

ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE: 31 DECEMBER 2025
NOT ON TRACK TO MEET DEADLINE

KEY DATA

ANTI-PERSONNEL (AP) MINE CONTAMINATION: MEDIUM

MINE ACTION REVIEW ESTIMATE

10 km²

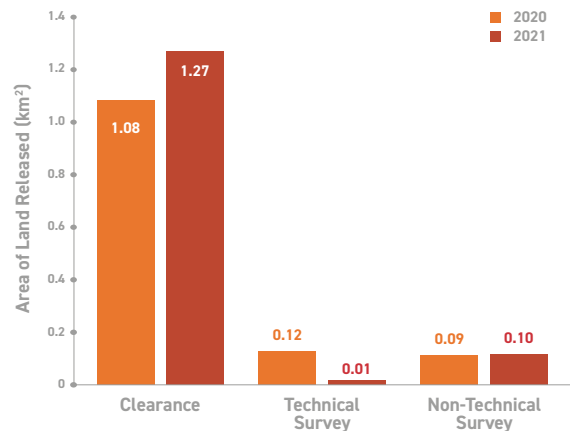
AP MINE CLEARANCE IN 2021

1.27 km²

AP MINES DESTROYED IN 2021

270

LAND RELEASE OUTPUT



CURRENT LIKELIHOOD OF MEETING 2025 CLEARANCE TARGET (as per the Oslo Action Plan commitment): LOW

KEY DEVELOPMENTS

In 2021, Colombia requested and was granted a second extension to its Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC) Article 5 deadline through to the end of 2025, although Colombia made it clear in the request that it will not complete mine clearance by that time. Clearance output increased in 2021 compared to the previous year despite restrictions imposed by civil unrest and protests all over the country in the first semester of 2021, as well as intermittent closures due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Improvements were also made to the mine action programme throughout the year with the Office of the High Commissioner for Peace (OACP – AICMA Group) issuing 17 new national mine action standards (NMAS). The new NMAS allow for more evidence-based survey and clearance. However, numerous challenges to efficient and effective land release persist, and it remains to be seen how the mine action programme will adapt.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

- Colombia should further endeavour to conduct a baseline survey to elaborate a more meaningful and evidence-based understanding of contamination while continuing to clean the data on “events” in the Information Management System for Mine Action (IMSMA) database.
- Colombia should establish a National Mine Action Platform (NMAP) for regular dialogue among all stakeholders, including donors, as recommended by the APMBC’s Committee on the Enhancement of Cooperation and Assistance, to collectively discuss progress, challenges, and support for Article 5 implementation in Colombia.
- The national programme should seek to further develop technical support to operators on land release in accordance with the new NMAS.
- Quality management of operations should be streamlined and targeted towards making operations more efficient rather than imposing unnecessary delays on operators. A specific space should be created as a matter of urgency for operators, the mine action authorities, and the Organization of American States (OAS) to discuss issues that arise in the monitoring process. As a priority the matrices that are used to evaluate demining operations should be reviewed.

- Colombia should proceed with the study on the effect of ageing on improvised anti-personnel mines in the country given the large proportion of non-functional mines being found during demining, and in order to provide data to inform decision making. Based on a risk analysis and clarity on the definition of “all reasonable effort”, a level of acceptability should be defined for residual contamination once Colombia has fulfilled its Article 5 obligations.
- Colombia should provide more detailed information on how it will mainstream gender and diversity considerations in its mine action programme, including with targets and timeframes.

ASSESSMENT OF NATIONAL PROGRAMME PERFORMANCE

Criterion	Score (2021)	Score (2020)	Performance Commentary
UNDERSTANDING OF CONTAMINATION (20% of overall score)	5	4	The precise extent of anti-personnel mine contamination remains unknown. While a nationwide baseline survey has yet to be conducted, non-technical survey is taking place in accessible areas and Colombia has developed guidance on establishing a baseline. Colombia is now presenting a more evidence-based estimate of remaining contamination that is at least partially based on survey. Of the areas surveyed Colombia estimated anti-personnel mine contamination as at end 2021 at 3.04km ² . Insecurity remains an obstacle to access of suspected mined areas and mines are still being emplaced in some areas by non-State armed groups (NSAGs).
NATIONAL OWNERSHIP AND PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT (10% of overall score)	7	6	There is strong national ownership in Colombia with overall responsibility for the mine action programme sitting with the OACP, and decision-making on demining the responsibility of a body within the Ministry of Defence. Roles and responsibilities at a national level are generally clear. Operators were actively consulted in the review of national standards, although Colombia would benefit from improved coordination mechanisms that are inclusive of all stakeholders in demining, including donors. In 2021, Colombia elaborated a resource mobilisation strategy and increased national funding for mine action.
GENDER AND DIVERSITY (10% of overall score)	7	7	Colombia has Gender Guidelines for Mine Action in place and gender is included within the framework of the new Strategic Plan for 2020–25. The needs of different groups must be considered during community liaison with gender-balanced teams according to the technical norm on risk education, and gender and diversity provisions are reflected in the land release technical norm. A woman heads the national authority and women make up 66% of the staff dedicated to mine action in the OACP – AICMA Group. However, among deminers overall this figure drops to only 3%. This proportion varies widely between operators, however, with only the military demining brigades not having any female deminers.
INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING (10% of overall score)	5	5	Improvements have been made to information management in Colombia following a review of the IMSMA database. However, Colombia continues to rely on “events” where more recent survey data is unavailable as the main indicator of contamination even though these are beset with errors and are often cancelled or discarded once investigated. Discrepancies between operator data and figures from the national authority are also frequent, due to delays in information processing and quality control. Article 7 reports are submitted on a timely basis and the latest report also included information in relation to the implementation of the Oslo Action Plan.
PLANNING AND TASKING (10% of overall score)	6	5	Colombia has a five-year strategic plan through to 2025 and an operational plan for demining which includes land release targets although it is unclear how much will be released through survey and how much by clearance. Colombia has allocated all the tasks to operators that can be performed, but 129 municipalities remain inaccessible due to insecurity or contain areas where mine laying may reoccur. In such situations, risk education is being delivered. The updated annual targets in 2022–25 in Colombia’s latest Article 7 report only project to clear 3.15km ² of mined area. Prioritisation and task allocation continue to be an issue within the mine action programme, with operators often locked into inaccessible tasks or being deployed into new areas without prior consideration of their capacity. A new criterion for assigning tasks has been included in the new technical norms and will be aligned with performance indicators that will measure operators efficiency. It remains to be seen whether this will improve the situation once the technical norms have been implemented.

Criterion	Score (2021)	Score (2020)	Performance Commentary
LAND RELEASE SYSTEM (20% of overall score)	7	6	In 2020, Colombia developed a new set of 17 NMAS, which were developed in consultation with operators and other mine action stakeholders and are an important step in improving land release processes in Colombia. These include new technical norms on land release, survey, and information management. The NMAS were formally issued in 2021.
LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND ARTICLE 5 COMPLIANCE (20% of overall score)	6	5	Overall land release output rose in 2021, including for clearance of mined area. Colombia remains unlikely to meet its extended Article 5 deadline of 31 December 2025 based on progress to date and the extent of the remaining challenge.
Average Score	6.1	5.3	Overall Programme Performance: AVERAGE

DEMINING CAPACITY

MANAGEMENT CAPACITY

- Office of the High Commissioner for Peace (OACP – AICMA Group)

NATIONAL OPERATORS

- Humanitarian Demining Brigade (Brigada de Desminado Humanitario (BRDEH))
- Batallón de Desminado e Ingenieros Anfíbios (BDIAN) previously known as Marine Corps Explosives and Demining Group (Agrupación de Explosivos y Desminado de Infantería de Marina (AEDIM))¹
- Campaña Colombiana Contra Minas (CCCM)
- Humanicemos Desminado Humanitario (DH)

INTERNATIONAL OPERATORS

- Danish Refugee Council's Humanitarian Disarmament and Peacebuilding Sector, (DRC) previously known as Danish Demining Group (DDG)²
- The HALO Trust (HALO)
- Humanity and Inclusion (HI)

OTHER ACTORS

- Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD)
- Organization of American States (OAS) Comprehensive Mine Action Program (AICMA Program – OAS)
- Swiss Foundation for Mine Action (FSD)
- United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS)

UNDERSTANDING OF AP MINE CONTAMINATION

The precise extent of anti-personnel mine contamination in Colombia remains unknown. The OACP – AICMA Group reported that at the end of 2021 there was an estimated total of 3.04km² of anti-personnel mined area, of which 1.49km² was in confirmed hazardous areas (CHAs) and 1.55km² in suspected hazardous areas (SHAs). The contamination was spread across 12 departments and 64 municipalities.³ In 14 other departments, 187 municipalities are reported to have some anti-personnel mine contamination, but which has not been confirmed or cancelled. In total, as of end 2021, 26 of 32 departments and 251 of 1,122 municipalities in Colombia have some form of confirmed, suspected, or reported mined area (See Table 1 below). In sum, at the end of 2021, 21% of municipalities had anti-personnel mine contamination and 79% of municipalities were considered mine-free.⁴

While a nationwide baseline survey has yet to be conducted in Colombia, discussions on the possibility restarted in 2022.⁵ Nonetheless, the OACP, the OAS – AICMA Program, and the Swiss Foundation for Mine Action (FSD) consider that the dynamics of the Colombian conflict and the size of the country⁶ combine to preclude a nationwide baseline survey.⁷ For the OACP, the previous experience of the pilot project on the study of Socio-Economic Impact from APM and UXO EISEC (LIS), which was conducted between 2008 and 2010, led to improvements to the information management system, increased cartographic

1 The name AEDIM is still used in the Article 7 report (covering 2021) and in other official documents and websites.

2 The name DDG is still used in the Article 7 report (covering 2021) and in other official documents and websites.

3 Table 1 in emails from Diana Marisol Peñalosa, Advisor, OACP – AICMA Group, 23 and 26 August 2022. The figures do not match those in the latest Article 7 report (for 2021), which total 2.95km². Article 7 Report (covering 2021), Form D, pp. 41–43.

4 Email from Mariany Monroy Torres, Coordinator, and Diana Marisol Peñalosa, OACP – AICMA Group, 30 September 2022. For the OACP this is important as it reflects the advances of the Peace Agreement with the FARC–EP.

5 Email from Arturo Bureo, Operations Manager, HI, 30 June 2022.

6 1,141,748 square kilometres.

