

KEY DATA

CLUSTER MUNITION CONTAMINATION:

NOT REPORTED

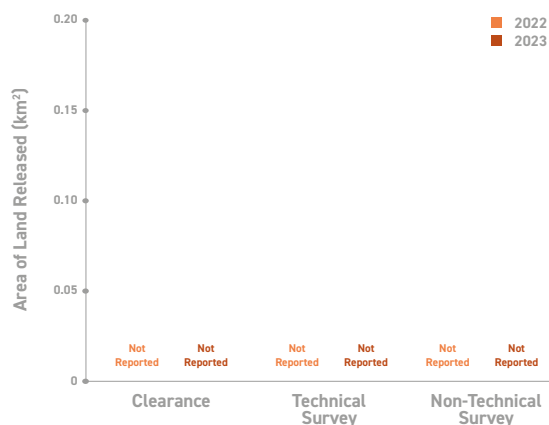
SUBMUNITION
CLEARANCE IN 2023

NOT REPORTED

SUBMUNITIONS
DESTROYED IN 2023

NOT REPORTED

LAND RELEASE OUTPUT



KEY DEVELOPMENTS

Available data on contamination and land release of cluster munition-affected areas in Iran continue to be extremely limited. There is no publicly available evidence to suggest that survey or clearance of cluster munition-contaminated areas took place in 2023.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

- Iran should accede to the Convention on Cluster Munitions (CCM) as a matter of priority.
- Iran should comply with its obligations under international human rights law to clear cluster munition remnants (CMR) on territory under its jurisdiction or control as soon as possible.
- Iran should report publicly on the extent and location of CMR and prepare a plan for their clearance and destruction.

CLUSTER MUNITION SURVEY AND CLEARANCE CAPACITY

MANAGEMENT

- Iran Mine Action Centre (IRMAC)

NATIONAL OPERATORS*

- IRMAC
- Iranian Army
- Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps
- Commercial operators

INTERNATIONAL OPERATORS

- None

OTHER ACTORS

- International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)

* This is based on information from earlier years. It is not known if the information remains accurate.

UNDERSTANDING OF CMR CONTAMINATION

The areas of Iran most significantly affected by weapons contamination, including mines and explosive remnants of war (ERW), are believed to be in the five western provinces of West Azerbaijan, Ilam, Kurdistan, Kermanshah, and Khuzestan.¹ However, the extent of contamination from cluster munition remnants (CMR) is not known.

Some contamination is believed to remain from the Iran-Iraq war in 1980–88,² when cluster munitions were widely used in Khuzestan and to a lesser extent in Kermanshah. Iraqi forces are believed to have air-dropped cluster bombs in 1984 against Iranian troops.³ Air Force explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) teams cleared many unexploded submunitions

after attacks but, as at 2014, contamination remained around Mah-Shahr and the port of Bandar Imam Khomeini, according to a retired Iranian Air Force colonel.⁴ In 2020, 18 submunitions were discovered during ERW clearance of some 7km² in a commercial clearance project in Khuzestan province in the south-west of Iran.⁵

The extent to which Iran is undertaking or planning survey to establish a baseline of CMR contamination is not known. It is also not known to what extent Iran disaggregates areas identified as contaminated by weapon type, for example unexploded submunitions from other ERW.

OTHER EXPLOSIVE REMNANTS OF WAR AND LANDMINES

Iran also has areas containing anti-personnel mines (see Mine Action Review's *Clearing the Mines* report on Iran for further information).

NATIONAL OWNERSHIP AND PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

The Iran Mine Action Centre (IRMAC) was established as the national mine action centre in 2005, taking the place of a mine action committee within the Ministry of Defence. In 2014, IRMAC reported that it was responsible for planning, data, managing survey, procurement, and the accreditation of demining operators. It was also tasked with setting standards, providing training for clearance operators, concluding contracts with demining operators, and ensuring quality assurance (QA) and quality control (QC) of their operations. IRMAC also coordinated mine action with the General Staff of the Armed Forces, the Ministry of Interior, the Management and Planning Organisation of Iran, and other

relevant ministries and organisations, while also managing international relations.⁶ At the time of writing, Mine Action Review had not been able to establish if this description of IRMAC's role and responsibilities remained up to date.

The amount of national resources Iran contributes to support the cost of IRMAC or the survey and clearance of CMR-contaminated areas is not known. However, Iran is believed to have dedicated significant resources and effort to clearing areas on its territory contaminated by other ERW and mines.⁷ The results of survey and clearance have not been made publicly available.

GENDER AND DIVERSITY

The extent to which gender and diversity are mainstreamed into mine action in Iran is not known.

ENVIRONMENTAL POLICIES AND ACTION

It is not known whether Iran has a national mine action standard (NMAS) on environmental management and/or a policy on environmental management. It has been reported, however, that Iran's Ministry for the Environment does regulate environmental practices in mine action to some extent.⁸

1 International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), "Weapon Contamination", accessed 29 May 2024 at: <https://bit.ly/30TC55t>.

