

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

KEY DATA

ANTI-PERSONNEL (AP) MINE CONTAMINATION: MEDIUM

MINE ACTION REVIEW ESTIMATE

20km²

AP MINE
CLEARANCE IN 2023

0.24km²

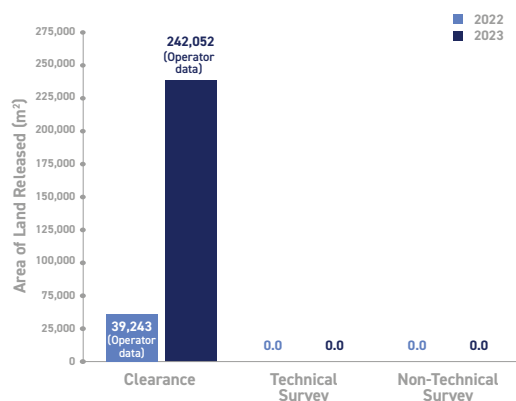
(OPERATOR DATA)

AP MINES
DESTROYED IN 2023

7

(INCLUDING 1 DESTROYED
IN A SPOT TASK)
(OPERATOR DATA)

LAND RELEASE OUTPUT



CURRENT LIKELIHOOD OF MEETING 2025 CLEARANCE TARGET (as per the Oslo Action Plan commitment): **NONE**

KEY DEVELOPMENTS

Although Ethiopia did not report any survey or clearance in 2023, The HALO Trust reported clearing 0.24km² of mined area during its first full year of operations – a six-fold increase on output the previous year. In 2023, Ethiopia initiated drafting of a national mine action strategy and national mine action standards (NMAS) and worked towards a functioning national database. An NMAS on accreditation was approved in May 2023. At the time of writing, DanChurchAid (DCA), Danish Refugee Council (DRC), and Humanity & Inclusion (HI) had received accreditation and each was expected to sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Ministry of Defence (MoD). Mines Advisory Group (MAG) was also seeking accreditation at the time of writing.

FIVE-YEAR OVERVIEW

Prior to The HALO Trust commencing operations in Ethiopia in 2022, the pace of clearance in recent years had been exceedingly slow. Between May 2019 and May 2020, Ethiopia reported clearance 1.76km²,¹ but only a further 60,000m² was released in January 2021 to end-March 2022.² In 2022, HALO was able to clear a further 39,243m²,³ but increased this six-fold in 2023, its first full year of operations. While, at the time of writing, Ethiopia had still not submitted the updated work plan requested by States Parties when granting its Article 5 deadline extension request in 2019, Ethiopia did repeat the pledge to undertake nationwide survey.

Mine action has been greatly set back by the conflict between the Federal Government and non-state armed groups (NSAGs) in the Tigray region in 2020. Citing the need for an urgent response to explosive ordnance (EO) threats, the United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS) established a Mine Action Area of Responsibility (MA-AoR) in Ethiopia. Collaboration between UNMAS and the Ethiopian Mine Action Office (EMA0) has resulted in a concerted recent effort to reorganise and rejuvenate the national programme.

¹ Article 7 Report (covering 31 April 2019–31 April 2020), Form D.

² Article 7 Report (covering January 2021–March 2022), Form C.

³ Email from Rob Syfret, (then) Head of Region, Horn of Africa, HALO, 10 April 2023.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

- Ethiopia should produce an updated work plan, with revised estimates of contamination, annual survey and clearance targets, and a detailed budget, in accordance with the terms of its Article 5 deadline extension.
- The work plan should include a clear implementation plan for Ethiopia's stated commitment to re-survey all mined areas, as a matter of priority, to establish an accurate baseline of contamination.
- Ethiopia should ensure its national mine action centre has sufficient resources to sustain an effective mine action programme and mobilise the necessary resources to complete clearance.
- Ethiopia should continue with its recent efforts to establish a functional Information Management System for Mine Action (IMSMA) database.

ASSESSMENT OF NATIONAL PROGRAMME PERFORMANCE

Criterion	Score (2023)	Score (2022)	Performance Commentary
UNDERSTANDING OF CONTAMINATION (20% of overall score)	4	4	Ethiopia has an inflated baseline of mine contamination, 99% of which is in suspected hazardous areas (SHAs) in the Somali region. In 2023, HALO continued non-technical survey (NTS) in the Somali region and Ethiopia stated its intention to conduct nationwide survey, setting out milestones in this regard for 2024–28.
NATIONAL OWNERSHIP AND PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT (10% of overall score)	4	4	In 2019, it was announced that the national programme would report directly to the MoD. Ethiopia did not report if any funding was made available for survey or clearance in 2022 or 2023, but did state that US\$100,000 was made available for rapid response to EO threats in 2023. EMAO stated in 2023 that it was reorganising itself to strengthen its structure and capacity to effectively undertake nationwide survey.
GENDER AND DIVERSITY (10% of overall score)	4	4	Ethiopia claims to have a gender policy that is reflected in its NMAS, but has reported little on gender and diversity since 2019. In 2023, UNMAS initiated efforts with EMAO to mainstream gender and diversity considerations in the national programme. HALO trained and deployed 28 female deminers in its first year of operations in 2022.
ENVIRONMENTAL POLICIES AND ACTION* (10% of overall score)	4	Not Scored	It is expected that Ethiopia's forthcoming national mine action strategy, the drafting of which began in April 2024, will include environmental considerations. It is also planned that the forthcoming NMAS will include environmental considerations, in line with International Mine Action Standards (IMAS). HALO works according to its global policy and procedures on environmental protection during demining.
INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING (10% of overall score)	5	4	Ethiopia submitted a detailed Article 7 report covering 2023 on time. However, no updated work plan, as requested by the decision taken by States Parties on Ethiopia's 2019 Article 5 deadline extension request, had been submitted. In 2023, Ethiopia initiated efforts towards developing a functioning national database.
PLANNING AND TASKING (10% of overall score)	3	3	Ethiopia's 2019 Article 5 deadline extension request contained annual targets for survey and clearance, which have proved unrealistic. No updated targets have been provided since, although in 2023 Ethiopia did set out survey and clearance milestones for 2024–28. In April 2024, the MoD committed to drafting a national mine action strategy.
LAND RELEASE SYSTEM** (10% of overall score)	6	6	An update to the NMAS is long overdue. As at June 2024, UNMAS had submitted a work plan to EMAO for NMAS development and aimed to develop eleven critical standards by the end of the first quarter of 2025. Urgent progress is still needed on NTS at scale, given the high degree of uncertainty over the extent and location of contamination.
LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND ARTICLE 5 COMPLIANCE (20% of overall score)	5	4	Limited land release has occurred since 2020, due to challenges around capacity, funding, and insecurity. In June 2023, Ethiopia acknowledged it would be "impossible" to meet its 2025 deadline. However, the arrival of HALO in 2022 and the approval of a national standard for accreditation of operators in 2023 has improved the long-term prospects for Article 5 implementation in Ethiopia. HALO saw a six-fold increase in clearance from its initial year of operation in 2022 to its first full year in 2023.
Average Score	4.4	4.3	Overall Programme Performance: POOR

* New criterion introduced in 2024 to assess performance.

