

# **SRI LANKA NATIONAL MINE ACTION COMPLETION STRATEGY 2023 - 2027**

WOMEN, GIRLS, BOYS AND MEN THRIVE IN A MINE-FREE  
SRI LANKA WHERE EO VICTIMS ARE FULLY INTEGRATED  
INTO SOCIETY AND HAVE THEIR NEEDS MET

REVIEWED STRATEGY  
JULY 2025

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## Glossary of acronyms and abbreviations

APMBC	Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention
AP	Anti-personnel
AV	Anti-vehicle
CCM	Convention on Cluster Munitions
CCW	Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons
CHA	Confirmed Hazardous Area
CRPD	Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
DASH	Delvon Assistance for Social Harmony
EO	Explosive Ordnance
EOD	Explosive Ordnance Disposal
EORE	Explosive Ordnance Risk Education
ERW	Explosive Remnants of War
GICHD	Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining
GoSL	Government of Sri Lanka
IED	Improvised Explosive Device
IM	Information Management
IMAS	International Mine Action Standards
IMSMA	Information Management System for Mine Action
LTTE	Liberation Tigers of Tamil Elam
MAG	Mines Advisory Group
NMAS	National Mine Action Standards
NTS	Non-Technical Survey
OAP	Oslo Action Plan
QA	Quality Assurance
QC	Quality Control
QM	Quality Management
RMAO	Regional Mine Action Office
SADD	Sex and Age-Disaggregated Data
SADDD	Sex and Age and Disability-Disaggregated Data
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SHA	Suspected Hazardous Area
SL-NMAS	Sri Lanka NMAS
SHARP	Skavita Humanitarian Assistance and Relief Project SLA
HDU	Sri Lanka Army, Humanitarian Demining Unit
SOP	Standard Operating Procedure
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
UXO	Unexploded Ordnance
VA	Victim Assistance
WFP	World Food Programme

## Government of Sri Lanka Endorsement

### Endorsement

This document titled “Sri Lanka National Mine Action Completion Strategy 2023–2027 (Reviewed Strategy – July 2025)” updates and supersedes the previous version of the Sri Lanka National Mine Action Strategy and is hereby endorsed by the Government of Sri Lanka through the authorized signatories below.

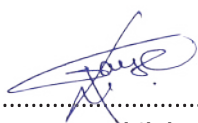


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**Date:** ..... 27.08.2025 .....



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# Introduction

## Purpose and outline

This reviewed National Mine Action Strategy (strategy) presents the strategic orientation for Sri Lanka's mine action programme between 2025 and 2027. It builds on accomplishments and draws on good practice and lessons learnt from Sri Lanka's previous National Mine Action Strategy and reinforces Sri Lanka's commitment to implementing its international convention obligations, including under the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC) and is aligned with commitments in the APMBC 2025-2029 Siem Reap Angkor Action Plan (SRAAP)<sup>1</sup>. It also connects with national policies, plans and commitments and supports international agendas, including the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

## Methodology

Sri Lanka's National Mine Action Centre (NMAC), with support of the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD) developed this strategy through a consultative process. Several Sri Lankan government ministries, the Sri Lanka Army Humanitarian demining Units (SLA HDU), national operators Delvon Assistance for Social Harmony (DASH) and Skavita Humanitarian Assistance and Relief Project (SHARP), and international operators HALO Trust, the Mines Advisory Group (MAG), and the Sri Lanka Campaign to Ban Landmines (SCBL) participated in the mid-term strategy review workshop, facilitated by NMAC and the GICHD in Colombo in April 2025. In support of the SRAAP Action 3<sup>2</sup>, this strategy builds on achievements, good practice and lessons learnt, identified by a range of stakeholders through annual strategy implementation meetings and the mid-term strategy review. In line with Chapter IV, Article 18 of Sri Lanka's constitution, the strategy is available in English and in Sri Lanka's two official languages Sinhala and Tamil.<sup>3</sup>

## Sri Lanka's mine action programme

### Mine action governance and stakeholders

With coordination and management support of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Sri Lanka's mine action programme was first established in 2002. Sri Lanka's Cabinet officially approved the establishment of NMAC in 2010, resulting in the programme's transition from UNDP-management to full national ownership. Since then, NMAC has been housed within several different ministries and is as of mid-2025 placed within the Ministry of Urban Development, Construction and Housing, with the Additional Secretary (Projects) serving as NMAC's Director. The Regional Mine Action Office (RMAO), based in Kilinochchi, is responsible for coordinating, tasking and conducting quality management (QM) activities on survey and clearance operations. NMAC and RMAO work closely with District Steering Committees for Mine Action, which are chaired by government agents (GAs), who head government district authorities.

As of June 2025, five stakeholders implement survey, clearance and Explosive Ordnance Risk Education (EORE) activities in Sri Lanka: the SLA HDU, DASH, SHARP, HALO Trust and Mines Advisory Group (MAG). The SCBL continues to play an important role in advocacy efforts. Sri Lanka's mine action programme draws

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<sup>1</sup> The SRAAP is the five-year action plan to implement the APMBC 2025-2029: <https://www.apminebanconvention.org/en/review-conferences/5revcon/documents>

The SRAAP Action 1: Demonstrate high levels of national ownership, partnership and coordination, by integrating Convention implementation activities into national development plans, strategies and budgets including on poverty reduction, humanitarian response, health and mental health, gender equality, inclusion of persons with disabilities, peacebuilding, Human Rights, climate change adaptation, environmental protection and improvement and/or disaster risk reduction, as appropriate.

<sup>2</sup> SRAAP Action 3: Develop evidence-based, costed, context-specific, and time-bound national strategies and work plans to implement Convention obligations as soon as possible and no later than the Twenty-Second Meeting of the States Parties and ensure that they are periodically reviewed and updated based on new evidence.

<sup>3</sup> The Constitution of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka, Revised Edition, 2021 (<https://www.parliament.lk/files/pdf/constitution.pdf>)

on funding from the GoSL and several international donors.<sup>4</sup> The Ministry of Health holds the main responsibility for victim assistance, with a vision to ensure that all people and communities in Sri Lanka receive the quality health services they need.<sup>5</sup>

## Normative framework

Sri Lanka's constitution stipulates Sri Lanka's commitment to international peace, security and cooperation: Sri Lanka "shall promote international peace, security and cooperation, and the establishment of a just and equitable international economic and social order and shall endeavour to foster respect for international law and treaty obligations in dealings among nations.

In line with this constitutional commitment, Sri Lanka is a State Party to several international conventions. It acceded to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW), including Amended Protocol II on landmines booby-traps etc. in September 2004 but has not yet ratified the 2003 Protocol V on Explosive Remnants of War (ERW).<sup>6</sup> Issuing a formal statement at the 14<sup>th</sup> APMBC Meeting of States Parties (MSP) in Geneva in December 2015, the GoSL publicly announced its commitment to acceding to the APMBC, before acceding to the APMBC in December 2017, with the convention entering into force on 1 June 2018. In its first transparency report submitted in November 2018, Sri Lanka reported stockpiled anti-personnel (AP) mines under its ownership or possession (Article 4 completed in 2021). In line with its APMBC obligations, Sri Lanka's Parliament adopted the Prohibition of Anti-personnel Mines Act, no. 3 of 2022, in February 2022.<sup>7</sup>

In 2018, Sri Lanka acceded to the Convention on Cluster Munitions (CCM) and announced that it does not have any cluster munition stockpiles, nor any cluster munition contamination in areas under its jurisdiction or control.<sup>8</sup> Sri Lanka is also a State Party to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) since March 2016.<sup>9</sup>

## EO Contamination: origin, type, extent and impact

### Origin and type

The nearly three decade-long armed conflict between Sri Lanka's security forces and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) left many districts in the northern and eastern parts, contaminated by a wide range of Explosive Ordnance (EO).<sup>10</sup> Both Sri Lanka's security forces and the LTTE laid mines and used other EO extensively. The Indian Peacekeeping Forces also used landmines during their presence between 1987 and 1990. Sri Lanka's security forces used and recorded AP and anti-vehicle (AV) mines. After ratifying CCW's Amended Protocol II in September 2004, the security forces reported all mines it had laid in accordance with the provisions of this protocol and shared all minefield records with the mine action programme at the end of the conflict. All EO-related information is recorded in Sri Lanka's national Information Management System for Mine Action New Generation (IMSMA NG) database.

The LTTE used protective minefields in front of their defensive positions, utilising both AP and AV mines, but never kept any formal records. The LTTE also made use of nuisance mines, to prevent access to facilities

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<sup>4</sup> As of June 2025, the US, Japan, Germany, Australia, the UK, Norway, Switzerland, Canada, and foundations World Without Mines (WWM), and the Trimble foundation provided funding to Sri Lanka's mine action programme.