7 Any baseline survey conducted in Colombia is considered to be a waste of scarce resources and would be out of date very quickly as a consequence of the evolution of the conflict and the NSAGs continuing to lay mines. Emails from Yessika Morales, Coordinator, OACP – AICMA Group, 20 July 2022; Mariany Monroy Torres, and Diana Marisol Peñalosa, OACP – AICMA Group, 30 September 2022; Tammy Hall, General Coordinator, OAS Mine Action Program, Department of Public Security, 20 September 2022; and Angela de Santis, Country Director, FSD Colombia, 13 September 2022.

information, and harmonisation on victim accidents data. In addition, the new NMAS on land release, the increase in operator capacity to carry out non-technical survey, and the improved security conditions in mine-affected municipalities as a result of the Final Peace Agreement with the FARC-EP in 2016 make it possible to more accurately determine the contamination based on evidence from the primary source: the communities themselves.⁸ Thus the primary source of information for tasking of demining operators continues to be Information Management System for Mine Action (IMSMA) "events". However, these have proven to be a generally unreliable source for contamination and are frequently not directly related to a hazardous area.⁹

Table 1: Anti-personnel mined area by department (at end 2021)¹⁰

Department	Affected municipalities	CHA (m ²)	SHA (m ²)	Total area (m ²)	Affected municipalities without data on size
Antioquia	43	128,456	261,407	389,863	33
Arauca	7	0	0	0	7
Bolívar	16	16,599	34,088	50,687	15
Boyacá	6	0	0	0	6
Caldas	4	52,536	141,736	194,272	0
Caquetá	11	53,981	179,627	233,608	4
Casanare	4	0	0	0	4
Cauca	20	81,066	16,236	97,302	12
Cesar	9	0	0	0	9
Choco	27	0	0	0	27
Cordoba	4	0	0	0	4
Guainía	1	0	0	0	1
Guaviare	4	0	0	0	4
Huila	3	280,349	241,547	521,896	0
Guajira	7	0	0	0	7
Meta	12	591,734	172,206	763,940	3
Nariño	22	2,301	5,030	7,331	20
Norte de Santander	17	0	0	0	17
Putumayo	7	55,413	120,447	175,860	0
Risaralda	2	0	0	0	2
Santander	8	55,922	113,856	169,778	2
Sucre	1	0	0	0	1
Tolima	5	109,857	198,429	308,286	1
Valle del Cauca	8	62,741	68,833	131,574	5
Vaupés	1	0	0	0	1
Vichada	2	0	0	0	2
Totals	251	1,490,955	1,553,442	3,044,397	187

8 Emails from Yessika Morales, OACP – AICMA Group, 20 July 2022; Diana Marisol Peñalosa, OACP – AICMA Group, 23 and 26 August 2022; and Mariany Monroy Torres and Diana Marisol Peñalosa, OACP – AICMA Group, 30 September 2022.

9 Emails from Tom Griffiths, HALO Trust Regional Director for Latin America, 20 June 2022; and Arturo Bureo, HI, 7 May 2021 and 30 June 2022.

10 The original total figures given by the OACP for Table 1 do not correspond to the raw data. The total figures were 1,770,494m² for CHAs and 1,400,162m² for SHAs for a grand total of 3,170,666m². Emails from Yessika Morales, OACP – AICMA Group, 20 July 2022; Diana Marisol Peñalosa, OACP – AICMA Group, 16, 23, and 26 August 2022.

A baseline of contamination is being constructed slowly and sporadically by demining operators in the municipalities in which they have been assigned. In 2020, the OACP – AICMA Group, with technical assistance from FSD, developed a study to update the national estimate of contamination for the purpose of the Article 5 deadline extension request, and in 2021 a monitoring and evaluation methodology with indicators, reference values, and analysis to compare the baseline of each indicator.¹¹ The OACP – AICMA Group has reported that in 2022 Colombia would continue to improve the “micro focalisation” methodology that allows work on “safe areas” in municipalities where the conflict is ongoing.¹²

For the AICMA Program – OAS, the first step on clarifying the contamination should be a desktop evaluation of existing areas in the database. Newly recorded areas identified by operators while conducting non-technical survey are more accurate and can be included as mined areas. But significant cancellation of areas recorded earlier, especially unconfirmed “events”, is likely.¹³ During 2021, new mined areas were recorded by the Colombian Campaign to Ban Landmines (CCCM), Danish Refugee Council (DRC), The HALO Trust, Humanity and Inclusion (HI), and Humanicemos DH.¹⁴

All the mines remaining in Colombia are said to have been laid by non-state armed groups (NSAGs) and all are of an improvised nature. According to The HALO Trust, mined areas in Colombia are low-density, nuisance minefields.¹⁵ Mines were planted in isolated rural areas to protect strategic positions; often coca cultivations and illegal gold mining sites. In other cases, they were laid by the side of communal paths,

which were used also by the military, as well as around hamlets, schools, on hills, and in riverbanks. The depth in which the mines were laid can vary between 10 and 13 centimetres.¹⁶ Humanicemos DH has reported in their area of operations the mined areas coincided with NSAGs' camps,¹⁷ while the CCCM has found that the patterns of minelaying corresponds to illicit cultivations areas as well as areas where the military stop and rest.¹⁸ The intended victims were the military or paramilitaries, local communities were often informed that certain areas were mined, though no specifics were typically given. This has led to a widespread belief that mines are everywhere and local people are afraid to use vast areas of land for fear of mines, despite scant firm evidence of their presence.¹⁹

As part of the Final Peace Agreement with the Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia – Ejército del Pueblo (FARC-EP (2016), a tripartite mechanism (OACP/FARC-EP/United Nations Verification Mission (UNVMC), with technical support from the United Nations Mine Action Service – UNMAS) was established with a view to collecting all available information on areas that may have been contaminated by explosive ordnance (EO) in Colombia by former FARC combatants. The data, which is provided by ex-combatants, started to be collected in 2021.²⁰ A technical note on the information collection methodology was jointly developed by the OACP, the FARC (represented by the COMUNES party/Centro de Pensamiento y Diálogo Político, CEPDIPO), and the UNVMC.²¹ UNMAS acted as technical support to the UNVMC.²²

NEW CONTAMINATION

New minelaying by NSAGs continues to occur in Colombia. UNMAS in Colombia has stated that this included use amid the intensification of armed violence along the border with Venezuela and in the Pacific coast region.²³ In 2021, the most affected departments were Antioquia, Arauca, Cauca, Choco, and Norte de Santander.²⁴

Contamination may also have been laid across the border into Venezuela. The Venezuelan Minister of Defense has reported eight civilian deaths in early 2022 from improvised landmines said to have been produced in Colombia. The Minister also informed on the “deactivation” in 2021 of 100 improvised mines laid by FARC-EP dissidents, now called by the Venezuelan authorities as Terrorista Armado Narcotraficante Colombiano (TANCOL).²⁵

In April 2021, the Venezuelan government requested technical on-the-ground assistance from the United Nations to deactivate an undisclosed number of anti-personnel mines that had been discovered in the state of Apure, on the border with Arauca department in Colombia. It reported that two soldiers had died from anti-personnel mine blasts and that other nine were injured.²⁶ Venezuela declared itself free of anti-personnel mines in 2013, in compliance with Article 5 of the APMB.

11 Email from Angela de Santis, FSD Colombia, 13 September 2022.

12 Email from Mariany Monroy Torres and Diana Marisol Peñalosa, OACP – AICMA Group, 30 September 2022.

13 Email from Tammy Hall, OAS Mine Action Program, Department of Public Security, 20 September 2022.

14 Emails from Francisco Moreno, Projects and Monitoring Director, CCCM, 15 June 2022; Caterina Weller, Programme Coordinator, DRC, 9 June 2022; Tom Griffiths, HALO Trust Latin America, 20 June 2022; Arturo Bureo, HI, 30 June 2022; Maria Sanz, Resource Mobilisation Manager, Humanicemos DH, 19 July 2022.

15 Email from Tom Griffiths, HALO Trust Latin America, 20 June 2022.

16 Article 7 Report (covering 2021), Form E.

17 Email from Maria Sanz, Humanicemos DH, 19 July 2022.

18 Email from Francisco Moreno, CCCM, 15 June 2022.

19 Email from Oliver Ford, Deputy Program Manager Colombia, HALO Trust, 6 August 2020; and Article 7 Report (covering 2019), Form D.

20 Email from Yessika Morales, OACP – AICMA Group, 20 July 2022.

21 Email from Mariany Monroy Torres and Diana Marisol Peñalosa, OACP – AICMA Group, 30 September 2022.

22 UNMAS Colombia Newsletter, March 2021.

23 UNMAS Colombia Newsletter, January 2022.

24 ICRC, “Humanitarian Challenges 2022 Colombia”, p. 3, at: <https://bit.ly/3eeltVD>; and UNMAS Colombia Newsletter, February 2022.

25 “Venezuela informa de ocho muertes por minas antipersona en la frontera con Colombia”, *El País*, 11 February 2022, at: <https://bit.ly/3q608yl>.

26 Insight Crime, “Guerrillas colombianas exportan tácticas de minas terrestres a Venezuela”, 22 April 2021, at: <https://bit.ly/3AJ4lbc>; “La tensión armada crece en la frontera entre Colombia y Venezuela, con muertos y miles de desplazados”, *El País*, 26 April 2021, at: <https://bit.ly/3q9TPvH>.

NATIONAL OWNERSHIP AND PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

In February 2019, in a restructuring of the Presidential Office, Descontamina Colombia,²⁷ through Presidential Decree 179,²⁸ was reallocated to the Office of the High Commissioner for Peace (OACP) and became Grupo AICMA, one of three working groups of the OACP.²⁹ A new Director, the High Commissioner for Peace, was appointed at the same time.³⁰ Presidential Decrees 179 and 1784,³¹ both issued in 2019, placed mine action as part of the strategy for formulating and developing the Peace Policy led by the OACP. With both decrees the OACP has all the functions of a National Mine Action Authority both at national and local levels.

