# STRENGTHENING MINE ACTION THROUGH SYNERGIES WITH THE WOMEN, PEACE AND SECURITY AGENDA:

## RECOMMENDATION BRIEF FOR NATIONAL MINE ACTION AUTHORITIES AND NATIONAL MINE ACTION CENTRES



Women's full participation in clearance operations makes mine action more effective and responsive. GICHD's Visit to Cambodia, 2022 © GICHD

### INTRODUCTION

The Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda and the mine action sector share certain common goals: peace, recovery, and the act of advancing human rights in conflict and post-conflict settings. However, the strategic and operational alignment between these two fields remains underdeveloped. Mine action is critical to enabling peace, rebuilding communities, and restoring access to land, services, and livelihoods. Harnessing the full potential of mine action to support the WPS agenda requires more intentional integration of gender, diversity, equality, and inclusion (GDEI) into both policy and practice.

This brief—for National Mine Action Authorities (NMAAs) and National Mine Action Centres (NMACs)—outlines the synergies between mine action and the WPS agenda, illustrating how leveraging these connections enhances the safety, efficiency, effectiveness, and inclusivity of mine action. The brief provides targeted recommendations—structured around core NMAA and NMAC functions—to support more equitable and inclusive mine action.

### WHAT IS THE WOMEN, PEACE AND SECURITY AGENDA?

The WPS agenda is a globally endorsed framework to advance gender equality in conflict prevention, resolution, and recovery. Grounded in United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000),<sup>1</sup> which first affirmed women's full, equal, and meaningful participation in peace and security decision-making and action, as essential to lasting peace, the agenda has since been expanded and strengthened through 10 subsequent resolutions that deepen its scope and commitment.

The original resolution explicitly references the mine action sector, "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."<sup>2</sup> This early mention positions mine action as both a tool for risk reduction and a potential contributor to broader peacebuilding and gender equality efforts. Subsequent WPS resolutions—particularly [2122](#),<sup>3</sup> [2242](#),<sup>4</sup> [2467](#),<sup>5</sup> and [2493](#)<sup>6</sup>—call on states to adopt a GDEI lens by addressing the intersecting forms of discrimination faced by women and girls, including those who are displaced, disabled, or from marginalized communities.

## HOW DOES THE WOMEN, PEACE AND SECURITY AGENDA STRENGTHEN MINE ACTION?

The WPS agenda is structured around four pillars:

### PARTICIPATION



**Participation** focuses on ensuring women’s full and meaningful involvement in peace and security decision-making. In mine action, this means increasing women’s roles across operational areas—such as survey, clearance, and explosive ordnance risk education (EORE) and ensuring their inclusion in policy development, strategy consultations, and disarmament forums. Promoting women’s leadership within mine action authorities and operators helps build more inclusive institutions and ensures that diverse perspectives shape priorities and implementation.

### PROTECTION



**Protection** aims to uphold the rights and safety of women and girls in conflict-affected settings. Mine action contributes by reducing their exposure to explosive ordnance (EO) risks through targeted land release and EORE. It also supports broader rights-based protection goals such as survivor assistance and employment opportunities. Land release further creates enabling conditions for women to exercise their rights, including the right to livelihoods and socio-economic security.

### PREVENTION



**Prevention** addresses the underlying causes of conflict and promotes structural change. Land release and safe return enable displaced communities—especially women and girls—to rebuild their lives, livelihoods, and security. By employing women and integrating gender-sensitive approaches, mine action can shift norms and reduce vulnerabilities that contribute to future violence and conflicts.

### RELIEF & RECOVERY



**Relief and recovery** emphasizes gender-responsive humanitarian response and rebuilding. Mine action supports this by involving women in decisions on land use after release and designing victim assistance programmes that reflect their needs as survivors or caregivers. These inclusive approaches ensure equitable access to services and strengthen the resilience of affected communities.

