



SOUTH SUDAN NATIONAL MINE ACTION STRATEGY

2024-2028



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GLOSSARY OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

APMBC	Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention	MoGCSW	The Ministry of Gender, Child and Social Welfare
CCM	Convention on Cluster Munitions	MoGEI	Ministry of General Education and Instruction
CCW	Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons	MoPSSW	Ministry of Public Service and Social Welfare
CMR	Cluster Munitions Remnants	NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
CHA	Confirmed Hazardous Areas	NMAA	National Mine Action Authority
CRPD	Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities	NTS	Non-Technical Survey
DCA	Dan Church Aid	NTSG	National Technical Standards and Guidelines
DRC	Danish Refugee Council	OAP	Oslo Action Plan
EO	Explosive Ordnance	QA/QC	Quality Assurance/Quality Control
EOD	Explosive Ordnance Disposal	QM	Quality Management
EORE	Explosive Ordnance Risk Education	SADD	Sex and Age-Disaggregated Data
ERW	Explosive Remnants of War	SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
GICHD	Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining	SHA	Suspected Hazardous Area
GoSS	Government of South Sudan	R-SSNDS	Revised South Sudan National Development Strategy
IDP	Internally Displaced Persons	TDI	The Development Initiative
IMAS	International Mine Action Standards	TS	Technical Survey
IM	Information Management	UN	United Nations
IMSMA	Information Management System for Mine Action	UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
INGO	International Non-Governmental Organisation	UNMAS	United Nations Mine Action Service
KAPB	Knowledge, Attitude, Practices and Behaviour	UNMISS	United Nations Mission in South Sudan
LAP	Lausanne Action Plan	UXO	Unexploded Ordnance
MAG	Mines Advisory Group	VA	Victim Assistance

FOREWORD

South Sudan's National Mine Action Strategy 2024 -2028, has been developed in support of the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD), in consultation with all the relevant mine action implementing partners, including the United Nations, government line ministries, international donors and other stakeholders.

This is the third mine action strategic plan that has been developed in close cooperation with all contributing partners. It is aligned with all national and international policies, plans and conventions, reflects international good practice and South Sudan's unique context, opportunities and challenges.

This Strategy highlights mine actions enabling role for achieving broader humanitarian and development goals. It aims to strengthen the integration with other sectors and connects with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The strategy is centred around three main objectives:

- 1). Strengthened National Ownership,
- 2). Land release.
- 3). Explosive Ordnance Risk Education and Victim Assistance.

On behalf of the Government of the Republic of South Sudan, I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the Donors for supporting the Mine action program in South Sudan and my sincere gratitude to all the mine action partners and stakeholders for their continued implementation of this strategy.

In this regard, I hereby endorse South Sudan's National Mine Strategy 2024-2028, and request all relevant partners and stakeholders to refer to this strategy as the guidance for all mine action operations in South Sudan.

Best Regards,

Hon. Joseph Bangasi Bakosoro,
Minister,
Office of the President,
Republic of South Sudan



INTRODUCTION

South Sudan's national mine action strategy presents the strategic direction for its mine action programme for the period 2024 – 2028. Its purpose is to provide accountability, clarity, and a shared sense of strategic orientation among all stakeholders. The strategy builds on achievements made during previous strategic periods, aligns with South Sudan's Revised National Development Strategy, and compliments the revised Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC) Article 5 Extension Request.¹ Reflecting international good practice and in line with the APMBC Oslo Action Plan (OAP)^{2,3} and the Convention on Cluster Munition (CCM) Lausanne Action Plan (LAP)⁴, the strategy was developed based on updated information through a collaborative, inclusive process with a wide range of stakeholders, including the National Mine Action Authority (NMAA), South Sudan government ministries, the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD), the United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS), the APMBC Implementation Support Unit and national and international operators. Following an official request from the NMAA and with support from UNMAS, the GICHD facilitated and supported the process of developing this strategy, drawing on funding from the German Federal Foreign Office.

COUNTRY CONTEXT

After decades of civil war and a six-year Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) period, South Sudan became the world's newest country on 9 July 2011 and joined the United Nations (UN) as 193rd member state on 14 July 2011. South Sudan is a landlocked country bordered by Sudan, Ethiopia, Kenya, Uganda, Democratic Republic of Congo, and Central Africa Republic and covers a total area of 619,745 km², with a population of approximately 10.9 million⁵. According to World Bank data at least 81% of the population lives in the rural areas⁶.

Conflict History

South Sudan has a complex conflict history that spans several decades. Its explosive ordnance (EO)⁷, contamination originates to the 1955-1972 first Sudanese Civil War, which came to an end with the 1972 Addis Ababa Agreement. In 1983, the conflict between the Government of Sudan and the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) re-erupted before it ceased through the signing of the 2005 CPA between the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM)/SPLA and the Government of Sudan. Internal conflicts and insecurity since South Sudan's independence in 2011 resulted in further EO contamination.

On 9 July 2011, the Security Council established the UN Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS). South Sudan faced enormous humanitarian, development, and security challenges from its birth, with the continuation of intercommunal violence in many parts of the country. Two years after independence, civil war erupted in South Sudan, with a temporary pause until the 2015 signing of the Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan (ARCSS), before fighting started again a few months later.

Subsequent efforts in peace negotiations resulted in the signing of the Revitalised ARCSS (R-ARCSS) in 2018. On 22 February 2020, South Sudan formed the Revitalised Transitional Government of National Unity for a 36-month period. On 4 August 2022, parties to the R-ARCSS agreed on a roadmap for a peaceful and democratic end to the transitional period of the R-ARCSS, extending the transitional period by 24 months (from 23 February 2022 to 22 February 2025) to allow the government to meet key benchmarks in the peace agreement.



Humanitarian Context

South Sudan continues to experience a complex humanitarian crisis due to continued conflict and insecurity, climate shocks and a widespread economic crisis. The humanitarian crisis has been compounded by four consecutive years of record flooding and localized drought, resulting in displacement, the destruction of livelihoods and loss of arable land, contributing to increased hunger. The effects of these climate shocks are exacerbated by rising food and fuel prices and continued conflict.

South Sudan's humanitarian crisis has resulted in more than 2.2 million internally displaced persons (IDPs). In parallel, South Sudan also has Africa's largest refugee crisis, with over 2.3 million South Sudanese refugees hosted in neighbouring countries.⁸ Concurrently, South Sudan hosts several hundred thousand refugees from Sudan, following the 2023 crisis, many of whom have settled in underdeveloped, and at times EO-contaminated areas.

Severe food insecurity has increased, with over 7.7 million people facing severe food insecurity, while 1.4 million children under the age of five experience acute malnutrition.⁹ Limited access to basic services remains a key challenge in South Sudan, only 7% of the population have electricity, 10% have access to improved sanitation, 70% lack access to basic healthcare services and a mere 35% of the population have access to potable water.¹⁰

Access to health care facilities is also very limited, with a shortage of medical facilities and qualified health workers and limited supplies of medical equipment and drugs. Malnutrition; water-borne diseases; vector-borne diseases, such as malaria; and acute respiratory infections are common. Increased incidence of water- and vector-borne diseases resulting from climate variability are likely to severely impact the already poor health status of the country.¹¹ Infant and child mortality is high, compounded by the 2022 floods, which affected 1 million people and displaced 140,000 across 29 counties.¹²

Years of conflict and political and economic instability have further resulted in limited access to education. Predictions indicated that children with no access to education facilities increased from 2.9 million in 2019 to 3.2 million in 2020. Also, 20% of the schools in South Sudan are currently non-functional because of insecurity and the displacement of teachers and students.

Environmental Considerations and The Climate Crisis

South Sudan is vulnerable to many natural disasters, including floods, droughts, heatwaves, and outbreaks of disease. In recent years, all these have been exacerbated by climate change, which is increasing in terms of severity, frequency, and complexity, resulting in infrastructure destruction, human suffering and loss of livelihoods.¹³ South Sudan experiences an increasingly warm and dry climate with unpredictable rainfall, resulting in degradation of ecosystems and decreased agricultural productivity that is negatively impacting the livelihoods of a large part of the population.¹⁴ South Sudan ranks as the second most vulnerable country to natural hazards globally¹⁵ and is included among the top five most climate-vulnerable countries, according to the 2024 Inform Risk Index. Alterations in rainy season patterns triggered severe flooding from 2019 to 2022, resulting in increased population vulnerability and infrastructure damage. Climate-induced drought-like conditions strain rural communities reliant on subsistence farming and pastoralism, affecting their access to water resources and production.

Most of the agriculture in South Sudan is rainfed and therefore depends on seasonal rainfall for optimal crop production, making the sector vulnerable to climate variability. Extended dry seasons and increasing precipitation variability negatively impact the economy and the nutrition status of residents who rely on agriculture for their livelihoods.¹⁶ Climate change is expected to continue intensifying extreme weather conditions with devastating results in South Sudan, including in communities already affected by EO.

EXPLOSIVE ORDNANCE CONTAMINATION

Decades of heavy fighting have resulted in widespread EO contamination throughout South Sudan, comprising anti-personnel (AP)¹⁷ and anti-vehicle (AV)¹⁸ mines, cluster munition remnants (CMR)¹⁹ and broader explosive remnants of war (ERW)²⁰. All South Sudan’s 10 states are affected by EO, with the most widespread contamination reported in the Eastern, Central and Western Equatoria, Jonglei and Upper Nile states. The presence of EO exacerbates the impacts of South Sudan’s wider humanitarian crisis, while mine action facilitates activities that seek to address it. The map below illustrates that 7 out of the 10 states that have remaining EO contamination as of January 2024 also experience food insecurity and flooding.