** The weighting of this criterion was previously 20% of overall performance score, but is now given a 10% weighting.

DEMINEING CAPACITY

MANAGEMENT CAPACITY

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

NATIONAL OPERATORS

- National Demining Companies (Ethiopian Armed Forces)

INTERNATIONAL OPERATORS

- The HALO Trust (HALO)

OTHER ACTORS

- Humanity & Inclusion (HI) (since 2024)
- United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS)

UNDERSTANDING OF AP MINE CONTAMINATION

In its most recent Article 7 report (covering 2023), Ethiopia repeated the information on contamination it provided in its previous report, submitted in September 2022. Ethiopia reports a total of 152 suspected hazardous areas (SHAs) and confirmed hazardous areas (CHAs) remaining, covering a total area of 726km² (see Table 1).⁴ Ethiopia records mine contamination in six of its twelve states.⁵ Almost all anti-personnel (AP) mined area is in SHAs, with just under 99% of the total estimate located in the Somali region.⁶ UNMAS notes, however, that a further unquantified threat lies along the border with Eritrea, where contamination may be dense. Additional contamination is expected to have resulted from the conflict in Tigray,⁷ which had spread into the regions of Amhara and Afar.⁸ In April 2024, renewed conflict was reported in Amhara⁹ and EMAO stated that it had been waiting for stability in Tigray to resume operations.¹⁰ Ethiopia has not yet provided an estimate of contamination disaggregated between areas known or suspected to contain AP or anti-vehicle (AV) mines.

Ethiopia's need for nationwide survey and, where applicable, re-survey, is pressing as historical survey data are unreliable. Ethiopia's 2001–04 Landmine Impact survey (LIS), undertaken with the support of Norwegian People's Aid (NPA), had identified mine and explosive remnants of war (ERW) contamination in 10 of Ethiopia's 11 regions, with 1,916 SHAs across more than 2,000km² impacting more than 1,492 communities.¹¹ However, EMAO stated that the LIS overestimated the number of both SHAs and impacted communities, citing lack of military expertise among the

survey teams as the major reason for the overestimate.¹² Between 2002 and 2019, EMAO, with support from donors and, until 2012, NPA¹³, sought to review the results of the LIS while conducting mine clearance.¹⁴ In 2019, however, Ethiopia requested international assistance to conduct a new baseline survey.¹⁵

Ethiopia's 2019 Article 5 deadline extension request projected that a total of 27km² would require clearance, while the remaining 1,029km² would be cancelled or reduced.¹⁶ HALO cautioned in 2022 that, while high levels of cancellation are likely, unrecorded mined areas might be found in the Somali region that had not been captured in the LIS.¹⁷ Indeed, based on survey conducted since November 2022, HALO now concludes that approximately 93% of the areas surveyed by HALO's non-technical survey (NTS) teams so far was not included in the LIS. However, while new areas continue to be identified, HALO still expects significant levels of cancellation and projects that the final total figure for contaminated area in the Somali region is likely to be less than currently reported. In 2023, NTS identified a total of 979,004m² of previously unrecorded AP mine contamination across nine hazardous areas in the Somali region: 221,652m² was recorded in two SHAs and 757,352m² in seven CHAs.¹⁸

In its latest Article 7 report (covering 2023) Ethiopia stated that it was "preparing plans to conduct a nationwide survey aimed at assessing the extent and severity of contamination across the country, including the Northern region",¹⁹ though no time frame for this was given. UNMAS, however, has stated that survey will continue at least until 2027.²⁰

4 Article 7 Reports (covering 2023 and 1 January 2021 to 31 March 2022), Form C.

5 On 19 June 2023, Ethiopia's Upper House of parliament voted to form a twelfth regional state called Southern Ethiopian Region. "Ethiopia: Upper House votes to form 12th regional state", *africanews*, accessed 30 August 2023 at: <https://bit.ly/3qP7RHf>.

6 Statement of Ethiopia, Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC) Intersessional Meetings, Geneva, 20–22 June 2022.

7 Email from Abel Tesfai, Chief of Mine Action Programme Ethiopia, UNMAS, 26 August 2022.

8 Email from Abel Tesfai, UNMAS, 17 August 2023.

9 "Mine Action in Ethiopia", presentation by UNMAS to the Mine Action Donor Support Group (MASG), Geneva, 29 April 2024.

10 "Defense Ministry, UN coordinate to clear landmines affecting 7 million Ethiopians", *The Reporter*, 6 April 2024, at: <https://bit.ly/3xEIQ63>.

11 NPA, "Landmine Impact Survey (LIS) Report, Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia", May 2004.

12 In 2012, Ethiopia reported that subsequent technical survey (TS) and NTS of the SHAs identified during the LIS had confirmed mine contamination in only 136 areas. However, 60 previously unrecorded hazardous areas were also identified, which were confirmed as mined through TS, resulting in a total of 196 confirmed mined areas. Ethiopia also reported that 358 SHAs across an area of 1,200km² from the LIS data needed to be re-surveyed.

13 NPA ended its support to Ethiopia's mine action programme in 2012 in response to the decision to close EMAO and transfer demining responsibility to the army's Combat Engineers Division ("Clearing the Mines 2016", Mine Action Review, p. 102, accessed 1 October 2024, at: <https://bit.ly/3Bq0Txb>).

14 2019 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 8.

15 Statement of Ethiopia on its Article 5 deadline extension request, Fourth APMBC Review Conference, Oslo, 27 November 2019.

16 2019 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 48.

17 Emails from Ralph Legg, Ethiopia Programme Manager, HALO, 13 July and 25 August 2022.

18 Email from Toby Robinson, Programme Manager, HALO, 14 June 2024; and Rob Syfret, Deputy Regional Director, Africa, HALO, 2 July 2024.

19 Article 7 Report (covering 2023), p. 5.

20 Presentation by Francesca Chiaudani, Chief, Mine Action Programme, UNMAS, The 27th International Meeting of Mine Action National Directors and United Nations Advisers (NDM27), Geneva, 29 April–1 May 2024.