<sup>5</sup> The Ministry of Health: <https://www.health.gov.lk/>

<sup>6</sup> Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (<https://geneva-s3.unoda.org/static-unoda-site/pages/templates/the-convention-on-certain-conventional-weapons/high-contracting-parties-and-signatories-ccw/SRI%2BLANKA.pdf>)

<sup>7</sup> The Prohibition of anti-personnel mines act, no. 3 of 2022: <https://www.parliament.lk/uploads/acts/gbills/english/6231.pdf>

<sup>8</sup> Convention on Cluster Munitions ([https://www.clusterconvention.org/files/country\\_profiles/Sri-Lanka-10.pdf](https://www.clusterconvention.org/files/country_profiles/Sri-Lanka-10.pdf))

<sup>9</sup> Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities: [https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/\\_layouts/15/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=CRPD%2fC%2fLKA%2f1&Lang=en](https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/15/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=CRPD%2fC%2fLKA%2f1&Lang=en)

<sup>10</sup> IMAS 04.10 Glossary on Mine Action Terms, Definitions and Abbreviations, Amendment 10, 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", p.15.

including wells, buildings, roads and footpaths. Some mines were also scattered on the ground during the LTTE rapid retreat in the north and the east during the final stages of the conflict between 2006-2009. The LTTE also used complex improvised explosive devices (IEDs)<sup>11</sup> in the form of mortar shells connected to tripwires to act as fragmentation mines, bar mines, electrical and magnetically initiated explosive devices/mines placed at strategic locations, and mines connected with detonating cord to mortar/artillery shells a distance away. The LTTE manufactured most of their mines, while Sri Lanka's security forces only used imported, factory-made mines, some of which were designed with an anti-lift/anti-tilt mechanism to prevent the removal of the mine from the ground after it was laid. Sri Lanka's IED contamination poses unique clearance challenges to operators because of its complex and unpredictable mechanisms. In line with the SRAAP Action #20, Sri Lanka recognises that it needs to apply all provisions and obligations under the APMBC to AP mines of an improvised nature, as it does for all other types of AP mines.<sup>12</sup>

Sri Lanka's EO contamination also comprises unexploded airdropped bombs, artillery-delivered shells, mortar bombs, handheld anti-tank projectiles, rifle grenades and hand grenades. There are also sizeable caches of abandoned explosive ordnance, particularly in the north. The Government of Sri Lanka (GoSL) has reported that cluster munitions were not used in Sri Lanka during the conflict.

### Extent and impact

As of mid-2025, Sri Lanka's remaining EO contamination is just over 22.7 square kilometres, located in 11 districts in the Northern, Eastern, North Central and North Western Provinces. This contamination comprises both confirmed hazardous areas (CHAs) and suspected hazardous areas (SHAs). The Northern Province, comprising Jaffna, Kilinochchi, Mannar, Mullaitivu and Vavuniya districts is the most heavily contaminated, with Mullaitivu having the most extensive contamination, with a total of 13.8 square kilometres of hazardous areas remaining. Mullaitivu also hosts Sri Lanka's largest minefield, a section of which has been cleared and was handover over in an official ceremony in June 2025.

Remaining EO contamination as of 15 July 2025						
Province	District	CHA (m <sup>2</sup> )	SHA (m <sup>2</sup> )	Remaining Contamination in (m <sup>2</sup> )	Operators	No of total tasks (open, worked on and suspended)
Northern	Jaffna	556 377	56 376	612 752	HALO Trust, SLA HDU, SHARP, MAG	18
	Kilinochchi	1 783 217	77 006	1 860 223	MAG, DASH, SHARP, HALO Trust	78
	Mannar	2 110 193	804 933	2 915 126	MAG	218
	Mullaitivu	12 190 344	1 639 902	13 830 246	MAG, DASH, HALO Trust, SHARP, SLA HDU	335
	Vavuniya	576 690	1 416 871	1 993 561	MAG, DASH, HALO Trust	77
<b>Sub total</b>		<b>17 216 820</b>	<b>3 995 088</b>	<b>21 211 908</b>		<b>726</b>
Eastern	Trincomalee	264 003.90	157 317.44	421 321	MAG, SLA HDU	39
	Batticaloa	211 494.49	474 079.37	685 574	MAG	50
	Ampara	11 134.33	306 527.88	317 662	MAG	18
<b>Sub total</b>		<b>486 633</b>	<b>937 925</b>	<b>1 424 557</b>		<b>107</b>
Northcentral	Anuradhapura	26 764.00	4 410.00	31 174	SLA HDU, DASH	3
	Polonnaruwa	2 845.00	32 200.65	35 046	MAG	5
<b>Sub total</b>		<b>29 609</b>	<b>36 611</b>	<b>66 220</b>		<b>8</b>
Northwestern	Puttalam		19 024.58	19 025	MAG	1
<b>Total</b>		<b>17 733 062</b>	<b>4 988 648</b>	<b>22 721 710</b>		<b>842</b>

Figure 1: Remaining EO contamination as of July 2025, NMAC

<sup>11</sup> Ibid, p.20: "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]".

<sup>12</sup> SRAAP Action #20: States Parties affected by anti-personnel mines of an improvised nature (improvised explosive devices (IEDs) which meet the definition of an anti-personnel mine) will apply all provisions and obligations under the Convention to such contamination including during survey and clearance in fulfilment of Article 5 and when reporting in fulfilment of Article 7.

Some of Sri Lanka's remaining mine contamination is located in forested areas. The country's diverse topography and tropical climate have fostered unique biodiversity, which is protected through various legislative instruments, policies, strategies, and programmes. Addressing this contamination in accordance with IMAS 07.13 on Environmental Management is essential to minimizing environmental impact.<sup>13</sup> Sri Lanka's mine action programme is committed to this goal and follows established good practices. Although the country does not have a specific National Mine Action Standard (NMAS) on Environmental Management, most operators adhere to IMAS 07.13 and implement relevant Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs). Under the leadership of the NMAC, the programme has also made concerted efforts to involve the Department of Wildlife Conservation and the Forest Department in workshops and strategic meetings. These initiatives aim to strengthen collaboration between the mine action programme and these departments, and to raise awareness around environmental considerations and Sri Lanka's commitment under the APMBC.

Sri Lanka's mine action programme has since its establishment in 2002 until the end of 2024 destroyed more than 971'830 AP mines, 2'304 AV mines and 388'911 UXO.<sup>14</sup>

#### EO victims

Sri Lanka experienced a major decrease in mine accidents over the last ten years with a total of three EO casualties recorded in 2024 (three injured women). Sri Lanka's total number of recorded EO casualties from 1985 to 2024 is 1,765<sup>15</sup> In line with international good practice, NMAC started collecting and recording EO casualty data in a sex and age disaggregated manner in 2010 and has since then recorded a total of 207 EO casualties, out of which 36 were women, 9 girls, 43 boys and 119 men. The higher proportion of male casualties (particularly above the age of 18) reflects global EO accident patterns. In Sri Lanka, this can be partly explained by the fact that men and boys engage in livelihood activities further from their households and villages, whereas women and girls' responsibilities are generally more limited to their homes and villages. EORE activities need to consider these gender and age dimensions in their design and delivery, something that is further elaborated upon under strategic objective 1.

Sri Lanka's mine action programme gained greater clarity on victim assistance (VA) needs through the *Victim Assistance Needs Assessment Survey*, conducted by the NMAC in 2024-2025, with support of operators. The primary objectives of the survey were to: 1. Verify the data and assess the current situation of 20% of the victims (41 individuals) recorded in IMSMA since 2010. 2. Identify the current needs, challenges, and gaps in service delivery among EO victims. 3. Support evidence-based decision making for government agencies, INGOs, and NGOs in implementing effective VA programmes. 4. Communicate the continuing importance of VA in post conflict recovery and rights-based development to donors and other stakeholders.

The report presents three key insights: 1. While most victims were adult men (54%), a noteworthy 24% were boys, indicating that one in four accidents involved a male under the age of 18. 2. This highlights the need for child focused EORE programmes, especially targeting boys. 3. The presence of girls (2%) and women (20%) also points to the importance of ensuring gender-sensitive EORE and assistance mechanisms. The assessment report also underlines that most of the victims (66%) were the main breadwinners of their households, highlighting their critical role in family livelihoods, which underscores the importance of addressing their specific needs to support their economic recovery and promote social reintegration. The remaining 34% were not the primary earners, yet their vulnerability also calls for targeted assistance.

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<sup>13</sup> IMAS 07.13 on Environmental Management, First Edition, 2017

<sup>14</sup> Sri Lanka National Mine Action Centre, IMSMA database

<sup>15</sup> Sri Lanka 2025 APMBC Article 7: <https://www.apminebanconvention.org/fileadmin/APMBC-DOCUMENTS/Art7Reports/2025-Sri-Lanka-Art7Report-for2024.pdf>



## Mid-term strategy review: key achievements and challenges

Mandated by this strategy, the NMAC conducted a mid-term strategy review with the support of the GICHD in April 2025, with two main objectives:

1. Review achievements, challenges and lessons learnt in implementing the strategy since its launch in 2023
2. Analyse the evolving mine action context, assess the strategic direction, and agree the way forward

The mid-term review workshop convened several national and international stakeholders, including government ministries and departments<sup>16</sup>, the SLA HDU, the Special Task Force (STF), SHARP, DASH, HALO Trust, MAG and the SCBL. Stakeholders assessed progress in meeting outcome targets and analysed the context at the objective level. Each objective section includes a summary of key results coming out of the mid-term strategy review.

Workshop participants also conducted a comprehensive analysis of the contextual situation at the global, national and programme-level, using tools such as the Paradigm Shift framework, SWOT, PESTLE, and stakeholder analysis. This multi-dimensional approach enabled a holistic understanding of the evolving context and its implications for Sri Lanka's mine action programme. Building on the findings of the contextual analysis, stakeholders further conducted a relevance assessment to evaluate the continued suitability of the programme's strategic objectives and outcomes over the coming years. Four criteria guided this assessment:

1. Strategic alignment: do the objectives support the long-term vision of Sri Lanka's mine action programme?
2. Contextual fit: are they responsive to current and emerging contextual conditions?
3. Stakeholder alignment: do key stakeholders recognise and support their value?
4. Resource feasibility: does the programme have, or can it secure, the necessary resources to achieve these outcomes?

### Key achievements

The mid-term review confirmed that Sri Lanka's mine action programme made significant progress during the first two years of strategy implementation. Significant progress was made in refining and implementing Sri Lanka's completion process, which will be explored in greater detail in first strategic objective section. The NMAC also made noteworthy progress in strengthening the mine action governance and national ownership, by establishing national coordination platforms, thereby harnessing greater inter-ministerial collaboration, coordination and information sharing. With the support of the GICHD, the NMAC further organised several donor coordination meetings, including a high-level donor appreciation event in May 2025.