South Sudan Humanitarian Situation

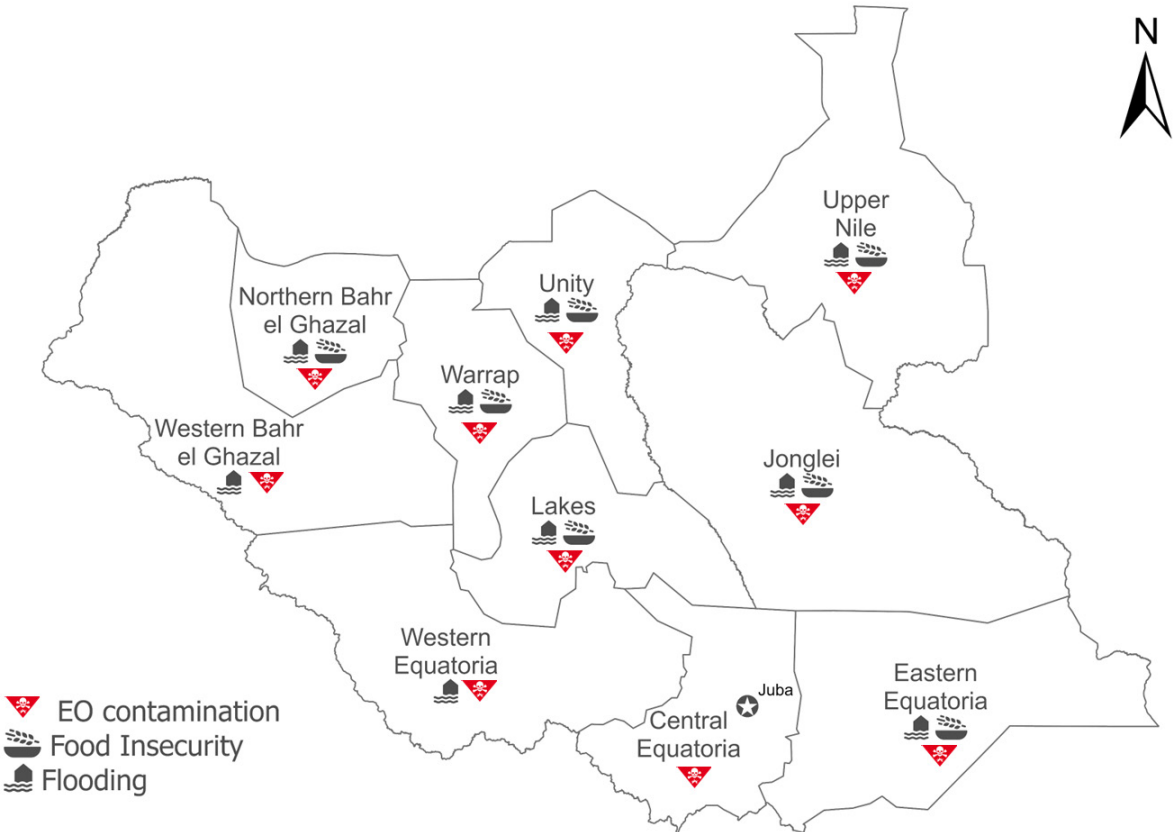


Figure 1 South Sudan map, EO contamination, food insecurity and flooding, GICHD, 2024²¹

The presence of EO poses a physical threat to the population of South Sudan, precluding the delivery of vital humanitarian aid, negatively impacting socioeconomic development and access to essential services including health care facilities, while inhibiting freedom of movement.

South Sudan has categorised the humanitarian and socio-economic impact from EO into four areas²²:

1. Agriculture and livestock: Agricultural land in South Sudan is often located within or very close to hazardous areas (HAs). Analysis of contamination data revealed that 52% of HAs are located less than 50m from agricultural land, and that there is significant overlap between the densest minefield contamination and the most fertile land. While comprehensive data on livestock EO accidents is not available, EO’s impact on livestock and by extension of pastoralist communities, cannot be overstated. South Sudan’s many cattle herding communities rely heavily on cattle that represent significant value and wealth. Livestock death therefore represents a major loss of wealth for many communities.

2. Infrastructure and community development: EO contamination also impacts community member’s access to water points, schools, health clinics and other services and infrastructure. Many South Sudanese depend on boreholes for access to water, data analysis revealed that out of 147 minefields, 22% were located less than 50m from a water point.

3. Natural resources: The importance of natural resources to communities in South Sudan must not be understated. Land, which at first glance may appear to be unused, is often used to burn charcoal (for home use and for sale), graze cattle and other livestock, collect fruits (for food and for making oil), hunting, and collecting honey. Because of the importance of these natural resources, community members may venture off known roads and safe paths into unknown territory to collect natural resources, putting themselves at greater risk of EO accidents.

4. Access, displacements and returns: An analysis of EO accident data between 2011-2023 illustrates that ‘playing’ and travelling have traditionally been the most common activities at the time of EO accidents. The population of South Sudan is highly mobile, with a lot of travel done by foot.

EO casualties

Due to low levels of reporting (itself a result of the remoteness of many EO contaminated areas), limited infrastructure and lack of awareness, South Sudan has an incomplete overview of its EO casualty situation. While organisations have continued to gather casualty data, the conflict has affected their ability to do so effectively. Despite limited EO accident information, analysis of available data reveals that boys represented 43% of all EO casualties between 2011-2023, followed by men at 25%, ‘unknown’ at 14%, girls at 11% and women at 7%. This reflects global EO accident patterns, where boys and men are generally overrepresented due to their distinct gender-related roles and responsibilities. These gender-specific aspects are recognised and addressed by organisations that deliver EORE in South Sudan and illustrate the importance of collecting and analysing SADD.

Activity at the time of EO accidents													
Age Group	Animal Grazing	Collecting	Demining	Farming	Household	Hunting	Military	Passing	Playing	Tampering	Travelling	Unknown	Grand Total
Boys	20	8				9		22	153	56	20	41	329
Girls		5			5			12	34	13	6	12	87
Men	8	11	1	14	2	2	1	19	8	16	77	35	194
Unknown Category		20		13				34	7	10	11	10	105
Women		3	2	5	4	1	1	10	9	2	8	12	57
Grand Total	28	47	3	32	11	12	2	97	211	97	122	110	772

Figure 3 Activity at the time of EO accidents (2011-2023 data), UNMAS January 2024

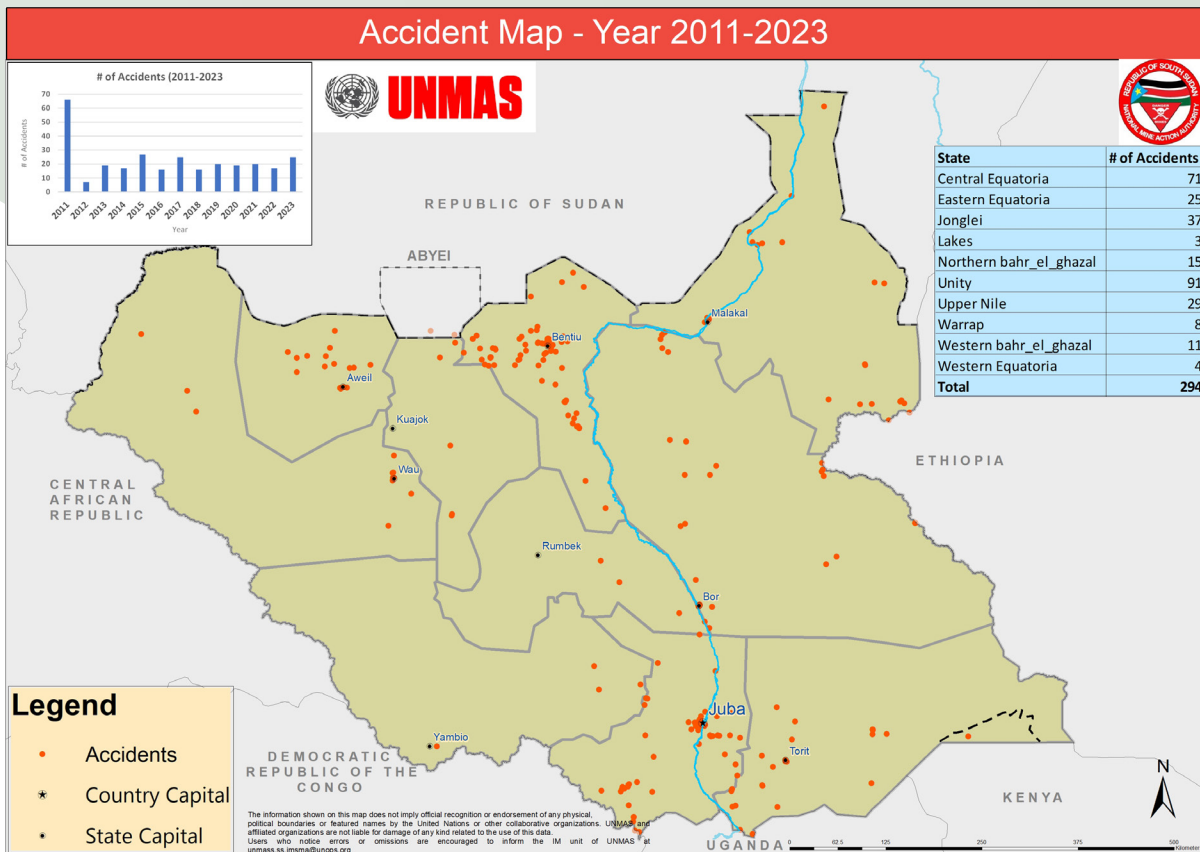



Figure 4 South Sudan EO accident map 2011-2023, UNMAS January 2024

The Mine Action Programme

The NMAA Act of 2023 provides the legal framework that governs the establishment, powers, functions, and operations of the NMAA. It stipulates that NMAA is responsible for overseeing, regulating, coordinating, supervising, prioritising, and monitoring all mine action activities.²³ In line with the Act, NMAA's structure includes management and a board which is an interministerial body, comprising nine different ministries.²⁴ As of January 2024, this board had not yet been established.

The Ministry of Gender, Child and Social Welfare (MoGCSW) formulates and implements policies and legislation concerning its mandate to “promote gender equality, social justice, and safeguard the rights and welfare of women, children, persons with disability and other vulnerable groups”.²⁵ The MoGCSW is also responsible for overseeing the integration of victim assistance into broader national frameworks and has dedicated departments focusing on social welfare, special needs, rehabilitation and disabilities. The Ministry of General Education and Instruction (MoGEI)²⁶ is the focal point for EORE activities within the Government of South Sudan (GoSS). UNICEF has supported EORE in South Sudan since the inception of the mine action programme.

