

KEY DATA

NO ARTICLE 4 DEADLINE:

State not party to the CCM

CMR CONTAMINATION:

Not known, but thought to be light

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS

Release of cluster munition-contaminated area	Release in 2025 (m ²)	Release in 2024 (m ²)
Clearance	0	0
Technical Survey	0	0
Non-Technical Survey	0	0
Destruction of submunitions during clearance, survey, and spot tasks	2025	2024
Submunitions destroyed	0	0

MAIN CMR SURVEY AND CLEARANCE OPERATORS IN 2025

■ None

KEY DEVELOPMENTS

The extent and location of cluster munition remnants (CMR) are not yet known due to lack of comprehensive survey. Ethiopia did not formally report any survey or clearance of CMR in 2025, and Mine Action Review is not aware of any nationally coordinated survey or clearance of CMR prior to 2025. Between 2024 and 2026, Mine Action Review has accessed a number of reports from credible sources with evidence of limited CMR contamination. These are preliminary findings, requiring further review.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

- Ethiopia should accede to the Convention on Cluster Munitions (CCM) as a matter of priority.
- Ethiopia should undertake systematic survey as soon as possible to ascertain the extent and location of CMR and prepare a plan for their clearance and destruction.
- Ethiopia should comply with its obligations under international human rights law to clear CMR on territory under its jurisdiction or control as soon as possible.
- Ethiopia should establish a framework to enable humanitarian mine action operators to conduct demolitions using explosives, without which they remain constrained in their ability to conduct safe and efficient disposal of explosive ordnance (EO).
- Ethiopia should ensure its national mine action centre has sufficient resources to sustain an effective mine action programme and mobilise the necessary resources to survey and clear CMR.
- Ethiopia should establish, as a matter of urgency, a functional Information Management System for Mine Action (IMSMA) database, following efforts ongoing since early 2024.

CLUSTER MUNITION SURVEY AND CLEARANCE CAPACITY

MANAGEMENT CAPACITY

- Ministry of Defence (MoD)
- Ethiopia Mine Action Office (EMAO)

NATIONAL OPERATORS

- National Demining Companies (Ethiopian Armed Forces)

* These operators have received desk accreditation. None was tasked with CMR survey or clearance in 2025 (or previously).

INTERNATIONAL OPERATORS

- DanChurchAid (DCA)*
- Danish Refugee Council (DRC)*
- The HALO Trust (HALO)*
- Humanity & Inclusion (HI)*
- Mines Advisory Group (MAG)*

OTHER ACTORS

- United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS)

UNDERSTANDING OF CMR CONTAMINATION

There is credible evidence of CMR remaining in Ethiopia from both from the recent non-international armed conflict in the Tigray region in 2020–22 and from the international armed conflict between Ethiopia and Eritrea in 1998–2000. The extent and location of CMR are not yet known due to lack of comprehensive survey. It appears, however, that there may be contamination in the Tigray, Afar, and Amhara regions in the north of the country.¹

The Ethiopian Mine Action Office (EMAO) has said that further survey is needed to ascertain the extent and location of any CMR, although it has yet to share any plans to undertake this.² Ethiopia has, however, issued a two-year work plan for survey and clearance of anti-personnel (AP) mines and other EO for 2026 and 2027. This work plan incorporates several regions of Ethiopia, including the apparently CMR-affected regions of Tigray and Afar, but not also Amhara. No explicit reference is made to survey and clearance of CMR in the plan.³

Between 2024 and 2026, Mine Action Review has accessed a small number of reports from credible sources, containing evidence of CMR contamination in the north of the country, with the condition of at least some of the submunitions suggesting that some of the contamination is relatively recent, likely resulting from the Tigray conflict of 2020–22, rather than the earlier Eritrea-Ethiopia war. These reports indicate a limited number of items, rather than widespread contamination, and are preliminary findings subject to confirmation.

Cluster Munition Monitor (the Monitor) refers to evidence that cluster bombs were used by Eritrea in Ethiopia's Tigray region during the first half of 2021, but states that it "could not verify and confirm these allegations". Mine Action Review has also not been able to verify these reports. According to the Monitor, media reports and social media posts and images indicate that several types of RBK-series cluster munition may have been used in attacks on Gijet and Samre, south-west of the city of Mekelle, the regional capital of Tigray, on 20–25 February 2021; and in attacks on Guyya and Menji, near the town of Abi-Adi Tembien (also in Tigray), on 13 June 2021. The air-delivered cluster munitions reportedly used included RBK-250; PTAB-2.5M; and RBK-250-275 AO-1SCh.⁴ In October 2021, the Military and Foreign Affairs Network documented evidence of cluster munition attacks by Ethiopia's armed forces against Tigrayan non-State forces, striking the town of Kutaber, in Amhara region, close to the border with Tigray, and the vicinity of Mekelle, in Tigray region.⁵