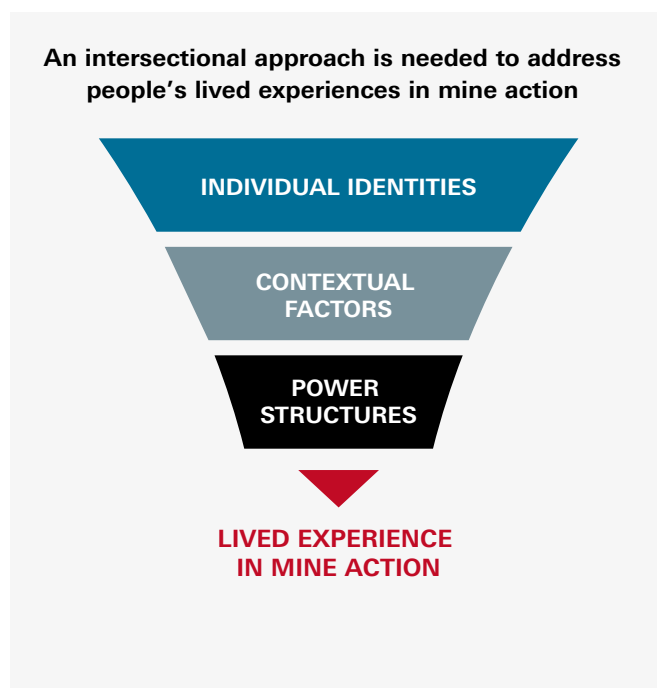
## CURRENT SITUATION

Encouragingly, a growing number of national mine action strategies now reference WPS principles or include gender equality goals, supported by broader commitments through disarmament treaties such as the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC) and the Convention on Cluster Munitions (CCM). More than 100 countries have adopted national action plans (NAPs) on WPS, with some referencing mine action.<sup>7</sup> These shifts signal a timely opportunity to strengthen the synergy between WPS and mine action at the national level.

However, despite the growing attention to gender equality in global and national policy frameworks, WPS commitments are not yet fully operationalized in mine action. Efforts within arms control and disarmament to enhance women’s participation and address the gendered impacts of weapons have largely occurred without explicit linkage to the WPS agenda.<sup>8</sup> Even with concerted efforts to strengthen women’s **participation** in all aspects of mine action, they remain underrepresented in operations, leadership, and decision-making roles.<sup>9</sup>

In most contexts, intersectional<sup>10</sup> gender and diversity analysis remains insufficiently integrated into EORE, land release, and EO victim assistance. This gap undermines the effectiveness of **relief and recovery** and **protection** efforts by failing to account for the distinct experiences, risks, and needs of women, girls, particularly those from marginalized groups affected by EO. When mine action does not account for these realities, it risks reinforcing existing inequalities and missing opportunities to deliver more impactful, equitable results.

The diagram below illustrates how people’s individual identities — such as age, gender, and disability — interact with contextual factors like displacement, conflict stage, livelihood risks, and local norms, before ultimately being shaped by deeper power structures, including systems of oppression, institutional discrimination, and broader socio-political hierarchies. Together, these intersecting factors determine how a person experiences mine action.



## WHAT IS THE ROLE OF A NMAA AND NMAC IN OPERATIONALIZING THE WPS AGENDA IN MINE ACTION?

Typically, the NMAA holds responsibility for overarching strategic direction and policy decisions, while the NMAC oversees the coordination and implementation of mine action at the operational level. Both play a critical role not only in ensuring physical safety but also in shaping inclusive recovery and peacebuilding.

For both entities, aligning mine action with the WPS agenda is not only a matter of compliance with international and national commitments—it is a strategic and operational imperative. Alignment with WPS leads to:



**Enhanced programme quality** by incorporating the perspectives and leadership of women, particularly those from marginalized groups, resulting in more effective EORE, land release, and victim assistance outcomes.