With the support of the GICHD's in-country IM Advisor to NMAC, NMAC has also made significant achievements in information management (IM), including by developing 11 IM forms in Survey123 as part of Sri Lanka's migration to the IMSMACore database. The GICHD and NMAC developed these forms in an inclusive manner, involving IM and operational staff from all operators. This process has further strengthened collaboration between IM and operations and has enhanced quality management (QM) by ensuring that the forms reflect good practice, lessons learnt and are aligned with the reviewed NMAC on QM, land release and non-technical survey (NTS). In a step to further strengthening QM and consistency across the programme, NMAC has also developed a NMAC on IM, expected to be finalised and approved in 2025.

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<sup>16</sup> Including the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Social Services, Ministry of Environment, and the Department of Forests.

## Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats

### *National ownership*

A key strength of Sri Lanka's mine action programme is the extent to which it is nationally owned, and its firm establishment within government structures. In 2025, the GoSL provided national budgetary support of an estimate 70 million Sri Lankan rupees<sup>17</sup> to support NMAC, RMAO and the Sri Lanka Army's Humanitarian Demining Unit (SLA HDU)'s operational costs. This marks a sustained increase beginning in 2023. Closely tied to the principle of national ownership, Sri Lanka stands out as a good example of localized mine action within the global mine action sector. Three of the five operators are national, and two of the four NGOs are national organisations that have successfully operated independently for many years, sustained by international funding. Their long-standing effectiveness—along with the experience and expertise of female and male national staff—illustrates the strength and sustainability of locally owned mine action. This supports the SRAAP Action 2 on establishing sustainable national mine action structures.<sup>18</sup> Sri Lanka's complex contamination context, which includes a diverse range of EO, has required the development of tailored approaches and systems, particularly in addressing improvised AP mines, which has resulted in extensive expertise in this area.

### *Mine action governance*

Past challenges related to frequent institutional changes in Sri Lanka's mine action governance, and the lack of continuity at the NMAC Directorate level, remain. This carries the risk of instability, loss of continuity and institutional knowledge, delays in decision-making, and fragmented communication and coordination. This risk can be mitigated by having a well-defined strategic direction, codified in a national mine action strategy, to ensure continuity and guide the sector through periods of institutional instability. The insufficient resourcing of both the NMAC and RMAO, across human, financial, and technical capacities continues to impede their ability to fully and effectively fulfil their responsibilities, particularly in QM. The increasing allocation of national budgets to NMAC and SLA HDU since 2022 reflects a positive trend and signals enhanced national ownership. Looking ahead, it will be critical to ensure that the GoSL continues to allocate sufficient funding to NMAC and RMAO to allow them to guide and support the programme on its path to completion.

### *Donor fatigue*

Additional risks, such as donor fatigue and the increasing pressure from competing global priorities, further compound these challenges. Sri Lanka's severe political and financial crisis that culminated in 2022 resulted in widespread protests, economic instability, political upheaval, increased living costs and widespread economic hardships throughout Sri Lanka. As a result, critical fuel shortages lead to the suspension of mine action operations for a total of 74 days for the four NGO operators in 2022. While risks related to future financial and political instability remain, stakeholders perceive them to be reduced under the new government and His Excellency, President Anura Kumara Disanayake.

### *Transition*

On its path to completing proactive survey and clearance activities, Sri Lanka is set to transition to reactively responding to reported EO threats. SLA HDU's prominent role in the mine action programme places Sri Lanka in a good position to manage its future residual EO contamination with sustainable national capacities. The SLA HDU will need to be adequately resourced and trained to facilitate a smooth and sustainable transition, elaborated upon further in the present strategy's objective 3. Acknowledging decreased international funding, it will be critical for the GoSL to continue increasing its budgetary support to the mine action programme, including the SLA HDU, to allow it to expand its operational capacities to address known EO contamination leading up to completion.

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<sup>17</sup> 65% of the 60.9 million was allocated to the SLA HDU, GoSL

<sup>18</sup> SRAAP Action #2: Establish sustainable national capacities able to coordinate, regulate, and manage the national mine action programme including survey, clearance, mine risk education, and victim assistance and undertake post completion activities, including in the event that previously unknown mined areas, including newly mined areas, are discovered.

### *Global insecurity and policy shifts*

At the macro level, geopolitical tensions, including the wars in Ukraine and the Middle East have placed greater stress on multilateralism and contributed to the erosion of international humanitarian law (IHL). Key disarmament conventions including the APMBC and the CCM are increasingly scrutinised, with several States Parties withdrawing from the Conventions.<sup>19</sup> Sri Lanka has an opportunity to play a greater global role by demonstrating its commitment to IHL through continued adherence to its convention obligations and by promoting universalization. The US' geopolitical shift and diminished security guarantees for Europe have prompted an increased focus on enhancing national security and boosting defence within many European countries. This has in turn contributed to several prominent European mine action donors announcing funding cuts in 2025 and beyond.

This unpredictable geopolitical landscape and shifting global priorities pose significant risks to Sri Lanka's mine action programme that should be considered in all future planning. Financial sustainability remains one of the most prominent risks to the programme as it directly impacts the extent to which strategic targets may be reached, and the completion timeline. Efforts to gain greater clarity on opportunities and threats related to resource mobilisation commenced in 2024, under the oversight of NMAC and the GICHD. This reviewed mine action strategy includes outcomes and targets on resource mobilisation in several objectives, including exploring non-traditional donors, as well as foundations, and Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) funding streams. Greater clarity and transparency on the level of confirmed and expected international funding has in turn enabled more informed, evidence-based planning. Looking ahead, effective collaboration and coordination, and transparent information-sharing will be crucial for managing risks related to funding. The mine action programme's resilience, along with its capacity to adapt and recover during challenging times, will be key to achieving its strategic objectives through 2027 and beyond.

### **Looking Ahead: Planning for Completion**

Considering challenges related to the discovery of previously unknown contamination, staff retention and reduced funding, it will not be possible for Sri Lanka to complete its APMBC Article 5 obligations by June 2028. The discovery of previously unknown contamination can primarily be explained by the launch of Sri Lanka's systematic completion survey, implemented by all four NGOs at the lowest administrative unit – the Grama Niladhari (GN). The standardised and community-focused completion survey enabled survey teams, comprising male and female surveyors, to access geographical areas that has been previously uninhabited during earlier, less thorough surveys, and to interview male and female community members at the GN level. This points to the effectiveness of the completion survey and the willingness of community members to share information on EO contamination. Making all reasonable effort to discover any remaining AP minefield contamination is an international obligation that Sri Lanka has committed to and is key to enabling Sri Lanka's vision of a 'Thriving National and Beautiful Life' and the strategic direction outlined in the GoSL's national policy framework.<sup>20</sup>

Sri Lanka's mine action programme will continue to implement the completion survey until the end of this strategic period. Clearing and surveying recorded hazardous areas and implementing the completion survey will provide Sri Lanka with greater clarity on the remaining contamination problem by the end of 2027. This will allow Sri Lanka to develop its APMBC Article 5 Extension Request based on updated information and submit its extension request in a timely manner to the APMBC States Parties by March 2027. By this time, Sri Lanka will be in a better position to make a more informed decision on a realistic Article 5 completion timeline.

With the support of the GICHD, the NMAC has developed a completion simulation tool that considers three

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<sup>19</sup> Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland and Finland announced their withdrawal from the APMBC in 2025. Ukraine signed a decree to withdraw in June 2025, pending parliamentary approval as of July 2025. Lithuania announced its withdrawal from the CCM in mid-2024.

<sup>20</sup> A Thriving Nation, A beautiful Life: <https://www.treasury.gov.lk/web/national-policy-framework-a-thriving-nation-a-beautiful-life>

inter-related factors: 1. The level of confirmed funding, 2. The extent of land released<sup>21</sup>/year, and 3. The extent of previously unknown contamination discovered/year<sup>22</sup>. The tool presents three scenarios, based on the 2024 funding baseline of 17.4 million USD:<sup>23</sup>

1. **Increased funding:** Funding increases for all operators annually by 30% for 2025 and 2026, to achieve timely completion by June 2028 (Article 5 deadline)
2. **Decreased funding:** 15% decrease in funding in 2025, level of funding stabilizes afterwards: Article 5 completion in 2030
3. **Significantly decreased funding:** 15% reduction every year, completion in 2036

As of July 2025, Sri Lanka's mine action programme is 85% funded compared to 2024, at a total of 14.9 million USD. The tool underscores the extent to which the level of funding will impact Sri Lanka's completion timeline. It allows the mine action programme to plan with greater clarity, based on evidence and to share information with the GoSL and international donors to ensure continued transparency and accountability.

## Mine Action's Enabling Role

Sri Lanka's mine action programme has played an instrumental role in the country's peace and reconciliation process, including by facilitating the safe resettlement of 918 980 internally displaced persons (IDPs) in eight districts in the Northern and Eastern Provinces.<sup>24</sup> 4 006 IDPs remain to be resettled in Jaffna and Kilinochchi districts.<sup>25</sup> Initially, Sri Lanka's resettlement process focused on providing housing for IDPs, resulting in focusing demining efforts in housing areas. Recognising the critical importance of enabling safe livelihood and income generating activities, the mine action programme responded to an increasing need of clearing land for livelihood activities, including farming.

Mine action has also facilitated tourism and infrastructure development and has enabled safe access to educational, and health facilities through survey and clearance activities and the subsequent release of safe land. Demining has further unblocked routes and enabled livelihood activities, including grazing, agriculture, fishing, trade, construction and firewood collection.