As well as possible CMR contamination as a result of the recent conflict, there is also the possibility of legacy CMR contamination in Ethiopia from the 1998–2000 war between Ethiopia and Eritrea. In 1998, Eritrea dropped cluster bombs on, and in the vicinity of, Mekelle airport, in Tigray's capital, also hitting a nearby school.⁶ The Monitor cites evidence indicating that both Eritrea and Ethiopia used cluster munitions during the 1998–2000 conflict.⁷

For more information on use, please see the country profile on Ethiopia on the *Landmine and Cluster Munition Monitor* website.⁸

1 *Landmine and Cluster Munition Monitor*, "Ethiopia", accessed 19 May 2026, <https://bit.ly/3YHLRMe>; and "Eritrea", accessed 19 May 2026, <https://bit.ly/43bhtI5>; "Battlefield Ethiopia – Federal forces cluster bomb Kutaber and Mekele", video posted by the Military and Foreign Affairs Network, 26 October 2021, <https://bit.ly/4miV5IX>; "Final Award: Ethiopia's Damages Claims between The Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia and The State of Eritrea", Eritrea-Ethiopia Claims Commission, 17 August 2009, <https://bit.ly/4ul3qzv>, pp. 35, 59, and 61; "A Guide to Cluster Munitions", CCM and the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD), 3rd edition, Geneva, May 2016, p. 22; and reports accessed by Mine Action Review, 2024 to 2026, containing preliminary findings.

2 Interview with Brigadier-General Tadesse Amelo, Director, EMAO, in Geneva, 10 April 2025.

3 2025 Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APBMC) Article 5 deadline Extension Request, pp. 40–52.

4 *Landmine and Cluster Munition Monitor*, "Cluster Munition Ban Policy, Eritrea", accessed 19 May 2026.

5 "Battlefield Ethiopia – Federal forces cluster bomb Kutaber and Mekele", video posted by the Military and Foreign Affairs Network, 26 October 2021.

6 "Final Award: Ethiopia's Damages Claims between The Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia and The State of Eritrea", Eritrea-Ethiopia Claims Commission, 17 August 2009, pp. 35, 59, and 61; and "A Guide to Cluster Munitions", CCM and the GICHD, 3rd edition, Geneva, May 2016, p. 22.

7 *Landmine and Cluster Munition Monitor*, "Cluster Munition Ban Policy, Eritrea", accessed 19 May 2026. The Monitor states: "The Mine Action Coordination Center (MACC) of the United Nations Mission in Eritrea and Ethiopia (UNMEE) reported that in 2007, unexploded PTAB 2.5 and BL755 explosive submunitions were found in Eritrea. UNMEE-MACC, "Annual Report 2008," undated draft, p. 1, provided in email from Anthony Blythen, Programme Officer, United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS), 7 April 2009. Previously, in 2004, a UN team near Melhadaga in Eritrea identified and destroyed an unexploded M20G dual-purpose improved conventional munition (DPICM)-type submunition of Greek origin, but it is not known who used the weapon. UNMEE-MACC, "Weekly Update," 4 October 2004, p. 4."

8 <https://the-monitor.org>.

Ethiopia has not, to date, reported on the extent and location of CMR contamination. Ethiopia drafted the Ethiopian National Mine Action Standard (ENMAS) 09.11 on Battle Area Clearance (BAC) in 2024, which states: "In Ethiopia, while the use of cluster munitions and related widespread contamination is not a predominant phenomenon, localized contamination still poses challenges to community safety and economic recovery. BAC efforts in the country therefore focus on addressing these targeted contamination issues".⁹

In April 2025, EMAO responded to Mine Action Review's enquiry about the extent and location of CMR contamination in Ethiopia by stating that further survey is needed to ascertain this.¹⁰ Previously, in July 2024, the United Nations

Mine Action Service (UNMAS) in Ethiopia reported to Mine Action Review that UNMAS teams had so far encountered only one case of CMR in the country, but acknowledged that survey so far and thus available data were limited.¹¹

It is possible that security risks could present a barrier to future survey and clearance in some CMR-affected areas. Renewed clashes between Tigrayan non-State groups and Ethiopia's armed forces broke out in the early months of 2026.¹² In March 2026, UNMAS reported that large areas of Amhara and parts of Tigray could not be safely accessed.¹³ Several operators also reported that insecurity had constrained access in certain areas, especially in the north of the country.¹⁴

OTHER EXPLOSIVE REMNANTS OF WAR AND LANDMINES

Ethiopia has extensive contamination from unexploded ordnance (UXO), resulting from the recent conflict in Tigray. It also has areas containing legacy contamination from AP mines (see Mine Action Review's *Clearing the Mines* report on Ethiopia for further information).