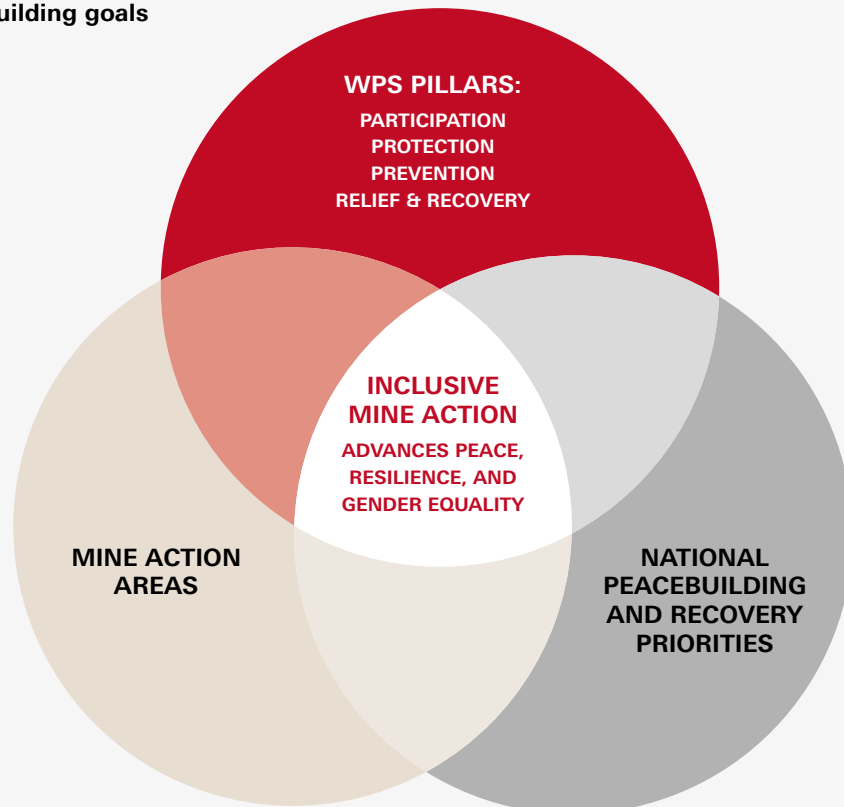
**Strengthened compliance and credibility** by aligning mine action with international and national commitments on gender equality, which increases transparency and builds citizens' and donors' confidence.



**Promotion of fairness and inclusion** by improving access to employment, support services, and land use—contributing to social cohesion and sustainable recovery.

As shown in the diagram below, by embedding WPS considerations in national strategies, structures, and approaches, NMAAs and NMACs can further elevate mine action from a purely technical response to a transformative instrument for advancing peace, resilience, and gender equality.

### Inclusive Mine Action aligned with WPS and peacebuilding goals



# RECOMMENDATIONS FOR NATIONAL MINE ACTION AUTHORITIES

Recommendations are organized according to the core functions of the NMAA, as defined in International Mine Action Standard (IMAS) 02.10 Guide for the establishment of a mine action programme.<sup>11</sup>



## 1. Mine action legislation

- ▶ Ensure the integration of WPS principles into the drafting and design of any new mine action legislation or legal reform. Mine action authorities, in collaboration with relevant ministries and stakeholders, should proactively incorporate WPS principles—namely participation, protection, prevention, and relief and recovery—into the legal frameworks that govern mine action. This includes legislation related to survey and clearance operations, risk education, victim assistance, and access to services and land as well as formalizing roles and responsibilities on GDEI, according to the mandate of each state entity.

## 2. National policy and strategy

- ▶ Align national mine action policies and strategies with WPS commitments. Ensure WPS NAPs, gender policies, and mine action strategies reference each other and articulate shared priorities, targets, and indicators;
- ▶ Embed inclusion targets and accountability measures. Set clear goals for participation of women, and persons with disabilities (PwD), and track progress through indicators aligned with disarmament treaties and Sustainable Development Goal targets;
- ▶ Champion GDEI in institutional reform. Use the mine action national strategy and operational plan to position gender equality and inclusion as central to mine action governance, staffing, and coordination mechanisms;
- ▶ Develop or contribute to national policies that guide the efforts of international development agencies, United Nations agencies, and civil society organizations in addressing GDEI issues in mine action programming; and
- ▶ Advocate for and represent the NMAA's mandate and priorities in national and international policy processes related to the WPS agenda and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, ensuring that these frameworks integrate and reinforce mine action priorities as part of broader peace, security, and development commitments.

## 3. Reporting

- ▶ Systematically collect and report sex-, age-, and disability-disaggregated data (SADDD), in accordance with IMAS 05.10 Information Management in Mine Action, Annex B<sup>12</sup> - minimum data requirements, and Technical Note for Mine Action (TNMA) 05.10/01 Measurement and reporting of beneficiaries,<sup>13</sup> and in full compliance with national data privacy and protection laws. For States Parties, this data should be integrated into national reports under Article 7 of the APMBC and equivalent CCM reporting obligations. This helps measure equitable access to clearance benefits, victim assistance, risk education, and participation in mine action decision-making thus supporting the prevention and protection goals of WPS; and
- ▶ Include a dedicated GDEI narrative section in national transparency reports. This section should outline progress, challenges, and planned actions related to gender equality, inclusion of women in mine action roles, survivor support tailored to gender-specific needs, and links to WPS NAPs (where applicable).

