MYANMAR

MINE ACTION REVIEW

CLEARING THE MINES 2026

KEY DATA

NO APMBC ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE:

State not party to the APMBC

AP MINE CONTAMINATION:

Unknown, but heavy

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS

Release of AP mined area	Release in 2025 (km²)	Release in 2024 (km²)
Clearance	Unknown	Unknown
Technical Survey	0	0
Non-Technical Survey	0	0

Destruction of AP mines during clearance, survey, and spot tasks	2025	2024
AP Mines destroyed	Unknown	Unknown

MAIN AP MINE SURVEY AND CLEARANCE OPERATORS IN 2025:

- Unknown

KEY DEVELOPMENTS

Intense conflict persisted as Myanmar's military government sought to regain control of territory from ethnic armed forces with mine use reported by pro- and anti-government forces. The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) recorded 510 landmine and explosive ordnance incidents in 2025 inflicting 745 casualties, a drop from the previous year. An earthquake in March 2025 reportedly displaced explosive ordnance, including mines, and signs marking contaminated areas. The Mine Action Area of Responsibility (MA AoR) created by the UN, international organisations, and NGOs in 2022 ceased to exist at the end of 2025.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

- **Myanmar's armed forces and non-State armed groups should halt all use of anti-personnel (AP) mines, including mines of an improvised nature.**
- **Myanmar should accede to the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC) as a matter of priority.**
- **Myanmar should clear anti-personnel (AP) mines in areas under its jurisdiction or control as soon as possible, consonant with its obligations under international human rights law.**
- **Relevant authorities in Myanmar should permit humanitarian mine action organisations to undertake survey to identify and mark mined areas using conventional marking systems, particularly in areas expected to receive internally displaced persons (IDPs).**
- **Mine action NGOs and their implementing partners should develop standards for implementing community-based assessments and non-technical survey (NTS).**

AP MINE SURVEY AND CLEARANCE CAPACITY

MANAGEMENT CAPACITY

- Department of Rehabilitation, Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief & Rehabilitation

NATIONAL OPERATORS

- Tatmadaw (Army)
- Unspecified ethnic armed entities/non-State armed groups
- Unspecified NGOs

INTERNATIONAL OPERATORS

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

OTHER ACTORS

- United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)

UNDERSTANDING OF AP MINE CONTAMINATION

Myanmar is heavily mine-affected as a result of conflicts between the Tatmadaw (Myanmar army) and numerous non-State armed groups (NSAGs) affiliated with ethnic minorities. The conflicts started after the nation's independence in 1948. AP mines, including those of an improvised nature, as well as other improvised explosive devices (IEDs), continue to be laid by both government forces and NSAGs.[1] Mine use has reportedly accelerated since the military's February 2021 coup and the escalating conflict it has ignited across the country.[2]

There is no accurate estimate of the extent of mine contamination. Before the *coup*, available data showed that nine of Myanmar's fourteen states and regions were contaminated with mines and explosive remnants of war (ERW).[3] The United Nations stated in 2025 that it believes Myanmar has the highest number of mine/ERW casualties in the world.[4] UNICEF recorded a total of 745 civilian casualties, including 108 fatalities, in 2025, a drop from the 1,082 civilian casualties UNICEF reported the previous year.[5]

Before the February 2021 coup, mine contamination was concentrated in the states bordering Bangladesh, China, and Thailand. UNICEF monitoring of mine and ERW incidents found eastern Myanmar's Shan state accounted for 36% of recorded incidents and a third of casualties in 2025, followed by Rakhine state bordering Bangladesh with 15% of incidents and 16% of casualties, and the central Magway region with 11% of incidents and casualties. Other states and regions experiencing mine/ERW casualties have included Ayeyarwady, Bago, Chin, Kachin, Kayah, Kayin, Magway, Mandalay, Mon, Naypyidaw, Tanintharyi, and Yangon.[6] For more information on casualties, please see the country profile on Myanmar on the *Landmine and Cluster Munition Monitor* website.[7]

Among recent developments, the Tatmadaw was reported in 2025 to have emplaced a massive defensive mine belt around Sittwe, the capital of Rakhine state, and an area of strategic Chinese Belt & Road Initiative investment that is heavily contested by the Arakan Army.[8] The Tatmadaw emplace mines around infrastructure and defensively around military positions which are often left when they withdraw. Mine use reportedly varies according to conflict dynamics in different regions but affected areas are often unmarked. For more information on use, please see the country profile on Myanmar on the *Landmine and Cluster Munition Monitor* website.[9]