Table 1: AP mined area by region (at end March 2023)²¹

Region	CHAs	Area (m ²)	SHAs	Area (m ²)	Total SHAs/ CHAs	Total area (m ²)
Somali	18	1,027,500	82	718,769,532	100	719,797,032
Gambela	0	0	20	838,000	20	838,000
Afar	6	1,755,049	8	1,915,300	14	3,670,349
Tigray	3	691,989	0	0	3	691,989
Oromia	0	0	13	1,026,105	13	1,026,105
Benishangule Gumuz	2	45,000	0	0	2	45,000
Totals	29	3,519,538	123	722,548,937	152	726,068,475

Plans to survey the buffer zone between Ethiopia and Eritrea following the armed conflict in 1998–2000 remain unclear. One of the stated justifications for Ethiopia's 2019 Extension Request was to allow it "to complete the survey of the buffer zone areas between Ethiopia and Eritrea once demarcation is completed", as the border was not demarcated.²² The likelihood of timely progress in this regard is unclear. On the one hand, the request states that: "The Tigray border mine field is suspended due to the insecurity" but also that "it is possible to clear the mine fields by military humanitarian demining operations, because the peace agreement between the countries is on the way."²³ Elsewhere the request highlights that insecurity remained along the border and, less optimistically, that the "peace agreement in process will hopefully provide some scope for mine action on the border".²⁴

Ethiopia expected that "discussions will be ongoing" to establish a "joint border commission to allow for survey and clearance operations to take place".²⁵ It also stated that clearance, when possible, would be undertaken by Ethiopia's army and committed to keep States Parties informed on progress regarding the contaminated border areas.²⁶ Since then, however, no progress on demarcation of the border has been reported and conflict in northern Ethiopia has severely impeded progress in survey or clearance along the border with Eritrea. In June 2024, the Committee on Article 5

Implementation repeated its call for updated information on progress between the two States regarding plans to address contamination in border areas.²⁷

Despite the permanent cessation of hostilities agreed between the Federal Government and NSAGs in the Tigray in November 2022,²⁸ conflict and insecurity continued to impede EO survey and clearance in 2023. The conflict, which erupted in November 2020, has left behind significant contamination from ERW,²⁹ increasing the strain on an already under-resourced mine action capacity in Ethiopia. In April 2023, although the security situation in some parts of northern Ethiopia remained uncertain, the MoD did agree that UNMAS could resume operations in the Amhara, Afar, and Tigray regions.³⁰ A year later, however, UNMAS reported renewed and intensified insecurity and instability, mainly in Amhara region, with the 2022 peace agreement not fully implemented and demobilisation, disarmament, and reintegration (DDR) efforts proceeding slowly.³¹ EMAO also reported in April 2024 that it had been waiting for stability in Tigray to resume clearance of EO in the region.³² This ongoing situation has made establishing a baseline of contamination impossible.

UNMAS did undertake EO threat assessments of 143 areas in Tigray and Afar between July 2023 and March 2024, and marked 775 items, including two AP mines,³³ in March 2024. These mines were not laid, but found, without fuzes, at an

21 Article 7 Reports (covering 2023 and January 2021–March 2022), Form C.

22 2019 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, pp. 10 and 8.

23 Ibid., p. 35.

24 Ibid., p. 14.

25 Ibid., p. 8.

26 Ibid., p. 69.

27 Committee on Article 5 Implementation, "Preliminary Observations", Intersessional Meetings 18–20 June 2024, p. 3.

28 "After Agreement in Ethiopia's Tigray Region, What Stands in the Way of Lasting Peace?", International Peace Institute Global Observatory, 27 February 2023, at: <https://bit.ly/3W3Oabj>.

29 Email from Abel Tesfai, UNMAS, 17 August 2023.

30 Ibid.; and Letter to Dr Catherine Sozi, UN Resident and Humanitarian Co-ordinator, from Col. Nizam Mudeser, General Acting Director, Foreign Relations and Military Cooperation Directorate, MoD, 27 April 2023.

31 "Mine Action in Ethiopia", presentation by UNMAS to the MASG, Geneva, 29 April 2024.

32 "Defense Ministry, UN coordinate to clear landmines affecting 7 million Ethiopians", *The Reporter*, 6 April 2024, at: <https://bit.ly/3xElQ63>.

33 "Ethiopia", UNMAS, accessed 24 June 2024.

abandoned military camp in Tigray. Additionally, previous reports of a mined area were verified by UNMAS in Afar (Bure), following a fatal blast. The minefield concerned is believed to be legacy contamination from the 1998–2000 border conflict.³⁴

Ethiopia's mine problem is a result of internal and international armed conflicts dating back to 1935, including the Italian occupation and subsequent East Africa campaigns (1935–41), a border war with Sudan (1980), the Ogaden war with Somalia (1977–78), internal conflict (1974–2000), and the Ethiopian-Eritrean war (1998–2000). It is unclear whether Ethiopia also has contamination from AP mines of

an improvised nature. Ethiopia stated in November 2022 that it had previously deployed its Combat Engineering Units to clear landmines in Somali region, "due to the cause of international extremist Al Shabaab activity by using IEDs" [improved explosive devices].³⁵ UNMAS did not discover any improvised mines during assessments in 2023,³⁶ and HALO is not aware of any evidence of IEDs within its current area of operations in the Somali region.³⁷ It did not encounter any improvised mines during its survey and clearance in 2023.³⁸ This said, Ethiopia does identify "IEDs" as an "emerging threat" as it scales up its current action programme.³⁹

NATIONAL OWNERSHIP AND PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

EMAO is in the process of reorganising itself to strengthen its structure and capacity to undertake nationwide survey,⁴⁰ the first major task towards fulfilment of Ethiopia's Article 5 obligations. This reorganisation includes updating the NMAS, and ensuring that operational procedures, prioritisation strategies, and quality management (QM) systems are functioning correctly.⁴¹ To inform this process, EMAO, with the support of UNMAS, initiated a Mine Action Authority Capability Self-Assessment in January 2024.⁴²

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.⁴³ In 2011, EMAO's governing board decided that the MoD was better suited to clear the remaining mines.⁴⁴ The transition of EMAO to the MoD appeared to be in limbo until 2015, when Ethiopia reported that oversight of national mine action activities had been re-established as "one Independent Mine Action Office" under the Combat Engineers Main Department.⁴⁵ In 2017, Ethiopia confirmed that this "autonomous legal entity" had been re-named EMAO, and was responsible for survey, clearance, and risk education.⁴⁶ In 2019, however, Ethiopia reported that the responsibility for

the national mine action programme had been transferred back to the headquarters of the MoD.⁴⁷

In March 2019, Ethiopia submitted a request for an extension to its Article 5 deadline of 1 June 2020. This was granted at the Fourth Review Conference of the States Parties, and a new deadline set for 31 December 2025.⁴⁸ Limited progress was made with the further development of Ethiopia's national programme and with survey and clearance in the years following the granting of this extension, with limited capacity and resources further strained by the conflict that started in Tigray 2020. Following field assessment missions between March and August 2022, UNMAS emphasised the urgency of establishing a mine action response in northern Ethiopia.⁴⁹ UNMAS subsequently established an MA-AoR and initiated monthly sub-cluster meetings in November 2023.⁵⁰ Ethiopia says that the MA-AoR is ensuring "effective, sustainable and people-centred mine action" at national level. The MA-AoR's activities include coordination of needs assessments and operations, establishing links with key stakeholders, and joint advocacy for access to resources.⁵¹

It is unclear how much national funding was made available for survey or clearance in 2023 or earlier years. According to Ethiopia's 2019 extension request, more than US\$40 million