#### 4. National mine action standards (NMAS)

- ▶ Systematically integrate WPS principles into NMAS and operational procedures, in line with IMAS and national legislation. Relevant chapters relating to community engagement, information management, non-technical survey, victim assistance, EORE and staff working conditions, should codify minimum requirements and recommendations that explicitly reflect the four WPS pillars: participation, protection, prevention, and relief and recovery.

#### 5. Resource mobilization

- ▶ Embed WPS principles into resource mobilization strategies, ensuring proposals reflect gender-responsive goals such as inclusive participation, survivor-centered assistance, and disaggregated data collection;
- ▶ Align funding requests with WPS NAPs and gender equality commitments to enhance donor engagement and diversify funding opportunities;
- ▶ Institutionalize the role of supporting GDEI integration, either through dedicated advisors, units, or focal points. Ensure they are resourced, trained and empowered to advise on strategy, to coordinate actors, and monitor implementation across all levels; and
- ▶ Leverage strategic partnerships with stakeholders advancing GDEI beyond the mine action sector—such as women’s organizations, disability rights groups, survivor organizations, ethnic minority associations, and development actors—to mobilize technical expertise, funding, and political support, thereby expanding resources and strengthening the impact of mine action on broader national inclusion and protection goals.

#### 6. Oversight

- ▶ Enforce minimum safeguarding protocols. Provide guidance and oversight to the NMAC and operators on systems of prevention from and response to sexual exploitation and abuse, including community-based feedback mechanisms.

#### 7. Workforce development and institutional culture

- ▶ Collect and regularly analyse SADDD human resource data—in full compliance with national legislation on data protection and privacy, to assess equity in recruitment, retention, and advancement, and to inform responsive adjustments in staffing policies and practices;
- ▶ Promote inclusive recruitment and career progression. Set targets for women, and PwD at all levels—particularly in leadership and operational roles;
- ▶ Support inclusive workplaces. Ensure that flexible working conditions, child care, gender-sensitive personal protective equipment, and trauma-informed policies are standard; and
- ▶ Invest in training for inclusive leadership. Prioritize mentorship and leadership development for underrepresented groups and encourage a culture of inclusion across all departments.



**PARTICIPATION**



**PROTECTION**



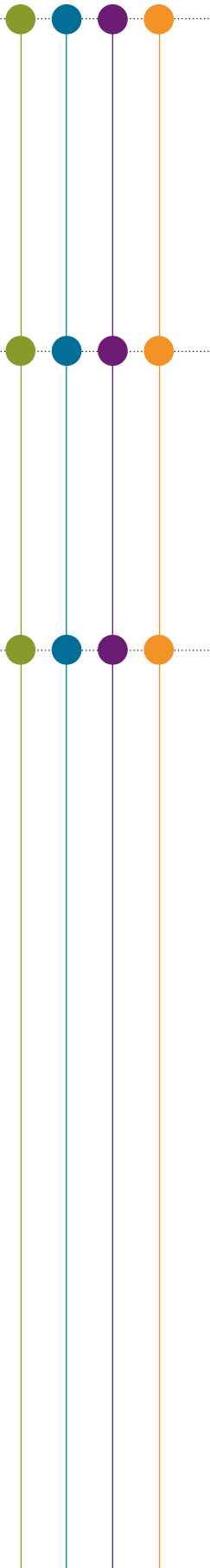
**PREVENTION**



**RELIEF & RECOVERY**

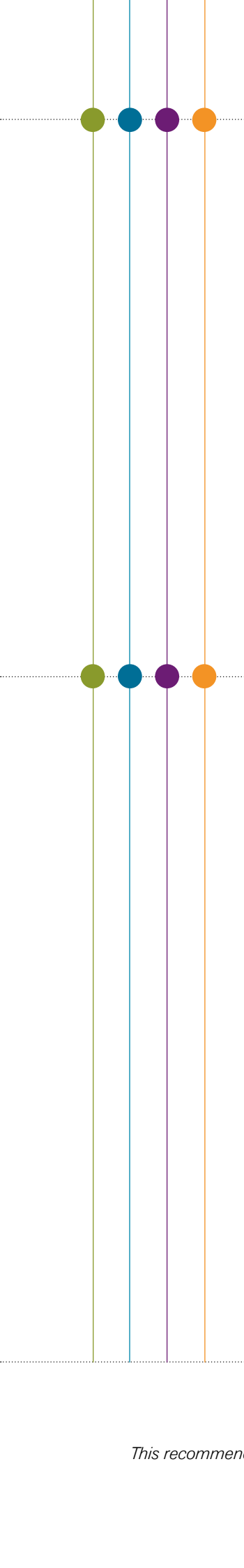
# RECOMMENDATIONS FOR NATIONAL MINE ACTION CENTRES

Recommendations are organized according to the core functions of NMACs, as defined in IMAS 02.10 Guide for the establishment of a mine action programme.<sup>14</sup>