### 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.<sup>26</sup> The Agenda is centred on the principle that sustainable development be participatory, inclusive and non-discriminatory.



Figure 3: Sustainable Development Goals

<sup>21</sup> This includes land released through non-technical and technical survey and clearance.

<sup>22</sup> This estimate is based on an analysis of the results of the completion survey January 2024-July 2025.

<sup>23</sup> This is based on the allocation of international funding to DASH, SHARP, HALO Trust and MAG and does not include national allocation to the SLA HDU. The tool is flexible, with the possibility of entering different levels of funding and land release results.

<sup>24</sup> District Secretariat Jaffna, Kilinochchi, Mullaitivu, Mannar, Vavuniya, Trincomalee, Batticaloa and Ampara

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>26</sup> Sustainable Development Goals (<http://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/development-agenda/>)



The GoSL commits to a development that is culturally sensitive and environmentally sustainable in its overarching policy framework ‘A thriving Nation. A Beautiful Life’, with several principles and actions presented in the section on ‘A sustainable biotic world - An evergreen life.’<sup>27</sup> Mine action will be essential for enabling these activities in EO-contaminated areas. Sri Lanka is also committed to promoting linkages between the SDGs and the mine action programme. Survey and clearance of contaminated areas and the subsequent release of safe land will be intimately linked with the SDGs as Sri Lanka’s minefields are close to, or in, rural communities with significant socio-economic, humanitarian, commercial and environmental impacts. Sri Lanka’s mine action programme has an opportunity to highlight impacts and opportunities clearance will bring in terms of facilitating development and contributing to the fulfilment of SDGs. NMAC and operators will collect, analyse and share relevant information, to raise awareness of mine action’s enabling role for broader development.

The release of safe land is expected to continue enabling safe conservation, tourism, agriculture, fishing, infrastructure development and access to education and health facilities. Case studies from several operators show tangible evidence on how demining activities have supported sustainable livelihood activities and strengthened conflict-affected families’ resilience. One example illustrates how a man from a fishing community in Annivelunthan, located on the northern coast of Sri Lanka, was able to restore his livelihoods following clearance. The release of safe land allowed him to safely access the beach and the sea, catching up to 30 kg of fish per day. The release of safe land further away from the beach also made it possible for him to safely plant 300 coconut trees, which allowed him to generate an income and send two of his children to university. The return of agriculture, coconut groves and cinnamon trees, shows a revival of cultural identity and traditional ways of life. By removing the hidden threats of EO, mine clearance restored not just land, but dignity and the right to live without fear to the people in Annivelunthan, and the broader region. A place that was once affected by danger and displacement, is now a space of recovery and renewed hope for people as they return.<sup>28</sup>

Sri Lanka’s national policy framework has identified Sri Lanka’s northern and eastern districts as opportunities for economic development. Also, as outlined in Sri Lanka’s Strategic Plan for Tourism 2022-2025<sup>29</sup>, tourism potential in the north and east is an opportunity to improve the diversity of tourism destinations and to address the concentration of tourist flows in Greater Colombo, the southern coast, the Hill Country and the cultural triangle. Also, Sri Lanka’s National Forest Policy<sup>30</sup> recommends nature-based tourism, provided it does not damage the ecosystem and that the local population benefits. Nature-based tourism is one of the fastest growing tourism sectors in the world, including in Sri Lanka and the country’s natural assets will continue to play an important role in the success of the industry’s performance.<sup>31</sup>

Sri Lanka’s national policy framework highlights the critical importance of food security and includes a section on *High productivity - Nation with food security*.<sup>32</sup> Ensuring that land is safe from EO contamination will be a critical enabler for enhanced food security in Sri Lanka and for achieving many of the activities and principles presented in the policy framework. The World Food Programme’s (WFP) 2024 Household Food Security Survey indicates that the most food-insecure districts are located in the Northern Province, with a clear overlap between these areas and those contaminated by explosive ordnance (EO). Strengthening collaboration between the mine action programme and relevant stakeholders—including GAs—offers an opportunity to improve information sharing on this overlap and to support efforts to enhance food security. The map below illustrates the correlation between food insecurity and EO contamination.

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<sup>27</sup> GoSL, National Policy Framework, *ibid*.

<sup>28</sup> The HALO Trust Sri Lanka: Restoring Livelihoods and Hope in Annivelunthan: Mine clearance in Northern Sri Lanka

<sup>29</sup> Strategic Plan for Sri Lanka Tourism 2022-2025 ([https://www.sltta.gov.lk/storage/common\\_media/Sri\\_Lanka-Final\\_V6\\_Edited850147500.pdf](https://www.sltta.gov.lk/storage/common_media/Sri_Lanka-Final_V6_Edited850147500.pdf))

<sup>30</sup> Sri Lanka National Forest Policy

<sup>31</sup> Sri Lanka Tourism Alliance, 2021 (<https://www.srilankatourismalliance.com/reopening-updates/>)

<sup>32</sup> GoSL, National Policy Framework, *ibid*.

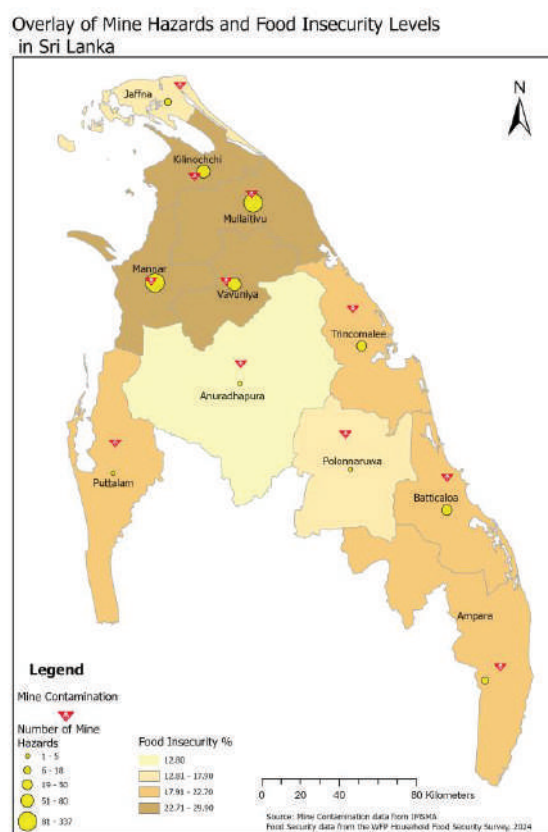


Figure 2: Sri Lanka Food security survey 2024, WFP: NMAC, July 2025

## Environmental considerations

Sri Lanka is exposed to climate change-induced hazards, including tropical cyclones and flooding. The disruption of monsoons and altered rainfall is already impacting many sectors of Sri Lanka's economy such as tourism, fisheries, tea plantations and agriculture. Climate-induced changes also impact the mine action programme and operational planning, including through access issues and flooding. Climate change projections predict long-term changes to the monsoon pattern and the shifting of ecological regions and view Sri Lanka as vulnerable to climate change impacts<sup>33</sup>, despite the country facing moderate disaster risk levels.<sup>34</sup> In response to these challenges and in line with its obligations as State Party to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and signatory to the Paris Agreement<sup>35</sup>, Sri Lanka has a comprehensive normative framework in place, comprising national policies, strategies and action plans on climate change and sustainable development.

Forestry has been identified by the GoSL as one of the key sectors which will actively contribute to reaching carbon reduction commitments<sup>36</sup>, in line with Sri Lanka's obligations towards the UNFCCC and the Paris Agreement. When engaging in Forest Areas, the mine action programme has an opportunity to adhere to the GoSL's efforts to mitigate climate change by integrating specific mitigation actions in its planning, ensuring appropriate survey and clearance activities. Sri Lanka's mine action programme will continue to

<sup>33</sup> Sri Lanka ranks 104th out of 181 countries in the 2020 [ND-GAIN Index](#), which calculates a country's vulnerability to climate change as well as their readiness to improve resilience.

<sup>34</sup> Sri Lanka ranks 95th out of 191 countries in the INFORM Index of Risk Management developed by the European Commission. Sri Lanka Country Profile 2022, (<https://drmkc.jrc.ec.europa.eu/inform-index/INFORM-Risk/Country-Risk-Profile>)

<sup>35</sup> UNFCCC webpage, Sri Lanka ratification status: <https://unfccc.int/node/61204>

<sup>36</sup> Ministry of Environment, Updated Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC) of Sri Lanka, September 2021. (<https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/NDC/2022-06/Amendmend%20to%20the%20Updated%20Nationally%20Determined%20Contributions%20of%20Sri%20Lanka.pdf>)

ensure that survey and clearance in environmentally sensitive areas are conducted in line with relevant standards and in agreement with authorities to minimise negative impact on the environment. Continued regular coordination between NMAC and the Departments of Wildlife Conservation and Forest, housed within the Ministry of Wildlife and Forest Resources Conservation<sup>37</sup>, will be necessary to achieve this.