In 2011, Decree 3750 created the Instancia Interinstitucional de Desminado Humanitario (IIDH an Inter Collegiate Body for Humanitarian Demining), which is composed of a representative from the Ministry of National Defence, another from the General Inspectorate of the Military Forces, and a third from the OACP – AICMA Group. It is responsible for recommending or suspending the certification of humanitarian demining organisations to the Ministry of National Defence as well as for prioritisation at national level of zones and municipalities to be progressively demined, as well as assigning demining tasks. The responsibility for drafting and adopting national mine action standards, their dissemination, implementation, and compliance was reassigned to the OACP in 2019 via Presidential Decree 1784 of 2019.³²

Operators report a largely enabling environment for mine action in Colombia, although the approval and decision-making process can be slow and would benefit from increased transparency between operators.³³

In 2021, the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD), with support from the OACP – AICMA Group, issued a case study on the impact of mine action on

sustainable development in Colombia.³⁴ A second case study on mine action and the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) was started in 2021 but had not yet been completed as of writing. In July 2021, the GICHD conducted an assessment mission to evaluate the skills and capacities of the AICMA Program – OAS External Monitoring Component (CEM), and the quality of monitors and inspectors conducting external monitoring of demining operations on behalf of the Colombian Government. The results of this assessment have not been made public. In addition, DRC contracted the GICHD to conduct a gender and diversity assessment of its humanitarian mine action projects and activities in Colombia.³⁵

A proposed study on the effect of ageing on improvised anti-personnel mines, which is particularly pertinent to the Colombian context due to the large proportion of non-functional mines found, was shelved in 2021 as the process stalled due to a lack of political will.³⁶

The Organisation of American States (OAS) has been present in Colombia since 2003 providing technical and capacity support to the OACP – AICMA Group for mine action through its AICMA Program – OAS, in particular for humanitarian demining. On behalf of the OACP – AICMA Group and the Ministry of National Defence, it is responsible for external monitoring of demining in Colombia by almost all military and civilian operators.³⁷ The exception is with respect to Humanicemos DH, whose work is monitored by UNMAS.³⁸ The OAS cannot monitor Humanicemos DH due to donor restrictions (from the US Department of State, even though since November 2021 the FARC have been taken off the US list of foreign terrorist organisations).³⁹ The OAS, through the Group of Interamerican Monitors (GMI) of the Interamerican Defense Board,⁴⁰ evaluates demining personnel for accreditation. In addition, the AICMA Program – OAS monitors compliance with the NMAS and IMAS as well as

27 In April 2017, following the adoption of Presidential Decree 672 of 2017, the Dirección para la Acción Integral contra Minas Antipersonal – Descontamina Colombia was created replacing the Directorate for Comprehensive Mine Action (Dirección para la Acción Integral contra minas Antipersonal, DAICMA). Descontamina Colombia was ostensibly made Colombia's national mine action authority, with responsibility for formulating the strategic direction of mine action, coordinating and monitoring mine action at national and local level, applying technical guidance, regulating State and non-State operators, and elaborating and implementing national standards. In practice, it also served as the national mine action centre. The Name Descontamina is still used in some official documents.

28 Presidential Decree 179, 8 February 2019.

29 Presidential Decree 1784 of 4 October 2019 restructured for a second time in 2019 the Presidential Office. The other two working groups of the OACP are: Thematic Topics, and Legality and Coexistence. OACP, "Estructura Interna", undated, but last accessed 13 August 2022.

30 Emails from Arturo Bureo, HI, 18 July 2019; and Rupert Leighton, NPA, 15 July 2019; and Statement of Colombia, Committee on Article 5 Implementation, Geneva, 22 May 2019.

31 Presidential Decree 1784, 4 October 2019.

32 OACP – AICMA Group "Instancia Interinstitucional de Desminado Humanitario – IIDH," undated, last accessed 19 July 2022; Presidential Decree 1784, 4 October 2019; Ministry of National Defence, Decree 3750 of 2011.

33 Emails from Francisco Moreno, CCCM, 15 June 2022; Caterina Weller, DRC, 9 June 2022; Tom Griffiths, HALO Trust Latin America, 20 June 2022; Arturo Bureo, HI, 30 June 2022; and Oliver Ford, HALO Trust, 15 September 2022.

34 Emails from Angela Hoyos Ibarra, Advisor External Relations and Policy, GICHD, 16 June 2022; and Mariany Monroy Torres and Diana Marisol Peñalosa, OACP – AICMA Group, 30 September 2022. The case study presents evidence of the transformative role of mine action in the country, identifying direct contributions to 16 SDGs and 83 of their associated targets. It approached thematic areas unique to the Colombian context, including the role of mine action in the Colombian peace process, the dynamic between mine action and the presence of illicit coca cultivation, and questions of land ownership and land-use rights. In contrast to previous studies, which only illustrated gender aspects, the Colombian study also addresses ethnic minority issues.

35 Email from Angela Hoyos Ibarra, GICHD, 16 June 2022.

36 Telephone interview with Pablo Parra, Chief of Mine Action Programme, and Gina Bernal, UNMAS, 14 July 2021.

37 Article 7 Report (covering 2021), Form H, p. 96.

38 Email from Tammy Hall, OAS Mine Action Program, Department of Public Security, 21 July 2022.

39 Email from Mariany Monroy Torres and Diana Marisol Peñalosa, OACP – AICMA Group, 30 September 2022.

40 "Evaluación de nuevos operadores en el manejo, identificación y destrucción de artefactos explosivos (EOD)", at: <https://bit.ly/3dzdzFIP>.

operators' SOPs; and inspects released land before handover to local authorities and communities.⁴¹

FSD has been present in Colombia since 2016 and has provided advice through technical experts to the national mine action authority (NMAA) in areas such as explosive ordnance disposal (EOD), use of mine detection dogs (MDDs), mechanical demining, information management, environmental protection, operational efficiency, and hazard cartography. During 2021, FSD concentrated its support to the OACP – AICMA Group, on integrating the operational framework, information analysis and demining capacity into a broader strategy for an effective land release process.⁴² Support included the development of a monitoring and evaluation system and the new NMAS.⁴³ FSD provides ongoing operational support in the field and participates in accident and incident investigation committees.⁴⁴

UNMAS provides technical assistance to the national authority as well as training and capacity building with a focus on national operators.⁴⁵ In 2021, UNMAS provided technical assistance on information management to follow up the progress of humanitarian demining and provided training to the national authority on demining techniques and quality monitoring. Starting in 2021, UNMAS led the provision of an EOD IMAS Level 2 training, which led to the certification of 25 EOD operators, of whom seven were women and one was a former FARC-EP fighter.⁴⁶

UNMAS has worked closely with Humanicemos DH to support capacity development to enable it to become a fully self-sufficient operator. During 2021, UNMAS developed a standardised methodology for post-clearance impact assessments that can be used by all operators. The methodology was tested by the CCCM, HUMANICEMOS DH, and the Humanitarian Demining Brigade (BRDEH) in the municipalities of Algeciras, La Montañita, Puerto Asís, and Zambrano. The results showed illicit crop planting had reduced; roads were improved; requests for land restitution by farming families grew; and the pace of reforestation increased.⁴⁷ However, the methodology has not been formally submitted to the OACP, and the GICHD, The HALO Trust, and the CCCM are also developing similar methodologies. Once these are all complete, the OACP will agree with all stakeholders a unified methodology to be used by the sector.⁴⁸

In 2021, and since 2018, UNMAS as the leader of the Mine Action Area of Responsibility of the Protection Cluster, continued with the implementation of the regional coordination project in coordination with the OACP to improve humanitarian coordination, deploying nine people to the most mine-affected departments to facilitate the coordination of mine action. As a result, the nine departments included 164 mine-action related actions in their development plans, whose implementation benefited 23,000 people.⁴⁹

In addition, UNMAS in support of the UNVMC supported the national government, municipalities and community representatives in the development of a technical note to gather information on contamination and supported the elaboration of more than 80 reports on explosive ordnance contamination (including the number of devices, the type of explosive, the container used, and initiation and activation methods). These were based on the information provided by 22 former FARC-EP ex-combatants using field-based gathering of information based on the Format of Localization and Positioning of Events (FULE, which has been used by national authorities since 2004).⁵⁰ As mentioned previously, the methodology for the technical note and process was built jointly by the three parts of a Tripartite mechanism: the national government represented by OACP, the FARC delegates represented by the COMUNES party/CEPDIPO, and the UNVMC. UNMAS acted as technical support for UNVMC.⁵¹ The reports were given to the OACP – AICMA Group to inform national demining plans.⁵² UNMAS also supported the revision of the NMAS and drafted four technical notes on key issues, including treatment of human and archaeological remains found in contaminated areas and procedures for technical survey,⁵³ and FSD was also involved in the process.⁵⁴

Colombia has estimated the total cost of the mine action programme in 2020–25 will be almost US\$250 million, of which the government will fund 30%. Colombia plans to seek funding from the international community to cover the remainder.⁵⁵ Of this, the projected cost of demining activities is estimated at \$183 million, of which the government will fund \$55 million.⁵⁶ For demining, Colombia is seeking almost \$128 million from the international community to build the quality management capacity within the national authority, to fund civilian operators, and for equipment servicing and replacement for the military.⁵⁷

41 "Programa de Acción Integral contra Minas Antipersonal de la OEA (AICMA – OEA)", at: <https://bit.ly/3RDT3TD>; and email from Tammy Hall, OAS Mine Action Program, Department of Public Security, 20 September 2022.

42 FSD Annual Report 2021, Geneva, 2022, p. 19.

43 Article 7 Report (covering 2021), Form H, p. 96.

44 Email from Angela de Santis, FSD, 13 September 2022.

45 Article 7 Report (covering 2021), Form H, p. 96; and UNMAS Colombia Newsletter, February 2022.

46 UNMAS Annual Report 2021, pp. 47–48; and email from Pablo Parra, UNMAS Colombia, 19 September 2022.

47 UNMAS Annual Report 2021, pp. 47–48.

48 Email from Mariany Monroy Torres and Diana Marisol Peñalosa, OACP – AICMA Group, 30 September 2022.

49 Email from Pablo Parra, UNMAS Colombia, 19 September 2022.

50 Email from Mariany Monroy Torres and Diana Marisol Peñalosa, OACP – AICMA Group, 30 September 2022.

51 Ibid.

52 UNMAS Annual Report 2021, p. 48; see also: "Pilot project with ex-combatants will collect information on the location of anti-personnel mines in Colombia", UNMAS, 16 March 2022, at: <https://bit.ly/3AJt2eB>.

53 UNMAS Annual Report 2021, p. 48.

54 Email from Angela de Santis, FSD, 13 September 2022.

55 2020 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, pp. 86–87.

56 Ibid., p. 96.

57 Ibid., Annex 10 (exchange rate of US\$1 = COP3,430); and Article 7 Report (covering 2021), Form H, pp. 94–95.

In 2021, the OACP – AICMA Group received US\$1.3 million in national funding, a slight decrease from the \$1.4 million allocated in 2020. Of this funding, 82% was allocated to risk education and victim assistance. The BRDEH received US\$41 million in national funding and the Batallón de Desminado e Ingenieros Anfibios (BDIAN) received US\$1.15 million. As part of the national strategy for resource mobilisation, the OACP – AICMA Group helped raise US\$23.3 million in 2021, which covered 14 projects by 10 operators for demining, risk education, victim assistance, and technical assistance for the monitoring of demining operations. The resources were directly given to the operators by the donors.

