

KEY DATA

**ANTI-PERSONNEL (AP)
MINE CONTAMINATION: NOT REPORTED**

3km²

ACCORDING TO A PARTIAL NATIONAL
AUTHORITY ESTIMATE IN 2021

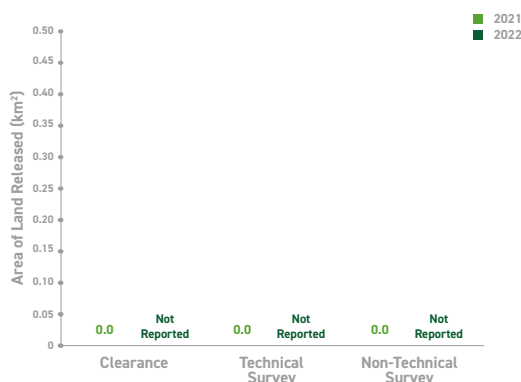
AP MINE
CLEARANCE IN 2022

NOT REPORTED

AP MINES
DESTROYED IN 2022

NOT REPORTED

LAND RELEASE OUTPUT



KEY DEVELOPMENTS

In 2022, periodic violations of the 2020 ceasefire that ended the six-week armed conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan over Nagorno-Karabakh included two days of hostilities in mid-September 2022, after Azerbaijan accused Armenia of laying mines in territory under the control of Azerbaijan. Azerbaijan also accused Armenia of sending thousands of landmines to Nagorno-Karabakh in 2022. Armenia denied the allegations but acknowledged that its armed forces have laid mines in its sovereign territory for the purpose of self-defence. Armenia did not disclose anti-personnel (AP) mine contamination and land release data for 2022.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

- Armenia should commit to not use AP mines and should accede to the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC) as a matter of priority.
- Armenia should comply with its obligations under international human rights law to clear AP mines on territory under its jurisdiction as soon as possible.
- Armenia should clarify the extent of remaining mine contamination.
- Armenia should expedite the adoption of national mine action legislation.
- Armenia should finalise its strategic mine action plan as soon as possible.

DEMINING CAPACITY

MANAGEMENT CAPACITY

- Center for Humanitarian Demining and Expertise (CHDE)

NATIONAL OPERATORS

- In addition to serving as the national mine action authority, the CHDE also conducts survey and clearance.

INTERNATIONAL OPERATORS

- The HALO Trust (HALO)

OTHER ACTORS

- Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD)

UNDERSTANDING OF AP MINE CONTAMINATION

The 2020 armed conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan over Nagorno-Karabakh ended with Azerbaijan regaining most of its internationally recognised territory except for a part of Nagorno-Karabakh.¹ Even before the 2020 conflict, there was only minimal clearance of AP mined area in Armenia. There was no release of mined area in Armenia in 2020 or 2021 and reported contamination in Armenia remained constant in the two years to the end of 2021,² the most recent years for which comprehensive data were reported. In 2022, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) reported that it supported the Armenia's Center for Humanitarian Demining and Expertise (CHDE) with non-technical survey (NTS), technical survey (TS), and land release operations for AP mines and other types of explosive ordnance.³ In 2022, The HALO Trust (HALO) conducted NTS at three previously unrecorded AP legacy minefields (dating from 1998) near Pambak village in Gegharkunik province.⁴ HALO discovered one AP mine in each area.⁵ The three mines were reported to the CHDE, but it is not known whether clearance was undertaken.⁶

At the end of 2021, Armenia estimated 9.53km² of mined area remained containing AP mines and/or anti-vehicle (AV) mines. Of this total, more than 5.69km² was in confirmed hazardous area (CHA) and a further 3.83km² was suspected hazardous area (SHA)⁷ (see Table 1). Mined area containing AP mines was estimated at 3.01km² (2.90km² of CHA and 0.1km² of SHA).⁸ Of 94 CHAs, 55 contained AP mines at the end of 2021, totalling just under 2.9km². The remaining 39 CHAs totalling 2.8km² contained AV mines only.⁹ Three of the six SHAs, totalling just over 0.1km², were thought to be contaminated by AP mines, with the remaining 3.7km² suspected to contain only AV mines.¹⁰