34 Email from Francesca Chiaudani, UNMAS, 7 June 2024.

35 Statement of Ethiopia on Article 5, Twentieth Meeting of States Parties (20MSP), Geneva, 21–25 November 2022.

36 Email from Francesca Chiaudani, UNMAS, 7 June 2024.

37 Email from Rob Syfret, HALO, 10 April 2023.

38 Email from Toby Robinson, HALO, 14 June 2024.

39 Presentation by Francesca Chiaudani, UNMAS, NDM27, Geneva, 29 April–1 May 2024.

40 Article 7 Report (covering 2023), p. 5.

41 Ibid.

42 Presentation by Francesca Chiaudani, UNMAS, NDM27, Geneva, 29 April–1 May 2024.

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

44 Statements of Ethiopia, Intersessional Meetings, Geneva, 25 June 2015, April 2014, and 24 May 2012.

45 Statements of Ethiopia, Committee on Article 5 Implementation, Geneva, 9 April 2014 and 25 June 2015; "Response to Committee on Article 5 Implementation request for additional information on its Article 5 deadline Extension Request", submitted 26 September 2015; and Analysis of Ethiopia's Article 5 deadline Extension Request, 19 November 2015, p. 3.

46 Revised National Mine Action Plan for 2017–20, October 2017, pp. 2 and 32.

47 2019 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 9.

48 Implementation Support Unit (ISU), "Ethiopia", accessed 28 June 2024 at: <https://bit.ly/3rAbTmB>.

49 Email from Abel Tesfai, UNMAS, 17 August 2023.

50 "Ethiopia", UNMAS, accessed 24 June 2024.

51 Article 7 Report (covering 2023), p. 5.

was required to fulfil its Article 5 obligations by 2025.⁵² The government pledged to cover 20% of the total,⁵³ but in its Article 7 report for January 2021 to March 2022, Ethiopia did not provide details of any government funding.⁵⁴ In June 2023, Ethiopia stated that the government had provided US\$100,000 that year for rapid response to EO threats.⁵⁵ In June 2024, the Committee on Article 5 Implementation observed that Ethiopia had not yet provided updated information on national funding.⁵⁶

EMAO had not clarified whether Ethiopia has a resource mobilisation strategy in place for Article 5 implementation. Ethiopia has, however, made numerous requests previously for international assistance: for equipment, assistance to conduct a baseline survey, and for IMSMA training for staff.⁵⁷ In May 2024, Ethiopia was said to be in bilateral dialogue with France, the United Kingdom (UK), and the United States (US) as well as with the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) regarding resource requirements.⁵⁸ As at April 2024, having previously received financial support from the Governments of Canada, Denmark, and Japan, UNMAS was seeking US\$4.4 million to scale up its mine action involvement in northern Ethiopia and to provide the necessary technical assistance and capacity development support to EMAO.⁵⁹

Ethiopia is seeking to build national capacity and, in collaboration with UNMAS, submitted requests for support to multiple organisations in 2023–24, including the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD).⁶⁰ HI provided training in NTS to EMAO and UNMAS in March–April 2024, including on use of the Global Positioning System (GPS), in line with International Mine Action Standards (IMAS) and GICHD guidelines.⁶¹

EMAO has only recently developed a national mechanism for accrediting national and international mine action operators. With support from UNMAS, a national standard on accreditation was drafted and then approved in May 2023.⁶² As at July 2024, it was expected that each operator, once it had received its letter of accreditation, would be able to sign a federal MoU with the MoD in the near future.⁶³ Accreditation has been standardised for all organisations, such that they do not seek accreditation for a specific activity, but broadly for all activities within the scope of mine action.⁶⁴

Although HALO is authorised to conduct demining operations, it was not able to obtain the federal level MoU required to import demining equipment.⁶⁵ Operators have reported various other challenges in the mine action environment in Ethiopia. The process of obtaining work permits and resident ID can be slow and onerous, requiring personnel to visit an Ethiopian embassy in their home country, which can be impractical as there are few embassies around the world. Operators may also wait for as long time for an MoU from the MoD or for accreditation, with one operator having waited nine months already for this.⁶⁶ UNMAS notes the need for support and advocacy at all levels “to facilitate understanding of humanitarian mine action among institutions and to create conditions for an enabling operating environment”.⁶⁷

Ethiopia has previously reported that its existing legislation is sufficient for the national mine action programme.⁶⁸ Its 2019 Article 5 deadline extension request also notes the availability of trained and highly experienced demining teams.⁶⁹ Clarity on the national operational capacity available and needed in order to fulfil Ethiopia’s Article 5 obligations may come with the reorganisation and scaling up of the national programme.

GENDER AND DIVERSITY

In August 2019, EMAO claimed to have a gender and diversity plan in place and to have mainstreamed gender in the national standards. It stated that all groups affected by AP mines are consulted during survey and community liaison through face-to-face interviews and using elders to disseminate information to local communities. It also

noted, though, that no female deminers were employed in the demining companies.⁷⁰ In June 2024, the Committee on Article 5 Implementation noted that Ethiopia had still not provided updated information on its efforts to ensure that the different needs and perspectives of women, girls, boys and men are considered and inform all areas, to remove

52 2019 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 51.

53 Ibid., p. 11.

54 Article 7 Report (covering January 2021–March 2022), Form J.

55 Statement of Ethiopia on Article 5 Implementation, Twenty-First Meeting of States Parties, Geneva, 20–24 November 2023.

56 Committee on Article 5 Implementation, “Preliminary Observations on the Implementation of Article 5 by Ethiopia”, Intersessional Meetings, Geneva, 18–20 June 2024, p. 2.

57 Statement on Article 5 deadline extension request, Fourth Review Conference, Oslo, 27 November 2019.

58 Presentation by Francesca Chiaudani, UNMAS, NDM27, 29 April–1 May 2024, Geneva.

59 “Ethiopia”, UNMAS, accessed 24 June 2024.

60 Email from Francesca Chiaudani, UNMAS, 7 June 2024.

61 Ibid.; and email from Goran Knezevic, AVR Specialist and NTS Trainer, HI, 21 May 2024.

62 Emails from Francesca Chiaudani, UNMAS, 7 June and 24 July 2024.

63 Emails from Toby Robinson, HALO, 14 June 2024; and Francesca Chiaudani, UNMAS, 24 July 2024.

64 Email from Francesca Chiaudani, UNMAS, 26 June 2024.

65 Emails from Rob Syfret, HALO, 10 April 2023 and 25 July 2024.

66 Email from Goran Knezevic, HI, 21 May 2024.

67 “Mine Action in Ethiopia”, presentation by UNMAS to the MASG, Geneva, 29 April 2024.

68 Article 7 Report (situation as of 30 April 2017), Form A.

69 2019 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 10.