In addition, during 2021, the OACP and the Presidential Counsellor's Office for Stabilisation renegotiated with the UN Multi Donor Fund for Peace Sustainability the inclusion of Mine Action within the framework of the Fund, which assigned US\$11.715 million for humanitarian demining, territorial management, and reintegration of FARC ex-combatants through Humanicemos DH.⁵⁸

Colombia does not have a platform in place which brings all stakeholders together to discuss the strengths and challenges of Article 5 implementation and coordination between national government entities is reported to be poor. The Swiss Embassy in Colombia has promoted a forum to bring together the OACP – AICMA Group, operators, and other partners from the mine action sector with the aim of eventually bringing in other donors and national entities.⁵⁹ Humanicemos DH reported starting to participate in the Swiss forum since July 2021, where demining stakeholders funded by the Swiss Government are encouraged to interact.⁶⁰ According to the CCCM and HI, only national operators receiving funding from the Swiss Government are part of this forum. According to the OACP, this is due to the Swiss international aid policy, which focuses on strengthening national capacities.⁶¹ The HALO Trust was not aware of the existence of the forum. HALO continues to advocate the establishment of a more effective strategic-level dialogue between the OACP – AICMA Group and its partners.⁶²

ENVIRONMENTAL POLICIES AND ACTIONS

Colombia has not produced a specific NMAS for environmental management in line with IMAS although Presidential Decree 1195 of 2017 outlines mitigation and correction measures that must be applied by operators when demining in national parks and other areas of ecological value. Operators are, in theory, expected to reforest in protected areas after clearance to mitigate environmental impact, but since the timeframe for reforestation is longer than for demining this may not be practicable.⁶³ According to the OACP – AICMA Group there have been inconsistencies in the application of Decree 1195 at regional and local levels. In response, the Group with support from FSD created a set of tools that clarify the obligations of demining operators and the process they must follow. The roles and responsibilities at local, regional, and national levels of environmental authorities are also clarified.⁶⁴

Several operators (CCCM, HI, Humanicemos DH, The HALO Trust, and DRC) have reported developing standing operating procedures (SOPs) in line with Decree 1195 of 2017, which they apply especially when working in environmentally protected areas.⁶⁵ DRC reported that, for several years now, it has been researching ways to mitigate the impact of demining in local communities. Today, deminers' camps all function with 100% energy generated from solar panels, and DRC has pledged to continue their use in new operations. In addition their environmental management SOP reflects internal humanitarian demining best practices for environmental management in land release operations, including the possible effects on soil, water, air, and flora and fauna.⁶⁶

GENDER AND DIVERSITY

Colombia, with the support of the GICHD, developed the Gender Guidelines for Mine Action in 2019 and reports that gender is mainstreamed within the framework of the new Strategic Plan 2020–25.⁶⁷ Data are disaggregated by gender, age, and ethnicity. The CCCM, DRC, The HALO Trust, HI, and Humanicemos DH all reported consulting women and children as well as men during non-technical survey and community liaison and employing women in their non-technical survey teams and or demining teams.⁶⁸

58 Email from Yessika Morales, OACP – AICMA Group, 20 July 2022; and Article 7 Report (covering 2021), Form A, p. 18 and Form H, pp. 91–93; and email from Mariany Monroy Torres and Diana Marisol Peñalosa, OACP – AICMA Group, 30 September 2022. See also Annual Report Multi Donor Fund (2021) at: <https://bit.ly/3Mal0Qo>.

59 Email from Pablo Parra, UNMAS, 13 September 2021.

60 Email from Maria Sanz, Humanicemos DH, 19 July 2022.

61 Email from Mariany Monroy Torres and Diana Marisol Peñalosa, OACP – AICMA Group, 30 September 2022.

62 Email from Tom Griffiths, HALO Trust Latin America, 20 June 2022.

63 Presidential Decree 1195, 11 July 2017; and emails from Angela de Santis, FSD, 11 July and 13 September 2022. According to FSD "the reforestation timeframe is at least 1 to 5 years of maintenance to be successful and the added value of demining is already enough."

64 Email from Yessika Morales, OACP – AICMA Group, 20 July 2022.

65 Emails from Francisco Moreno, CCCM, 15 June 2022; Caterina Weller, DRC, 9 June 2022; Tom Griffiths, HALO Trust Latin America, 20 June 2022; Arturo Bureo, HI, 30 June 2022; and Maria Sanz, Humanicemos DH, 19 July 2022.

66 Email from Paula Ximena Cadena, Programme Officer, DRC Colombia, 23 September 2022.

67 2020 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 77; Article 7 Report (covering 2021), Form A, p. 20.

68 Emails from Francisco Moreno, CCCM, 15 June 2022; Caterina Weller, DRC, 9 June 2022; Tom Griffiths, HALO Trust Latin America, 20 June 2022; Arturo Bureo, HI, 30 June 2022; and Maria Sanz, Humanicemos DH, 19 July 2022.

HI highlighted that the new NMAS on Land release (NTC 6469) recognizes that different groups of populations call for different attention and protection needs. Those include responses related to gender, ethnic, age, disability condition, socio-economic condition and cultural identities, in order to ensure that mine action interventions promote equal opportunities and respect for their differences.⁶⁹ The new NMAS on Territorial Management (NTC 6480) contains an Annex which identifies affirmative actions to mainstream gender and diversity in demining, information management, territorial management, risk education, and victim assistance.⁷⁰

Colombia has a significant indigenous and ethnic minority group population (13.7% of the total population), which are afforded their own constitutional protections and therefore require a specific approach during demining tasks. Indigenous communities are said to have been disproportionately affected by anti-personnel mines. According to UNMAS Colombia, almost three (28.5%) of every 10 victims registered in 2021 were indigenous or Afro-descendants.⁷¹ While there was no information or associated actions on how the needs of ethnic and minority groups are being considered during community liaison, survey, and clearance activities in Colombia's 2020 Article 5 extension request, further developments concerning humanitarian demining and diversity were implemented in 2021. The OACP and the humanitarian demining operators (HDOs) developed annexes to the NMAS on non-technical survey and territorial management, in order to facilitate processes of negotiation with ethnic communities on demining interventions.⁷² The technical note for non-technical survey, has a specific methodology for interacting and negotiating with ethnic communities, so as to guarantee direct participation throughout the land release cycle.⁷³ In addition, a Manual, a Guide, and a format for registering agreements pertaining to information gathering, the participation process, and the agreements reached with ethnic groups were also designed and are currently being used. They were produced by the OACP and finalised in consultation with demining organisations. The documents were designed to help HDOs in the processes of working with ethnic communities. The OACP reported that, between 2019 and 2022, 32% of the funds for mine action have been destined to risk education and victim assistance in ethnic communities (indigenous and Afro-descendants).⁷⁴

Operators reported that in 2021 they continued, as reported in 2020, with the same approach towards indigenous groups that is requesting special permissions in order to gain access to indigenous reserves, and that they continue to work closely with communities to build trust by employing community liaison officers, deminers, and non-technical survey personnel directly from those communities. Operators involve local ethnic minority communities in the liaison process ahead of any field operations, working with them to map contamination and prioritise tasks.⁷⁵ The involvement of local indigenous communities during the community liaison process also gives operators an understanding of the necessary preparations that must take place before survey or clearance can be conducted on sacred land.⁷⁶ The CCCM reported that they also actively hire indigenous and Afro-Colombian people for non-technical survey and clearance teams in order to be more inclusive and improve their access to territories with indigenous populations.⁷⁷

The HALO Trust reported that while conducting surveys their teams ensure that women and young people are interviewed to guarantee the maximum level of input from communities as to the whereabouts of EO contamination. Furthermore, if there are gender-based considerations in terms of the level of impact of clearance of particular areas (access for women's groups, female farming initiatives, and so forth), these are incorporated into HALO's strategic plan for clearance. This type of information is often not volunteered freely and information through third-party organisations is frequently the best source of information.⁷⁸

DRC reported that their activities in the field when relating to communities are carried out taking into account flexible schedules and the use of pedagogical methodologies that allow the participation of women, children, and people with disabilities. During the meetings, gender stereotypes are eliminated, promoting equity between men and women. In addition, the indicators for DRC projects have special sections on the gender approach (number of women participating in the activities and women who are part of the work teams) and that DRC also encourages the deployment of mixed work teams in the field.⁷⁹ DRC's camps also take into account the needs of women and men.⁸⁰

69 Email from Arturo Bureo, HI, 30 June 2022.

70 Article 7 Report (covering 2021), Form A; and NTC 6480 Territorial Management, Annex C Guidelines for Mainstreaming the Gender Approach, pp. 138–53.

71 UNMAS Colombia Newsletter, February 2022.

72 Email from Yessika Morales, OACP – AICMA Group, 20 July 2022.

73 Ibid.

74 Email from Mariany Monroy Torres and Diana Marisol Peñalosa, OACP – AICMA Group, 30 September 2022.

75 Emails from Francisco Moreno, CCCM, 15 June 2022; Caterina Weller, DRC, 9 June 2022; Tom Griffiths, HALO Trust Latin America, 20 June 2022; Arturo Bureo, HI, 30 June 2022; and Maria Sanz, Humanicemos DH, 19 July 2022.