2 Statement by Gholamhossein Dehghani, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Iran, Convention on Cluster Munitions (CCM), Second Meeting of States Parties, Beirut, 13 September 2011.

3 Landmine and Cluster Munition Monitor, "Iran Cluster Munition Ban Policy", 4 September 2020, at: <http://bit.ly/3uRJDbQ>.

4 Interview with Air Force Colonel (ret.) Ali Alizadeh, Tehran, 8 February 2014.

5 Information provided by Reza Amaninasab, Ambassadors for Development Without Borders, August 2020.

6 IRMAC PowerPoint Presentation, Tehran, 9 February 2014; and IRMAC, "Presentation of IRMAC".

7 ICRC, "Experts from over 15 nations attend round-table on humanitarian mine action", Press release, 15 March 2019, at: <https://bit.ly/3N7Ca4e>; and ICRC, "Weapon Contamination".

8 Email from Narges Jahanparast, Ambassadors for Development Without Borders, 26 April 2023.

INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING

It is not known to what extent IIRMAC is able to disaggregate CMR contamination and clearance output from that of other explosive ordnance. It has been reported that IIRMAC's database is comprehensive and accurate and that operators provide regular activity reports to IIRMAC on both humanitarian and commercial mine action projects.⁹ However, Mine Action Review has not been able to obtain further information on this from IIRMAC.

In 2020, IIRMAC reported that it had a geographic information system (GIS), web-based, integrated information management system, which integrates information on quality, safety, and

the environment.¹⁰ In 2022, IIRMAC launched an application for smartphones, which is reported to contain all data from historical and current clearance operations and intended to provide mine action organisations with a comprehensive view of contaminated and cleared areas identified by IIRMAC. The application is also said to contain information about explosive incidents and is updated on a regular basis. The application is available to operators and interested parties upon request.¹¹ At the time of writing, it had not been possible to ascertain whether it includes data on cluster munition-affected areas.

PLANNING AND TASKING

It is not known whether Iran has a national mine action strategy or an annual work plan for the survey and clearance of CMR or agreed and specified criteria for the prioritisation of tasks.

LAND RELEASE SYSTEM

STANDARDS AND LAND RELEASE EFFICIENCY

Iran reportedly has national mine action standards in place.¹² No information was available on quality management (QM) procedures for clearance in Iran, although it was reported in 2023 that a subsidiary of IIRMAC performs quality assurance (QA) and quality control (QC) of commercial demining.¹³

OPERATORS AND OPERATIONAL TOOLS

No up-to-date information was available on Iran's national survey and clearance capacity. In 2023, it was reported that IIRMAC continued to undertake humanitarian demining,¹⁴ although it was not clear what capacity, if any, was being deployed to survey or clear cluster munition-contaminated areas.

Petroleum Engineering and Development Company (PEDEC), the development arm of the National Iranian Oil Company (NIOC), contracts and monitors commercial operators conducting clearance of Iran's oil and gas producing areas, which are concentrated in the west and south-west of the country, close to the border with Iraq.¹⁵

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND PROGRESS TOWARDS COMPLETION

No information was available on land release activities in Iran in 2023. It is not known if any cluster munition-contaminated areas were released through survey or clearance in 2023 or whether any newly discovered areas of CMR contamination were added to the national database.

It was, however, reported in 2023 that commercial clearance in the west of the country had resulted in the destruction of 13 submunitions as well as 188 landmines and 1,690 items of unexploded ordnance (UXO), although most of these items were cleared in 2022.¹⁶

⁹ Email from Reza Amaninasab, Director, Ambassadors for Development Without Borders, 23 March 2023.

¹⁰ IIRMAC PowerPoint presentation, available at: <http://bit.ly/38ALojt>; and presentation by Mr Pourbagher, Deputy Director of IIRMAC, 23rd International Meeting of Mine Action National Directors and UN Advisers, 11–14 February 2020, Geneva.

¹¹ Emails from Reza Amaninasab, Ambassadors for Development Without Borders, 23 March 2023; and Narges Jahanparast, Ambassadors for Development Without Borders, 26 April and 6 May 2023.

¹² Email from Narges Jahanparast, Ambassadors for Development Without Borders, 6 June 2023.

¹³ Email from Narges Jahanparast, Ambassadors for Development Without Borders, 26 April 2023.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Email from Narges Jahanparast, Ambassadors for Development Without Borders, 6 June 2023.

¹⁶ Emails from Narges Jahanparast, Ambassadors for Development Without Borders, 26 April, 6 May, and 6 June 2023.

PROGRESS TOWARDS COMPLETION

As the extent of CMR contamination in Iran remains unknown and little information is available on the overall effectiveness of Iran's national mine action programme, it is not possible to comment on the extent to which Iran is making reasonable progress towards release of CMR-affected areas.

PLANNING FOR MANAGEMENT OF RESIDUAL CONTAMINATION

It is not known to what extent Iran is making provision for a sustainable capacity to address previously unknown CMR-contaminated areas following completion of large-scale clearance.