UNMAS, established in South Sudan since the country's independence in 2011, and before then in the southern Sudan region since 2004, is mandated to support the UN Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS), through Security Council Resolution 1996 (2011). This resolution authorised UNMISS, among other tasks, to support South Sudan in “conducting de-mining activities within available resources and strengthening the capacity of the Republic of South Sudan Demining Authority to conduct mine action in accordance with International Mine Action Standards”.



Mine action is implemented by commercial operators contracted by UNMAS and international and national NGOs funded by international donors, all accredited by NMAA and UNMAS. All information is recorded in the IMSMA Core database, managed by UNMAS. UNMAS is responsible for all tasking and quality management, including for operators funded bilaterally. As of January 2024, three international NGOs (DanChurch Aid (DCA), Danish Refugee Council (DRC), Mines Advisory Group (MAG)) and three commercial companies (G4S Ordnance Management, The Development Initiative (TDI), and Safe Lane Global) implemented land release activities in South Sudan.

NMAA organises and chairs monthly coordination meetings with all operators, while UNMAS coordinates monthly operations meetings with its contractors. UNMAS and MAG also co-chair the Mine Action Sub-Cluster, part of the Protection Cluster for South Sudan. Regular coordination meetings are also organised by the Explosive Ordnance Risk Education (EORE) and victim assistance (VA) working groups respectively.

NORMATIVE FRAMEWORK

South Sudan's mine action programme is guided by a normative framework that is rooted in national and international laws, obligations, policies, and broader international agendas. The mine action programme commits to adhere to this, to continue promoting nationally owned, localised mine action that contributes to gender equality, broader humanitarian goals, and sustainable development.

National Normative Framework

The Transitional Constitution of the Republic of South Sudan (2011)²⁷ stipulates its commitment to establishing a decentralised democratic multi-party system of governance in which power shall be peacefully transferred and to upholding values of human dignity and equal rights and duties of men and women; and conscious of the need to manage our natural resources sustainably and efficiently for the benefit of the present and future generations and to eradicate poverty and attain the Millennium Development Goals. Mine action's enabling role will be key for these commitments. As highlighted above, the NMAA Act provides the legal framework that governs the establishment, powers, functions, and operations of the NMAA.

With the support of GICHD, NMAA developed South Sudan's first National Mine Action Gender Equality Policy in 2023-24. The Policy aims to promote safe and equitable access for all to opportunities and services in South Sudan's mine action sector regardless of gender, age, ethnicity, disability, and other diversity factors and help all men, women, girls, and boys to enjoy their rights without any discrimination.

South Sudan National Development Strategy

South Sudan's Revised National Development Strategy (R-NDS) 2021–2024 presents the “national aspirations to slowly move from dependence on humanitarian aid to a development trajectory” and adopts the humanitarian, development, and peace nexus approach to the implementation of the R-NDS. It is aligned with the R-ARCSS; the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development; Agenda 2063 (for Africa) and South Sudan's Nationally Determined Contribution.²⁸ The R-NDS lists EO contamination affecting farming, grazing and human settlement as one of five issues to be addressed under the governance cluster “to establish an environment for sustainable peace and development in the country.”

In late 2022, the GoSS and the UN signed the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework 2023–2025, outlining the UN’s collective action to support the GoSS’ national development priorities for the period 2023–2025. The framework is aligned with national development priorities, as highlighted R-NDS and is aligned with the 2030 Agenda.²⁹

International Normative Framework

Six months after becoming an independent state, South Sudan deposited its notification of succession to the APMBC on 11 November 2011 and reported at the 2011 Eleventh Meeting of States Parties that it did not possess any stockpiled AP mines. It also informed in its 2012 Article 7 report that it had areas under its jurisdiction or control in which AP mines were known or suspected to be emplaced. In line with its Article 5 obligations, South Sudan committed to destroy or ensure the destruction of all AP mines in these areas as soon as possible or by 9 July 2021. South Sudan’s 2020 Article 5 Extension Request, requesting a five-year extension to 9 July 2026, was approved by States Parties at the 18th Meeting of States Parties in 2020.³⁰ South Sudan’s obligations under the APMBC are guided by the OAP until 2025.

South Sudan completed the national legal processes that allowed it to join the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) on 24 February 2023. South Sudan also completed national procedures to accede to the CCM on 2 August, with the convention entering into force on 1 February 2024. South Sudan’s deadline under CCM Article 4 on clearance and risk education is set for February 2034 and its obligations under this convention will be guided by the LAP until 2026. South Sudan also ratified and acceded to the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women³¹ in 2015 and acceded to the Convention on the Rights of the Child in 2015, and its first and second Optional Protocols in 2018.³² South Sudan is also a State Party to the Paris Agreement.


Crosscutting Considerations

The Grand Bargain and Localisation

The Grand Bargain is a commitment by international donors and humanitarian organisations to empower people in need and improve the effectiveness and efficiency of humanitarian action.³³ Localisation, understood as a commitment to make principled humanitarian action as local as possible and as international as necessary, is a key principle of the Grand Bargain. Its overall goal is to provide greater support and funding tools to local and national actors by focusing on enhancing partnerships, strengthening capacities, providing more direct financing, and improving coordination.³⁴ South Sudan’s mine action programme is fully committed to the localisation agenda, reflected in commitments in this strategy.

Gender, Diversity, Equality, and Inclusion

Equality of all persons is enshrined in South Sudan’s Transitional Constitution, which grants equal protection of the law ‘without discrimination as to race, ethnic origin, colour, sex, language, religious creed, political opinion, birth, locality or social status.’³⁵ The Constitution further includes an Article on the Rights of Women, and stipulates that ‘women shall be accorded full and equal dignity of the person with men’ and that all levels of government shall “promote women[‘s] participation in public life and their representation in the legislative and executive organs by at least twenty-five per cent.”³⁶ This affirmative action for employment of women was later increased to a minimum of 35% through the 2018 Revitalised



Peace Agreement.³⁷ In line with this, the NMAA Act stipulates that that the composition of the NMAA (the Board and Management) shall comprise at least 35% women.

Furthermore, UNMAS policy requires its contractors to elaborate any approaches linked to the improvement of participation of women in their activities in their proposals. In addition, several INGOs have implemented initiatives to strengthen gender equality in mine action. These include the implementation of female only demining trainings and the development of Gender Action Plans.

South Sudan recognises that women, girls, boys, and men may be affected differently by EO contamination due to their roles and responsibilities and often therefore have specific and varying needs and priorities. The mine action programme commits to ensuring that mine action survey, clearance, EORE and VA activities reflect the distinct needs of different age, sex and diversity groups. Such tailored activities will help to ensure they are effective and non-discriminatory and that results are sustainable.

South Sudan will ensure that gender and diversity aspects are considered in the planning, implementation, and monitoring phases of all mine action projects, promoting equality and quality. This supports the OAP's action #3 and LAP's action#4 on the importance of inclusion and promoting gender balance.^{38,39} The programme will also ensure that all EO accident data is collected and analysed in a sex and age disaggregated manner to allow for detailed reporting and effective targeting of activities and assistance, in line with the OAP's action #35.⁴⁰ South Sudan further acknowledges all other gender and diversity-related actions in the OAP and its sex and age disaggregated data (SADD) reporting obligations. Gender-sensitive mine action will also contribute to the realisation of the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 5 on gender equality, through mainstreaming gender in all operations and guaranteeing non-discriminatory employment opportunities. South Sudan will require all stakeholders to implement their activities in line with the South Sudan National Mine Action Gender Equality Policy once finalised and approved in 2024. The annual strategy implementation plans will provide good opportunities to ensure this.

Under the leadership of the Ministry of Gender, Child and Welfare, South Sudan completed the review of its second National Action Plan (NAP) on UN Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325 on Women Peace and Security⁴¹ in 2023.⁴² The NAP, which will also be developed at the state and local level, provides an important opportunity to strengthen mine action's contribution to the Women Peace and Security agenda.

The 2030 Agenda

The 2030 Agenda with its 17 SDGs and 169 targets has since early 2016 shaped global development efforts and policymaking.⁴³ The Agenda is centred on the principle that sustainable development be participatory, inclusive, and non-discriminatory. South Sudan's mine action programme is fully committed to achieving the SDGs and recognises the connections between mine action and several of the SDGs. Survey and clearance of contaminated areas and the subsequent release of safe land will be intimately linked with the SDGs as much of South Sudan's EO contamination is near rural communities with significant socio-economic, humanitarian, commercial and environmental impacts.

The Sustainable Development Outcomes of Mine Action in South Sudan study presents evidence of the multidimensional and transformative role of mine action in South Sudan by identifying its contribution to 12 SDGs and to at least 50 of their targets.⁴⁴ As such South Sudan's mine action programme has contributed to all five dimensions of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development: partnership, peace, people, planet and prosperity.⁴⁵ South Sudan commits to continue ensuring mine action's facilitative role, including through stronger partnerships, enhanced coordination and facilitating the achievements of the SDGs.