70 Email from Col. Tadege Yohala, EMAO, 5 August 2019.

barriers to full, equal and gender-balanced participation in mine action. The Committee would welcome further information from Ethiopia on its efforts to establish a baseline of contamination through inclusive consultations.⁷¹

UNMAS is providing technical assistance to EMAO to develop its capacity to collect and analyse data through the Age, Gender and Diversity (AGD) lens⁷² and, as a step towards a renewed efforts in gender and diversity, organised a perception survey in April 2024, which was distributed to members of the MA-AoR at the national (Addis Ababa) and regional (Tigray and Afar) levels. UNMAS concluded from survey results that, overall, gender and diversity are well mainstreamed across MA-AoR members with most respondent organisations reporting to have relevant policies, mixed-gender field teams, and with women constituting a significant portion of their workforce, though mainly in operational and/or support or administration functions and not also supervisory or managerial roles. However, the survey did indicate strongly that women and persons with disabilities do not have equal access to risk education or other community-led discussions to mitigate the threat of EO, either because locations present access challenges for people with disabilities or due to barriers arising from social norms or low literacy levels. UNMAS highlights that innovative approaches are needed to facilitate participation for women and persons with disabilities in mine-affected communities.⁷³

In terms of access to mine action employment, some respondents identified barriers to employing persons with disabilities. These included misconceptions regarding individual capacities; a lack of adequate resources, including accessible facilities and specialised equipment (e.g. reading

aids); field locations presenting access and mobility challenges; and a lack of adequate and accessible housing in field locations for employees with disabilities.⁷⁴

HALO, which at the time of writing was the only international operator engaged in survey and clearance in Ethiopia, has a gender and diversity policy and implementation plan and is committed to gender parity, aiming to employ a 50/50 ratio of men and women, and to create an inclusive and diverse working environment. However, HALO notes that cultural sensitivities, societal norms, and traditional gender roles bring challenges to implementation and to achieving gender balance. Working with local community leaders to help overcome these barriers, HALO did successfully recruit a significant number of female deminers for its first operational deployment in 2022. HALO also has a number of initiatives to better support female employees, such as child stipends for new mothers and an increased focus on supporting women's health for field based employees.⁷⁵ The proportion of women among total staff at HALO and in operational positions remained largely unchanged in 2023 (see Table 2).⁷⁶

HALO's survey and community liaison teams are inclusive and gender balanced, and include representatives from different ethnic and minority groups, in order to facilitate access and participation for all groups, including women and children. Measures are in place to facilitate engagement with all segments of the community, including direct consultation and focus group discussions. HALO also has also developed clear messaging practices to support recruitment from marginalised communities and works with community elders during the recruitment process. All beneficiary data collected during survey are disaggregated by gender and age.⁷⁷

Table 2: Gender composition of operators in 2023⁷⁸

Organisation*	Total staff	Women staff	Managerial or supervisory staff	Women in managerial or supervisory positions	Operational staff	Women in operational positions
EMAO	N/K	N/K	N/K	N/K	N/K	N/K
National Demining Companies	N/K	N/K	N/K	N/K	N/K	N/K
HALO*	98	30 (31%)	10	3 (30%)	86	27 (31%)
UNMAS**	16	4 (25%)	5	1 (20%)	10	2 (20%)
Totals	114	34 (30%)	15	4 (27%)	96	29 (30%)

* Some supervisory positions are also operational. ** Figures are as at end 2023 and Q1 2024.

71 Committee on Article 5 implementation, "Preliminary Observations", Interessional Meetings 18–20 June 2024, p. 2.
72 "Ethiopia", UNMAS, accessed 24 June 2024.
73 "Gender in Mine Action Perceptions from Mine Action actors in Ethiopia. Result of the survey conducted in April 2024", UNMAS, p. 1.
74 Ibid., p. 5.
75 Email from Toby Robinson, HALO, 14 June 2024.
76 Emails from Rob Syfret, HALO, 10 April 2023; and Toby Robinson, HALO, 14 June 2024.
77 Email from Toby Robinson, HALO, 14 June 2024.
78 Emails from Francesca Chiaudani, UNMAS, 7 June 2024; and Toby Robinson, HALO, 14 June 2024.

ENVIRONMENTAL POLICIES AND ACTION

Ethiopia's forthcoming national mine action strategy, the drafting of which began in April 2024, is expected to include environmental considerations. It is also planned that the forthcoming NMAS and National Technical Standards and Guidelines (NTSG), likewise in the early stages of development at the time of writing, will include environmental considerations, in line with IMAS.⁷⁹

HALO has an environmental management policy⁸⁰ and a global standard operating procedure (SOP) for the environmental management of operations, which serves as a basis for programme-specific environmental management.⁸¹ HALO continues to refine its pre-clearance environmental assessments to ensure they are tailored to local needs, and aims to develop partnerships with regional and national NGOs to facilitate post-clearance land regeneration and implement climate resilience projects. Current measures to prevent or minimise environmental harm include tree planting in field

camps⁸² as well as sharing of field camps by teams from HALO Ethiopia and HALO Somaliland,⁸³ with all HALO field camps on the Ethiopia-Somaliland border solar-powered to reduce the need for diesel generators or wood burning. It plans to extend this to field camps elsewhere in the country. HALO has long-established clearance procedures that help mitigate the impact of operations on the environment. These include only cutting trees during clearance operations when necessary and limiting cutting to as few branches as possible and/or to young trees that are growing too densely to work around.⁸⁴

In collaboration with iMMAP,⁸⁵ UNMAS triangulates its mine action work and EO assessment activities with environmentally relevant issues such as food security. UNMAS prioritises EO assessments of watersheds and plans to prioritise the clearance of EO from water wells in the Somali region in order to improve access to water in the context of drought.⁸⁶

INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING

The infrastructure for Ethiopia's current mine action programme, including information management and reporting, is in the early stages of development. In June 2023, Ethiopia described its information management system as "non-functional", without a centralised reporting system.⁸⁷ Although a version of IMSMA was installed and customised by EMAO prior to 2015, in 2019, Ethiopia continued to report it was still using an "alternative data processing package" alongside the IMSMA database, due to a "gap" in the system's installation.⁸⁸ UNMAS is now supporting EMAO with the development of a functioning national database and in April 2024, it recruited a temporary information management support person for EMAO.⁸⁹

There is no national guidance as yet for the collection of NTS data in Ethiopia. The data collection forms HALO uses are, though, in line with IMAS and global best practice and, as such, collect data in a form compatible with IMSMA. HALO

reports all its land release data to the MoD each month.⁹⁰ HALO and UNMAS are collaborating to align data collection forms between HALO's database and the developing national database, to help ensure consistency and efficient data exchange going forwards.⁹¹

In 2024, Ethiopia submitted its Article 7 report covering 2023 on time. Though somewhat more detailed than previously, the report repeated the information on contamination it provided in its previous Article 7 report.⁹² Ethiopia did not submit an Article 7 report covering the period from April 2022 to the end of that year.