Table 1: Mined area (at end 2021*)¹¹

Type of contamination	CHAs	Area (m ²)	SHAs	Area (m ²)	Totals
AP mines	41	2,176,085	3	105,500	2,281,585
AV mines	39	2,791,608	3	3,728,442	6,520,050
AP and AV mines	11	706,046	0	0	706,046
AP mines and UXO	2	12,769	0	0	12,769
AP and AV mines and UXO	1	4,842	0	0	4,842
Totals	94	5,691,350	6	3,833,942	9,525,292

UXO = Unexploded ordnance

*HALO surveyed 46,643m² across three previously unrecorded AP mined areas in Gegharkunik province in 2022. It is not known whether the areas were cleared,¹² and the area has not been deducted from Table 1.

A baseline NTS began in 2022 to determine the extent of cluster munition remnants (CMR) and other explosive ordnance, including new contamination arising from the 2020 conflict.¹³ It is unclear whether the baseline survey was completed by the end of 2022.

Four of Armenia's eleven administrative areas (ten provinces plus Yerevan) contained mined areas at the end of 2021. Three were contaminated with both AP and AV mines while the fourth (Vayots Dzor) was contaminated solely with AV mines, as set out in Table 2.¹⁴

- 1 T. De Waal, "Unfinished Business in the Armenia-Azerbaijan Conflict", Carnegie Europe, 11 February 2021, at <https://bit.ly/3PFvARz>. In September 2023, Azerbaijan regained full control of all remaining areas of Nagorno-Karabakh. "Azerbaijan halts Karabakh offensive after ceasefire deal with Armenian separatists", *BBC*, 21 September 2023, at: <https://bbc.in/3rCVK0e>.
- 2 Emails from Margaret Lazyan, CHDE, 25 June 2020 and 26 April 2021.
- 3 Emails from Karinée Khojayan, Project Coordinator, UNDP, 15 March and 10 July 2023.
- 4 Email from Fiona Kilpatrick-Cooper, Head of Region – Europe (South Caucasus), HALO, 16 March 2022.
- 5 Emails from Fiona Kilpatrick-Cooper, HALO, 16 March 2022; and David Crawford, Programme Manager, Nagorno Karabakh and Armenia HALO, 14 July 2023.
- 6 Email from David Crawford, HALO, 14 July 2023.
- 7 Email from Karine Shamiryan, Head of International Affairs, CHDE, 27 May 2022.
- 8 Ibid.
- 9 Ibid.
- 10 Ibid.
- 11 Ibid.
- 12 Emails from Fiona Kilpatrick-Cooper, HALO, 16 March 2022; and David Crawford, HALO, 14 July 2023.
- 13 Emails from Vaghinak Sargsyan, CHDE, 11 May 2022; and Karine Shamiryan, CHDE, 27 May 2022.
- 14 Emails from Margaret Lazyan, CHDE, 26 April 2021; and Karine Shamiryan, CHDE, 27 May 2022.

Table 2: Mined area by province (at end 2021)¹⁵

Province	Type of contamination	CHAs	Area (m ²)	SHAs	Area (m ²)
Gegharkunik*	AP mines	3	584,022	2	105,123
	AV mines	5	2,428,128	3	3,728,442
Syunik	AP mines	32	1,424,512	1	377
	AV mines	21	280,425	0	0
	AP and AV mines	8	676,617	0	0
	AP mines and UXO	2	12,769	0	0
	AP and AV mines and UXO	1	4,842	0	0
Tavush	AP mines	6	167,551	0	0
	AV mines	10	15,603	0	0
	AP and AV mines	3	29,429	0	0
Vayots Dzor	AV mines	3	67,452	0	0
Totals		94	5,691,350	6	3,833,942

*HALO surveyed 46,643m² across three previously unrecorded AP mined areas in Gegharkunik province in 2022. It is not known whether the areas were cleared,¹⁶ and the area has not been deducted from Table 2.