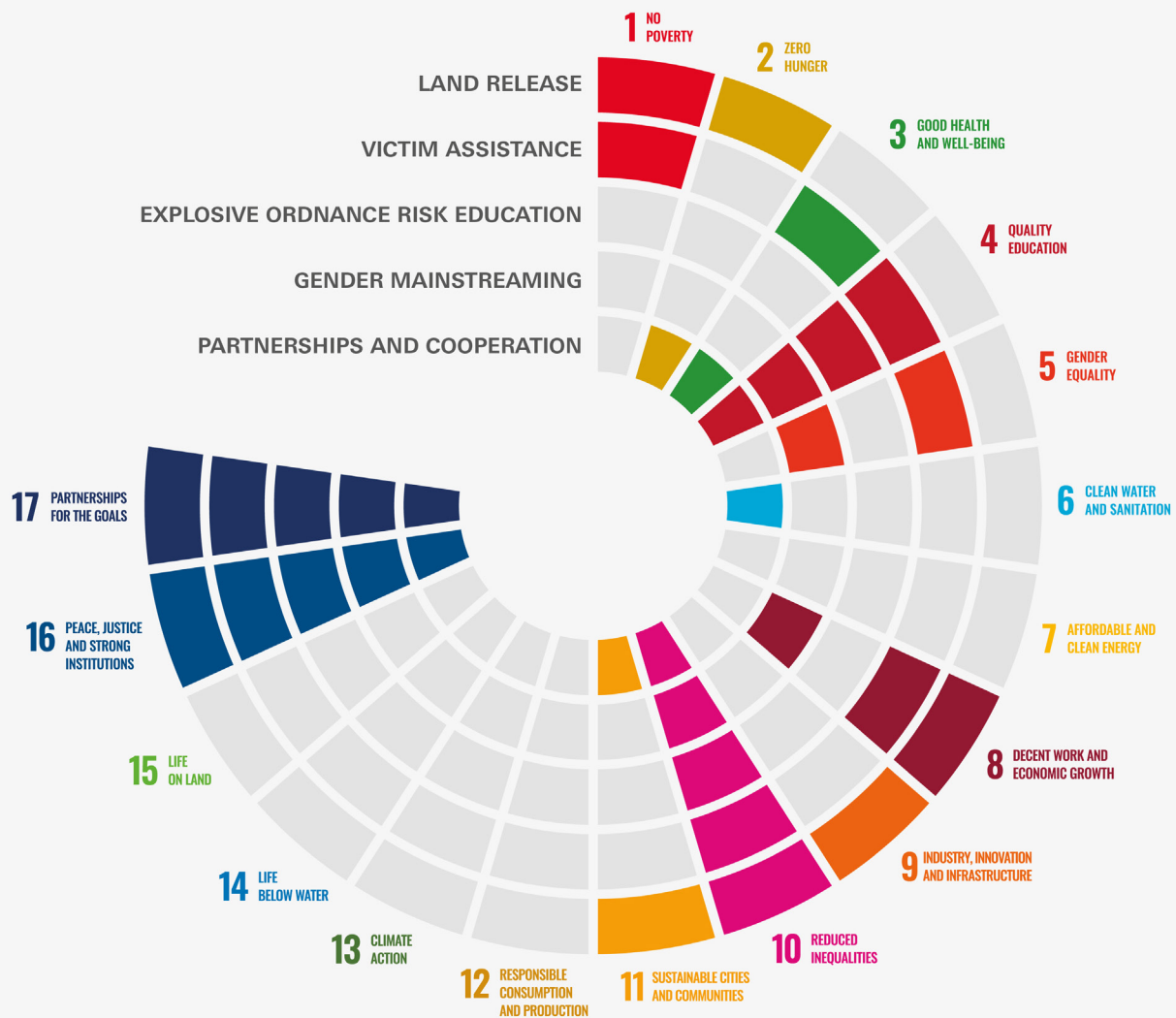


Figure 5 The Sustainable Development Outcomes of Mine Action in South Sudan, GICHD and UNDP June 2023

THE ENABLING ENVIRONMENT

The enabling environment of South Sudan's mine action programme is vital to supporting activities that are efficient, effective, safe, and implemented in line with NTSGs, international good practice and convention obligations. Due to limited national ownership and a lack of financial, human, and technical resources within the NMAA and other national structures, the mine action programme has relied heavily on the presence of UNMISS and UNMAS. Moving forward, greater national commitment is critical to limit the reliance on UN to manage areas that essentially are national responsibilities, as stipulated in the NMAA Act. Stronger national ownership will safeguard the sustainability of the programme and promote a more nationally and locally owned mine action programme.

Quality Management for Continual Improvement

Quality management (QM) in mine action focuses on the implementation of effective and appropriate processes to deliver outputs and products in line with specified requirements. It relies upon the availability and use of information as evidence to support decision-making and to inform the planning process, direct implementation, check performance against requirements and to take action to improve the quality and safety of processes, services, and products. International Mine Action Standards (IMAS) 07.12⁴⁶ presents several principles that are central to QM in mine action.⁴⁷ South Sudan's mine action programme embraces all these principles, reflected in subsequent strategic objective sections. The driver behind continual improvement processes is the PDCA cycle (plan – do – check – act) which occurs at every level of the programme and within every mine action activity.⁴⁸ Quality assurance (QA) and quality control (QC) are key components of the operational QM process.

Mine Action Standards

Standards are a central component of QM and the development and application of IMAS are guided by five key principles, as outlined in IMAS 01.10.⁴⁹ One of these principles is national ownership, which reaffirms that the primary responsibility for mine action lies with the Government of the affected state.

Acknowledging the importance of IMAS-compliant NTSGs for effective and efficient operations, South Sudan's commitment to taking on greater national ownership and its mandated responsibility in leading the development of NTSGs in line with the NMAA Act, NMAA will play a more active role in the annual review and update of NTSGs, currently led by UNMAS. This is addressed in further detail in subsequent strategic objective sections.

Information Management

The goal of information management (IM) is to provide stakeholders with timely, accurate and relevant information products that meet agreed requirements. IMAS 05.10 defines IM as the ongoing specification and evaluation of information requirements, the collection, validation, storage and analysis of relevant data followed by the dissemination of information products to stakeholders in a timely manner.⁵⁰ As highlighted in IMAS 05.10, QM principles should guide the implementation of all elements of IM: organisation, resources, processes, and products.⁵¹ Clear reporting systems and sound coordination and collaboration with relevant stakeholders are central for the achievement of all objectives presented in this strategy. South Sudan's mine action programme will build on its achievement in database clean-up and ensure these efforts continue throughout the strategic period. This supports OAP action #9 on the importance of establishing and maintaining a national database that contains accurate and up-to-date data.⁵² South Sudan's national database is currently managed by UNMAS. In line with the NMAA Act, and South Sudan's commitment to strengthen national ownership, NMAA will play a greater role in information management, on the assumption that GoSS will dedicate required resources to facilitate this.

STRATEGIC ORIENTATION 2024 - 2028

The Theory of Change for South Sudan's mine action programme centres around a vision, mission, three strategic objectives, outcomes, cross-cutting factors, the enabling environment and risks and mitigation measures. 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, each accompanied by a mitigation measure. The strategy will be implemented through a budgeted work-plan and progress will be measured at the outcome level.

SOUTH SUDAN NATIONAL MINE ACTION STRATEGY

VISION



Mine action facilitates safe returns and allows women, girls, boys and men to engage in secure and sustainable livelihood activities

MISSION



To resource, strengthen and sustain a national mine action programme that coordinates land release and EORE activities in line with international good practice, NTSGs and convention obligations

OBJECTIVES



1

National Ownership

2

Land Release

3

Explosive Ordnance Risk Education and Victim Assistance

OUTCOMES



- Coordination and information sharing are strengthened
- Mine action is integrated into national plans and strategies
- NMAA is strengthened and empowered
- Clarity is gained on resource needs and funding gaps, national budgetary support is increased

- Land release activities are continuously improved
- Clarity is gained on the remaining EO problem
- Safe land is handed over and land use is documented
- National survey and clearance capacities are strengthened

- Clarity is gained on EO accidents and EORE needs
- EORE is continuously improved
- EORE coordination is strengthened
- National EORE capacities and structures are strengthened and sustainable
- Strengthened VA coordination facilitates greater information sharing

CROSS-CUTTING FACTORS



Localisation, gender, diversity and inclusion, environmental considerations, national ownership, the Sustainable Development Goals

ENABLING ENVIRONMENT



Quality management, NTSGs, information management, resource mobilisation, capacity development

RISKS



- Funding
- Corruption
- Insecurity
- Limited coordination
- Climate change

MITIGATION MEASURES

- Strive for a broader funding base
- Resource mobilisation and communications strategy
- Transparency and accountability as guiding principles
- Ongoing monitoring and adaptation
- Government, community and donor engagement

Achievements, Challenges and Risks

Despite significant challenges, including ongoing insecurity, South Sudan's mine action programme has successfully implemented activities throughout the country. Progress has been made in surveying and clearing hazardous areas and releasing safe land that has supported humanitarian efforts and contributed to sustainable development. Progress has also been made in strengthening mine action's normative framework, including South Sudan's NMAA Act, the NMAA National Gender Equality Policy and South Sudan's accession to the CCM and the CRPD. These developments have signalled South Sudan's commitment to international humanitarian law and have given rise to new opportunities for the mine action programme that it will capitalise on. Also, greater, evidence-based clarity on mine action's contribution to the SDGs provides opportunities for the programme to further strengthen mine action's visibility and highlight its enabling role for humanitarian efforts and broader development in South Sudan.

UNMAS and NMAA have further continued efforts to gain greater clarity on the remaining EO problem by ongoing cleaning of the IMSMA database, analysing operational information and prioritising survey activities. While the remaining EO contamination figure remains challenging to confirm, these efforts have resulted in greater clarity in line with the OAP's action #18 on the importance of establishing an evidence-based baseline. GoSS also has an opportunity to take on greater national ownership of its EO problem and the mine action programme, and to share good practice and lessons learnt with the international community. Moreover, GoSS has the prospect to support a more localised mine action programme, capitalising on the many national NGOs already present in South Sudan.

Several risks may impact the achievement of strategic objectives, the most prominent being South Sudan's fragile security situation and organisations' ability to access affected areas. While strengthened national ownership is an opportunity moving forward, limited national ownership and insufficient national budgetary support to mine action are key challenges experienced by the programme. Acknowledging that national ownership is a precondition for achieving all strategic objectives, insufficient national ownership is also a principal risk that could jeopardise progress in implementing the strategy. The strategic objective on national ownership addresses this in multiple ways. A related risk concerns insufficient national and international funding and a heavy reliance on the presence of UNMISS and by extension UNMAS to fund operators and coordinate and manage the mine action programme. Acknowledging the major risks that may impede the achievement of strategic objectives, four key principles underpin South Sudan's mine action strategy and are central to achieving all objectives: 1. accountability⁵³, 2. continual improvement, 3. transparency⁵⁴ and 4. humanitarian principles: humanity, impartiality, neutrality, and independence.⁵⁵



Delegation of South Sudan at the 2022 Intersessional Meetings of the APMBC, Geneva. © AP Mine Ban Convention ISU

Strategic Objective 1: Strengthened National Ownership

As a State Party to the APMBC and CCM, South Sudan commits to take on greater ownership of the mine action programme, including by ensuring that NMAA is sufficiently equipped and resourced to effectively execute its mandate in line with the NMAA Act. This supports OAP and LAP actions#1, on demonstrating national ownership, including by making financial commitments.