## Gender and Diversity

The importance of gender equality is recognised in Sri Lanka's national policy framework, stipulating that 'In a just society that treats everyone equally, no group should be marginalised because of their gender identity..' The policy framework presents several principles related to gender equality, including on economic justice, identified as a cornerstone for achieving gender equality.<sup>38</sup> Sri Lanka recognises that women, girls, boys and men are affected differently by EO contamination due to their roles and responsibilities and 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 need to reflect the distinct needs of women, girls, boys and men through targeted design, for activities to be effective and non-discriminatory and results to be sustainable. Furthermore, Sri Lanka recognises the benefits and importance of providing equitable employment opportunities to women in mine action. As such, Sri Lanka commits to ensuring that all mine action activities are gender<sup>39</sup> and diversity<sup>40</sup> sensitive and to continue efforts to mainstreaming gender and diversity and building on past achievements and lessons learned. Commitment from all stakeholders is required for this to be achieved at both organisational and operational levels. As of June 2025, 27% of Sri Lanka's demining staff was female.<sup>41</sup>

The mine action programme also commits to ensuring that all information is collected, analysed and shared in a gender and diversity sensitive manner, disaggregating data by sex, age and disability, in line with the SRAAP and Sri Lanka's reporting obligations. Communicating about the needs of women, girls, boys and men has proven effective for awareness-raising and fundraising purposes. It also makes explicit the link between mine action and broader agendas such as the Women, Peace and Security agenda and work around SDG 5 on Gender Equality. A 2020 GICHD study, exploring the socioeconomic impact of employing female deminers in Sri Lanka<sup>42</sup> found that 50% of female deminers interviewed were the sole income earners in their households and that more than one in three women who were employed as deminers did not receive any income before joining mine action, as opposed to one in 20 men. Several case studies from operators illustrate how the release of safe land has empowered female headed households, allowing them to regenerate sustainable livelihood activities, including by cultivating land and grazing cattle.<sup>43</sup> One case study illustrates how one female-headed household cultivated cleared land for paddy, harvesting nearly 3.6 metric tons of rice, and cultivating seasonal vegetables including pumpkins, sweet potatoes, casava and onions. These livelihood activities allowed the household to generate a regular income and increase its food security, thereby significantly strengthening its resilience.<sup>44</sup> Other examples from operators also point to the empowering potential of employing women to work with mine action organisations.

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<sup>37</sup> Ministry of Wildlife and Forest Resources Conservation: <https://www.mwfc.gov.lk/about-us/>

<sup>38</sup> A Thriving Nation, A beautiful Life, *ibid*.

<sup>39</sup> Gender refers to the roles, behaviours, activities, and attributes that a given society at a given time considers appropriate for women, girls, boys and men. Gender is socially constructed, and thus changes in relation to location and time. Gender is not a synonym for women; it is about the power relations between women and men, as well as among women and among men. Gender is part of the broader socio-cultural context, which includes other dimensions such as age, race, ethnic group, class, etc. Definition as per the UN Gender Guidelines for Mine Action Programmes, 3rd Edition, 2018, [https://unmas.org/sites/default/files/mine\\_action\\_gender\\_guidelines\\_web\\_0.pdf](https://unmas.org/sites/default/files/mine_action_gender_guidelines_web_0.pdf)

<sup>40</sup> Diversity refers to identity characteristics such as age, race, ethnicity, language, religion, disability, sexual orientation, etc. A good understanding of diversity enables the use of an intersectional approach where different diversity aspects are seen overlapping and creating interdependent systems of discrimination. *Ibid*

<sup>41</sup> Based on information from HALO Trust, MAG, DASH and Sharp

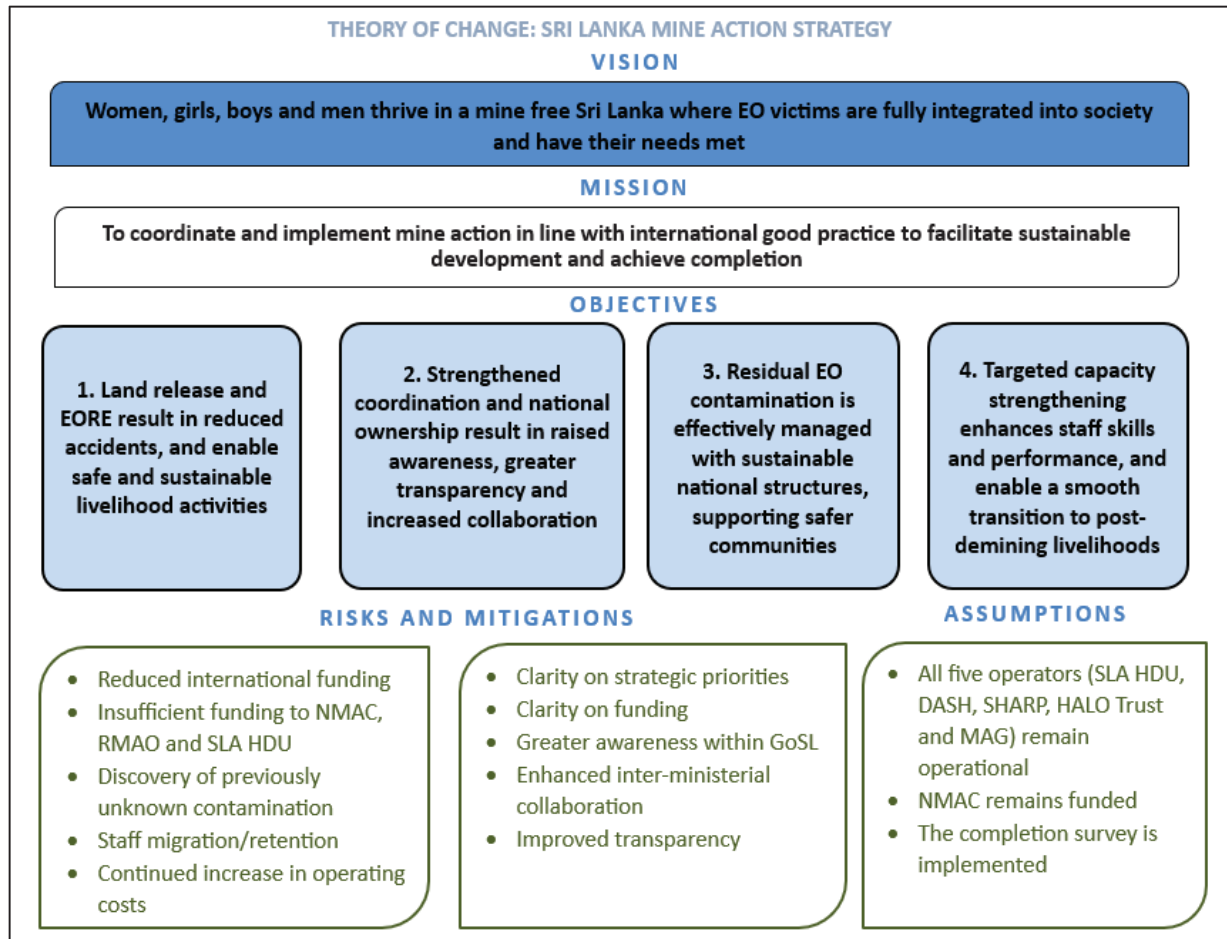
<sup>42</sup> The Socioeconomic Impact of Employing Female Deminers in Sri Lanka, GICHD, June 2020, *op.cit*.

<sup>43</sup> DASH: The resilience of S. Suasini: Overcoming adversity and building a better future

<sup>44</sup> MAG: Beneficiary Story: Venita Joise Jeyaseelan

## Strategic orientation 2025 - 2027

Sri Lanka's Theory of Change is centred around a vision, mission and four strategic objectives. Each objective is accompanied by a set of outcomes, with corresponding indicators, baselines and targets. Five key risks may negatively impact the achievement of strategic objectives, accompanied by a mitigation measure. The strategy will be implemented through a budgeted work-plan and progress will be measured at the outcome level.





## Strategic Objective 1: Land release and EORE result in reduced accidents and enable safe and sustainable livelihood activities

The mid-term strategy review concluded that substantial progress has been achieved under Strategic Objective 1. Key achievements include the revision and approval of three Sri Lanka National Mine Action Standards (SL-NMAS): land release, non-technical survey (NTS) and QM. Following an inclusive and consultative revision process, supported by the GICHD, the NMAC finalised the revised SL-NMAS in June 2024 and officially endorsed them for operational use with effect as of 2 May 2025.<sup>45</sup> The NMAC has underlined that these standards may be further updated based on operational needs and that any future revisions will be made by the Technical Working Group (TWG). The process of updating operators' SOPs was nearly complete as of June 2025, ensuring operational procedures reflect the updated SL-NMAS. The update and approval of these standards and SOPs will contribute to greater operational clarity, standardisation and transparency. This will in turn promote more effective, efficient and safe survey and clearance operations. The programme has made significant progress towards achieving the first outcome: Strengthened QM facilitates effective and safe land release activities.

The programme has also made substantial progress in refining and implementing Sri Lanka's Completion Process<sup>46</sup>, which was defined through a consultative process in 2021, with three key objectives: 1. Identify any previously unknown EO contamination, 2. Document the 'completion' of administrative areas in a consistent and transparent manner, and 3. Demonstrate that *all reasonable effort*<sup>47</sup> has been made to identify and clear all mined areas, as per its Article 5 obligations and declare that all mined areas have been identified and cleared and that there is no further evidence and/or suspicions of mine in the administrative area, at the time of signing the completion documents. The Completion Process SOP<sup>48</sup> outlines a clear, coherent and standardised process and presents the survey methodology, considering gender and diversity aspects and the location and intensity of the conflict. It defines all reasonable effort and stipulates that a survey teams should visit a total of 1,411 GNs. In line with the SOP and as of mid-July 2025, survey teams from HALO Trust, MAG, DASH and SHARP have visited a total of 1,388 GNs and have recommended 1,055 for declaration - on the basis that community members shared no evidence/suspicion of any remaining EO at that time. Survey teams have recommended follow-up visits to the remaining 333 GNs.<sup>49</sup>

While EO accidents have been reduced significantly in Sri Lanka over the past 10 years, analysing and understanding trends on activities at the time of accidents, risk taking behaviour and possible seasonal dimensions will remain important in the years to come. This will allow the programme to tailor EORE messages and supporting materials and implement and monitor EORE interventions, in line with principles outlined in SRAAP action #27.<sup>50</sup>

Looking ahead, in line with its Completion Process, Sri Lanka commits to ensuring continual improvement

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<sup>45</sup> NMAC website: <https://slnmac.gov.lk/sri-lanka-national-mine-action-standards/>

<sup>46</sup> Completion', in the context of Sri Lanka, refers to Sri Lanka fulfilling its APMBC Article 5 obligations and identifying and clearing other EO, in line with All Reasonable Effort.