In the decision on Ethiopia's 2019 Article 5 deadline extension request, the States Parties requested that Ethiopia submit by 30 April 2021 an updated work plan for the period covered by the extension request. As at June 2024, Ethiopia had not done so.⁹³

79 Email from Francesca Chiaudani, UNMAS, 7 June 2024.

80 Email from Toby Robinson, HALO, 14 June 2024.

81 Email from Rob Syfret, HALO, 10 April 2023.

82 Email from Toby Robinson, HALO, 14 June 2024.

83 Somaliland is a self-proclaimed, though generally unrecognised, State in the north-west of Somalia.

84 Email from Rob Syfret, HALO, 10 April 2023.

85 iMMAP is an international NGO that provides information management services to humanitarian and development organisations. See <https://bit.ly/3L8wyVm>, accessed 28 June 2024.

86 Email from Francesca Chiaudani, UNMAS, 7 June 2024.

87 "Briefing to the Mine Action Support Group on the Mine Action Situation in Ethiopia", presentation by Brig. Gen. Tadesse Amelo, Director, EMAO; and Abel Tesfai, UNMAS. Document dated 21 June 2023.

88 2019 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, pp. 30–31.

89 Emails from Francesca Chiaudani, UNMAS, 7 and 26 June 2024.

90 Email from Rob Syfret, HALO, 10 April 2023.

91 Email from Toby Robinson, HALO, 14 June 2024.

92 Article 7 Reports (covering 2023 and 1 January 2021 to 31 March 2022), Form C.

93 Committee on Article 5 implementation, "Preliminary Observations on the Implementation of Article 5 by Ethiopia", Intersessional Meetings 18–20 June 2024, p. 4.

PLANNING AND TASKING

In April 2024, the Research and Development Department of Ethiopia's MoD committed to drafting a national mine action strategy. Stakeholder consultation and support from the GICHD is planned but a time frame has not yet been set.⁹⁴ In the meantime, Ethiopia has set out milestone activities for 2024–28. In 2024, Ethiopia planned to initiate nationwide survey, focus on capacity building, draft the national mine action strategy, produce a work plan, and establish the IMSMA database. Following this, Ethiopia aims to:

- Clear EO from 60% of high priority areas and establish regional EMAO sub-offices in 2025;
- Clear EO from the remaining 40% of high priority areas and 40% of medium priority areas, as well as building regional capacity in 2026;
- Clear EO from 40% of medium and 40% of medium to low priority areas, as well as operationalising regional capacity in 2027; and
- Clear EO from the remaining 20% of medium priority and 40% of medium to low priority areas, as well as operationalising regional response in 2028.

Ethiopia also plans to continue undertaking nationwide survey and explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) between

2024 and 2027. Ethiopia has not yet stated a date by which it expects to fulfil its Article 5 obligations. However, it envisages handover of released land and dealing with residual contamination in 2029.⁹⁵

These activity milestones follow a list of strategic priorities, shared by Ethiopia at the Twentieth Meeting of States Parties (20MSP) in 2022, which included clearance of mines and ERW in conflict-affected areas; cross-border liaison and co-operation; risk education; training of military personnel to conduct humanitarian demining; pro-active planning for victim assistance; and a concerted NTS effort.⁹⁶ These strategic priorities in turn updated the strategic goals set out in Ethiopia's second Article 5 extension request for the period 2020–25, which included to:

- Address the remaining 1,065km² of mine contamination;
- Complete survey of the buffer zone between Ethiopia and Eritrea once demarcation is completed;
- Obtain the support of donors and international advisors;
- Fully equip and train the demining companies, Rapid Response Teams (RRTs), and EOD teams;
- Implement risk education in affected communities and mark SHAs; and
- Finish building the demining training centre.⁹⁷

Table 3: Planned land release in 2019–25⁹⁸

Year	Area to be reduced/ cancelled (m ²)	Area to be cleared (m ²)	Totals (m ²)
2019	171,507,352	1,905,438	173,412,790
2020	171,507,352	4,300,000	175,807,352
2021	171,507,352	4,300,000	175,807,352
2022	171,507,353	4,300,000	175,807,353
2023	171,507,352	4,300,000	175,807,352
2024	171,507,352	4,300,000	175,807,352
2025	0	3,900,000	3,900,000
Totals	1,029,044,113	27,305,438	1,056,349,551

94 Email from Francesca Chiaudani, UNMAS, 7 June 2024.
95 Presentation by Francesca Chiaudani, UNMAS, NDM27, Geneva, 29 April–1 May 2024.
96 Statement of Ethiopia on Article 5, 20MSP, Geneva, 21–25 November 2022.
97 2019 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, pp. 10–11.
98 Ibid., Additional Information, p. 48; and Article 7 Report (covering January 2021–March 2022), Form C.

The work plan and planned land release figures included in the 2019 extension request were neither realistic nor achievable and have been surpassed by events. These include the outbreak of conflict in 2020 and the COVID-19 pandemic, which Ethiopia reported “affected the Ethiopian mine action sector” during 2021–22, but without giving further details. Ethiopia has not provided any updated land release targets since 2019.

Ethiopia was due to submit to the States Parties, by 30 April 2021 and then a second time by 30 April 2023, updated work plans for the remaining period covered by the extension request.⁹⁹ As at June 2024, Ethiopia had not submitted even the first of the requested updated work plans, though it said it aimed to do so during 2024.¹⁰⁰ In its latest Article 7 report covering 2023, Ethiopia stated it was “preparing plans to conduct a nationwide survey aimed at assessing the extent

and severity of contamination across the country, including the Northern region”. Ethiopia highlights that this will help it determine the systems and resources needed for its mine action programme going forward.¹⁰¹

There were no nationally agreed criteria for the prioritisation of land release tasks in Ethiopia at the time of writing. However, it is anticipated that these will be formulated under EMAO’s authority once the NMAS are finalised. In the meantime, HALO continues to use its own survey information to assess the impact of contamination and prioritise clearance tasks, prioritising areas with high numbers of beneficiaries and higher accident rates.¹⁰² HALO also presently produces its own survey and task dossiers for all operations¹⁰³ – action that normally the responsibility of the national authorities or the national mine action centre.

LAND RELEASE SYSTEM

STANDARDS AND LAND RELEASE EFFICIENCY

As at June 2024, UNMAS had submitted a work plan for NMAS development to EMAO. By the end of the first quarter of 2025, UNMAS aims to have completed eleven critical standards. Discussions were ongoing with partners to ensure a participatory and inclusive process.¹⁰⁴ This is the first notable progress since Ethiopia’s pledge in 2017 that its NMAS would be “developed and updated” and that standing operating procedures for mine clearance and other land release would be revised according to IMAS.¹⁰⁵ HALO says that, in the absence of NMAS, its operations are carried out in line with IMAS.¹⁰⁶

Ethiopia’s second Article 5 deadline extension request detailed the land release methodology it intends to employ in demining operations.¹⁰⁷ The request claimed that manual demining is the most efficient and least costly method of clearance, and states that machines cannot be used due to the terrain of the remaining contaminated areas.¹⁰⁸

OPERATORS AND OPERATIONAL TOOLS

During 2023, HALO continued to operate in Somali region and three international humanitarian demining NGOs formally submitted requests for mine action accreditation, namely DCA, DRC, and HI. MAG has also begun the registration process.¹⁰⁹ As at July 2024, HI had received accreditation and hoped to deploy one NTS team and two EOD teams, as well as provide training for the national authorities in NTS and EOD. DCA and DRC reportedly received accreditation in June 2024.¹¹⁰ With letters of accreditation received from the MoD, these

operators were expected to sign an MoU with the MoD to regulate technical operations. This process was underway.¹¹¹ At the time of writing, the Fondation Suisse de Déminage (FSD) was also developing plans to deploy survey staff in Ethiopia, potentially for NTS in Afar, Amhara, and Tigray.¹¹²

As at June 2024, HALO was the only international operator undertaking survey and clearance in Ethiopia, having signed an MoU with the Mine Action Office at the Ethiopian MoD in

99 “Decisions on the request submitted by Ethiopia for an extension of the deadline for completing the destruction of anti-personnel mines in accordance with Article 5 of the Convention”, 29 November 2019.