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- 1. Liaise with government authorities, humanitarian and development agencies to determine immediate and mid-term priorities in line with national humanitarian and development plans.**
    - ▶ Build cross-sector partnerships. Coordinate with actors in peacebuilding, protection, education, health, and recovery for victim assistance planning, and to amplify the impact of mine action interventions; and
    - ▶ Ensure inclusive representation in coordination platforms. Create space for women, including women from diverse backgrounds, to shape land release processes including non-technical survey, setting clearance priorities and land use planning.
  - 2. Establish an Information Management System and gather and analyse data.**
    - ▶ Institutionalize the collection of SADDD in accordance with IMAS 05.10, TNMA 05.10/01, and in full compliance with national legislation on data protection and privacy.<sup>15</sup> Ensure data is used not only for compliance but to inform land release prioritization, EORE targeting, community engagement, and victim assistance broader efforts; and
    - ▶ Monitor SADDD on land release, EORE, and victim assistance beneficiaries to ensure equitable access to services and fair distribution of benefits of mine action.
  - 3. Develop National Mine Action Standards.**
    - ▶ Design a process that enables inclusive participation of groups with diverse perspectives in the development of NMAS;
    - ▶ Establish requirements, accountability mechanisms, and recommendations for the prevention of violence, harassment, and discrimination for staff and community members in line with IMAS 10.10<sup>16</sup> and national legislation that seeks to eliminate discrimination and violence against women. Ensure access to safe reporting channels and appropriate government support services;
    - ▶ Ensure that NMAS—particularly those related to the collection, storage, reporting, and use of personal data—set out minimum requirements and recommendations for data privacy, protection, and ethical standards.
    - ▶ Ensure that NMAS—particularly those related to land release (LR), EORE, and victim assistance—set out minimum requirements and recommendations for the inclusive and equitable implementation of activities.
    - ▶ Identify and institutionalize gender and diversity-related key performance indicators (KPIs) within NMAS monitoring requirements, in line with IMAS 07.40.<sup>17</sup> Ensure that these KPIs are clearly defined, systematically applied across all operators, and used not only for compliance purposes but also to assess the inclusivity and effectiveness of mine action activities in meeting the needs of diverse groups.
    - ▶ Include a clear requirement in contracts and NMAS monitoring frameworks that operators submit SADDD in their periodic reports.
- KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS**

Examples of gender and diversity related KPIs are:

  - percentage of community consultations that include participation of women, men, boys, girls, persons with disabilities, and minority groups;
  - evidence that community priorities are collected and disaggregated by sex, age, and disability;
  - percentage of survey teams trained in gender and diversity-sensitive data collection methods.<sup>18</sup>



#### 4. Accreditation and monitoring.

- ▶ As part of accreditation, ensure that safeguarding policies and reporting mechanisms are in place. During monitoring, verify that staff and community members are aware of and have confidence in reporting mechanisms.
- ▶ As part of accreditation, ensure that standard operating procedures (SOPs)—particularly those related to LR, EORE, and victim assistance—set out clearly how activities will be implemented in an inclusive and equitable manner. During monitoring, verify that implementation of these activities aligns with SOPs and that they are consistently carried out in an inclusive and equitable way.
- ▶ As part of accreditation, ensure that SOPs describe data protection and ethical standards for collection, storage, reporting, and use of data about people, including informed consent, anonymization of sensitive data, and ensuring that individuals are not exposed to harm, stigma, or retaliation because of their participation.
- ▶ During monitoring, verify that operators make all reasonable effort to collect and report sex and age disaggregated data for EORE activities, and sex-, age, and disability-disaggregated data for non-technical surveys, victim assistance referrals, and community liaison activities.
- ▶ Monitor compliance by reviewing consultation records, data collection tools, and reporting formats during accreditation and quality assurance processes.

#### 5. Implement the national mine action plan.

- ▶ Integrate GDEI into operational plans and tasking orders by translating strategic commitments into specific activities, timelines, and responsibilities, such as setting inclusion targets, allocating resources for safeguarding and outreach, and embedding GDEI indicators into performance monitoring frameworks; and
- ▶ Integrate GDEI into EORE and LR prioritization and early warning. Use vulnerability criteria (e.g. EO exposure, displacement, caregiving burdens) to identify high-risk areas and vulnerable groups within communities.