<sup>47</sup> IMAS 07.11 Land Release, First Edition, Amendment 5, 2019: "The term "All Reasonable Effort" describes what is considered a minimum acceptable level of effort to identify and document contaminated areas or to remove the presence or suspicion of EO. "All reasonable effort" has been applied when the commitment of additional resources is considered to be unreasonable in relation to the results expected.", p.3.

<sup>48</sup> NMAC website: <https://slnmac.gov.lk/publications/>

<sup>49</sup> There may be four reasons for recommending a follow-up visit: 1. Outstanding EOD spot tasks, 2. Open hazards (either currently worked on or not started), 3. There is suspicions and/or evidence of previously unknown contamination and 4. Other.

<sup>50</sup> SRAAP action #27: Provide context-specific mine risk education and reduction programmes that are tailored to the threat encountered by the population and prioritise people most at risk by ensuring that these programmes are developed on an analysis of available casualty and contamination data, climate and environmental risk, an understanding of the affected population's behaviour, risk pattern and coping mechanisms, and, wherever possible, anticipated population movements. Ensure that such programmes are sensitive to gender, age, disability and take the diverse needs and experiences of people in affected communities into account.

and to continue strengthening its QM system, supporting effective and safe survey and clearance activities and enabling sustainable development. In parallel, the programme will implement the completion survey in a gender and diversity-sensitive manner, facilitating Article 5 completion. With NMAC in the lead, the programme will continue to ensure that the Completion Survey Dashboard remains active and that data continues to be analysed to support operational decision making and evidence-based planning. Under NMAC's leadership, the programme will increasingly adopt a geographical approach, whereby GNs, districts and provinces are declared 'mine-free' through the completion survey.

Acknowledging that it will not be realistic for Sri Lanka to meet its Article 5 obligations by June 2028, the mine action programme will prioritise addressing all SHAs recorded in the database (211 areas, totalling just under 5 km<sup>2</sup><sup>51</sup>) until the end of 2026. This will allow greater clarity on the *actual* remaining contamination. SHAs that are determined – through evidence-based survey - to not contain any contamination can be cancelled and removed from the database, while SHAs that have been determined to contain contamination will be recorded as CHAs and addressed with appropriate assets to manage the threat in the most efficient manner. This process will allow Sri Lanka to submit its Article 5 extension request by March 2027 based on updated information, and plan for a realistic completion timeline in an evidence-based manner.

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<sup>51</sup> NMAC data as of 12 July 2025

Strategic Objective 1: Land Release and EO RE			
Land release and EO RE result in reduced accidents and enable safe and sustainable livelihood activities			
Outcomes	Indicators	Baselines	Targets
1.1. Strengthened quality management, facilitates effective and safe land release activities	Number of IMAS-compliant NMAS updated, finalised and approved	13 NMAS Chapters from 2010; 4 draft NMAS, awaiting finalisation and approval, as of September 2022	SL-NMAS 04.10 on NTS, NMAS 04 on Land Release and NMAS 08 on Quality Management updated and approved <sup>52</sup> by the end of 2023
	Number of operator SOPs reviewed in line with updated NMAS	Operator SOPs not always aligned IMAS land release	SL-NMAS on IM finalised and approved by December 2025
	Number of IMSMA forms reviewed in line with updated NMAS	Current IMSMA forms do not include requirements for additional explanation on reduction and cancellation decisions	All operator SOPs are reviewed in line with updated NMAS by the end of 2025
	Number of RMAO QM Officers sufficiently equipped and resourced to implement QM activities	12 RMAO QM officers (2022) 10 RMAO QM officers as of July 2025	All relevant IMSMA forms are reviewed in line with updated NMAS by the end of 2025
1.2. An inclusive and transparent completion survey, facilitates Article 5 completion	Number of completion surveys conducted in line with completion survey SOP	Completion survey SOP developed in 2022	At least 2 monitoring visits per sites
	Number of GN completion declaration forms/year	O (2022) 1055 GNs recommended for declaration (July 2025) 928 GNs declared mine-free <sup>53</sup> (July 2025)	All completion surveys conducted in line with SOP until the end of 2027
	Number of districts declared 'complete'/year	11 EO-affected districts as of 2022 11 EO-affected districts (June 2025)	All GNs visited and declared in a timely manner, in accordance with Sri Lanka's Completion Process SOP
			Six districts declared complete by the end of 2027: Puttalam, Anuradhapura, Polonnaruwa districts

<sup>52</sup> The revisions of the NMAS on NTS, Land Release and Quality Management referred to in Outcome 1.1. refer to recommendations from the Accident Investigation Report N-DA-TR-193, recommendations, 12 December 2021.s

<sup>53</sup> 829 declaration forms have been signed by GN officers and recorded and scanned by RMAO

				(end of 2025) Trincomalee and Ampara districts (end of 2026) Jaffna and Batticaloa districts (end of 2027) Eastern, North Central and North Western Provinces declared complete by the end of 2027
	Number of provinces declared complete		Northern, Eastern, North Central and Northwestern Provinces contaminated (July 2025)	
1.3. Survey and clearance activities result in the release of safe land, facilitating sustainable development	Number of SHAs addressed/year		211 SHAs, totalling 4 988 648 square metres (July 2025)	All SHAs are addressed by the end of 2027
	Number of km <sup>2</sup> released (disaggregated by cancelled, reduced and cleared)		Disaggregated land release results are available on NMAC website <sup>54</sup> on an annual basis	2025: 4 750 000 square metres land released <sup>55</sup> 2026: 4 275 000 square metres land released 2027: 3 847 500 square metres land released
	Number of survey/clearance permissions granted by the Forestry, Wildlife and Archaeology Departments		No survey/clearance permissions granted as of 2022  MoU signed with Mannar District Forestry Department, July 2025	Relevant permissions granted
1.4. Gender and diversity inclusive EORE activities result in community awareness and safer behaviour	Existence of updated NMAC on EORE		NMAC on EORE developed in 2010	NMAC EORE updated and approved by mid-2026
	Number of EO casualty (SADDD)		2021: Injured: 1 man, Killed: 1 man, 2 boys 2022: Injured: 1 girl, 1 boy, 3 men (5) 2023: Injured: 1 boy, 1 man (2) 2024: 3 injured women (3)	EO casualty (SADDD) 0

<sup>54</sup> [www.NMAC.sr.gov.com](http://www.NMAC.sr.gov.com)

<sup>55</sup> These land release estimates are based on the following assumptions: 1. Funding level remains the same as in 2025 (-15%), 2. Operational costs increase, 3. Clearance capacities decrease (including mechanical assets), 4. Unpredictable weather conditions impact access and deployments. 5. Some of the remaining tasks more challenging, technically, access, etc. 6. 10% reduction in land release outputs every year



## Strategic Objective 2: Coordination and national ownership result in raised awareness, greater transparency and increased collaboration

Sri Lanka will continue to demonstrate strong national ownership, including by ensuring its national mine action structures are sufficiently equipped and resourced to effectively execute their mandates, in support of the SRAAP on demonstrating national ownership, including by making financial commitments.<sup>56</sup> Since 2023, the GoSL has steadily increased its national budget allocation to the mine action programme, with a 22% rise from 2023 to 2024 and a further 15% increase from 2024 to 2025. The NMAC also commits to ensuring regular and structured coordination and transparent information sharing with Sri Lanka government representatives, international donors, operators and other partners, in support of the SRAAP.<sup>57</sup> The NMAC will continue to provide access to Sri Lanka's Completion Survey Dashboard to the GoSL, international donors and other partners to ensure transparent information sharing and accountability on behalf of the mine action programme. The Dashboard, updated on a weekly basis with quality assured data directly from the field, presents detailed completion survey results, and updated information on land release activities and the remaining contamination.

Regarding the national mine action architecture, Sri Lanka's mine action governance has been further strengthened by the NMAC Director's re-establishment of the National Steering Committee (NSC) on Mine Action<sup>58</sup>, with its inaugural meeting held in February 2025. Under the Chairmanship of the Secretary of the Ministry of Urban Development, Construction and Housing, the NSC convenes representatives from relevant government ministries, operators and the civil society on a bi-monthly basis to strengthen inter-ministerial coordination, collaboration and information sharing. The visibility of Sri Lanka's mine action programme has further improved with the new NMAC website, formally inaugurated by Sri Lanka's Prime Minister in May 2025.<sup>59</sup>

As a State Party to the APMBC, CCM and CRPD, Sri Lanka commits to a rights-based approach to VA<sup>60</sup>, acknowledging that VA's overall goal is the full and effective participation of EO victims<sup>61</sup> in society on an equal basis to others. Sri Lanka supports the principle that specialised VA efforts are short-term solutions that should be implemented only until they are effectively integrated into broader frameworks, and that the mine action programme's VA responsibilities are more of a facilitating role, focusing on awareness raising, coordination and information sharing. The mid-term strategy review noted progress in the field of VA, including NMAC's establishment of the National Committee on Victim Assistance in March 2024. Chaired by the NMAC Director, the committee meets quarterly and comprises representatives from the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Rural Development, Social Security and Community Empowerment, relevant government departments, and international organisations, with an aim to raise awareness and strengthen information sharing through enhanced coordination and collaboration. Another achievement includes the inclusion of EO accidents as a cause of disability in the Ministry of Health's injury surveillance system and forms, expected to facilitate greater clarity on the number of EO victims and their needs, in

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<sup>56</sup> SRAAP action #1: Demonstrate high levels of national ownership, partnership and coordination, by integrating Convention implementation activities into national development plans, strategies and budgets including on poverty reduction, humanitarian response, health and mental health, gender equality, inclusion of persons with disabilities, peacebuilding, Human Rights, climate change adaptation, environmental protection and improvement and/or disaster risk reduction, as appropriate

<sup>57</sup> SRAAP action# 42: Strengthen national level coordination including by ensuring regular dialogue with national and international stakeholders on progress and challenges in implementation and requirements for assistance including by establishing an appropriate National Mine Action Platform, wherever possible.