A Landmine Impact Survey (LIS) was conducted in Armenia in 2005, followed by partial survey of 17 sites by HALO in 2012, and then again, in 2012–13, by FSD. FSD found 17 SHAs estimated to cover 26km² and 114 CHAs that covered 21km² in four districts bordering Azerbaijan. Thirteen of these areas, totalling 1.8km², contained only UXO and not mines.¹⁷ In 2019, the CHDE conducted NTS in Syunik province but military-restricted zones continued to be off limit for survey and clearance.¹⁸

Mine and explosive remnants of war (ERW) contamination in Armenia is primarily the consequence of armed conflict with Azerbaijan in 1988–94, in which both sides used mines. The heaviest contamination exists in areas previously occupied by Armenia but regained by Azerbaijan during the 2020 conflict. The reclaimed territory contains heavily contaminated land, including around Nagorno-Karabakh, and massive mined area along the 350km-long line of contact (LoC) that previously separated Armenian and Azerbaijani forces.¹⁹

Armenia has acknowledged that it has laid mines since the end of 2020, contending that it has “carried out minelaying exclusively within the sovereign territory of the Republic of Armenia for self-defence purposes only”.²⁰ Furthermore, Armenia insists that the presence of Armenian mines in three districts now under the control of Azerbaijan (Aghdam, Kalbajar, and Lachin), if established, can be explained by the fact that, at the end the 2020 conflict, a “contact line”

continued to exist in and around Nagorno-Karabakh and the Trilateral Statement (signed by Azerbaijan, Armenia, and Russia on 9 November 2020 and effective from 10 November 2020) did not preclude armed forces from taking steps to secure their positions.²¹ In contrast, Armenia has consistently denied Azerbaijan's contention that it has sent thousands of landmines to Nagorno-Karabakh.²² Azerbaijan's allegations that Armenia has laid new mines in Nagorno-Karabakh have not been independently verified.²³ On 19 September 2023, Azerbaijan launched a 24-hour large-scale military offensive which resulted in it regaining control of the rest of Nagorno-Karabakh.²⁴ Nagorno-Karabakh is now fully under Azerbaijan's jurisdiction and control. The leader of the de facto Nagorno-Karabakh authorities, Samvel Shahramanyan, signed a decree to dissolve all governmental institutions by 1 January 2024.²⁵

Armenia's border with Georgia has been cleared of mines whereas the border with Türkiye, also mined during the Soviet era, is still contaminated.²⁶ While NTS in 2012–13 by FSD did not find evidence of mines outside the buffer zones in Ararat province, which borders Türkiye, certain areas on that border have not yet been surveyed because they are controlled by Russian border troops.²⁷ The LIS conducted under UNDP auspices in 2005 had identified Ararat province as contaminated with AP mines, but this is not confirmed by the data provided from the CHDE.²⁸

15 Emails from Vaghinak Sargsyan, CHDE, 11 May 2022; and Margaret Lazyan, CHDE, 26 April 2021.

16 Emails from Fiona Kilpatrick-Cooper, HALO, 16 March 2022, and David Crawford, HALO, 14 July 2023.

17 CHDE, “FSD non-technical mine action survey”, Yerevan, 2013, p. 12.

18 Emails from Margaret Lazyan, CHDE, 19 April 2019 and 25 June 2020.

19 See Mine Action Review's Clearing the Mines 2022 report on Azerbaijan for further information.

20 International Court of Justice, *Application of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (Azerbaijan v. Armenia)*, Order, 23 February 2023, at <https://bit.ly/3NwBKEG>, para. 19.

21 Ibid., para. 20.

22 G. Gavin, “Azerbaijan demands UN action as Nagorno-Karabakh landmine row escalates”, *Eurasianet*, 12 December 2022 at: <https://bit.ly/3yYS09L>.

23 “Armenia releases map of territories ‘seized by Azerbaijan’ since 2020”, *Open Caucasus Media (OC Media)*, 1 February 2023, at: <https://bit.ly/3luuqOR>.

24 “Azerbaijan halts Karabakh offensive after ceasefire deal with Armenian separatists”, *BBC*, 21 September 2023.

25 “Nagorno-Karabakh's breakaway government says it will dissolve itself”, *The Guardian*, 28 September 2023, at: <https://bit.ly/45ozvJ7>.

26 Emails from Ruben Arakelyan, Director, CHDE, 19 March 2014 and 28 April 2017, and interview in Geneva, 1 April 2014.

27 CHDE, “FSD non-technical mine action survey”, CHDE, Yerevan, 2013, p. 9; and emails from Varsine Miskaryan, Operations Officer, CHDE, 8 August 2016; and Ruben Arakelyan, CHDE, 28 April 2017.