76 Email from Alejandro Perez, CCCM, 18 July 2020.

77 Email from Francisco Moreno, CCCM, 15 June 2022.

78 Email from Tom Griffiths, HALO Trust Latin America, 20 June 2022.

79 Email from Caterina Weller, DRC, 9 June 2022.

80 Email from Paula Ximena Cadena, DRC Colombia, 23 September 2022.

Humanicemos DH informed Mine Action Review that both in their formats for collecting data for demining and RE the diversity of the beneficiaries and their needs are taken into account, which generates a direct impact on the prioritisation and planning of their operations. This was said to have been the case in La Montañita where they worked within an Emberá Chamí indigenous reserve. Contact from the very beginning is mandatory, as the ethnic authorities are the ones to authorise demining and risk education. As well, once in the field community liaison applies different socialisation strategies. In addition, their Gender and Inclusion internal Policy guarantees the access to equal employment within the organisation, non-technical survey and demining teams are composed of persons of diverse ethnic origin, which helps as the staff provide their knowledge of the areas being intervened.⁸¹

HI reported developing a prioritisation assessment tool before initiating mine action operations in a given municipality. This was in a pilot phase as of the time of writing. It takes into account specific needs, socio-economic vulnerability factors, and relative impacts, including in terms of disability and ethnicity. This tool will allow HI to identify what areas of a task have more vulnerable populations and to identify what other mine action components to deploy, supporting a more comprehensive mine action programming.⁸²

Colombia has a female head of its national mine action authority, one of the few women who hold this position in the world. Between 2002 and 2022, the NMAA has been led by five women and four men.⁸³ In the OACP – AICMA Group, of the 30 officials dedicated to mine action, 20 are women and 10 are men. A total of 70% of managerial positions are held by women; for the middle ranks, the figure is 65%.⁸⁴ However, from the 3,633 accredited deminers in Colombia, only 125 (3%) are female deminers.⁸⁵ As reported by the NMAA, the BRDEH, the largest operator in Colombia, had no female deminers operational in 2021 and nor did BDIAN, the smaller military operator.⁸⁶

As at August 2022, no information had been provided to Mine Action Review by the OACP – AICMA Group with regard to whether there is equal access to employment within the BRDEH or AEDIM for qualified women and men, or whether any measures have been put in place to achieve this. Remarkably, one woman is reported to be part of the non-technical survey teams of the BRDEH (see Table 2 on demining capacities during 2021 provided by the OACP – AICMA Group).⁸⁷

The HALO Trust has an organisational gender and diversity policy. Open recruitment for jobs such as deminers specifically encourages women to apply because manual labour is often seen as not appropriate for women in some rural regions of Colombia.⁸⁸ In 2021, 38% of HALO Colombia's staff were women. In operations positions, 28% were filled by women, while in managerial/supervisory staff positions 42% were women.⁸⁹

HI has an organisational disability, gender, and age policy which is being implemented in Colombia. HI actively recruits women and offers gender-appropriate working conditions, such as separate living quarters in the field. In 2021, 34% of staff in operational roles were women, with 39% of women in managerial/supervisory level positions. HI's community liaison personnel are recruited locally and selected by the local community. HI's demining staff are usually also recruited locally with the exception of some positions which require more experienced personnel as per the national standards. This also applies when HI works within indigenous communities.⁹⁰

In 2021, DRC reported that 31% of the total number of its employees in Colombia are women with 43% of managerial/supervisory positions held by women and 22% in operational positions.⁹¹

The CCCM has a gender and diversity policy and implementation plan. In 2020, the CCCM updated its gender and diversity policy and developed new procedures to promote efforts to achieve gender parity within the organisation and build a work environment that is free of all types of discrimination and gender-based violence. This work was extended to include the families of their staff with the aim of achieving safe spaces both at home and at work.⁹²

Gender focal points have been appointed within community liaison, survey, and clearance teams to ensure that gender is being mainstreamed throughout the CCCM. The organisation has reviewed its hiring processes to make roles more accessible to women both at the operational and managerial level, but despite these efforts the inclusion of women remains a challenge. In 2021, 45% of total staff were women: in operations, 42% were women while 44% of managerial and supervisory positions were held by women.⁹³

Humanicemos DH reported having in place a gender and inclusion policy, which guarantees equal access to employment for all levels. In 2021, 33% of the total staff were women, with 50% in managerial positions and 19.5% in operations.

81 Email from Maria Sanz, Humanicemos DH, 19 July 2022.

82 Email from Arturo Bureo, HI, 30 June 2022.

83 Article 7 Report (covering 2021), Form A, p. 20.

84 Email from Yessika Morales, OACP – AICMA Group, 20 July 2022.

85 Ibid.

86 Ibid.

87 Ibid.

88 Emails from Oliver Ford, HALO Trust, 9 and 21 August 2019; and Tom Griffiths, HALO Trust Latin America, 20 June 2022.

89 Email from Tom Griffiths, HALO Trust Latin America, 20 June 2022.

90 Email from Arturo Bureo, HI, 30 June 2022.

91 Email from Caterina Weller, DRC, 9 June 2022.

92 Email from Alejandro Perez, CCCM, 18 August 2021.

93 Email from Francisco Moreno, CCCM, 15 June 2022.

The AICMA Program – OAS reported that, for 2021, 47% of its total staff were women: in operations in Colombia, 42% were women, while 66% of managerial and supervisory positions at headquarters and in Colombia were held by women.⁹⁴

In 2021, UNMAS reported that 65% of its personnel were women, including the Chief of Operations, the head of Programme, and the acting head of Support Services. UNMAS Chief of Operations responsible for delivering training and technical assistance to the sector is a certified EOD IMAS Level 3 operator.⁹⁵

FSD reported that 50% of its staff are women, including its Country Director.⁹⁶

INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING

The OACP via Presidential Decree 1784 of 2019, was assigned as the source of official information for decision making, according to information collected through the prevention, marking, mapping, mine clearance and victim assistance programmes.⁹⁷ The OACP – AICMA Group uses the IMSMA NG V6 database⁹⁸ and its own “Periferico” database.

Poor information management has been a feature of the mine action programme since its inception. In 2018, an evaluation of information management was conducted and as a result the national authority, in partnership with FSD, elaborated an Improvement Plan 2018–19. According to the national authority, this has led to a review of the IMSMA database, increased data sharing with external parties, increased information management capacity, and improved reporting procedures and data management.⁹⁹

According to FSD, which has been advising the OACP – AICMA Group, some of the improvements seen during 2021 relate to the development of an interest by the Group in information quality. FSD has advised the NMAA to focus on the appropriate use of information, including for strategic purposes.¹⁰⁰

The GICHD have also noted improvements since 2017 in data sharing and data quality following a significant review and correction of IMSMA data.¹⁰¹ Access to data has improved, with IMSMA now available online and licences granted to the operators for access to the Periferico database. Training has also been provided for operators in the management of the online platforms that are required to submit demining outputs.¹⁰² DRC considers that the Periferico system’s biggest problem is the response time of the platform, be it for queries or uploads.¹⁰³

In addition, efforts from the national authority to improve the data in the database are ongoing. Since 2020, new data collection, analysis, and processing tools have been introduced and promoted by the NMAA, UNMAS, and the GICHD with the support of ESRI Colombia (Survey123, Collector, Dashboard, and Historical Maps, among others).¹⁰⁴ The HALO Trust reported that the use of Survey123 for weekly reporting on clearance activities worked well in 2021 and has not increased the workload for operators.¹⁰⁵ HI says that the OACP – AICMA Group are willing to listen and provide support in solving problems.¹⁰⁶ For Humanicemos DH, the new NMAS on information management has helped improve the process.¹⁰⁷ For DRC, the migration of weekly progress forms for non-technical survey and clearance has improved from the use of Excel files to the Survey123 application. In addition, the possibility for the general public to access IMSMA events and status of municipalities being addressed by demining via the geographic viewer is useful. However, there is still ample room for improvement in terms of stability and continuity of the services, as both the Survey123 and the geographic viewer portal applications often crash, affecting queries and the sending of forms.¹⁰⁸

As mentioned above, since 1990, “events” related to anti-personnel mines, unexploded ordnance (UXO), and improvised explosive devices (IEDs) have been collected in Colombia. IMSMA “events” are the main source of contamination information in areas that have not yet been surveyed and form the starting point for non-technical surveys carried out by operators.¹⁰⁹ Operators have found these IMSMA events are beset with errors, including duplications and inaccuracies. Despite some improvements

94 Email from Tammy Hall, OAS Mine Action Program, Department of Public Security, 21 July 2022.

95 Email from Pablo Parra, UNMAS Colombia, 19 September 2022.

96 Email from Angela de Santis, 13 September 2022.

97 Presidential Decree 1784, 4 October 2019, Article 28(25).

98 Email from Diana Marisol Peñalosa, OACP – AICMA Group, 16 August 2022.

99 Article 7 Report (covering 2019), Form H.

100 Email from Angela de Santis, FSD, 11 July 2022.

101 Email from Marc Bonnet, GICHD, 31 August 2019.

102 Emails from Arturo Bureo, HI, 13 May 2020; and Alejandro Perez, CCCM, 18 July 2020.

103 Email from Paula Ximena Cadena, DRC Colombia, 23 September 2022.

104 Emails from Arturo Bureo, HI, 13 May 2020 and 30 June 2022; and Yessika Morales, OACP – AICMA Group, 20 July 2022.

105 Email from Richard Scott, HALO Trust, 14 May 2021.

106 Email from Arturo Bureo, HI, 18 July 2019.

107 Email from Maria Sanz, Humanicemos DH, 19 July 2022.

108 Email from Paula Ximena Cadena, DRC Colombia, 23 September 2022.

109 Emails from Marc Bonnet, GICHD, 31 August 2019; and Arturo Bureo, HI, 13 May 2020.

to the registration of events and a clean-up of the database, when operators are assigned a task and investigate each event, they are still finding that most do not contain either mines or UXO, situation that continued throughout 2021.¹¹⁰ As a result, most of the investigated events are cancelled or discarded.

Frequent discrepancies between operators' data and the figures from the national authority continued in 2021. While the national authority provides a weekly update of all demining statistics, there is often a delay in information processing, which means that the publicly available figures are not always accurate or up to date.¹¹¹ Administrative delays between the National Authority, the external monitoring system (AICMA Program – OAS) and operators contribute to delays with approvals taking time between various parties.¹¹² Not only do data discrepancies continue but in addition, for the NMAA, only the data approved by the CEM and those incorporated in IMSMA are considered valid.¹¹³

According to the AICMA Program – OAS, the information is stored through the peripheral system. It is uploaded directly from the operation and is fully traceable from assignment to delivery. However, it does not have enough capacity to store big data, which causes delays for the operators and the CEM, as all information must be processed this way. In addition, it does not allow results analysis to be conducted.¹¹⁴

The HALO Trust suggests adopting an open-source data policy. While some data are publicly available, crucial key data is not available to implementing partners. As such, there is no formalised process that allows operators to access land release data submitted by other operators into the national database. This limits data analysis, thereby restricting the opportunity to improve evidence-based decision making.¹¹⁵ DRC has suggested that the OACP – AICMA Group publish the structure of tables arising from non-technical survey, SHAs, CHAs and risk education (RE) reports, so that the HDOs can capture the information in a structured system and allow HDOs to provide the OACP with a CSV or SQL back-up in compliance with its technical specifications.¹¹⁶

Article 7 reports are submitted on a timely basis, and Colombia's latest Article 7 report also includes comprehensive information in relation to the implementation of the Oslo Action Plan. There are large disparities in the clearance data recorded in the Article 7 reports when compared to the clearance data recorded on the humanitarian demining dashboard that is regularly updated by the OACP – AICMA Group. In 2022, inconsistencies in reporting continued, including with respect to the extent of contamination and land release in Colombia's Article 7 report covering 2021.