This strategic objective is supported by four strategic outcomes. Firstly, greater national ownership⁵⁶ will be advanced by strengthening NMAA and ensuring it is empowered, appropriately structured, and sufficiently equipped and resourced to allow it to take on greater responsibilities. Secondly, recognising the importance of coordination, regular and structured coordination meetings will be continued to facilitate greater information sharing. NMAA will take the lead in raising awareness of the EO problem and the enabling role of mine action for broader development, including by requesting regular meetings with the Office of the President and the Parliament. These meetings will provide NMAA with the opportunity to present achievements, clarify remaining challenges and coordinate activities. They will also give NMAA the chance to reinforce mine action's visibility within the GoSS, promote linkages between mine action and broader humanitarian, development, and peace efforts, including the SDGs, and explore partnerships to facilitate more sustainable results. Third, capacity strengthening initiatives with NMAA and work placements will be a combined effort among all international partners. A collective, NMAA capacity strengthening plan stipulating roles, responsibilities, outcomes, outputs and timelines, with an accompanying monitoring framework would allow for a holistic approach among stakeholders to developing and measuring activities. This would facilitate a long-term engagement and reduce the burden on one organisation.⁵⁷ The overall goal would be to strengthen the capacities of NMAA to allow it to implement its mandate and as such take on greater national ownership.

Fourth, NMAA will continue its efforts to integrate mine action into relevant national plans and strategies, including South Sudan's next National Development Strategy. Drawing attention to mine action's facilitating role will strengthen connections between mine action and humanitarian, development, and peace efforts, needs and priorities, in line with OAP's action #6 on enhanced partnerships and integrated responses between mine action and other sectors. This initiative is also in line with the Triple Nexus approach.⁵⁸ Lastly, resource mobilisation will be an ongoing effort, with the goal to secure increased national budgetary support, including to NMAA and national NGOs, in keeping with the localisation agenda. In line with OAP action #43⁵⁹, NMAA and partners will develop a resource mobilisation strategy which will bring greater clarity on funding targets and key principles that will guide all resource mobilisation efforts in the mine action programme until the end of 2028.

Strategic Objective 1: Strengthened National Ownership

Greater coordination and information sharing result in raised awareness, increased collaboration, and stronger national ownership

Outcomes	Indicators	Baselines	Targets
<p>1.1. Coordination and information sharing are strengthened</p> <p>Regular mine action coordination meetings strengthen collaboration and information sharing among stakeholder</p>	<p>APMBC Article 7 transparency report submitted by 30 April every year, drawing on the guide to reporting^{60,61}</p> <p>CCM Article 7 transparency report submitted by 30 July every year</p>	<p>South Sudan's Article 7 report was submitted by deadline in 2023</p> <p>South Sudan acceded to CCM on 3 August 2023 and submitted a Voluntary Article 7 report in 2023</p>	<p>APMBC Article 7 reports submitted by 30 April</p> <p>APMBC updated Article 5 work plan submitted by 15 April 2024</p> <p>Initial CCM Article 7 report submitted by 30 July 2024, and thereafter by 30 April every year</p>
	Number of NMAA meetings with the Parliament/year	One meeting with the parliament took place in 2023	NMAA briefs the Parliament on mine action 3 times/year
	Number of mine action donor coordination meetings organised/year	One mine action donor coordination meeting organised in 2023	One mine action donor coordination meeting organised/year 2024-2028
	Number of monthly NMAA coordination meetings organised/year	Four NMAA s coordination meetings organised in 2023	10 NMAA coordination meetings organised every year 2024-2028
<p>1.2 Mine action is integrated into national plans and strategies</p> <p>Reinforced coordination and information sharing facilitate greater awareness of mine action within the government of South Sudan, mine action's inclusion in relevant national plans and strategies</p>	Number of national plans and strategies that include mine action	Mine action is minimally referenced in South Sudan's R-NDS 2021-2024	Mine action is better reflected in South Sudan's next NDS 2024-2028

Strategic Objective 1: Strengthened National Ownership Greater coordination and information sharing result in raised awareness, increased collaboration, and stronger national ownership			
Outcomes	Indicators	Baselines	Targets
1.3 NMAA is strengthened and empowered The allocation of greater national resources, capacity enhancement activities enable NMAA to execute its mandate in a gender sensitive manner, as stipulated in the NMAA Act	Number of capacity strengthening initiatives with NMAA Number of NMAA staff on-the-job trainings with UNMAS and INGOs Existence of a NMAA capacity strengthening plan % of NMAA female employees Existence of National Mine Action Gender Equality Policy	9 capacity strengthening initiatives with NMAA in 2023 Five ⁶² NMAA on-the-job trainings with UNMAS and INGOs in 2023 No updated NMMA capacity strengthening plan as of 2023 ⁶³ 12.5% of NMAA are female employees as of January 2024 Development of South Sudan National Mine Action Gender Equality Policy started in late 2023	9 or more capacity strengthening initiatives with NMAA/year Five on-the-job trainings for NMAA with UNMAS and INGOs /year NMAA collective capacity strengthening plan developed by 2025 20% of NMAA employees are female by the end of 2025 South Sudan National Mine Action Gender Equality Policy developed and approved by mid-2024
1.4 Clarity is gained on resource needs and funding gaps and national budgetary support is increased A resource mobilisation strategy provides clarity on funding principles, resource requirements and gaps until 2028 ⁶⁴	Existence of government-approved resource mobilisation strategy National budgetary support disbursed to NMAA /year (USD) # of national NGOs funded by GoSS	Zero resource mobilisation strategy as of 2023 No baseline on national budgetary support disbursed to NMAA in 2023 Zero national NGOs funded by GoSS in 2023	Resource mobilisation strategy developed and approved by mid-2025 Increased national budgetary support to mine action At least one national NGO receive funding from GoSS as of 2025, increased by one NGO every year until 2028

Strategic Objective 2: Land Release

Land release describes the process of applying all reasonable effort⁶⁵ to identify, define, and remove all presence and suspicion of EO through non-technical survey, technical survey and/or clearance.⁶⁶ South Sudan’s mine action programme commits to ensuring that all land release operations are conducted in line with IMAS-compliant NTSGs, and that required information is collected, stored, analysed and reported on in line with specified land release classifications, activities and products.⁶⁷ Applying these standards and principles will allow South Sudan to meet its convention reporting obligations, including OAP actions #20 and #22.^{68 69} A key challenge over recent years has been the discovery of previously unknown mine and CMR-contaminated areas. Concerning CMR contamination, CMR completion reports show that clearance generally extend well beyond the original polygons as recorded in IMSMA. UNMAS has reported that completed CMR tasks often are significantly larger compared to the initial polygons due to the discovery of CMR in fade-outs. The complexity of South Sudan’s CMR contamination, including the fact that several CMR strikes and overlapping footprints are often found in one area means that it is challenging to estimate the CMR baseline and the required clearance time. Addressing this challenge, NMAA and UNMAS will continue to analyse historical CMR clearance data to estimate the remaining CMR contamination more accurately. Findings will feed into South Sudan’s Initial CCM Article workplan, due in July 2024.

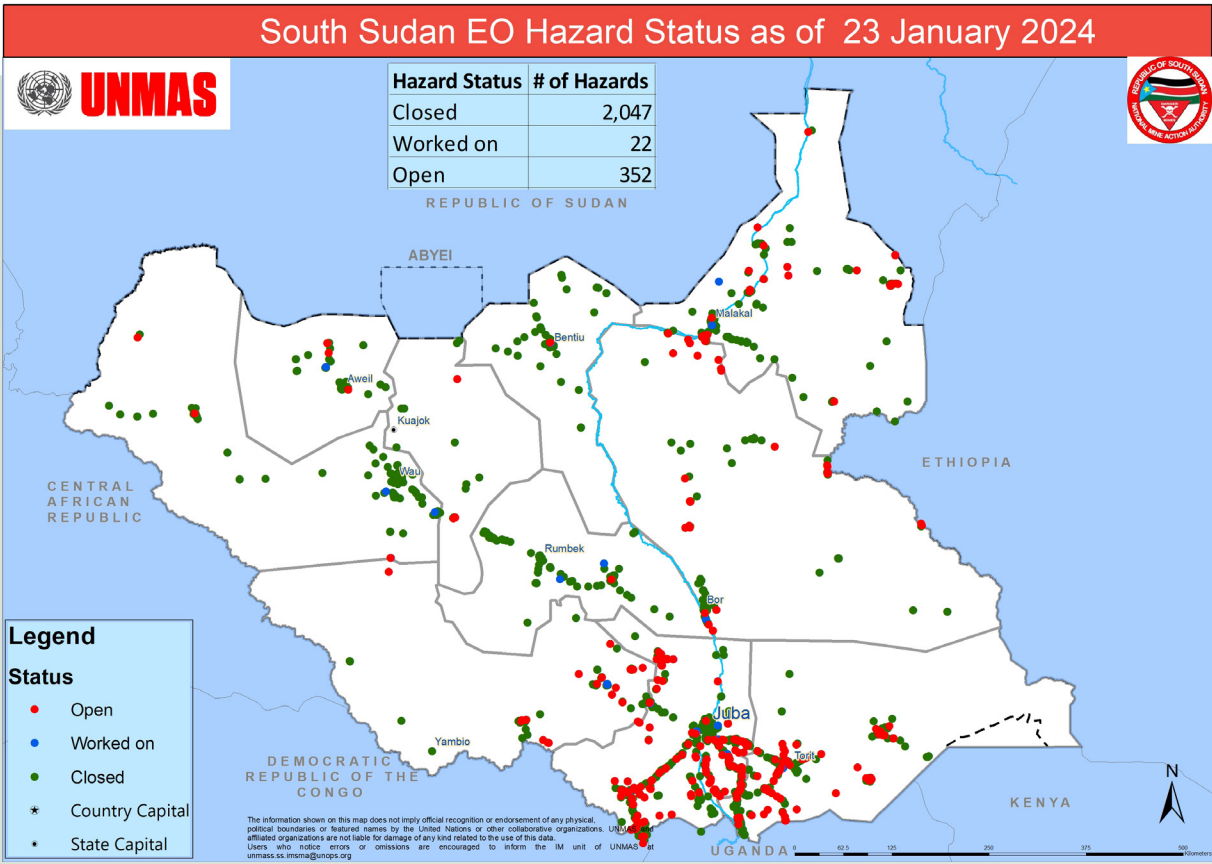


Figure 6 EO Hazard status as of January 2024, UNMAS South Sudan



© UNMAS South Sudan

This land release objective is accompanied by four outcomes. Firstly, the mine action programme commits to continually improving operational efficiency and effectiveness, including by developing, reviewing, and fully implementing updated NTSGs, in line with OAP action # 5⁷⁰ and LAP action #21⁷¹. Secondly, in compliance with its Article 5 and 4 commitments, South Sudan will continue its efforts to better define the boundaries of the AP and CMR contamination to gain clarity on the remaining contamination and reflect this in updated baselines. This will be achieved through continued analysis of historical land release data, ongoing database clean-up, continuous survey and clearance activities and the implementation of a baseline survey (BLS) in line with South Sudan's Technical Note.⁷² Clearance assets can then be allocated to areas that have confirmed contamination which will facilitate more efficient operations. This will support OAP's and the LAP's actions # 18^{73,74}, and is aligned with related indicators. All activities will be implemented in line with South Sudan's updated APMBC and CCM workplans.