28 “Landmine Impact Survey”, UNDP, 2005, at: <http://bit.ly/3tfQtr0>, p. 29.

OTHER EXPLOSIVE ORDNANCE CONTAMINATION

Armenia reported new CMR and other explosive ordnance contamination in Gegharkunik, Syunik, and Tavush provinces as a result of the conflict with Azerbaijan in 2020 (see Mine Action Review's *Clearing Cluster Munition Remnants 2023* report on Armenia for further information).

NATIONAL OWNERSHIP AND PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

The CHDE was established by the Armenian government in 2011 as a non-commercial State body responsible for conducting survey and clearance and identifying contaminated areas. In 2014, the CHDE was made Armenia's national mine action authority.²⁹ An Advisory Board oversees the CHDE at the Deputy Ministerial level, with representation from the Ministry of Defence; Ministry of Emergency Situations; Ministry of Territorial Administration and Infrastructure; Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sports; the Ministry of Justice; and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.³⁰ In 2013, in conformity with a government decree, the CHDE began developing national mine action legislation. But as at May 2022, the draft mine action law was reported to still be under development, with the hope it might be finalised by the end of 2022.³¹ At the time of writing, it was not known whether the law had been adopted.

Key decisions on mine action are taken centrally by the CHDE, although in December 2022, other stakeholders were invited to a strategy stakeholder workshop and to participate in future work.³² In 2021, the government allocated AMD317.6 million (approx. US\$695,000) to cover the costs of the CHDE and AMD6.3 million (approx. US\$14,000) for survey and clearance operations.³³ The level of funding provided in 2022 is not known. The national authorities do not provide direct funding to HALO, the only international clearance operator present in Armenia. HALO only conducted minimal survey of AP mined area in 2022.³⁴

Obtaining visas for Armenia is straightforward for HALO employees and HALO has not faced any significant difficulties in importing demining equipment when it has needed to do so. However, Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) undergo approval from relevant ministries and the CHDE and the process can be lengthy.

UNDP provides a range of capacity development activities to the CHDE. This includes support with NTS, TS, and other land release activities. In addition, UNDP has assisted the CHDE with renewing explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) and information technology equipment; drafting operational plans; reviewing national mine action standards (NMAS), and strengthening risk education and coordination capacities.³⁵ UNDP and the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD) also supported the CHDE in installing Information Management System for Mine Action (IMSMA) Core and training staff on its use.³⁶

In addition, UNDP and the GICHD also supported the CHDE to review and draft a new national mine action strategy.³⁷ The GICHD facilitated a strategy stakeholder workshop in Yerevan in December 2022. It also supported the CHDE in conducting a baseline assessment of the Armenia programme.³⁸ Furthermore, in its Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) Protocol V Article 10 Report (covering 2022), Russia reported that the International Mine Action Center within its armed forces trained 12 Armenian military personnel in 2022.³⁹ No other details were provided.

ENVIRONMENTAL POLICIES AND ACTION

The CHDE has previously reported that it deploys methods and tools to avoid damaging the environment where possible.⁴⁰ In May 2022, the CHDE reported that Armenia did not yet have a national mine action standard on environmental management, but planned to develop one.⁴¹ No update on any progress in this regard was available as at July 2023.

HALO seeks to minimise the environmental impact when it conducts survey and clearance in Armenia. It minimises fuel consumption by sharing vehicles; it does not burn vegetation during the clearance process and does not remove vegetation unnecessarily; it takes care not to contaminate water sources with fuels, lubricants, and paints; it takes rubbish away when it leaves a task; and removes any metal contamination. HALO also plans clearance operations around agricultural planting and harvesting cycles.⁴²

29 Emails from Ruben Arakelyan, CHDE, 8 June 2015; and Margaret Lazyan, CHDE, 10 August 2020.

30 Emails from Stanislav Damjanovic, Country Focal Point, GICHD, 13 July 2022; and Ani Zakaryan, Head of Information Management, CHDE, 21 July 2022.