FSD is providing support to the OACP – AICMA Group to develop a methodology to measure the socio-economic impact of humanitarian demining in Colombia.¹¹⁷

PLANNING AND TASKING

In 2019, Colombia developed a new Strategic Plan 2020–25 "Towards a Colombia free of the suspicion of anti-personnel mines for all Colombians", which formed the basis of Colombia's 2020 extension request. But information from 2020 onwards is now outdated. In April 2023, Colombia will present to the APMBBC States Parties an updated intervention plan to comply with the terms of the extension request. Adjustments were made in 2021 to the completion calendar with updated estimated dates.¹¹⁸ The new NMAS do not include guidance on prioritisation at national level, which is left to the IIDH.¹¹⁹

For 2022, the plan is to release 21 contaminated areas covering 578,636m² in the departments of Antioquia, Bolívar, Caldas, Caquetá, Cauca, Huila, Meta, Nariño, Putumayo, Santander, Tolima, and Valle del Cauca.¹²⁰

110 Emails from Francisco Moreno, CCCM, 15 June 2022; Caterina Weller, DRC, 9 June 2022; Tom Griffiths, HALO Trust Latin America, 20 June 2022; Arturo Bureo, HI, 30 June 2022; and Maria Sanz, Humanicemos DH, 19 July 2022.

111 Emails from Oliver Ford, HALO Trust, 23 April 2020; and Richard Scott, HALO Trust, 14 May 2021.

112 Emails from Francisco Moreno, CCCM, 15 June 2022; Caterina Weller, DRC, 9 June 2022; Tom Griffiths, HALO Trust Latin America, 20 June 2022; Arturo Bureo, HI, 30 June 2022; and Maria Sanz, Humanicemos DH, 19 July 2022.

113 Email from Caterina Weller, DRC, 9 June 2022.

114 Email from Tammy Hall, OAS Mine Action Program, Department of Public Security, 21 July 2022.

115 Email from Tom Griffiths, HALO Trust Latin America, 20 June 2022.

116 Email from Paula Ximena Cadena, DRC Colombia, 23 September 2022.

117 Email from Angela de Santis, FSD, 11 July 2022.

118 Email from Yessika Morales, OACP – AICMA Group, 20 July 2022.

119 Emails from Francisco Moreno, CCCM, 15 June 2022; Caterina Weller, DRC, 9 June 2022; Tom Griffiths, HALO Trust Latin America, 20 June 2022; Arturo Bureo, HI, 30 June 2022; and Maria Sanz, Humanicemos DH, 19 July 2022.

120 Article 7 Report (covering 2021), Form D, pp. 48–49.

Table 2: Annual land release projections (for 2022-25)¹²¹

Year	SHAs/CHAs	Area (m ²)
2022	21	578,636
2023	37	1,784,257
2024	15	596,017
2025	5	191,549
To be determined	25	387,502
Totals	103	3,537,961

The OACP – AICMA Group has now tasked all operators with all the accessible contaminated municipalities.¹²² The remaining municipalities not considered possible to intervene with demining are now receiving risk education from UNMAS and the AICMA Program – OAS through local implementing partners.¹²³

The municipalities with highest human casualties from anti-personnel mines tend to have the highest levels of anti-personnel mine contamination and the most security issues. In these areas, contaminated territories are often inaccessible to operators or operators are forced to suspend survey and clearance operations due to security concerns. These suspensions can last anywhere from a few days to an indefinite period depending on how severely the situation disrupts operations.¹²⁴ As a solution a micro-targeting methodology was developed in 2021 but was yet to be

operationalised as of writing.¹²⁵ It is seen as a way of being able to conduct demining in priority municipalities that have part of their territory considered as “safe” in terms of homogenous security conditions that can be verified objectively and contamination from landmines and UXO. For example, in 2021, 22 municipalities in 8 departments saw improvements in the security conditions in certain part of their territories through micro-targeting they became municipalities included in the prioritisation model.¹²⁶

Task allocation by the NMAA continues to be the subject of concern. The CCCM provided an example from May 2021 when several new municipalities were opened and tasks were allocated to operators that had no previous presence in the area rather than to operators already assigned to neighbouring municipalities.¹²⁷ A similar situation is reported by DRC, whereby adjacent municipalities are handed over to different HDOs, causing difficulties and generating operational inefficiencies. HI feels, however that there has been an improvement on clustering task assignments.¹²⁸

Operators do coincide in that there is no feedback from the NMAA regarding the score given to the operators by the IIDH on intervention plans when assigning municipalities.¹²⁹

DRC reported delays on the issuance of task orders by the NMAA. It is the operators themselves who must present to the local authorities and call for the prioritisation meetings, which can be a challenge given the full agendas local authorities have as well as security problems.¹³⁰

LAND RELEASE SYSTEM

STANDARDS AND LAND RELEASE EFFICIENCY

In 2020, Colombia started developing a new set of 17 NMAS, which it renamed national technical norms (NTC) and are equated to NMAS, but with a higher level of obligation.¹³¹ A working group was established by the OACP to review the technical norms with representatives from the Ministry of Defence, the General Inspectorate of the Military Forces, the AICMA Program – OAS, and UNMAS, and FSD in its role as advisor,¹³² along with the national and international mine action operators.¹³³ The NTC were formally issued in 2021. According to operators they were consulted throughout the review process and the new technical norms were also subject to a public consultation process. Although the OACP did not adopt all the suggestions from stakeholders the new NMAS are viewed as an important step in improving land release processes in Colombia.¹³⁴

121 Article 7 Report (covering 2021), Form D, pp. 48–49.

122 Email from Yessika Morales, OACP – AICMA Group, 20 July 2022.

123 UNMAS Colombia Newsletter, February 2022; and email from Tammy Hall, OAS Mine Action Program, Department of Public Security, 21 July 2022.

124 Emails from Arturo Bureo, HI, 18 July 2019; Hector Hernandez Acevedo, CCCM, 5 August 2019; Oliver Ford, HALO Trust, 9 August 2019; and Yessika Morales, OACP – AICMA Group, 20 July 2022.

125 Article 7 Report (covering 2021), Form D, pp. 35–36.

126 Article 7 Report (covering 2021), Form D, p. 31; and email from Yessika Morales, OACP – AICMA Group, 20 July 2022.

127 Email from Alejandro Perez, CCCM, 18 August 2021.

128 Email from Caterina Weller, DRC, 9 June 2022; and Arturo Bureo, HI, 30 June 2022.

129 Email from Caterina Weller, DRC, 9 June 2022.

130 Emails from Francisco Moreno, CCCM, 15 June 2022; Caterina Weller, DRC, 9 June 2022; Tom Griffiths, HALO Trust Latin America, 20 June 2022; and Arturo Bureo, HI, 30 June 2022.

131 Email from Angela de Santis, FSD, 13 September 2022.

132 Email from Angela de Santis, FSD, 11 July 2022.

133 Article 7 Report (covering 2020), Form A; and emails from Caterina Weller, DRC, 5 May 2021; Arturo Bureo, HI, 7 May 2021; and Richard Scott, HALO Trust, 14 May 2021.

134 Email from Richard Scott, HALO Trust, 14 May 2021.

According to the OACP AICMA Group, key developments of the new NMAS with regard to land release can be summarised as follows: if a device is found, the whole area does not now need to become a hazardous area but can be treated as a spot task; through the new approach to technical survey, areas and polygons sizes can be reduced, which should help improve efficiency, instead of having to conduct full clearance as required previously. IMSMA events can now be cancelled through non-technical survey.¹³⁵

By the end of 2021, technical survey had not yet been implemented by civilian operators in Colombia. It is too early to assess if the new standards have led to operational demining efficiencies. Nonetheless, according to FSD the new technical norms present an improvement towards evidence-based survey and clearance compared to the previous NMAS. By the end of 2022, FSD will organise a lessons-learned workshop in order to collect the experiences of operators, the OACP, the AICMA Program – OAS, and UNMAS in their application and propose, if needed, adjustments.¹³⁶

For the CCCM, technical survey has not been implemented as there are no established patterns that could serve as the basis to reduce a given area. The CCCM has requested the OACP – AICMA Group to establish a technical committee to agree on the mentioned patterns.¹³⁷

For DRC there is a clear barrier in the possibility of applying technical survey in the Colombian context owing to the lack of clear guidelines from the NMAA on how to use this

method. Particularly, the lack of clear information on who is responsible for residual risk in hazardous areas reduced by survey is of great concern. Further, there is no established monitoring capacity in the AICMA Program – OAS to monitor the implementations of technical survey.¹³⁸

For HALO Trust, the lack of standardisation on how to implement the principles in the technical survey guidelines is the reason for operators not having yet started using this methodology. HALO considers further work is required by the sector to standardise and define practicalities across all operators for the successful implementation of technical survey.¹³⁹

HI had not developed an SOP on technical survey as of writing, nor does it plan yet to implement it, as it considers that due to the nature of mine contamination in Colombia, applying the new guidance would represent a duplication of efforts or delay land release in some cases.¹⁴⁰

FSD has reported to Mine Action Review that it has created a technical survey working group and that it will work with the OACP, CEM, and operators to clarify the “grey areas” in the technical survey NTC and operationalise it in the Colombian context. In addition, FSD’s Operational Efficiency Senior Technical Advisor will attend a GICHD training on technical survey in Bosnia and Herzegovina at the end of September 2022 and share the newly acquired knowledge with the sector.¹⁴¹

OPERATORS AND OPERATIONAL TOOLS

Colombia has a large operational clearance capacity at its disposal with a total of seven operators accredited to carry out demining operations: two national operators and five non-governmental organisations (NGOs). By far the largest clearance operator is the National Army’s Humanitarian Demining Brigade (BRDEH). BDIAN (previously known as the Marine Corps Explosives and Demining Association (AEDIM)), a smaller military operator, conducts clearance and destruction of anti-personnel mines and explosive remnants of war (ERW) in areas under the jurisdiction of the National Navy.¹⁴² Demining is also conducted by international mine action NGOs DRC, The HALO Trust, and HI, and national NGOs CCCM and Humanicemos DH.