NATIONAL OWNERSHIP AND PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

EMAO was established in 2001 by Ethiopia's Council of Ministers, following the end of the conflict with Eritrea, as an autonomous civilian body responsible for mine clearance and risk education. It reported to the Office of the Prime Minister.¹⁵ In 2019, after several institutional transitions, Ethiopia reported that the responsibility for the national mine action programme had been transferred back to the headquarters of the Ministry of Defence (MoD).¹⁶

In recent years, in collaboration with UNMAS and operators, Ethiopia has made concerted efforts to develop the systems and processes of its mine action programme and increase survey and clearance capacity, with the desk accreditation of five international operators in 2024.¹⁷ Throughout 2025, and into 2026, the focus has been on moving operators from desk accreditation to operational accreditation for survey and clearance, in particular for single item destruction in-situ, to meet the nature of most explosive hazards in the country. Due to restrictions on the use of explosives, operators are currently using methods such as T-Jets (pyrotechnical

torches) for EO disposal, which is only an interim measure.¹⁸ Mine Action Review recommends, therefore, that Ethiopia establish a framework to enable humanitarian mine action operators to conduct demolitions using explosives, without which they remain constrained in their ability to conduct safe and efficient disposal of EO, including any CMR identified.

During 2026–27, Ethiopia plans to concentrate on non-technical survey (NTS) and explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) of new EO contamination in the northern regions,¹⁹ an approach which HALO believes is "grounded in operational reality", reflecting "a clear understanding of the country's evolving contamination profile and access challenges, particularly in the north".²⁰ It is not yet clear the extent to which CMR may be surveyed or cleared in the course of this planned NTS and EOD.

See Mine Action Review's *Clearing the Mines* report on Ethiopia for further information on Ethiopia's mine action programme.

GENDER AND DIVERSITY

See Mine Action Review's *Clearing the Mines* report on Ethiopia for further information on efforts to integrate gender and diversity considerations into the programme of survey and clearance of AP mines in Ethiopia.

9 ENMAS 09.11, First Edition, November 2024, BAC, p. 1.

10 Interview with Brigadier-General Tadesse Amelo, EMAO, in Geneva, 10 April 2025.

11 Email from Francesca Chiaudani, Chief, Mine Action Programme, UNMAS, Ethiopia, 31 July 2024.

12 See, for example: "Flights to northern Ethiopia cancelled as fears mount of renewed conflict", *BBC News*, 29 January 2026, <https://bit.ly/4arU3ol>; "Clashes between government troops and Tigrayan forces erupt in Ethiopia", *Al Jazeera*, 29 January 2026, <https://bit.ly/4n5bqlc>; "Ethiopia: Türk fears new crisis in Tigray amid renewed fighting", *UN News*, 10 February 2026, <https://bit.ly/4apfmr7>.

13 Online interview with Rob Syfret, Chief of Mine Action, UNMAS, Ethiopia, 25 March 2026.

14 Emails from several mine action operators, April to May 2026.

15 Council of Ministers Regulation No. 70/2001, 5 February 2001.

16 2019 APBMC Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 9.

17 *Ibid.*, p. 7.

18 Online interview with Rob Syfret, UNMAS, 25 March 2026.

19 Revised 2025 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 9.

20 "Statement on Ethiopia Article 5 Extension Request", HALO, Intersessional Meetings, 17–20 June 2025.

ENVIRONMENTAL POLICIES AND ACTION

See Mine Action Review's *Clearing the Mines* report on Ethiopia for further information on efforts to mainstream environmental considerations into the programme of survey and clearance of AP mines in Ethiopia.

INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING

Strengthening and improving Ethiopia's mine action information management systems by "operationalising" IMSMA Core remained one of EMAO's key objectives as at March 2025.²¹ As at March 2026, EMAO was in the process of finalising an agreement on transitioning to IMSMA Core.²² It is not clear to what extent Ethiopia plans to disaggregate contamination by weapon type, including CMR, in the developing national database. See Mine Action Review's *Clearing the Mines* report on Ethiopia for further information on the development of Ethiopia's information management and reporting system for mine action.

PLANNING AND TASKING

Ethiopia has not yet revealed any plan to survey and clear CMR, and has yet to allocate any CMR survey or clearance tasks to operators. See Mine Action Review's *Clearing the Mines* report on Ethiopia for further information on efforts to develop Ethiopia's planning and tasking system.