31 Email from Vaghinak Sargsyan, CHDE, 11 May 2022.

32 Email from Fiona Kilpatrick-Cooper, HALO, 16 March 2023.

33 Email from Vaghinak Sargsyan, CHDE, 11 May 2022.

34 Email from Fiona Kilpatrick-Cooper, HALO, 16 March 2022.

35 Email from Karinée Khojayan, UNDP, 15 March 2023.

36 Emails from Karinée Khojayan, UNDP, 15 March 2023; and Stanislav Damjanovic, GICHD, 25 May 2023.

37 Ibid.

38 Email from Stanislav Damjanovic, GICHD, 25 May 2023.

39 Russia CCW Protocol V Article 10 Report (covering 2022), Forms F.

40 Email from Vaghinak Sargsyan, CHDE, 11 May 2022.

41 Ibid.

42 Emails from Fiona Kilpatrick-Cooper, HALO, 18 May 2022 and 16 March 2023.

GENDER AND DIVERSITY

In May 2022, the CHDE reported that it did not have a gender policy or associated implementation plan but that gender had been mainstreamed in Armenia's draft national mine action strategy. No update was available as of July 2023. The CHDE reported in 2022 that during survey and community liaison activities, all groups affected by contamination were consulted, including women and children, and ethnic or minority groups. Furthermore, according to the CHDE the needs of women and children in affected communities are taken into account in prioritisation, planning, and tasking of survey and clearance operations. However, as of May 2022, the CHDE did not disaggregate mine action data by sex.⁴³

The CHDE says it offers equal employment opportunities for both men and women. In 2021, seventeen of the fifty CHDE employees were women (32%, down from 36% in 2020), while women held six of sixteen managerial positions. Two of six staff in the Operations Department were women, as were two staff in the training centre and five of six staff in the explosive

ordnance risk education (EORE) Group. As of May 2022, survey teams did not include representatives from different ethnic or minority groups.⁴⁴ No update was available as at July 2023.

HALO, in its limited recent activities in Armenia, disaggregates mine action data by age and sex. It only employed one staff member in Armenia in 2022, a female administrator.⁴⁵ While HALO is an equal opportunities employer, due to the local cultural context and nature of the work, the majority of staff it deploys in Armenia are men.⁴⁶ NTS and risk education training-of-trainer teams that worked in Armenia in 2022 comprised men only.⁴⁷ HALO's teams adhere to a gender-sensitive approach and relevant policies, and consider the needs of minority groups and internally displaced persons (IDPs). All tasks, however, are allocated by the CHDE, and HALO is not involved in task prioritisation.⁴⁸

INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING

The CHDE manages the national IMSMA database.⁴⁹ In 2022, with UNDP and GICHD support, the CHDE completed the installation of IMSMA Core, which had been delayed by COVID-19.⁵⁰ By May 2023, an in-country server had been set up and configured. Basic IMSMA CORE training was provided to CHDE staff in the summer of 2022, and two CHDE staff members attended the GICHD's advanced administrator training in Spiez, Switzerland, in May 2023.⁵¹

PLANNING AND TASKING

A draft National Strategic Plan on Mine Action was originally presented to the Armenian Government for approval in 2018. Since early 2021, however, the draft plan has been under review primarily due to the emergence of new challenges in the aftermath of the 2020 conflict.⁵² The strategy, along with the operational plans, were finalised and adopted by the CHDE Board in May 2023.⁵³ The main objectives of the original draft plan were to address, as a priority, AP mines in CHAs that have a humanitarian impact, and increasing community safety in support of the achievement of the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals.⁵⁴ No information is available on the contents of the reviewed strategy.

Tasking for clearance is based on CHDE criteria. Priority is given first to contaminated areas that are up to 1km away from a population centre, then to those near agricultural land, and finally to contaminated areas that negatively affect the environment. These are mostly located in the mountains. To optimise efficient deployment of resources, clearance plans are typically drawn up on a community-by-community basis.⁵⁵