<sup>58</sup> Including the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Defence, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Social Services, Ministry of Environment, and the Departments of Wildlife and Forest

<sup>59</sup> <https://slnmac.gov.lk/>

<sup>60</sup> IMAS 13.10, Victim Assistance in Mine Action, First Edition, 2021: "The term VA in the context of mine action refers to a set of activities that address the needs and rights of EO victims, and comprises emergency and ongoing medical care, rehabilitation, psychological and psycho-social support, and socio-economic inclusion (...). VA also includes data collection, laws, and policies.", p.8.

<sup>61</sup> Victims include people injured and killed, their families, and communities affected by EO. The term 'victim' carries legal significance with respect to the APMBC, CCW and CCM. *Ibid.*

support of the SRAAP action #16.<sup>62</sup> In collaboration with Government Agents, the NMAC/Ministry of Urban Development, Construction and Housing will implement a housing programme for EO victims, with the goal to ensure they have appropriate housing.

Future opportunities include leveraging the high-level support demonstrated by the GoSL over the past year and capitalising on the enhanced coordination structures. The Donor Appreciation Event, held in Colombo in early May 2025, played a pivotal role in expressing the GoSL's gratitude to international donors, while also raising awareness among key government ministries. The programme will build on this momentum to further advance its objectives.

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<sup>62</sup> SRAAP action #32: Carry out efforts to identify all mine and other explosive ordnance victims and collect accurate and comprehensive information on their needs, challenges and geographic locations in a manner disaggregated by gender, age, disability, and other considerations, making data on mine and other explosive ordnance victims available to relevant stakeholders including by integrating this data into a national centralised database, such as disability data systems to ensure a comprehensive and sustainable response in line with relevant national data protection regulations/measures.

Strategic Objective 2: Coordination and National Ownership			
Strengthened coordination and national ownership result in raised awareness, greater transparency and increased collaboration			
Outcomes	Indicators	Baselines	Targets
2.1. Compliance with convention obligations, timely reporting and regular mine action coordination meetings enhance national ownership, and strengthen collaboration and information sharing	APMBC Article 7 transparency report submitted by 30 April every year <sup>63</sup>	Sri Lanka submitted its Article 7 report by deadline in 2022, 2023, 2024 and 2025	Sri Lanka submits its APMBC annual Article 7 reports in a timely manner <sup>64</sup> and includes information on relevant SRAAP actions on Victim Assistance
	Article 5 extension request submitted by deadline (March 2027)	Sri Lanka's Article 5 deadline is June 2028	Sri Lanka submits its Article 5 extension request in line with guidance by March 2027
	Number of mine action donor coordination meetings organised/year	2 donor coordination meetings organised annually 2022-2024	Bi-annual mine action donor coordination meetings organised every year 2023-2027
	Number of NSC meetings chaired by NMAC and recorded/year	As of mid-July 2025, NMAC had organised two NSC meetings (February and July)	NMAC chairs and circulates the minutes of at least four NSC meetings per year
	Number of National Committee VA meetings/year	NMAC established the National Committee on VA in March 2024	National Committee on VA meets on a quarterly basis
2.2. The needs and rights of EO victims are effectively addressed through strengthened multi-sectoral efforts	Inclusion of EO casualty SADDD in injury surveillance system database, housed within the Ministry of Health	EO casualty SADDD not included in Sri Lanka's injury surveillance system database as of June 2022	EO accidents are included as a cause of disability in the injury surveillance system forms (MoH); EO accident data is integrated into the injury surveillance system database
	Existence of national legislation to implement the CRPD	No national legislation to implement the CRPD as of July 2025	GoSL will enact the new Disability Act to implement the CRPD by the end of 2026

<sup>63</sup> (APLC/MSP.14/2015/WP.2, <https://bit.ly/Guide-Reporting>)

<sup>64</sup> Deadline for submitting APMBC Annual Article 7 report is 30 April

2.3. Greater clarity on the funding situation, gaps, needs and priorities allow for more strategic resource mobilisation <sup>65</sup>	Number of programme funding overview updates/year	Programme funding overview updated quarterly in 2025	Programme funding overview is updated on a quarterly basis
	Amount of national budgetary contribution (LKR) allocated to the mine action programme/year <sup>66</sup>	2023: 50 million LKR 2024: 60.9 million LKR 2025: 70 million LKR	Annual increase in national budgetary contribution to the national mine action programme by at least 10%
	Number of new financial partnership agreements/year	Eight international donors and two foundations fund the programme (July 2025) 2023: 18 530 950 USD 2024: 17 435 185 USD 2025: 14 910 125 USD	One new funding agreement per year
	Number of CSR initiatives agreed	No CSR funding to the programme (July 2025)	CSR funding secured in 2025, 2026 and 2027

<sup>65</sup> SRAAP action #41: Develop resource mobilisation plans and use all mechanisms to disseminate information on challenges and requirements for assistance including through annual Article 7 reports, requests for extension under Article 5 and updated work plans where applicable, and by taking advantage of the Individualised Approach tool.

<sup>66</sup> This funding is allocated to the NMAC (including the RMAO) and to the SLA HDU

### Strategic Objective 3: Residual EO contamination is effectively managed with sustainable national structures, supporting safer communities

IMAS 04.10 specifies that residual contamination refers to contamination which gives rise to residual risk, which is the risk that remains, following the application of all reasonable effort to identify, define, and remove all presence and suspicion of EO through NTS, TS and/or clearance. Risk is the combination of the probability of occurrence of harm and the severity of that harm.<sup>67</sup>

Recognising the importance of strengthening national capacities to address known contamination and to manage residual risk, Sri Lanka's 2016-2020 mine action strategy included an objective on the management of residual contamination, stipulating that this responsibility will rest with the SLA HDU. In line with the SRAAP action #2, Sri Lanka will continue to plan for this transition, in close collaboration with all concerned stakeholders.<sup>68</sup> Sri Lanka's Police Task Force will play a pivotal role in explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) call outs, in line with Sri Lanka's 2022 Prohibition of Anti-personnel Mines Act.<sup>69</sup>

The SLA HDU has played a key role in Sri Lanka's mine action programme for decades, implementing land release activities, conducting EOD callouts, and delivering EORE. SLA HDU has also seconded IM and operations staff to the RMAO for many years, developing solid humanitarian mine action expertise within its structures. These experiences place SLA HDU in a good position to manage Sri Lanka's future residual contamination effectively. Looking ahead, the GoSL will ensure that the SLA HDU is appropriately equipped, staffed and sufficiently resourced to fulfil its responsibilities. As part of Sri Lanka's future transition process to a residual context, it will be important to ensure that mine action information (including data on previously surveyed and cleared areas, EO accident locations, etc) is easily accessible and that any future residual EO contamination data can be collected, stored and analysed in an effective manner. This will facilitate sustainable and transparent IM processes, including effective information sharing and reporting. It will be critical that the transfer of Sri Lanka's national database to SLA is a staged process, and that relevant SLA staff are trained in IMSMA Core leading up to completion to ensure a sufficient level of technical knowledge and a smooth transition. This process is being successfully implemented, with a total of five SLA HDU IM staff having attended GICHD-organised IMSMA Core trainings in Switzerland between 2022-2025 in line with strategic targets. GICHD's IM advisor in Sri Lanka has also organised trainings at the RMAO for SLA HDU IM staff in 2024 and 2025. In the future, it will be important to ensure that Sri Lanka's normative framework, including policies and acts, that guide residual contamination is appropriate given the context and needs.

Building on its strong track record in reducing EO accidents, Sri Lanka is committed to further developing and strengthening sustainable EORE structures. These systems aim to promote safer behaviour and minimize the risk of future incidents. A key focus is ensuring that communities remain informed about newly discovered EO and are aware of existing reporting mechanisms. Over the years, Sri Lanka has successfully laid the foundation for sustainable EORE, notably by integrating EORE messages into the national school curriculum. In line with SRAAP Action #28, these systems will continue to be enhanced to ensure they are flexible and responsive to evolving needs.<sup>70</sup> Looking ahead, the NMAC and partners will ensure effective coordination and collaboration with Provincial Education Departments to support more sustainable EORE systems and structures.

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<sup>67</sup> IMAS 04.10 Glossary of mine action terms, definitions and abbreviations, Second Edition, Amendment 10, 2019

<sup>68</sup> SRAAP action #21: Ensure the establishment of a sustainable national capacity to implement the Convention and address previously unknown mined areas, including newly mined areas, discovered following completion.

<sup>69</sup> Parliament of the Democratic Socialist republic of Sri Lanka: Prohibition of AP mines Act, No 3, 2022: chrome-extension://efaidnbmnnpbpcjpcglclefindmkaj/https://www.parliament.lk/uploads/acts/gbills/english/6231.pdf

<sup>70</sup> SRAAP action #28: Establish sustainable national capacities to deliver mine risk education and reduction programmes able to adapt to changing needs and contexts including in the case that previously unknown mined areas or newly mined areas are discovered and/or in emergency settings.