### CALL TO ACTION

National Mine Action Authorities and National Mine Action Centres have a pivotal role in transforming mine action into a more inclusive, responsive, and effective pillar of peacebuilding. By aligning mine action policies and operations with the Women, Peace and Security agenda, authorities can address existing inequalities, enhance programme impact, and meet global commitments to gender equality and sustainable peace. The recommendations in this brief offer concrete steps to embed gender, diversity, equality, and inclusion across institutional functions and programming areas.

Now is the time for national authorities to lead by example—strengthening their strategies, systems, and partnerships to ensure that mine action opens up space for empowerment, recovery, and resilience for all members of society.

## Endnotes

- 1 United Nations Security Council (2000), *Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security*, S/RES/1325, New York: United Nations, retrieved July 15, 2025, [Security Council Resolution 1325](#)
- 2 United Nations Security Council (2000), *Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security*, S/RES/1325, New York: United Nations, retrieved July 15, 2025, [Security Council Resolution 1325](#)
- 3 United Nations Security Council (2013), *Security Council Resolution 2122 (2013) on Women, Peace and Security*, S/RES/2122 (2013), New York: United Nations, retrieved July 29, 2025, [Security Council Resolution 2122 \(2013\)](#)
- 4 United Nations Security Council (2015), *Security Council Resolution 2242 (2015) on Women, Peace and Security*, S/RES/2242 (2015), New York: United Nations, retrieved July 29, 2025, [Security Council Resolution 2242 \(2015\)](#)
- 5 United Nations Security Council (2019a), *Security Council Resolution 2467 (2019) on Sexual Violence in Conflict*, S/RES/2467 (2019), New York: United Nations, retrieved July 29, 2025, [Security Council Resolution 2467 \(2019\)](#)
- 6 United Nations Security Council (2019b), *Security Council Resolution 2493 (2019) on Women, Peace and Security*, S/RES/2493 (2019), New York: United Nations, retrieved July 29, 2025, [S/RES/2493 \(2019\)](#)
- 7 Workshop “Addressing weapons-related risks in the Women, Peace and Security Agenda”, co-hosted by UNIDIR and Canada, 12 June 2025.
- 8 Henri Myrntinen (2020), *Connecting the Dots: Arms Control, Disarmament and the Women, Peace and Security Agenda*, Geneva: United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR), retrieved July 29, 2025, [Connecting the Dots: Arms Control, Disarmament and the Women, Peace and Security Agenda](#)
- 9 Mines Action Canada (2023), *Gender and Employment in Mine Action by the Numbers: An Update*, Ottawa: Mines Action Canada, retrieved July 25, 2025, [Gender and Employment in Mine Action by the Numbers: An Update](#)
- 10 Intersectional refers to understanding how different aspects of identity—such as gender, age, ethnicity, disability, or socio-economic status—overlap to shape people’s experiences, risks, and access to rights and services.
- 11 IMAS 02.10, First edition, “Guide for the establishment of a mine action programme”, Amendment 3, June 2013, [IMAS 02.10](#)
- 12 IMAS 05.10, Second edition, “Information management in mine action”, Amendment 2, 6 March 2023, [IMAS 05.10](#)
- 13 TNMA 05.10/01, First edition, “Measurement and reporting of beneficiaries”, 7 October 2023, [TNMA 05.10/01](#)
- 14 IMAS 02.10, First edition, “Guide for the establishment of a mine action programme”, Amendment 3, June 2013, [IMAS 02.10](#)
- 15 IMAS 05.10, Second edition, “Information management in mine action”, Amendment 2, 6 March 2023, [IMAS 05.10](#) and TNMA 05.10/01, First edition, “Measurement and reporting of beneficiaries”, 7 October 2023, [TNMA 05.10/01](#)
- 16 IMAS 10.10, Second edition, “Occupational Health and Safety – general requirements”, 16 May 2025, calls for employers to “set out in writing a safety policy and arrangements”, Section 5.2, [IMAS 10.10](#)
- 17 IMAS 07.40, Second edition, “Monitoring of mine action organisations”, 20 January 2016, [IMAS 07.40](#)
- 18 UNMAS (2019), *United Nations Gender Guidelines for Mine Action Programmes* (3rd edition), UNMAS, Geneva, [UN Gender Guidelines for Mine Action Programmes](#)

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.