43 Email from Vaghinak Sargsyan, CHDE, 11 May 2022.

44 Ibid.

45 Email from Fiona Kilpatrick-Cooper, HALO, 16 March 2023.

46 Email from Fiona Kilpatrick-Cooper, HALO, 18 May 2022.

47 Email from Fiona Kilpatrick-Cooper, HALO, 16 March 2023.

48 Ibid.

49 Email from Ruben Arakelyan, CHDE, 19 March 2014.

50 Email from Stanislav Damjanovic, GICHD, 25 May 2023.

51 Emails from Stanislav Damjanovic, GICHD, 25 May and 23 June 2023.

52 Emails from Margaret Lazyan, CHDE, 10 August 2020 and 26 April 2021.

53 Email from Karinée Khojayan, UNDP, 10 July 2023.

54 Email from Margaret Lazyan, CHDE, 19 April 2019.

55 Email from Ruben Arakelyan, CHDE, 28 April 2017.

In 2022, the CHDE started a baseline NTS to determine the extent of new explosive ordnance contamination arising from the 2020 conflict, and planned to clear 50,000m² of explosive ordnance-contaminated area and to reduce a further 60,000m².⁵⁶ Priorities for clearance were to be defined when the NTS results were analysed.⁵⁷ In June 2022, the CHDE reported that it had finalised NTS for all of Syunik province.⁵⁸ There is no available information on whether the land release targets were achieved in 2022.

At the strategy stakeholder workshop in December 2022, the CHDE indicated it would like HALO to help clear contamination arising from the September 2022 incursion.⁵⁹ UNDP was due to support the clearance of 130,000m² of mined area in 2023.⁶⁰

LAND RELEASE SYSTEM

STANDARDS AND LAND RELEASE EFFICIENCY

The CHDE developed the Armenian NMAS, which were approved by the government in 2014.⁶¹ The CHDE has reported that these have been reviewed to ensure they are consistent with International Mine Action Standards (IMAS) and international best practice.⁶² In 2022, UNDP supported a review of the NMAS.⁶³

The overall quality of Armenia's NMAS on land release varies. While some chapters provide sufficient and good-quality information on national requirements, others tend to be overly prescriptive with sections that are more procedural. There are sections on "All Reasonable Effort", evidence of criteria, liability, and residual risk. Some are taken directly from the IMAS although the text has been adapted to the local context.⁶⁴ The CHDE has initiated a review of the

NMAS which could be completed by the end of 2023, and intends to develop a NMAS on accreditation.⁶⁵

The CHDE has been developing standard operating procedures (SOPs) for several years.⁶⁶ SOPs on manual mine clearance, battle area clearance (BAC), marking of hazardous areas, and medical support were all elaborated by 2018.⁶⁷ In 2020, the CHDE elaborated SOPs on Information Management, NTS, TS, EOD, and quality management (QM).⁶⁸ No update was available for further progress in 2022.

When conducting occasional deployments in Armenia, HALO operates under SOPs that were updated in line with those in Nagorno-Karabakh, which were accredited by the CHDE.⁶⁹

OPERATORS AND OPERATIONAL TOOLS

The GICHD supported the CHDE in conducting a Baseline Capacity Assessment of the Armenia programme in 2022.⁷⁰ With the focus on BAC in 2022, the CHDE was planning to deploy two more clearance teams,⁷¹ but it is not known whether this was achieved. In 2021, the CHDE deployed three NTS teams, each comprising a team leader and three surveyors, and two TS teams. This constituted an increase in the number of operational teams from the previous year, with the addition of two NTS teams and two TS teams.

In 2022, HALO did not have any staff dedicated to mine survey and release, but did deploy two NTS teams with a total of eight personnel that continued to work on BAC tasks assigned by the CHDE.⁷²

QM is conducted in accordance with IMAS and the NMAS. Quality assurance (QA) is conducted by dedicated officers who make regular field visits to inspect cleared land.⁷³

