

**UNMAS****May 2023****For more information:**

Charles Birch

Chief Mine Action Programme, Palestine

charles.birch@un.org**UNMAS PALESTINE**

Programme Highlights

UNMAS and UNRWA Commemorated the International Day for Mine Awareness and Assistance in Mine Action (IMAD) in Gaza



UNRWA school children dancing during Safe Steps song at the IMAD event, March 2023, Gaza, Palestine. Photo credit: UNRWA/Mohammed Al-Hinnawi

On 21 March 2023, UNMAS and UNRWA jointly commemorated the International Day for Mine Awareness and Assistance in Mine Action (IMAD). During the event, UNRWA students participated in fun activities such as dancing, coloring, and singing, that included explosive ordnance risk education (EORE) and awareness messages. The event also included an exhibition of paintings created by the students with awareness messages, hope, and love for life. Furthermore, Mr. Thomas White, the Director of UNRWA/Gaza, and Mr. Charles Birch, the Chief of the Mine Action Programme (CMAP) in Palestine, delivered speeches emphasizing the importance of EORE in safeguarding civilian lives and maintaining normalcy.

UNMAS Rolls-out Mobile Puppet Shows to Educate Children in the West Bank and East Jerusalem on the Threat of Explosive Ordnance

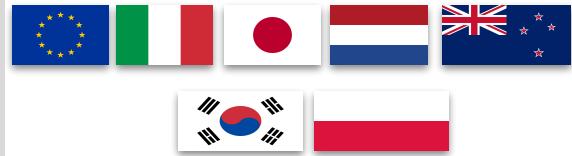
In March 2023, UNMAS rolled-out a mobile puppet shows in the West Bank to educate children on the threat of explosive ordnance. The puppet shows included storytelling, plays, and interactive audience participation to provide EORE messages in a child-friendly manner. The shows continued throughout various governorates and neighborhoods such as Hebron, Al-Khan Al-Ahmar, and Bedouin communities living in proximity to military training sites, etc. A total of 14 shows have been performed, targeting a total of 1,264 children, including 576 girls and 688 boys, in addition to more than 200 parents. The shows were made accessible to children with disabilities so they could receive EORE with their friends and family members.



UNMAS delivered EORE to children through puppet shows in Al-Eizariya, East Jerusalem, April 2023. Photo credit: Nidal Al Khatib



UNMAS in Palestine is funded bilaterally through contributions to the United Nations Voluntary Trust Fund for assistance in Mine Action. In response to the most recent escalation of hostilities in 2021, UNMAS surged its capacity in Gaza and resource mobilisation for additional funds to allow them to respond to the needs for emergency EOD response, emergency preparedness, and risk education to continue their operations in 2022 and beyond. UNMAS continues to make consistent efforts to raise the additional funds to allow them to respond to these needs, to provide support to reconstruction in Gaza and the Humanitarian Response Plan.



Thank you to all of our donors for their generous support.

UNMAS Delivers EORE Training of Trainers to UNICEF's Implementing Partners in Gaza

In May 2023, UNMAS Palestine delivered a training of trainers (TOT) for UNICEF's implementing partners' personnel from the Tamer Institute for Community Education and Ma'an Development Center, in Gaza. A total of 50 participants were equipped with knowledge and skills to deliver quality age and gender-appropriate EORE as they engage with the beneficiaries of their humanitarian and development projects. UNMAS will continue the engagement with like-minded stakeholders to ensure knowledge sharing and continued delivery of EORE to at-risk communities.



Participants practicing the delivery of children-appropriate EORE using Snakes and Ladders game, as part of the EORE TOT delivered by UNMAS, Gaza, Palestine. Photo credit: Mohammed Al-Hinnawi

UNMAS Recovers, Renders Safe and Dispose a Deep Buried Bomb (DBB) in Rafah, Gaza, Palestine

UNMAS operations in Gaza are vital to restoring a safe and secure environment for civilian communities after escalations.

In March 2023, UNMAS worked diligently to excavate a deep buried bomb (DBB) located in a densely populated area in Rafah, in southern Gaza. UNMAS excavated, rendered safe, and witnessed the disposal of the DBB and declared the site safe and clear from any known explosive hazards. People living in the area resumed their normal life with a renewed sense of safety and security.



UNMAS Chief of Operations (CoO) managing the movement of a recovered munition onto a truck for disposal, Rafah, Gaza, Palestine, March 2023. Photo credit: UNMAS



EOD Support

UNMAS responds to requests for EOD clearance and risk assessment from UN agencies and reconstruction partners in Gaza.



Emergency Preparedness

UNMAS maintains an emergency EOD response which forms an integral part of UN contingency plans for Gaza.



Survivor Assistance

UNMAS continues to provide referral and verification of the survivors of ERW accidents.

Established in 1997, the **United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS)** works to eliminate the threat posed by mines, explosive remnants of war and improvised explosive devices by coordinating United Nations mine action, leading operational responses at the country level, and supporting the development of standards, policies and norms. As a specialized service of the United Nations located within the Department of Peace Operations, UNMAS operates under UN legislative mandates of both the General Assembly and the Security Council. UNMAS also responds to specific requests for support from the UN Secretary-General or designated official. UN Security Council Resolution 2365 (2017) the first stand-alone text on mine action, "Expresses grave concern over the threat that landmines, explosive remnants of war and improvised explosive devices pose to civilians, refugees returning to their homes, ...and stresses the need to undertake appropriate measures to mitigate this danger effectively."