The third outcome focuses on ensuring timely handover ceremonies, appropriate information sharing and broad gender and diversity inclusion and participation. With a view to identify, document and gain clarity on land use and the extent to which women, girls, boys, and men benefit from the released land, all operators are requested to conduct post-clearance impact assessment on 50% of AP mine and CMR tasks. These should be conducted in line with the minimum data requirements as stipulated in IMAS 05.10 on information management, the TNMA 05.10/01 on measurement and reporting of beneficiaries⁷⁵, gender and diversity considerations and relevant NTSGs. Operators will share information on post-land release land use with NMAA for further dissemination to GoSS and international donors to raise awareness of mine action's facilitative role and broader benefits.

Lastly, GoSS will strengthen national survey and clearance capacities, including by allocating national budgetary support to enhance and sustain national NGOs. These efforts will reinforce the localisation⁷⁶ of mine action and promote greater sustainability. This is particularly important given the risks related to sustained funding. The GoSS also commits to reinforcing its institutional national survey and clearance capacities to ensure it has sustainable, national structures in place to manage residual EO contamination⁷⁷ and commits to develop a strategy on the management of residual contamination⁷⁸, outlining processes, roles, and responsibilities, in line with OAP action #26⁷⁹ and LAP action #22.⁸⁰ Lastly, the mine action programme will define its APMBC Article 5 and CCM Article 4 completion processes during the 2025 mid-term strategy review, to ensure these processes are clarified, standardised and transparent.

Strategic Objective 2: Release of safe land			
Effective and efficient land release activities facilitate safe returns and sustainable development			
Outcomes	Indicators	Baselines	Targets
<p>2.1 Land release activities are continuously improved</p> <p>The review and full implementation of NTSGs facilitate effective and efficient operations⁸¹</p>	<p>#of reviewed and endorsed NTSGs/year⁸²</p>	<p>As of January 2024, 24 NTSG Chapters have been endorsed</p>	<p>Annual review of NTSGs organised based on identified needs recorded in internal tracker</p>
<p>2.2 Clarity is gained on the remaining EO problem</p> <p>Ongoing database clean-up and survey and clearance clarify the extent of the remaining EO problem, facilitating operational planning, tasking, implementation, and reporting⁸³</p>	<p># of CMR-contaminated areas (m²)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • cancelled through NTS • reduced through TS • cleared • # of CMR destroyed <p># of AP mined areas (m²)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • cancelled through NTS: • reduced through TS • cleared • # of AP mines destroyed <p># of AV mined areas (m²)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • cancelled through NTS: • reduced through TS • cleared • # of AV mines destroyed <p># of ERW destroyed (EOD call outs and land release)</p>	<p>2023 CMR land release outputs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4,682m² cancelled through NTS • 0 m² reduced through TS • 4,060,959 m² cleared • 3,102 CMR destroyed <p>2023 AP mine land release outputs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 20,527 m² cancelled through NTS • 0 m² reduced through TS • 594,087m² cleared • 142 AP mines destroyed <p>2023 AV mine land release outputs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 68,509 m² cancelled through NTS • 0 m² reduced through TS • 153,032 m² cleared • 25 AV mines destroyed <p>5,932 ERW destroyed in 2023 (EOD call outs and land release)</p>	<p>Disaggregated land release outputs are reported on in compliance with NTSGs, IMAS and convention obligations</p> <p>All ERW destroyed are reported on, in line with NTSG</p>
	<p>Existence of lists of Payams to be prioritized for BLS, disaggregated by SHA and CHA</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CMR • AP mine <p>% of prioritized Payams where BLS has been conducted⁸⁴</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CMR • AP mine 	<p>BLS conducted in 0% of prioritised Payams as of January 2024</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CMR • AP mine <p>BLS conducted in 0% of prioritised Payams as of January 2024</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CMR 0% • AP mine 0% 	<p>List of Payams prioritised for BLS established by the end of 2024, disaggregated by SHA and CHA</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CMR • AP mine <p>BLS has been conducted in 100% of prioritised Payams by June 2028</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CMR • AP mine
	<p>Evidence-based baselines are updated and reported on annually^{85,86}</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CMR • AP mine 	<p>Remaining (January 2024):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CMR: 5,545,560 m² ⁸⁷ • AP mine: 5,376,120 m² 	<p>Evidence-based baselines are updated and reported on in Article 7 reports (CCM and APMBC⁸⁸)</p>

Strategic Objective 2: Release of safe land

Effective and efficient land release activities facilitate safe returns and sustainable development

Outcomes	Indicators	Baselines	Targets
<p>2.3 Safe land is handed over and land use is documented</p> <p>The socio-economic impact of land release is documented through the collection of SADDD in gender and diversity-sensitive impact assessments</p>	# of completed tasks handover over in line with NTSGs	100% of completed tasks were handed over in line with NTSGs in 2023	100% of completed tasks are handed over in line with NTSGs 2024-2028
	# of m ² of formerly EO contaminated land in use following land release (disaggregated by land use: agriculture, construction, infrastructure.)	No baseline data on the number of impact assessments conducted in 2023	Impact assessments conducted on 50% of completed mine and CMR clearance tasks
	% of formerly displaced beneficiaries interviewed, reporting that mine action facilitated their safe return	27,383 returnees registered in EO-affected Payams as of January 2024	All impact assessment results recorded in IMSMA Core by June 2025
	# of returnees, refugees and IDPs registered in EO-affected Payams	No baseline data available on refugees and IDPs from 2023	All beneficiary numbers are calculated in line with IMAS 05.10, Annex B and TNMA 05/10/01 by the end of 2025 ⁸⁹
	# of service facilities (e.g. medical and educational facilities) which have been cleared and are being used by the public	No baseline data available for 2023	
<p>2.4 National survey and clearance capacities are strengthened</p> <p>National survey and clearance capacities are strengthened ⁹⁰ and a strategy on the management of residual contamination is developed</p>	# of national organisations that implement survey and clearance capacities in South Sudan ⁹¹	Zero national organisations implemented land release activities as of January 2024	One national NGO is fully funded by GoSS to implement land release by the end of 2025
	# of formalised capacity enhancement projects between national and international partners	1 capacity enhancement project between national and international NGOs in 2023 (DRC and CINA)	Annual increase of formalised capacity enhancement projects between national and international partners
	Existence of strategy on management of residual contamination ⁹²	Zero strategy on management of residual contamination as of January 2024	Strategy on management of residual contamination developed by 2028



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Strategic Objective 3: Explosive Ordnance Risk Education and Victim Assistance

EORE comprises activities that seek to reduce the risk of injury from EO by raising awareness of women, girls, boys, and men in accordance with their different vulnerabilities, roles, and needs, and promoting behavioural change. Key activities include public information dissemination, education, and training.⁹³ EORE's overall objective is to reduce EO risks to a level where people can live safely and facilitate economic and social development free from the constraints of EO contamination.⁹⁴ As a State Party to the APMBC and CCM South Sudan has committed to implementing EORE in line with IMAS and international good practice.

The MoGEI⁹⁵ is the focal point for EORE activities within the GoSS. EORE activities are coordinated through the cluster approach to humanitarian assistance with the Mine Action Sub Cluster being a component of the Protection Cluster (OAP#28) and the EORE Technical Working Group, co-chaired by NMAA and UNMAS, to 'improve the coherence, effectiveness and impact of collective response delivered in support of national authorities and to facilitate effective engagement of international actors and civil societies in South Sudan.'⁹⁶ As from 2025, NMAA commits to chairing this working group independently.

This strategic objective is supported by four strategic objectives. First, in line with LAP action #29, the mine action programme will continue to collect and analyse SADD EO accident data to gain clarity on EO accident patterns and EORE needs. Close coordination with VA stakeholders and survey and clearance teams will be vital to ensure an integrated approach and effective information sharing, supporting the OAP's Action #28.⁹⁷ Second, these efforts will enable the provision of tailored and targeted EORE to communities in EO-affected areas, in line with OAP action #30. Given the high number of refugees and IDPs in South Sudan, close coordination with broader humanitarian actors is instrumental to ensure returnee data is shared and that EORE activities are planned and prioritised accordingly, thus supporting South Sudan's broader humanitarian goals. Efforts will also be made to promote, record, analyse and report on behavioural change. Reporting on EORE beneficiaries will be done in line with IMAS 05.10 Annex B and TNMA 05/10/01.