Table 3: Survey capacities in 2021 (as reported by demining operators)¹⁴³

Operator	NTS teams	NTS personnel	TS teams	Comments
CCCM	41	101	0	
DRC	7	24	0	
HALO	13 (Average per month)	52 (4 per team)	0	TS is part of HALO’s Global manual clearance teams duties
HI	8	27	0	
Humanicemos DH	5	18	0	
Totals	74	222	0	

135 Email from Yessika Morales, OACP – AICMA Group, 20 July 2022.

136 Email from Angela de Santis, FSD, 11 July 2022.

137 Email from Francisco Moreno, CCCM, 13 September 2022.

138 Email from Caterina Weller, DRC, 9 June 2022.

139 Emails from Tom Griffiths, HALO Trust Latin America, 20 June 2022; and Oliver Ford, HALO Trust, 15 September 2022.

140 Email from Arturo Bureo, HI, 30 June 2022.

141 Email from Angela de Santis, 13 September 2022.

142 Descontamina Colombia, “Agrupación de Explosivos y Desminado de Infantería de Marina – AEDIM”, undated but accessed 3 September 2018, at: <http://bit.ly/2McfRw1>.

143 Emails from Francisco Moreno, CCCM, 15 June 2022; Caterina Weller, DRC, 9 June 2022; Tom Griffiths, HALO Trust Latin America, 20 June 2022; Arturo Bureo, HI, 30 June 2022; and Maria Sanz, Humanicemos DH, 19 July 2022.

Table 4: Clearance capacities deployed in 2021¹⁴⁴

Operator	Manual teams	Total deminers	Machines	Comments
CCCM	10	35	0	
DRC	7	65	0	Increase from 2020
HALO	32 (Average per month)	160 (5x deminers per team)	0	Increase from 2020 in 2 teams and 10 deminers
HI	6	34	1	1 Mechanical team with 2 operators
Humanicemos DH	3	30	0	Increase from 2020
Totals	58	324	1	

The CCCM reported that their teams are multitask and conduct either non-technical survey or clearance as per requirements in the assigned municipalities. Overall, personnel for non-technical survey and clearance increased from 129 to 146 between 2020 and 2021.¹⁴⁵ The CCCM together with Tohoku University, Japan and the National University, has a research project on a new detector that combines metal detection and a penetration radar. The project was expected to finish in 2022.¹⁴⁶

The HALO Trust in 2021 deployed on average 13 non-technical survey teams per month totalling 52 personnel and on average 32 manual clearance teams with 160 deminers (5 per team). Due to additional funding from the United States, The HALO Trust increased its capacity of both clearance and survey teams in 2021 and expanded its area of operations. HALO's Colombia programme in 2021 saw an increase of overall operational staff of 19% as a result of the lifting of COVID-19 related restrictions.¹⁴⁷

In 2021, DRC began clearance activities for the first time; it also deployed two non-technical survey teams totalling six people. In 2021, DRC expanded to Curillo, Milan, and Solano municipalities in the department of Caquetá by adding one community liaison team, five non-technical survey teams, and four clearance teams to its existing capacity. In total, DRC deployed 65 clearance personnel in 2021. For 2022, the clearance teams will be in Caquetá department, and it will expand to Bolivar department with more non-technical survey teams. DRC is using drones to conduct marking during non-technical survey activities. In addition, DRC has developed information management software, which automates reporting, mapping, and risk analysis. The open-source software, which can be used online or offline, enables quality control of operations. DRC has also started

using a new protection material called Dyneema, which is more resistant and lighter than Kevlar and is not so easily affected by humidity.¹⁴⁸

HI during 2021 had no significant changes in the number of non-technical survey personnel, but did increase clearance staff as more hazardous areas were identified in Vista Hermosa in Meta department. HI also deployed a mechanical asset in support of manual clearance, a GCS-100 machine, using a tiller which has allowed clearance speed to triple and the cost per square metre to decrease considerably. HI expected to increase its teams in mid 2022, with an increase of demining teams dependent on the survey findings.¹⁴⁹

Humanicemos DH, the demining organisation comprised of ex-fighters from the FARC-EP, was accredited in August 2017.¹⁵⁰ In March 2020, the United Nations and the Government of Colombia, with the support of the European Union, signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) facilitating the demining operations of Humanicemos DH. The MoU designated UNMAS as the responsible agency for external quality management and monitoring of Humanicemos DH.¹⁵¹ In November 2020, Humanicemos DH began survey and clearance operations in La Montañita, Caquetá and was tasked with demining a second municipality in Caquetá in 2021. In 2021, they deployed a total of around 100 personnel divided into four non-technical survey teams and two to three clearance teams. For 2022, Humanicemos DH expected to train non-technical survey teams to also do clearance.¹⁵²

The AICMA Program – OAS serves as the External Monitoring Component (CEM) body for accreditation and monitoring of humanitarian demining in Colombia, for all operators with the exception of Humanicemos DH. It has been criticised for being too focused on compliance rather than on supporting

¹⁴⁴ Ibid.

¹⁴⁵ Email from Francisco Moreno, CCCM, 13 September 2022.

¹⁴⁶ Email from Francisco Moreno, CCCM, 15 June 2022.

¹⁴⁷ Emails from Richard Scott, HALO Trust, 14 May 2021; and Tom Griffiths, HALO Trust, 19 June 2022.

¹⁴⁸ Email from Caterina Weller, DRC, 9 June 2022.

¹⁴⁹ Email from Arturo Bureo, HI, 30 June 2022.

¹⁵⁰ Email from Sergio Bueno Aguirre, Descontamina Colombia, 5 June 2018.

¹⁵¹ UNMAS Facebook post, 1 June 2020, at: <http://bit.ly/3f3U11Z>.

¹⁵² Telephone interview with Pablo Parra and Gina Bernal, UNMAS, 14 July 2021; and email from Maria Sanz, Humanicemos DH, 19 July 2022.

the operators to run effective demining operations. This has manifested itself in non-critical conformities being determined by rigid application and varied interpretation of national standards and/or SOPs, leading to delays in operations.¹⁵³ The differences in interpretation can depend on the region or individual OAS personnel with the HALO Trust reporting that processes are adapted dependent on the location or individual monitor or even in the same location when there is a change of personnel by OAS.¹⁵⁴

DRC considers that the delays imposed by the OAS due to their inefficiency to conduct proper monitoring has negatively affected DRC's work in the country.¹⁵⁵ There is a high turnover of leadership at the OAS with a new head of mission in post almost every year.¹⁵⁶ As of writing, the AICMA OAS General

Coordinator has assumed the role of head of programme, in order to ensure its stability while a new head of programme is being selected.¹⁵⁷

The AICMA Program – OAS reported that in 2021 it had identified recurrent (non-critical) non-compliance by some of the operators, and that it had held several technical roundtables with the operators and the OACP, for the HDOs to make their own adjustments and to encourage improvement in quality management processes.¹⁵⁸

The introduction of a new system of confidence levels was under discussion but it was decided in 2020 not to proceed as it became too difficult to implement.¹⁵⁹

DEMINER SAFETY

Mine action operations will only be undertaken with the local community's agreement, often in areas where mistrust of the State is high. In certain situations, the forced eradication of illicit crops by the security forces has affected civilian demining operations. Thus, during 2021 in Caquetá Humanicemos DH was forced to stop operations by request of one armed group.¹⁶⁰ Community members continued to be sceptical of the operator's intentions due to the initial perception that operators are linked to the military. Effective long-term community liaison and risk education have been key to change that initial perception.

Another factor is that civilian operators hire people from the affected communities and respect their ancestral traditions, as in the case of indigenous communities and Afro-Colombian communities.¹⁶¹ This is often exacerbated by the proximity of the demining brigade's operations to civilian operators' areas of intervention. This negatively affects the ability of humanitarian demining organisations to conduct survey and clearance and to determine an accurate estimate of contamination in these areas. HI reported that a car was burnt by a non-State armed group in December 2021 in Vista Hermosa, Meta department, with some equipment stolen, but no one was physically harmed.¹⁶²

During September 2021, in Meta department, HALO had a visit from FARC – EP dissidents, a vehicle was burnt in San Juan de Arama and though no staff were injured in the incidents HALO suspended operations in San Juan de Arama and Vista Hermosa municipalities.¹⁶³

The CCCM reported that in August 2021 a non-State armed group of about 100 armed men visited their camp and the community in the hamlet of Piñuña Negro, requested documentation from all civilians, the survey and clearance teams, as well as the representative from the CEM. The community and CCCM personnel were detained by the group for a day. Some people from the community were detained and taken away and days later were reported as assassinated. A Departmental Security Council was held, and the NMAA suspended operations in Puerto Leguizamo. The CCCM has the funds and the municipalities assigned, but cannot yet operate in all of the assigned municipalities as security conditions have worsened. By the end of 2021, five municipalities had operations suspended.¹⁶⁴ Neither the security forces nor the NMAA has authorised a start of demining operations.¹⁶⁵

153 Interviews with Pauline Boyer and Aderito Ismael, HI, Vista Hermosa, 8 August 2018; Esteban Rueda, and Sergio Mahecha, NPA, Vista Hermosa, 9 August 2018; Hein Bekker, and Emily Chrystie, San Juan de Arama, HALO Trust, 10 August 2018; and Alejandro Perez, CCCM, Bogota, 14 August 2018; and email from Rupert Leighton, NPA, 15 July 2019.

154 Email from Richard Scott, HALO Trust, 14 May 2021.

155 Email from Caterina Weller, DRC, 5 May 2021.

156 Telephone interview with Angela de Santis, FSD, 21 June 2021.

157 Email from Tammy Hall, OAS Mine Action Program, Department of Public Security, 20 September 2022.

158 Email from Tammy Hall, OAS Mine Action Program, Department of Public Security, 21 July 2022.

159 Telephone interview with Angela de Santis, FSD, 21 June 2021.

160 Email from Maria Sanz, Humanicemos DH, 19 July 2022.

161 Emails from Francisco Moreno, CCCM, 15 June 2022; Caterina Weller, DRC, 9 June 2022; Tom Griffiths, HALO Trust Latin America, 20 June 2022; Arturo Bureo, HI, 30 June 2022; and Maria Sanz, Humanicemos DH, 19 July 2022.

162 Email from Arturo Bureo, HI, 30 June 2022.

163 Email from Tom Griffiths, HALO Trust Latin America, 20 June 2022.

164 Email from Francisco Moreno, CCCM, 13 September 2022.

165 Email from Francisco Moreno, CCCM, 15 June 2022.

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND ARTICLE 5 COMPLIANCE

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS IN 2021

Colombia's Article 7 report (covering 2021) reports in Form D a total for the year of almost 1.27km² of mine clearance along with cancellation of almost 0.1km² of mined area (and reduction of less than 0.01km²). This resulted in the release of 22 mined areas.¹⁶⁶ But an Annex has a significantly higher figure for mine clearance. The data in the Article 7 report are not internally consistent nor do they match reports of release by the individual operators. Mine Action Review has taken the lower figure for clearance provided in the Article 7 report.