100 Presentation by Francesca Chiaudani, UNMAS, NDM27, Geneva, 29 April–1 May 2024.

101 Article 7 Report (covering 2023), p. 5.

102 Email from Toby Robinson, HALO, 14 June 2024.

103 Email from Rob Syfret, HALO, 10 April 2023.

104 Email from Francesca Chiaudani, UNMAS, 7 June 2024.

105 Revised National Mine Action Plan for 2017–20, October 2017, p. 12.

106 Email from Toby Robinson, HALO, 14 June 2024.

107 2019 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, pp. 24–25 and 27–29.

108 Ibid., p. 51.

109 Article 7 Report (covering 2023), p. 3. The report also states that a fourth organization, BBC Media Action, also submitted a request for accreditation, but it is not stated what mine action activities it intends to undertake.

110 Emails from Goran Knezevic, HI, 21 May 2024; and Alberto Casero Gómez Pastrana, Chief of Operations, Ethiopia, HI, 16 July 2024.

111 Emails from Francesca Chiaudani, UNMAS, 7 June and 24 July 2024.

112 Email from Matt Wilson, Head of Operations, FSD, 16 May 2024.

June 2022 and, in August of the same year, training its first demining sections to clear high-priority minefields on the border with Somaliland.¹¹³ In 2023, HALO maintained the same clearance capacity as in 2022 (see Table 5), but was able to increase NTS capacity from one to two teams, thanks to an increase in donor funding (see Table 4).¹¹⁴ HALO did not expect any significant changes in operational capacity in 2024.¹¹⁵ HALO notes that, having conducted operations in Somaliland since 1999, it will share lessons learned as other clearance operators become accredited in Ethiopia.¹¹⁶ HALO has identified 100 hazardous areas requiring resurvey in Somali region and hopes to start the process as soon as the necessary permissions are obtained. Based on existing survey data, the requirement for both clearance and survey is expected to be much greater than the operational deployment HALO's secured funding currently permits.¹¹⁷

In August 2023, UNMAS reported that, due to the lack of accredited implementing partners and in the absence of a finalised accreditation mechanism at the time, UNMAS had changed its operating mode to direct implementation – deploying its operational personnel to undertake surveys and removal of EO in close collaboration with government entities. UNMAS describes this as a measure of last resort.¹¹⁸ In 2023, UNMAS deployed eleven staff for Explosive Ordnance Assessment (EOA). Of these, seven were deployed to Afar and Tigray. They were supported by an international chief of operations, a national coordinator, and two information management officers. UNMAS planned to deploy the same capacity in 2024 and for the foreseeable future, as long as funding can be sustained.¹¹⁹

Table 4: Operational survey capacities deployed in 2023¹²⁵

Operator	Survey teams	Total personnel	Mechanical assets	Comments
HALO	2	6	0	Deployed for NTS. See Table 5 for technical survey capacity.
Ethiopia Armed Forces*	2	N/K	0	Deployed for technical survey.
Totals	4	N/K	0	

* Based on most recent data from 2019 for capacity deployed in 2018. It is not known if this information remains correct.

Prior to HALO commencing operations in 2022, all survey and clearance in Ethiopia was conducted by the national demining companies of the Ethiopian Armed Forces. Ethiopia's second extension request forecasted a "rearrangement" of its four demining companies and four RRTs, which would be deployed each year through to the end of its Article 5 extension in 2025.¹²⁰ The request indicates that one additional "demining company" would be added during the extension period, but did not specify when this would occur. EMAO informed Mine Action Review in 2019 that there would be an additional 90 deminers.¹²¹ At the time of writing, no update on current or planned national operational survey and clearance capacity had been provided by EMAO. However, as already outlined, work is underway to reorganise the sector and better define national capacity and resource requirements.

Ethiopia reported in 2019 that it has six ground-preparation machines, but that these were not in use as all remaining hazardous areas are located in remote areas, which it claims are only suitable for manual clearance.¹²² Ethiopia is, though, seeking to introduce technological innovations into operations as its mine action programme develops. In the first quarter of 2024, in addition to the training of EMAO and UNMAS personnel by HI on the use of GPS in NTS, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) presented a project on remote detection using drones in areas where ground access is challenging.¹²³ There are, however, no firm plans to deploy such technology at present.¹²⁴

113 Emails from Ralph Legg, HALO, 13 July and 25 August 2022; and Rob Syfret, HALO, 2nd July 2024.
114 Emails from Rob Syfret, HALO, 10 April and 4 August 2023; and Tony Robinson, HALO, 14 June 2024.
115 Email from Tony Robinson, HALO, 14 June 2024.
116 Email from Rob Syfret, HALO, 10 April 2023.
117 Emails from Ralph Legg, HALO, 13 July 2022; and Rob Syfret, HALO, 10 April 2023 and 24 July 2024.
118 Email from Abel Tesfai, UNMAS, 17 August 2023.
119 Email from Francesca Chiaudani, UNMAS, 7 June 2024.
120 2019 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, pp. 46–48.
121 Email from Col. Tadege Yohala, EMAO, 5 August 2019.
122 2019 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 50.
123 Email from Francesca Chiaudani, UNMAS, 7 June 2024.
124 Email from Francesca Chiaudani, UNMAS, 26 June 2024.
125 Emails from Col. Tadege Yohala, EMAO, 5 August 2019; and Toby Robinson, HALO, 14 June 2024.

Table 5: Operational clearance capacities deployed in 2023¹²⁶

Operator	Manual clearance teams	Total deminers	Mechanical assets	Comments
HALO	8	64	0	Deployed for clearance and technical survey.
Ethiopia Armed Forces*	2	N/K	0	Also deployed one EOD team.
Totals	10	N/K	0	

* Based on most recent data from 2019 for capacity deployed in 2018. It is not known if this information remains correct.