A 7.7 magnitude earthquake on 28 March 2025 centred near Sagaing, close to Myanmar's second city of Mandalay, added further complexity to understanding and dealing with explosive ordnance contamination causing displacement of mines, destroying or moving signs and markers indicating the presence of explosive items, and posing risks to first responders and recovery programmes of explosive items buried in rubble.[10]

1 UN Human Rights Council, Report of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Myanmar, Thomas H. Andrews, 4 March 2026, p. 7; OHCHR, Annual update on the Human Rights Situation in Myanmar, Overview of Developments in 2025, February 2026, pp. 3, 6, 7.

2 "As Myanmar's army faces setbacks, it is stepping up attacks on civilians, a UN expert warns", *Associated Press*, 20 March 2024; UNICEF, "Three-fold increase in civilian casualties caused by landmines and unexploded ordnance in Myanmar's expanding conflict", 4 April 2024; Karen Human Rights Group, "Danger beneath our feet; Briefing Paper", 22 December 2023; see also Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), "Myanmar Emergency Update: Key displacement figures", 6 March 2023; and R. Ayisi, "Children pay a heavy price as more landmines are laid", UNICEF, 4 April 2023.

3 Landmine Monitor, Myanmar/Burma, Mine Ban Policy, Last updated 12 November 2019.

4 Statement of the UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Myanmar, Tom Andrews, to the UN Human Rights Council, 19 March 2025; see also UNICEF, "Six things to watch in Myanmar in 2025", 5 February 2025, https://bit.ly/4189pv1.

5 UNICEF, Myanmar Landmine and Explosive Ordnance Incidents 2025 Factsheet, April 2026.

6 UNICEF, Myanmar Landmine and Explosive Ordnance Incident Information (2024).

7 https://the-monitor.org.

8 Interview with international humanitarian organisation, 15 May 2025.

9 https://the-monitor.org.

10 Email from Aleksandra Minkiewicz, Country Director, Mines Advisory Group (MAG), 16 July 2025.

NATIONAL OWNERSHIP AND PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

Myanmar does not have a structured mine action programme. Tentative steps over several years towards setting up a national mine action authority (NMAA) ended with the military coup in 2021. The State Administration Council established by the Tatmadaw to lead the government has not set up a mechanism for managing or coordinating mine action and focused on military campaigns marked by intensifying air strikes and sharply increased explosive ordnance contamination.[11]

The operating context for humanitarian demining organisations—as for humanitarian and civil society organisations in general—remains challenging. Myanmar informed the Eighteenth Meeting of States Parties to the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC) in 2020 that it had set up a Mine Action Working Group in May 2020 as "the first step towards formulating a National Strategy and Plan of Action for mine clearance".[12] A Department of Rehabilitation created in 2018 within the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief & Rehabilitation gradually took over responsibility for overseeing mine action and took steps towards setting up a NMAA but momentum was lost with the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic and government elections in November 2020.[13] No concrete results emerged by the time the Tatmadaw took over the government in February 2021 at which time operators adopted a policy of non-engagement with the Department of Rehabilitation.[14] Operators engage with de jure and de facto authorities to secure humanitarian access, meet the humanitarian needs of affected populations, and maintain legal and administrative compliance. A national Mine Risk Working Group (MRWG) first set up in 2012 and co-chaired by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and government ministries did not formally convene after February 2021.

The Department of Rehabilitation set up a working group on risk education in January 2026 and invited organisations in the humanitarian mine action community to join.[15] The post-election government formed in February 2026 has sought to expand contacts with foreign governments and international organisations and two further working group meetings were convened in the first half of 2026, reportedly attended by government ministries, as well as the military and police. It also organised a workshop on risk education and victim assistance which authorities presented as co-organised by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining. Discussions reportedly occurred but they did not lead to plans being set out for the sector or that called for NGO engagement with the Department of Rehabilitation.