In 2020, a total of just over 1.28km² of mined area was released, of which 1.08km² was cleared, 0.12km² was reduced through technical survey, and 0.09km² was cancelled through non-technical survey.

SURVEY IN 2021

In 2021, 71,895m² was reportedly cancelled through non-technical survey (see Table 5), a slight decrease from 2020 when 86,891m² was cancelled through non-technical survey. Operators' figures are much larger than those reported by the national authorities (see Table 6).

Table 6: Cancellation through non-technical survey in 2021 (operator data)¹⁶⁷

Department	Operator	Area cancelled (m ²)
Antioquia	CCCM	0
Putumayo	CCCM	3,786
Caquetá	DRC	11,255
Valle del Cauca	HALO	4,948
Cauca	HI	62,445
Meta	HI	25,952
	Humanicemos DH	0
Total		108,386

CLEARANCE IN 2021

In 2021, Colombia reports in its Article 7 report variously a total of 1.26km² and 1.69km² as having been cleared in 2021, along with the destruction of either 204 or 178 anti-personnel mines. In August 2022, OACP – AICMA Group reported different figures again to Mine Action Review, as set out in Table 7. The NMAA has been unable to reconcile the difference between the different figures. NGO operators have reported clearing almost 0.42km² of mined area in 2021, destroying in the process 236 anti-personnel mines.

Table 5: Cancellation through non-technical survey in 2021 (Article 7 report, Annex III)¹⁶⁸

Departments	Operator	Area cancelled (m ²)
Bolívar	AEDIM	0
Sucre	AEDIM	0
Subtotal 2	AEDIM	0
Antioquia	BRDEH	1,241
Caldas	BRDEH	15,101
Caquetá	BRDEH	0
Huila	BRDEH	0
Meta	BRDEH	17,481
Nariño	BRDEH	0
Putumayo	BRDEH	831
Santander	BRDEH	1,356
Tolima	BRDEH	26,971
Valle Del Cauca	BRDEH	0
Subtotal 10	BRDEH	62,981
Cauca	CCCM	2,875
Putumayo	CCCM	0
Subtotal 2	CCCM	2,875
Caquetá	DDG	0
Subtotal 1	DDG	0
Antioquia	HALO	0
Meta	HALO	0
Nariño	HALO	757
Putumayo	HALO	0
Tolima	HALO	0
Valle Del Cauca	HALO	220
Subtotal 6	HALO	977
Caquetá	Humanicemos DH	0
Subtotal 1	Humanicemos DH	0
Cauca	HI	0
Meta	HI	5,062
Subtotal 2	HI	5,062
Totals 24		71,895

¹⁶⁶ Article 7 Report (covering 2021), Form D, pp. 43–46.

¹⁶⁷ Emails from Francisco Moreno, CCCM, 15 June 2022; Caterina Weller, DRC, 9 June 2022; Tom Griffiths, HALO Trust Latin America, 20 June 2022; Arturo Bureo, HI, 30 June 2022; and Maria Sanz, Humanicemos DH, 19 July 2022. There is a potential difference in methodology between operators with respect to "cancelling" mined area after investigating IMSMA events versus only cancelling mined area previously identified through non-technical survey and which is already recorded in the information management system.

¹⁶⁸ Article 7 Report (covering 2021), Form D, Annex III Released areas 2021, pp. 104–07.

Table 7: Reported destruction of explosive ordnance in 2021 (new data from OACP – AICMA Group)¹⁶⁹

Operator	AP mines destroyed	UXO destroyed	IEDs destroyed
AEDIM	17	12	0
BRDEH	100	33	11
CCCM	38	4	0
DRC	1	0	0
HALO	109	13	9
HI	5	12	8
HUMANICEMOS DH	0	1	0
Totals	270	75	28

Table 8: Mine clearance in 2021 (operator data)¹⁷⁰

Department	Operator	Area cleared (m ²)	AP mines destroyed	UXO destroyed	IEDs destroyed
Antioquia	CCCM	2,262	1	3	0
Putumayo	CCCM	60,227	57	4	7
Subtotals	CCCM	62,489	58	7	7
Caquetá	DRC	11,879	5	1	0
Subtotals	DRC	11,879	5	1	0
Antioquia	HALO	86,979	82	2	0
Boyacá	HALO	0	0	1	0
Casanare	HALO	103	0	1	0
Cauca	HALO	0	9	0	0
Meta	HALO	38,685	39	10	0
Nariño	HALO	27,490	6	5	0
Putumayo	HALO	15,689	10	1	0
Tolima	HALO	2,530	1	0	0
Valle del Cauca	HALO	44,977	9	0	0
Subtotals	HALO	216,453	156	20	0
Cauca	HI	18,546	0	0	0
Meta	HI	100,356	11	2	0
Subtotals	HI	118,902	11	2	0
Caquetá	Humanicemos DH	6,794	6	0	0
Subtotals	Humanicemos DH	6,794	6	0	0
Grand totals		416,517	236	30	7

In 2021, 39 minefields measuring a total of 106,305m² cleared by HALO Trust proved to contain no anti-personnel mines. Due to the easing of restrictive COVID-19 measures during 2021 HALO was able to deploy clearance teams uninterrupted throughout the year. As a result of higher deployment, there was an increase of 30% in metres it cleared compared to 2020.¹⁷¹ During spot tasks it destroyed seven anti-personnel mines, which are included in Table 8.

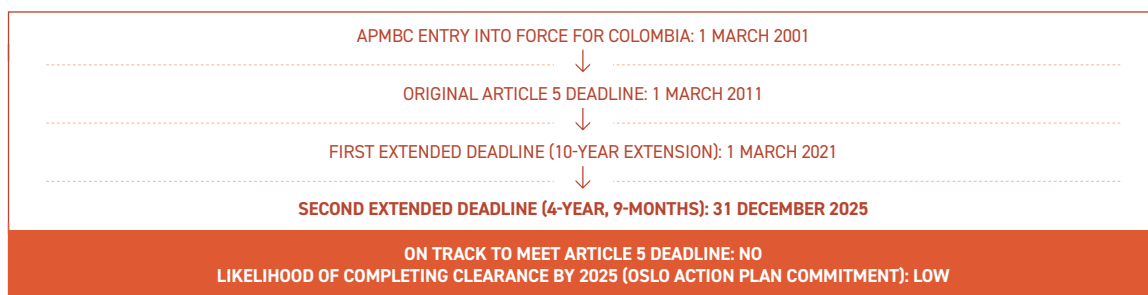
¹⁶⁹ Email from Diana Marisol Peñalosa, Advisor, OACP – AICMA Group, 26 August 2022.

¹⁷⁰ Emails from Francisco Moreno, CCCM, 15 June 2022; Caterina Weller, DRC, 9 June 2022; Tom Griffiths, HALO Trust Latin America, 20 June 2022; Arturo Bureo, HI, 30 June 2022; and Maria Sanz, Humanicemos DH, 19 July 2022.

¹⁷¹ Email from Tom Griffiths, HALO Trust Latin America, 20 June 2022.

HI reported 12 new CHAs and 3 SHAs with a total size of 89,063m² in Inza, Cauca and Vista Hermosa, Meta, all are legacy contamination. In addition, it cleared 17 areas measuring 94,503m² where no mines were to be found. In spot tasks it destroyed 11 anti-personnel mines not included in Table 8.¹⁷² Humanicemos DH reported clearance of four areas measuring 4,483m² which contained no anti-personnel mines. In addition, during spot tasks it destroyed two anti-personnel mines and one item of UXO not included in Table 8.¹⁷³ DRC reported clearing 3,900m² where no anti-personnel mines were found. In addition, one item of UXO was destroyed during a spot task, which is included in Table 8.¹⁷⁴ The CCCM reported clearing a total of 24 areas measuring 30,572m² without any anti-personnel mines being found. During spot tasks, it destroyed 9 anti-personnel mines, 11 items of UXO, and 10 IEDs, which are not included in Table 8.¹⁷⁵

ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE AND COMPLIANCE



Under Article 5 of the APMBC, and in accordance with the four-year nine-month extension granted by States Parties in 2020, Colombia is required to destroy all anti-personnel mines in mined areas under its jurisdiction or control as soon as possible, but not later than 31 December 2025. It is unlikely that Colombia will be able to meet this deadline given the numerous challenges it faces.

It remains to be seen whether implementation of the new technical norms will improve the efficiency of land release processes in Colombia. A high percentage of mined areas are still being cleared without any mines found and, the perception from The HALO Trust is that a large proportion of the aged, legacy mines that are found are non-functional.¹⁷⁶ The challenging terrain and climatic conditions along with an over-reliance on full clearance means that demining in Colombia is very expensive and, in this context, it is

especially important that demining is conducted in the most effective and efficient way possible which includes ensure that operators are tasked and deployed effectively.

Table 9: Five-year summary of anti-personnel mine clearance

Year	Area cleared (km ²)
2021	1.27
2020	1.08
2019	0.79
2018	0.96
2017	0.38
Total	4.48

PLANNING FOR MANAGEMENT OF RESIDUAL CONTAMINATION

Colombia does not yet have a plan in place to manage residual contamination after clearance is completed in accordance with Article 5. The OACP – AICMA Group is aware of the importance for the management of residual contamination, although an official plan has not been drafted yet.

The Land Release Technical Note NTC6469, Annex A, is dedicated to residual risk, but this should not be confused with the management of residual contamination once clearance is completed as per Article 5 of the APMBC.

The Annex A to NTC6469 refers specifically to the methodology for managing residual risk within the framework of the land release process and once land release has been completed by HDOs. It addresses the responsibilities of the HDOs for the six months following the handover of released land, as well as the methodology for residual risk management once the responsibility period of the clearance operator has come to an end.¹⁷⁷

172 Email from Arturo Bureo, HI, 30 June 2022.

173 Email from Maria Sanz, Humanicemos DH, 19 July 2022.

174 Email from Caterina Weller, DRC, 9 June 2022.

175 Email from Francisco Moreno, CCCM, 15 June 2022.

176 Email from Oliver Ford, HALO Trust, 15 September 2022.

177 See: ANEXO A_NTC6469_Metodología Atención Riesgo Residual, available at: <https://bit.ly/3ShAXHe>.