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April 2022

UNMAS PALESTINE

## Programme Highlights

### MINE ACTION DAY 2022 - PHOTO EXHIBITION



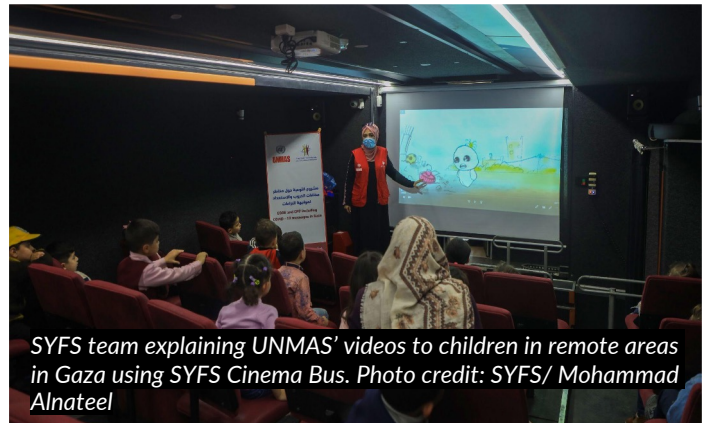
To mark the International Day for Mine Awareness and Assistance in Mine Action 2022, UNMAS Palestine organized several events in Palestine.

On 19 April, UNMAS held a photography exhibition "Safe Steps, Safe Ground, Safe Home" in Ramallah, the West Bank. The opening included speeches by a representative of the Ramallah and Al-Bireh Governorate, Mr. Ahmad AlKhateeb, a representative of the Palestinian Mine Action Center (PMAC), Mr. Issa Alghnimat, and the Chief of Mine Action Programme Palestine, Ms. Bridget Forster.

The exhibition also provided an opportunity for visitors to play a mobile application game, MineSafe, a world-first game to educate on risks of explosive ordnance. The visitors expressed great interest and enjoyed playing the game.

### MINE ACTION DAY 2022 - RISK EDUCATION MESSAGE

On 3 April, UNMAS Palestine launched a remote campaign to celebrate the International Day for Mine Awareness and Assistance in Mine Action in Gaza. Over three days, posts and videos were shared on social media by Gazan social media bloggers. UNMAS' implementing partner; Save Youth Future Society (SYFS), Norwegian People's Aid (NPA), and UNICEF and their implementing partners shared the Risk Education posts on their social media pages to disseminate the messages about safe behaviours as widely as possible throughout the Gaza Strip.



SYFS team explaining UNMAS' videos to children in remote areas in Gaza using SYFS Cinema Bus. Photo credit: SYFS/ Mohammad Alnateel

On 4 April, SYFS sent out their Cinema Bus, which is an initiative launched by SYFS to carry out theatre activities with children, youth, and communities in remote areas of Gaza, to deliver UNMAS videos and interactive explosive remnants of war (ERW) safety messages to children and their parents in remote areas in the Gaza Strip.

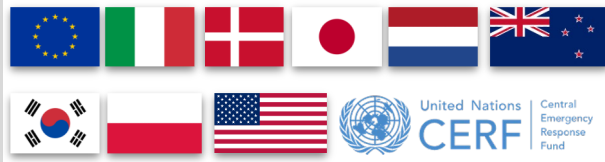


SYFS team delivering an interactive risk education session to children in Gaza. Photo credit: SYFS/ Mohammad Anateel

Throughout this week, to ensure messages reached people with no access to the internet in remote areas of Gaza, radio messages were also broadcasted to 1.4 million Gazan residents.



UNMAS in Palestine is funded bilaterally through contributions to the United Nations Voluntary Trust Fund for Assistance in Mine Action. In response to the escalation of hostilities in 2021, to support reconstruction in Gaza and the Humanitarian Response Plan, UNMAS mobilized additional funds and surged its capacity in Gaza for emergency explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) response, emergency preparedness, and risk education to continue its operations in 2022 and beyond. UNMAS is now focusing on resource mobilization for 2023 to ensure sustainability and readiness to respond at any time.



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

## UNMAS ACTING DIRECTOR VISITS PALESTINE



An Operations Assistant explaining to UNMAS Acting Director, Ilene Cohn, the work at the deep buried bomb site in Gaza. Photo credit: UNMAS Palestine

The conflict in Gaza in May 2021 left several aircraft dropped bombs buried deeply under infrastructure, posing a risk to civilians and requiring highly specialized expertise, provided by UNMAS, to safely removed these bombs.

The UNMAS Acting Director, Ilene Cohn, visited one of the sites where the UNMAS team is working and met with national staff including Operations Assistants and Medics who are present on site at all times in support of the excavation and explosive ordnance disposal (EOD).

## REMOVING EXPLOSIVE THREATS IN GAZA

Explosive remnants of war (ERW) risk assessment for rubble removal and reconstruction operations is a systematic and investigative process involving the identification of the threat, the probability of an ERW accident, the impact of hazards on local communities, and the mitigation measures that can be implemented.

After the escalation of hostilities in May 2021, UNMAS Palestine conducted 241 building risk assessments for UN agencies which benefited approximately 900,000 people living in the community. In support of street recovery, road construction, and repair of water supply networks, a surface of 517,000m<sup>2</sup> was assessed for a project delivered by international non-governmental organizations and Governmental agencies, benefiting nearly 130,000 people in the community.



UNMAS EOD Officer assessing a building before the start of rubble removal project in Gaza City. Photo credit: UNMAS Palestine



### 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 Security Council resolution 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."