Strategic Objective 3: Management of Residual Contamination				
Residual EO contamination is effectively managed with sustainable national structures, supporting safer communities				
Outcomes	Indicators	Baselines	Targets	
3.1. Sri Lanka's national database will be managed by the SLA upon completion, safeguarding effective and transparent information collection, storage, analysis, sharing and reporting	Number of SLA staff participating in IMSMA NG and Core trainings	0 SLA staff trained in IMSMA Core as of mid-2022 2023: 4 (GICHD training in Switzerland) 2024: 6 (local IMSMA NG GICHD training) 2025: 10 (9 local GICHD training and 1 GICHD training in Switzerland)	2 SLA staff participate in the IMSMA Core advanced course/year 1 local training organised by NMAC and GICHD IM advisor/year 1 refresher training for SLA HDU IM staff organised by NMAC and GICHD IM advisor/year SLA will manage Sri Lanka's national database upon Article 5 completion	
	National database fully managed by SLA	NMAC manages national database (2022)		
	Number of SLA clearance teams as of 2022	SLA MA capacities as of 2022: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>7 demining teams (1 officer and 41 deminers/team)</li> <li>16 demolition teams</li> <li>15 survey teams</li> </ul> SLA capacities (July 2025): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>10 EOD personnel</li> <li>5 mechanical teams</li> <li>6 mine detection dog teams</li> <li>187 male deminers, 31 female deminers</li> </ul>	Gradual increase of survey and clearance capacities in line with increased budgetary support until 2027 and beyond	
3.2. SLA's survey and clearance capacities and structures are appropriately equipped, staffed and resourced to ensure effective management of residual contamination	Number of SLA staff participating in mine action trainings/year	Number of SLA HDU mine action trainings (2022)	2 mine action trainings organised for SLA HDU/year	
	Number of initiatives with Provincial Education Departments to develop sustainable EORE systems and structures	Limited interactions with Provincial Education Departments as of July 2025	1 new initiative between NMAC and Provincial Education Departments in Northern, Eastern, North Central and North Western Provinces	
3.3. National EORE capacities and structures are strengthened, promoting sustainability and community safety				



## Strategic Objective 4: Targeted capacity strengthening enhances staff's skills and performance, and enable a smooth transition to post-demining livelihoods

As of June 2025, the combined workforce of the four mine action NGOs —MAG, HALO Trust, DASH, and SHARP—is close to 2,500 staff. Women comprise a notable share of this workforce, including in leadership positions, with participation ranging from one-quarter to one-third across operators. Most personnel are based in the conflict-affected Northern and Eastern Provinces, regions that experience greater socio-economic challenges and that have more limited employment opportunities and higher poverty levels than the national average. Sri Lanka's mine action programme supports this workforce through a phased approach that aims to develop employability skills, enhance performance in current roles and facilitate a smooth transition to in-demand post-demining occupations as Sri Lanka approaches completion. Mine action operators provide training, exposure and skills development to bridge educational gaps experienced by staff from conflict-affected backgrounds, including many from the Tamil community, thereby contributing to more sustainable livelihoods.

The mid-term strategy review determined that significant progress has been made since 2023, including: 1. Secured funding from international mine action donors to expand staff capacity development activities to include non-demining skills and build coordination work with external stakeholders at national and local levels. 2. All four operators established dedicated staff transition teams to lead the implementation of efforts, with support from external service providers and partners. 3. Interventions have focused on improving the employability skills of male and female mine action staff and encouraging income diversification while they remain employed. These efforts led to achieving the Phase 1 target of 75% of mine action staff completing one or more tailored trainings. 4. Although most interventions were voluntary and organised during the stand-down period—making attendance challenging—operators successfully secured female participation. In addition, MAG and HALO Trust conducted women-only trainings to address the specific needs of the female workforce. 5. Memoranda of Understanding (MoU) were signed with the Chief Secretaries of the Northern and Eastern Provinces for an initial two-year period, with the need for extension by the end of 2025, formalizing government commitment to the workforce transition process. 6. Sri Lanka's staff transition efforts have further gained international recognition, drawing interest from other mine action programs such as Zimbabwe and Angola and operators like NPA.

Staff transition efforts remain inherently linked to the overall clearance timeline, which is being extended beyond the original 2027 completion target due to unforeseen challenges. This shift has directly impacted the implementation of staff transition activities, particularly those associated with the pilot redundancy (Phase 2) and gradual staff demobilization (Phases 3). Staff transition is a relatively new focus area in mine action, both globally and in Sri Lanka, and must remain flexible and responsive to changes to stay relevant. The mid-term review enables the Sri Lanka programme to adjust its outcomes and indicators accordingly.

The strategic objective, outcomes, and indicators for 2025–2027 have been revised to better reflect the evolving context. Clearance at full capacity is lasting longer than planned. This, combined with increased staff turnover due to the economic crisis, out-migration, and funding uncertainties, has introduced an additional challenge: while previous planning primarily prepared for redundancies toward the end of operations, there is now a need to address potential redundancies arising from reduced funding leading up to completion. This revision also aims to better reflect the sector's ongoing efforts to strengthen mine action staff capacities—not only to support future employability after demining, but also to enhance current performance, productivity, and motivation to support effective completion. It calls for improved monitoring systems to track workforce changes over time and marks a shift from post-demining transition focus to a more integrated capacity strengthening approach that also promotes staff retention and morale amid growing challenges. Reflecting the realities of prolonged clearance and shifting funding dynamics, the strategic objective formerly titled “Staff Transition” has been renamed to capture the dual focus: prioritising staff development during employment while maintaining a long-term vision for sustainable transition.

Strategic Objective 4: Capacity Strengthening				
Targeted capacity strengthening enhances staff skills and performance, and enable a smooth transition to post-demining livelihoods				
Outcomes	Indicators	Baselines	Targets	
4.1. The GoSL (line Ministry and NMAC) takes full ownership of the mine action staff capacity strengthening and post-demining transition process	Number of coordination meetings on capacity strengthening convened and chaired by NMAC, with minutes recorded and shared	Biannual coordination meetings among operators led by MAG (January and October 2024)	Biannual coordination meetings initiated by the NMAC Director during the period 2025-2027	
	Redundancy guidelines formally endorsed by NMAC and the line Ministry, and recognized by the Department of Labour, are in place	1 redundancy guideline endorsed by the 4 operators in March 2024	Redundancy guidelines reviewed, endorsed, and recognized by all relevant stakeholders by Q4 2025	
	Number of MoUs signed between NMAC, the line Ministry, and external stakeholders to support staff capacity building	2 MoUs signed between NMAC and Chief Secretaries of the Northern and Eastern Province in 2023	At least 4 MoUs signed by Q4 2026 between NMAC and external stakeholders to support staff capacity strengthening	
4.2. Mine action staff access tailored capacity strengthening to enhance current performance and support future employability beyond demining	Percentage and number of mine action staff (disaggregated by gender and position) completing one or more tailored capacity-building activities, including targeted women-focused activities addressing specific needs and vulnerabilities	As of June 2025, the target of at least 75% of mine action staff completing one or more tailored capacity strengthening activities has been met	At least 75% of mine action staff complete one or more tailored activities by the end of 2027	
	Percentage of operations line managers reporting improved staff conduct, performance, communication and/or motivation following capacity strengthening activities	Tracking not in place as of June 2025	At least 85% of female mine action staff complete one or more women-focused capacity strengthening activities by the end of 2027	
	Percentage and number of staff made redundant receiving vocational training and/or job placement support, in line with the endorsed redundancy guidelines <sup>73</sup>	0% (2025)	At least 70% of line operations line managers report improvements <sup>71</sup> collected across all operators during the period 2025-2027 <sup>72</sup>	
4.3. The mine action sector	Number of concept notes or funding proposals for staff	In 2024, a total of two concept notes	At least 75% of mine action staff made redundant receive vocational training and/or job placement support	At least 4 concept notes or proposals

<sup>71</sup> As measured through appraisal responses, reduction in disciplinary records, and qualitative feedback

<sup>72</sup> This will be monitored through the following system: 1. A new question added to the staff appraisal form, 2. A review of disciplinary records, and 3. Qualitative data collected by the Staff Capacity Building Teams.

<sup>73</sup> Applicable only in cases of redundancy due to funding cuts.



successfully engages non-traditional donors <sup>74</sup> to secure diversified funding for capacity strengthening and post-demining transition activities	capacity building submitted individually or jointly by mine action operators to non-traditional donors	submitted (both unsuccessful),	submitted each year to non-traditional donors, either directly by operators or through strategic partners
	Number of funding agreements secured from non-traditional donors to support staff capacity building and transition activities	0 (June 2025)	At least 2 funding agreements secured each year from non-traditional donors, either directly by operators or through strategic partners

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<sup>74</sup> Non-traditional donors refer to entities not typically involved in funding mine action, such as international donors supporting skills development initiatives, CSR arms of private sector companies, diaspora organizations, and philanthropic foundations.

## **Strategy implementation, monitoring and review**

Under the lead of NMAC, the programme will develop annual strategy implementation plans that will present activities that will enable the programme reach annual strategy targets.

In line with international good practice, NMAC, in close collaboration with national and international partners, will be responsible for monitoring the implementation of this strategy. Effective IM with clear information requirements and reporting systems, and sound coordination and collaboration with stakeholders are preconditions for this. Progress will be discussed and reported on during 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.

NMAC will organise annual strategy implementation review meetings with relevant stakeholders to take stock of progress made, to determine to what extent strategy targets have been met and if the programme is on track to meet strategic outcomes. These meetings will be organised at the end or the beginning of every calendar year; international donors will be informed of progress made and potential challenges experienced.