The third outcome centres around strengthening local and national capacities and structures, promoting greater localisation and sustainability. Current initiatives, including the training of teachers, will be built on further. The integration of EORE messages into school curriculum for the protection of all school children and their families has been an ongoing effort for several years and will support the sustainability of EORE implementation. Also, in line with the localisation agenda, national NGOs that deliver EORE in South Sudan will be further strengthened through a range of initiatives. In line with OAP action #31 and LAP action#30, national structures will be further strengthened to ensure they can adapt to changing needs in

case previously unknown contamination is discovered.^{98 99} This will be further explored in the strategy on management residual contamination, to be developed in 2026.¹⁰⁰

Concerning victim assistance, the rights of persons with special needs are enshrined in the Transitional Constitution of the Republic of South Sudan: *All levels of government shall guarantee to persons with disabilities or special needs participation in society and the enjoyment of rights and freedoms set out in this Constitution, especially access to public utilities, suitable education and employment.*¹⁰¹ VA in mine action includes activities that address the needs and rights of EO victims. It comprises emergency and ongoing medical care, rehabilitation, psychological and psycho-social support, and socio-economic inclusion. VA also includes data collection, laws, and policies.¹⁰² The term ‘victim’ refers to persons either individually or collectively who have suffered physical, emotional, and psychological injury, economic loss or substantial impairment of their fundamental rights through acts or omissions related to the use of EO. Victims include people injured and killed, their families, and communities affected by EO.^{103 104}

As a State Party to the APMB, CCM and CRPD, South Sudan commits to a rights-based approach to VA, with the understanding that its overall mission is the full and effective participation of EO victims¹⁰⁵ in society on an equal basis to others. South Sudan supports the principle that specialised VA efforts are short-term solutions that should be implemented only until they are effectively integrated into broader frameworks. The mine action programme notes that its VA responsibilities are more of a facilitating role, focusing on advocacy, coordination, and information sharing, as highlighted in the fourth outcome.

Strategic Objective 3: Explosive Ordnance Risk Education and Victim Assistance Behavioural change is promoted to facilitate safe livelihood activities and reduce EO accidents; EO accident data is collected, analysed, and shared			
Outcomes	Indicators	Baselines	Targets
3.1. Clarity is gained on EO accidents and EORE needs The collection, storage, and analysis of EO accident SADD ¹⁰⁶ allows for the identification of accident patterns and risk-taking behaviours and groups, facilitating tailored and targeted EORE activities	Number of EO victims/year (SADDD) Number of refugees, IDPs and returnees targeted with EORE/year	2023 EO accident SADD Number of refugees, IDPs and returnees targeted with EORE in 2023: total 128,541 (IDPs: 38,684, Refugees: 57,168, Returnees: 32,689)	All reported EO accidents are recorded in SADDD IDP, refugee and returnees are continuously targeted with tailored EORE
3.2. EORE is continuously improved EORE is continuously improved, by ensuring methodologies, technologies, materials and NTSG address needs in gender and diversity sensitive ways	Number of new or updated EORE material/year	2023 material improvements	EORE Technical Working Group chairs annual review meetings to ensure EORE material is relevant and context specific
	Percentage of EORE beneficiaries, showing an improvement of EO knowledge in pre-/post-EORE surveys	92% ¹⁰⁷ of EORE beneficiaries show improvement in 2023 pre and post EORE survey results	Pre and post EORE surveys to be implemented on 100% of all EORE sessions 85% of EORE beneficiaries show improvement in pre/post survey scores ¹⁰⁸

Strategic Objective 3: Explosive Ordnance Risk Education and Victim Assistance

Behavioural change is promoted to facilitate safe livelihood activities and reduce EO accidents;
EO accident data is collected, analysed, and shared

Outcomes	Indicators	Baselines	Targets
<p>3.3 EORE coordination is strengthened</p> <p>Regular EORE coordination meetings reinforce collaboration, information sharing and EORE's integration into other sectors</p>	<p># of EORE Working Group meetings/year</p> <p># of other sectors that have integrated EORE in their programmes</p>	<p>11 EORE working group meetings organised in 2023</p>	<p>Ten EORE Working Group Meetings are co-chaired by NMAA and UNMAS in 2024</p> <p>As from 2025, NMAA independently chairs ten EORE Working Group meetings/year</p>
<p>3.4 National EORE capacities and structures are strengthened and sustainable</p> <p>National and local EORE capacities and structures are developed to strengthen sustainability and localisation of EORE activities¹⁰⁹</p>	<p># of national organisations implementing EORE</p> <p># of schools where EORE services are provided/year</p> <p># of teachers trained in EORE</p> <p># of training of trainers (ToT) sessions for national NGOs/year</p>	<p>Five national NGOs implemented EORE in 2023</p> <p>EORE provided to 948 schools in 2023</p> <p>No baseline for number of teachers trained in EORE in 2023</p> <p>Seven ToT sessions organised for national NGOs in 2023</p>	<p>10 or more national NGOs implement EORE activities</p> <p>All schools in affected Payams targeted by the end of 2028, or earlier if they can be accessed</p> <p>Record number of teachers trained in EORE as of 2024</p> <p>Seven ToT sessions for national NGOs in 2024 and five for the remaining years</p>
<p>3.5 Strengthened VA coordination facilitates greater information sharing</p> <p>Continued collaboration and coordination facilitate sharing of EO casualty data and greater awareness of EO victims' needs and rights</p>	<p># of VA and Disability Working Group Meetings/year</p> <p># of Article 7 reports that include VA/year</p>	<p>10 coordination meetings organised by the VA and Disability Working Group in 2023</p> <p>Information on progress and challenges in victim assistance included in 2023 APMBC Article 7¹¹⁰</p> <p>Voluntary CCM Article 7 report submitted in 2023</p>	<p>10 coordination meetings organised by the VA and Disability Working Group/year</p> <p>Annual APMBC Article 7 reports incorporate information on OAP actions #33-41</p> <p>Annual CCM Article 7 reports incorporate information on LAP actions #31-37</p>

STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION, MONITORING AND REVIEW

Under the lead of NMAA and UNMAS, the mine action programme will develop annual strategy implementation plans that will present activities to operationalise this strategy. Progress in strategy implementation will be monitored at the outcome level.

In line with the NMAA Act, NMAA, in close collaboration with UNMAS and 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 implementation reports and referenced in APMBC and CCM Article 7 reports.

NMAA 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 of every calendar year; international donors will be informed of progress made and potential challenges experienced. NMAA will request an external mid-term review of this strategy by mid-2025 to take stock of achievements made, identify challenges, and make necessary modifications to ensure the strategy remains relevant to the context. The mid-term review will also be an opportunity to update the strategy in line with the new APMBC Action plan, the Convention work-plans, and other developments in South Sudan and the global mine action sector.

ENDNOTES

- 1 Submitted on 21 August 2020, requesting a new deadline for 8 July 2026, subsequently approved by the States Parties in November 2020.
- 2 The 2019 OAP is the fourth action plan of the APMBC, following the 4th Review Conference in Oslo, Norway, November 2019.
- 3 OAP #2: Develop evidence-based, costed and time-bound national strategies and work plans to fulfil and implement Convention obligations as soon as possible
- 4 LAP # 2: Develop realistic, evidence-based, costed and time-bound national strategies and work plans to fulfil and efficiently complete the implementation of Convention obligations as soon as possible.
- 5 The World Bank: <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SP.POPTOTL?locations=SS>
- 6 The World Bank, % of Rural Population (2016). Retrieved from <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SP.RUR.TOTL.ZS>
- 7 International Mine Action Standards (IMAS) 04.10 Glossary on Mine Action Terms, Definitions and Abbreviations (Amendment 10, February 2019): Explosive Ordnance (EO) encompasses 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
- 8 Humanitarian Needs and Response Plan, South Sudan 2024
- 9 WFP, South Sudan Situation Report, November 2023
- 10 Ibid.
- 11 South Sudan's second Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC), Government of South Sudan, 2021
- 12 Humanitarian Needs and Response Plan, South Sudan 2024
- 13 South Sudan's second Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC)
- 14 NDC, 2021
- 15 2024 Inform Risk Index: <https://drmkc.jrc.ec.europa.eu/inform-index/INFORM-Risk/Country-Risk-Profile>
- 16 NDC, 2021
- 17 Anti-Personnel Mine (APM): a mine designed to be exploded by the presence, proximity or contact of a person and that will incapacitate, injure or kill one or more persons. [APMBC] Note: APM include improvised explosive devices that fit the above definition, IMAS 04.10
- 18 Anti-Tank/Vehicle Mine (ATM/AVM) (2018): a mine designed to be exploded by the presence, proximity or contact of a vehicle. Note: Mines designed to be detonated by the presence, proximity or contact of a vehicle as opposed to a person that are equipped with anti-handling devices, are not considered APM as a result of being so equipped.
Note: ATM/AVM include improvised explosive devices that fit the above definition, IMAS 04.10
- 19 "Cluster munition remnants" means failed cluster munitions, abandoned cluster munitions, unexploded submunitions and unexploded bomblets; CCM (May 2008). From a technical perspective, cluster munitions are included in the overall definition of ERW.
- 20 ERW: Unexploded Ordnance (UXO) and Abandoned Explosive Ordnance (AXO). [CCW protocol V]. Unexploded Ordnance: explosive ordnance that has been primed, fused, armed or otherwise prepared for use or used. It may have been fired, dropped, launched or projected yet remains unexploded either through malfunction or design or for any other reason. Abandoned Explosive Ordnance: explosive ordnance that has not been used during an armed conflict, that has been left behind or dumped by a party to an armed conflict, and which is no longer under control of the party that left it behind or dumped it. Abandoned explosive ordnance may or may not have been primed, fused, armed or otherwise prepared for use. [CCW protocol V], IMAS 04.10
- 21 Based on UNMAS EO contamination data, flooding data from OCHA and food insecurity data from the Humanitarian Needs and Response Plan, South Sudan 2024
- 22 South Sudan Article 5 Extension Request, August 2020
- 23 NMAA Act, 2023
- 24 Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, Ministry of Defence and Veterans Affairs, Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs, Ministry of General Education and Instruction, Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Gender, Child and Social Welfare, Ministry of Roads and Bridges, Ministry of Health and Ministry of Environment.
- 25 MoGCSW: <https://mgcsw.gov.ss/background/>
- 26 Ministry of General Education and Instruction: <https://moge.gov.ss/>
- 27 The Transitional Constitution of the Republic of South Sudan, 2011: <http://www.mofp.gov.ss/laws/Constitution.pdf>
- 28 The revised National Development Strategy for South Sudan 2021-2024
- 29 United Nations, UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) 2023–2025, Results and M&E framework
- 30 South Sudan Revised APMBC Article Extension Request, 2020: https://www.apminebanconvention.org/fileadmin/_APMBC-DOCUMENTS/Meetings/2020/18MSP-South-Sudan-Revised-Extension-Request.pdf