COVID-19 had no significant reported impact on operations during 2022.⁷⁴

56 Emails from Vaghinak Sargsyan, CHDE, 11 May 2022; and Ani Zakaryan, CHDE, 21 July 2022.

57 Email from Vaghinak Sargsyan, CHDE, 11 May 2022.

58 Email from Vaghinak Sargsyan, CHDE, 13 June 2022.

59 Emails from Fiona Kilpatrick-Cooper, HALO, 16 March 2023; and David Crawford, HALO, 19 June 2023.

60 Email from Karinée Khojayan, UNDP, 15 March 2023.

61 Email from Margaret Lazyan, CHDE, 19 April 2019.

62 Emails from Margaret Lazyan, CHDE, 19 April 2019 and 26 April 2021.

63 Email from Karinée Khojayan, UNDP, 15 March 2023.

64 Email from Stanislav Damjanovic, GICHD, 25 May 2023.

65 Emails from Stanislav Damjanovic, GICHD, 25 May and 23 June 2023.

66 Email from Varsine Miskaryan, CHDE, 8 August 2016.

67 Email from Margaret Lazyan, CHDE, 8 August 2018.

68 Email from Margaret Lazyan, CHDE, 26 April 2021.

69 Email from Fiona Kilpatrick-Cooper, HALO, 18 May 2022.

70 Email from Stanislav Damjanovic, GICHD, 25 May 2023.

71 Email from Vaghinak Sargsyan, CHDE, 11 May 2022.

72 Email from Fiona Kilpatrick-Cooper, HALO, 16 March 2023; and David Crawford, HALO, 19 June 2023.

73 Email from Ruben Arakelyan, CHDE, 8 June 2015.

74 Emails from Stanislav Damjanovic, GICHD, 25 May and 24 July 2023; and Fiona Kilpatrick-Cooper, HALO, 16 March 2023.

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND PROGRESS TOWARDS COMPLETION

LAND RELEASE IN 2022

No comprehensive data on land release were available for 2022. As indicated above, UNDP supported CHDE with NTS, TS, and land release operations for AP mined area and other contamination in 2022,⁷⁵ but no other details were reported. HALO conducted NTS of three previously unrecorded AP legacy minefields (but dating from 1998) near Pambak village, in Gegharkunik province in 2022. The total area surveyed was 46,643m² and HALO identified three AP mines, one AP mine in each area.⁷⁶ HALO reported the three mines to CHDE, but does not know whether they were destroyed.⁷⁷ This contrasts with 2021 when, for the second consecutive year, no AP mined area was surveyed or cleared.⁷⁸

PROGRESS TOWARDS COMPLETION

In 2021, it was reported that no target date had yet been set for the completion of partial mine clearance, due to the uncertainty over future capacity and funding.⁷⁹ Moreover, due to the new UXO contamination resulting from the 2020 conflict with Azerbaijan, in 2021 the CHDE had prioritised BAC and TS in part of Syunik, and NTS in the newly contaminated provinces of Gegharkunik, Syunik, and Tavush.⁸⁰

For the five years until the end of 2021, demining in Armenia has been slow and productivity rates low, with very little demining taking place. Armenia has in the past claimed that challenges in its mine and ERW clearance include the low level of contamination and the random distribution of mines, which creates obstacles for the effective and efficient implementation of TS and clearance activities, and the absence of donor funding.⁸¹

Table 3: Five-year summary of AP mine clearance

Year	Area cleared (km ²)
2022	N/K
2021	0
2020	0
2019	*0.02
2018	*0.01
Total	0.03

N/K = not known. * Area rounded up.

The CHDE did launch a baseline NTS in 2022 and planned to clear mined and battle areas of 50,000m² within the year, with priorities to be determined following the completion of the NTS.⁸² The outcome of the survey is not known.

PLANNING FOR MANAGEMENT OF RESIDUAL CONTAMINATION

According to the CHDE, Armenia has included provisions for addressing previously unknown mined areas following completion in national strategies. It is reported to have a limited but sustainable capacity to conduct survey and clearance. In addition to its own staff, the CHDE reports that it can also recruit additional staff from an internal roster of trained people.⁸³

75 Emails from Karinée Khojayan, UNDP, 15 March and 10 July 2023.
76 Emails from Fiona Kilpatrick-Cooper, HALO, 16 March 2022; and David Crawford, HALO, 14 July 2023.
77 Email from David Crawford, HALO, 14 July 2023.
78 Emails from Vaghinak Sargsyan, CHDE, 11 May 2022; and Ani Zakaryan, CHDE, 21 July 2022.
79 Emails from Margaret Lazyan, CHDE, 19 April 2019 and 26 April 2021.
80 Email from Vaghinak Sargsyan, CHDE, 11 May 2022.
81 Emails from Margaret Lazyan, CHDE, 10 August 2020; and Ruben Arakelyan, CHDE, 28 April 2017.
82 Email from Vaghinak Sargsyan, CHDE, 11 May 2022.
83 Emails from Stanislav Damjanovic, GICHD, 25 May and 24 July 2023.