LAND RELEASE SYSTEM

STANDARDS AND LAND RELEASE EFFICIENCY

EMAO issued twelve ENMAS and two standard operating procedures (SOPs) in 2024, which serve as the basis for Ethiopia's quality management system.²³ The ENMAS were developed jointly with mine action sector stakeholders, including ENMAS 09.11 on BAC.²⁴

OPERATORS AND OPERATIONAL TOOLS

Ethiopia's national capacity to survey and clear CMR is not yet clear. EMAO has an EOD team, a clearance team, and a survey desk. EMAO is also supported by "other standby forces of the MoD Main Engineering department, that could provide surge support".²⁵ As previously mentioned, a growing number of international survey and clearance operators have been accredited to work in Ethiopia in recent years. In November 2024 EMAO "processed the desk accreditation for six international NGOs for field deployment", namely for: BBC Media Action,²⁶ DCA, DRC, HALO,²⁷ HI, and MAG.²⁸ HALO was already operational, having worked in the country since August 2022, clearing mined areas on the border with Somaliland.²⁹

According to Ethiopia's 2026–27 plan for survey and clearance of AP mines and other EO, international operators have been assigned to work in CMR-affected regions, although at the time of writing there was no indication that survey or clearance tasks specifically of CMR would be issued.³⁰ As at June 2026, DCA had initiated NTS, but had not yet secured funding to engage in clearance;³¹ DRC was not yet authorised to undertake clearance;³² HALO had relocated its operations from the Somali region

21 2025 APBMC Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 40.

22 Online interview with Rob Syfret, UNMAS, 25 March 2026.

23 2025 APBMC Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 7.

24 Emails from, and interviews with, international mine action operators in March to May 2025.

25 2025 APBMC Article 5 deadline Extension Request, pp. 28–29.

26 BBC Media Action to be deployed for EORE and victim assistance only. Email from Pierrick Rouat, Country Director, Ethiopia, HALO, 28 May 2025.

27 In March 2024, HALO was instructed to cease operations and to renew its MoD accreditation. In coordination with EMAO, HALO secured its re-accreditation in October 2024. Email from Pierrick Rouat, HALO, 28 May 2025.

28 2025 APBMC Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 7.

29 Email from Rob Syfret, (then) Head of Region for the Horn of Africa, HALO, 2 July 2024.

30 Ethiopia stated that DRC would focus on survey and clearance (including BAC), and EOD, in the north-west of Tigray. DCA would focus NTS and EOD efforts in Afar, with potential expansion to Amhara. HI would work in various parts of Tigray, including NTS, EOD, clearance, and BAC in Tigray's South Eastern and Central zones. HALO would initially concentrate its efforts in the Afar region, deploying multi-task teams capable of EOD, NTS, and EORE. MAG was to undertake survey, clearance, and EOD in Tigray and Amhara. 2025 APBMC Article 5 deadline Extension Request, pp. 30–31.

31 Email from Kibru Alemu Adinew, DCA, 19 March 2026.

32 Email from Christian Green, DRC, 31 March 2026.

to Afar, received operational accreditation, and begun demolition of surface-based EO – the predominant threat in the region;³³ HI was undertaking NTS and UXO spot tasks;³⁴ and MAG continued to provide capacity support to EMAO, but had not yet begun survey and clearance activities.³⁵ No operators were engaged in survey or clearance of CMR.

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND PROGRESS TOWARDS COMPLETION

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS IN 2025

Table 1: Land release outputs in 2025 (Mine Action Review data)

Release of cluster munition-contaminated area	Release in 2025 (m ²)
Clearance	0
Technical Survey	0
Non-Technical Survey	0
Destruction of submunitions during clearance, survey, and spot tasks	2025
Submunitions destroyed	0

No survey or clearance of CMR was reported by Ethiopia in 2025. Mine Action Review is not aware of any nationally coordinated survey or clearance of CMR by Ethiopia prior to 2025.

³³ HALO received operational accreditation in April 2026. Such surface-based EO in Afar region consists mainly of artillery shells, mortar bombs, cannon rounds, hand grenades, shoulder-propelled grenades, and tank ammunition. There is also legacy landmine contamination in Afar, concentrated along the border with Eritrea, but this is reserved for military clearance. Emails from Mahad Ibrahim, Operations Manager, HALO, 22 April 2026; and Claire Brenner, Programme Officer, HALO Ethiopia and Sudan, HALO, 15 June 2026.

³⁴ Email from Raphael Witter, Country Director, HI, 29 April 2026.

³⁵ Email from Cristy McLennen, MAG, 13 April 2026.