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND ARTICLE 5 COMPLIANCE

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS IN 2023

Ethiopia did not report any land release through clearance or survey in 2023.¹²⁷ However, HALO reported that it cleared 242,052m² in 2023 across two CHAs, which were not completed as at the end of 2023. Six AP mines were destroyed, along with four AV mines and two items of unexploded ordnance (UXO). HALO also destroyed one AP mine and one AV mine in EOD spot tasks in 2023.¹²⁸

UNMAS reports that it discovered and two AP mines during EOA in March 2024. These mines were not laid. UNMAS marked and reported the mines for disposal by local authorities.¹²⁹

A total of 979,004m² of previously unrecorded AP mine contamination across nine hazardous areas was identified through NTS in 2023.¹³⁰

SURVEY IN 2023

Ethiopia did not report any land release through survey in 2023.¹³¹ The last release of land through survey reported by Ethiopia was in its Article 7 Report covering January 2021–March 2022, which said 13,400m² was released, though it is unclear whether this area was cancelled or reduced.¹³²

In 2023, HALO identified a total of 979,004m² of previously unrecorded AP mine contamination across nine hazardous areas through NTS: 221,652m² in SHAs and 757,352m² in CHAs.¹³³ This compares to almost 2.2km² of AP mined area recorded by HALO in 2022.¹³⁴

UNMAS discovered two AP mines in 2023; an M14 blast mine and a Type 69 bounding fragmentation mine, found during EOA in March 2024. Both were found without fuzes. These mines were not laid, but discovered at an abandoned military camp of conflict parties in Tsada Emba Woreda, 90km east of Mekele, in Tigray. UNMAS marked and reported the mines for disposal by local authorities.¹³⁵

CLEARANCE IN 2023

Ethiopia did not report any land release through clearance in 2023.¹³⁶ However, HALO reported that it cleared 242,052m² across two CHAs, which were not completed as at the end of 2023 (see Table 6). The areas were mixed AP and AV minefields. Six AP mines were destroyed, along with four AV mines and two other items of UXO.¹³⁷ Clearance by HALO in 2023 represents a six-fold increase on the 39,243m² cleared in 2022,¹³⁸ with 2023 being HALO's first full year of operations. HALO also destroyed one AP mine and one AV mine in EOD spot tasks in 2023.¹³⁹

The last release of land through clearance reported by Ethiopia was in its Article 7 Report covering January 2021–March 2022, which states 46,600m² was cleared, with the destruction of 46 TM-57 AV mines.¹⁴⁰

¹²⁶ Ibid.

¹²⁷ Article 7 Report (covering 2023), Form F.

¹²⁸ Email from Toby Robinson, HALO, 14 June 2024.

¹²⁹ Email from Francesca Chiaudani, UNMAS, 7 June 2024.

¹³⁰ Email from Toby Robinson, HALO, 14 June 2024.

¹³¹ Article 7 Report (covering 2023), Form F.

¹³² Article 7 Report (covering January 2021–March 2022), Form C.

¹³³ Email from Toby Robinson, HALO, 14 June 2024; and Rob Syfret, HALO, 2 July 2024.

¹³⁴ Email from Rob Syfret, HALO, 10 April 2023.

¹³⁵ Email from Francesca Chiaudani, UNMAS, 7 June 2024.

¹³⁶ Article 7 Report (covering 2023), Form F.

¹³⁷ Emails from Toby Robinson, HALO, 17 May and 14 June 2024.

¹³⁸ Email from Rob Syfret, HALO, 10 April 2023.

¹³⁹ Emails from Toby Robinson, HALO, 17 May and 14 June 2024.

¹⁴⁰ Article 7 Report (covering January 2021–March 2022), Form C.

Table 6: Mine clearance by The HALO Trust in 2023¹⁴¹

State/Zone/ District (woreda)	CHAs cleared	Area cleared (m²)	AP mines destroyed	AV mines destroyed	Other UXO destroyed
Somali/Jarar Zone/Gashamo	0	242,052	6	4	2
Totals	0	242,052	6	4	2

ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE AND COMPLIANCE



Under Article 5 of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC), Ethiopia is required to destroy all AP mines in mined areas under its jurisdiction or control as soon as possible, but not later than 31 December 2025.¹⁴² At the 20MSP in November 2022, Ethiopia said it was not in a position to complete clearance by 2025.¹⁴³ In June 2023, Ethiopia again said that meeting this deadline would be “impossible”, given constrained “access, capacity and human and financial resources”.¹⁴⁴

Ethiopia projections and estimations for completion of survey and clearance in recent years have proved unrealistic and the primary assumptions set out in its second extension request of 2019 did not come to pass, namely: that donor funding would increase steadily; that old demining equipment would be replaced by “licensed” demining equipment; that one deminer would clear on average as much as 50 square metres per day, 22 days a month, and ten months a year; and that one additional demining company would be added, for a total of five deployed. This average clearance rate per deminer appears unrealistically high.¹⁴⁵

Apart from the lack of an accurate baseline of contamination, the ongoing conflict and insecurity in the north of the country since November 2020 has impeded any ongoing efforts towards completion. However, the ongoing work of the MA-AoR, coordinated by UNMAS, and the initiation of HALO’s

survey and clearance operations in Ethiopia in 2022, are significant positive steps. Promising too is the work launched in 2023 and early 2024 to accredit more international and national operators, develop a national mine action strategy, and overhaul the NMAS. While activity milestones for nationwide survey and clearance for 2024–28 have been set out, Ethiopia would benefit from finally providing an updated work plan with realistic and costed annual targets for land release, including a plan for national NTS.

Table 7: Five-year summary of AP mine clearance

Year	Area cleared (km²)
2023	*0.24
2022	*0.04
2021**	0
2020***	0
2019****	1.76
Total	2.04

* Clearance reported by HALO ** Reporting year was January 2021 to March 2022.
*** Reporting year was April–December 2020. **** Reporting year was 31 April 2019–31 April 2020.

141 Email from Toby Robinson, HALO, 14 June 2024.
142 Ethiopia’s original Article 5 deadline expired on 1 June 2015. In March 2015, Ethiopia submitted a request for an extension of five years until 1 June 2020 to complete survey and clearance of all remaining mined areas.
143 Statement of Ethiopia on Article 5, 20MSP, Geneva, 21–25 November 2022.
144 Statement of Ethiopia on Article 5, Intersessional Meetings, 19–21 June 2023, Geneva.
145 2019 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 42.

PLANNING FOR MANAGEMENT OF RESIDUAL CONTAMINATION

The scope of residual contamination remains unknown in Ethiopia. Ethiopia acknowledges that mines may have been left because of lack of information during clearance operations, because of ground movements, or exposure to rain. It is also possible that more mines have been laid in recent armed conflicts.¹⁴⁶ As at June 2024, Ethiopia had not reported on whether it has a strategy for managing residual contamination after completion of large-scale clearance.¹⁴⁷

¹⁴⁶ Ibid., p. 16.

¹⁴⁷ Committee on Article 5 implementation, "Preliminary Observations", Intersessional Meetings, Geneva, 18–20 June 2024, pp. 2–3.