- 31 <https://www.ohchr.org/en/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/convention-elimination-all-forms-discrimination-against-women>
- 32 <https://www.ohchr.org/en/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/convention-rights-child>
- 33 The Grand Bargain Official website: <https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/grand-bargain>
- 34 Swiss Agency for Development Cooperation (SDC) and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), Country-led dialogue on localisation, resource kit, Grand Bargain Localisation Workstream (<https://gblocalisation.ifrc.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/GB-Localisation-Workstream-Country-Level-Dialogue-Resource-Kit-1.pdf>)
- 35 Republic of South Sudan Transitional Constitution, 2011
- 36 Ibid.
- 37 2018 Revitalised Peace Agreement
- 38 OAP action #3 Ensure that the different needs and perspectives of women, girls, boys and men are considered and inform all areas of Convention implementation and mine action programmes, in order to deliver an inclusive approach. Strive to remove barriers to full, equal and gender balanced participation in mine action and in Convention meetings
- 39 LAP action # 4 : Ensure that the different needs, vulnerabilities and perspectives of women, girls, boys and men from diverse populations and all ages are considered and inform the implementation of the Convention in order to deliver an inclusive approach, as well as strive to remove all barriers to full, equal and meaningful gender-balanced participation in implementation activities at the national level and in the Convention's machinery, including its meetings.
- 40 OAP action # 35: Establish or strengthen a centralised database that includes information on persons killed by mines as well as on persons injured by mines and their needs and challenges, disaggregated by gender, age and disability, and make this information available to relevant stakeholders to ensure a comprehensive response to addressing the needs of mine victims.
- 41 UN Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000): Emphasizing the need for all parties to ensure that mine clearance and mine awareness programmes take into account the special needs of women and girls <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N00/720/18/PDF/N0072018.pdf?OpenElement>
- 42 UNSCR 1325 Women, Peace and Security National Action Plan: <https://southsudan.un.org/en/225217-south-sudan-validates-second-national-action-plan-women-peace-and-security>
- 43 Sustainable Development Goals: <http://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/development-agenda/>
- 44 The Sustainable Development Outcomes of Mine Action in South Sudan, GICHD and UNDP, June 2023
- 45 Ibid.
- 46 IMAS 07.12 Quality Management in Mine Action, First Edition, 1 July 2016
- 47 IMAS 07.12: Key QM principles: 1. Customer focus, 2. Leadership, 3. Engagement of people, 4. Gender and diversity, 5. Process approach, 6. Continual improvement, 7. Evidence-based decision making, 8. Relationship management, 9. Risk management and quality
- 48 IMAS 07.12, Ibid
- 49 IMAS 01.10 Guide for the application of IMAS, Second Edition 1 January 2003, Amendment 9, March 2018
- 50 IMAS 05.10 Information Management for Mine Action, Second Edition Amendment 1 February 2020
- 51 IMAS 05.10, ibid.
- 52 Action #9 Establish and maintain a national information management system containing accurate and up-to-date data at the national level on the status of implementation. The design and implementation of information management systems will ensure that they are nationally owned, sustainable and take into account the need for data that can be accessed, managed and analysed post-completion.
- 53 An obligation or willingness to accept responsibility or to account for one's actions (<https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/accountability>)
- 54 Transparency is characterized by visibility or accessibility of information (<https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/transparent>)
- 55 IMAS 01.10 Guide for the application and development of IMAS, Second Edition, Amendment 10, 2021: "Humanitarian principles: In its response to explosive ordnance, mine action is first and foremost a humanitarian concern. Framing of the standards and their application as part of any humanitarian response shall reflect the fundamental humanitarian principles of humanity, impartiality, neutrality, and independence.", p.4.
- 56 OAP: 'The States Parties have defined national ownership as entailing the following: 'maintaining interest at a high level in fulfilling Convention obligations; empowering and providing relevant State entities with the human, financial and material capacity to carry out their obligations under the Convention; articulating the measures its State entities will undertake to implement relevant aspects of Convention in the most inclusive, efficient and expedient manner possible and plans to overcome any challenges that need to be addressed; and making a regular significant national financial commitment to the State's programmes to implement the Convention.'
- 57 MAG, Learning review: National Mine Action Authority capacity development, South Sudan, June 2022
- 58 The 'triple nexus' refers to the interlinkages between humanitarian, development and peace actors. In December 2016, UN Secretary General Guterres famously stated that relief, rehabilitation, early recovery, development, peacebuilding and stabilization often overlap, run simultaneously or intersect on the ground. The triple nexus builds on the momentum of global commitments and

frameworks in the context of greater resource scarcity. It asks humanitarian, development and peace actors to consider whether they could conduct their work more holistically with one another to enable them to more effectively relieve global suffering, build resiliency and prevent conflict or its reoccurrence. Since its inception, the triple nexus has become an increasing focus of attention for those operating in the humanitarian, development and peace communities, including donors.

59 OAP action #43 States Parties seeking assistance will develop resource mobilisation plans and use all mechanisms within the Convention to disseminate information on challenges and requirements for assistance, including through their annual Article 7 transparency reports.

60 APLC/MSP.14/2015/WP.2

61 OAP action #8, Indicator 1.

62 DCA (1), MAG (3), DRC, UNMAS (1 IM)

63 MAG developed a capacity development plan in 2021-22 and implemented a capacity development project with NMAA for nine months.

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

65 All reasonable effort”, in South Sudan Mine Action Program (SSUDANMAP) is the process of deciding when land may be released from suspicion, is the level of effort required to achieve the desired level of confidence that the land is free of EO. “All reasonable effort” may, at one extreme, only be the conduct of a non-technical survey which finds absolutely no evidence of EO. The commitment of additional resources, in this case, is unlikely to justify the expected additional information about the area. However, if the non-technical survey confirms some evidence of EO, it would be reasonable to expend more effort to gain more confidence about which areas are free of EO and which are not. In this case, “all reasonable effort” may mean that a technical survey and/or clearance should be conducted. NTSG, Chapter 23 Land Release

66 IMAS 07.11 Land Release, First Edition, Amendment 5, 2019: “”, p.2”. Land release should result in disaggregated reporting, distinguishing between the activity (non-technical survey (NTS), technical survey (TS) and clearance) and the products they result in (cancelled, reduced and cleared).

67 Ibid.

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

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

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

71 LAP action #21: Take appropriate steps to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of surveys and clearance, taking into account international standards, including the IMAS-compliant land release processes, and to promote the research and development of innovative survey and clearance methodologies which take into account environmental impacts and concerns.

72 South Sudan Technical Note on Baseline Survey, 8 September 2023

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

74 LAP action # 18: Identify the precise location, scope and extent of cluster munition remnants in areas under their jurisdiction or control, and establish evidence-based, accurate baselines of contamination to the extent possible, and adopt practical measures to better protect civilians, no later than the Eleventh Meeting of States Parties in 2022 (or within two years of entry into force for new States Parties). States Parties will mark and, where possible, fence off all hazardous areas, no later than the Eleventh Meeting of States Parties in 2022 to ensure the safety of civilians (or within two years of entry into force for new States Parties).

75 TNMA 05.10/01 Measurement and reporting of beneficiaries, 7 October 2023

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

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

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

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

rational response to States Parties discovering previously unknown mined areas after deadlines have passed.

80 LAP action#22: Ensure that national strategies and work plans provide for a sustainable national capacity to address residual risks posed by cluster munition remnants that are discovered following fulfilment of Article 4.

81 OAP action # 5

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

83 Including through annual APMBC and CCM Article 7 reports (see Objective 1, outcome 2)

84 All BLS to be conducted in line with the Technical Note on BLS

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

86 OAP action #21

87 Based on an analysis of historical CMR clearance data, UNMAS has informed that this figure is expected to be significantly higher, possibly 12,158,747 m²

88 OAP action #18

89 Standardising Beneficiary Definitions in Humanitarian Mine Action, Second Edition, October 2020: <https://www.maginternational.org/standardising-beneficiary-definitions-humanitarian-mine-action/>

90 OAP action #26

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

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

93 IMAS 12.10 Explosive Ordnance Risk Education (EORE), Second Edition 1 April 2010, Amendment 3, September 2020: https://www.mineactionstandards.org/fileadmin/uploads/imas/Standards/English/IMAS_12.10_Ed.2_Am.3.pdf

<Oslo-action-plan-en.pdf> (<osloreviewconference.org>)

94 IMAS 12.10, ibid.

95 Ministry of General Education and Instruction: <https://moge.gov.ss/>

96 Terms of Reference and Work Plan for Mine Risk Education Working Group (MRE WG) in South Sudan, Final, 2016

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

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

99 LAP action #30: Develop national capacities to adapt risk education initiatives to changing circumstances, including taking account of risks posed by residual contamination once Article 4 obligations have been completed, as well as potential risks caused by changing climatic and environmental conditions.

100 GICHD's 2023 publication Explosive Ordnance Risk Education in residual contamination management, will be a useful reference for this

101 The Transitional Constitution of the Republic of South Sudan, 2011: <http://www.mofp.gov.ss/laws/Constitution.pdf>

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

103 IMAS 13.10, ibid.

104 The term 'victim' carries legal significance with respect to the APMBC, CCW and CCM.

105 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.

106 Sex, age, disability disaggregated data (SADDD)

107 The 2023 target of 80% was exceeded.

108 EORE teams are expected to start operating in new areas as of 2024, hence the lower knowledge retention target compared to 2024

109 OAP action #31 Build national capacity to deliver mine risk reduction and education with the ability to adapt to changing needs and contexts, including the delivery of such programmes in previously unknown mined areas.

110 https://www.apminebanconvention.org/fileadmin/_APMBC-DOCUMENTS/Art7Reports/2023-South-Sudan-Art7Report-for2022.pdf