The Global Protection Cluster, comprising UN agencies, international organisations, and NGOs, set up a Mine Action Area of Responsibility (MA AoR) in 2022 to coordinate and share information between humanitarian demining organisations. It met on several occasions in 2025. It was supported by a strategic advisory group involving operators and by subnational AoRs for the north west, the north east, the south east, and Rakhine state. The MA AoR ceased to exist at the end of the year as part of a humanitarian reset in which mine action sector issues came under a protection cluster led by the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).[16]

PLANNING AND TASKING

In the absence of a national mine action authority, Myanmar has not formulated national or state-level plans for any form of mine action. The MA AoR strategic plan for 2025–26 set out general objectives, including expanding risk education, enhancing the coverage and effectiveness of mine action and ensuring access for victims to health care and support. It calls for increasing the number of local mine action organisations and providing them with training. It also called for systematic surveys to map explosive ordnance contamination and establishing an information management department with a centralised database accessible to all mine action stakeholders.[17]

LAND RELEASE SYSTEM

STANDARDS AND LAND RELEASE EFFICIENCY

Historically, Myanmar has not developed national standards and therefore operators have followed the International Mine Action Standards (IMAS) and their own standard operating procedures (SOPs). Operators are not permitted to conduct technical survey, clearance, or explosive ordnance disposal (EOD), so the focus of the mine action sector is on developing standards for permitted activities.

11 Situation of Human Rights in Myanmar, Report of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, UN doc. A/HRC/57/56, 4 September 2024, pp. 4–5; Myanmar Protection Cluster Strategy 2024–2025, Global Protection Cluster, undated, pp. 2–3; N. Gillen, "Myanmar: at least 43 killed and 50 injured by junta air strike in Rakhine", Action on Armed Violence, 10 January 2025.

12 Statement of Myanmar, 18th Meeting of States Parties to the APMBC (18MSP), Geneva 16–20 November 2020.

13 Email from Hilde Jørgensen, Norwegian People's Aid (NPA), 27 May 2021.

14 Email from Matthew Walsh, Head of Humanitarian Response and Mine Action, DanChurchAid (DCA), 22 April 2021.

15 Email from Aleksandra Minkiewicz, Country Director, MAG, 14 July 2026.

16 Ibid.; and email from Sophie Schillings, Programme Manager, HALO, 23 July 2026.

17 Mine Action Area of Responsibility Strategy 2025–26, Global Protection Cluster, undated, pp. 6–9.

Prior to the February 2021 military coup, tentative steps to develop national standards saw the drafting of a first national standard on marking, which was approved by the government in January 2020. An NTS Working Group also worked on a standard for NTS in 2020, led by the Mine Action Advisor from the New Zealand Embassy,[18] but the group had not finalised and approved the standard by the February 2021 coup that suspended discussions on national standards.

The civilian-led government in office in 2018 agreed that physical marking (with warning signs) and fencing should be included as part of NTS.[19] Circumstances prevailing after the coup, including intensifying conflict, the junta's crackdown on civil society and humanitarian programmes, and increased use of mines by parties to the conflict halted development of humanitarian mine action.

OPERATORS AND OPERATIONAL TOOLS

Even before the 2021 coup, demining organisations were not permitted to conduct technical survey or clearance and therefore concentrated on community-based assessments, risk education, and community liaison. After February 2021, an increasingly hostile political environment and escalating conflict further restricted the space for international NGO involvement in humanitarian mine action.

Until 2023, five international demining organisations—DanChurchAid (DCA), Danish Refugee Council (DRC), The HALO Trust (HALO), Mines Advisory Group (MAG), and Norwegian People's Aid (NPA)—had offices in Yangon and some provincial locations. As a result of deteriorating conditions, most organisations now work remotely, supporting local partners.

The HALO Trust and MAG were the only international demining organisations with a presence in Myanmar supporting local partners providing explosive ordnance risk education (EORE) and conducting some community-based assessments of explosive ordnance threats. HALO supported six EORE/community liaison teams.[20] Other international organisations providing EORE include DCA, DRC, and Humanity & Inclusion (HI), together with UNICEF, UNHCR, the ICRC, and the Myanmar Red Crescent Society.

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND PROGRESS TOWARDS COMPLETION

Myanmar has no programme of systematic survey or clearance.

18 Email from Liam Harvey, DRC, 21 April 2021.

19 Emails from Liam Harvey, DRC, 21 April 2021; and Matthew Walsh, DCA, 22 April 2021.

20 Emails from Aleksandra Minkiewicz, MAG, 14 July 2026, and Sophie Schillings, HALO, 23 July 2026.