

ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE: 1 OCTOBER 2027
NOT ON TRACK TO MEET DEADLINE

KEY DATA

ANTI-PERSONNEL (AP) MINE CONTAMINATION: MEDIUM

MINE ACTION REVIEW ESTIMATE

6 km²

AP MINE CLEARANCE IN 2023

1.81 km²

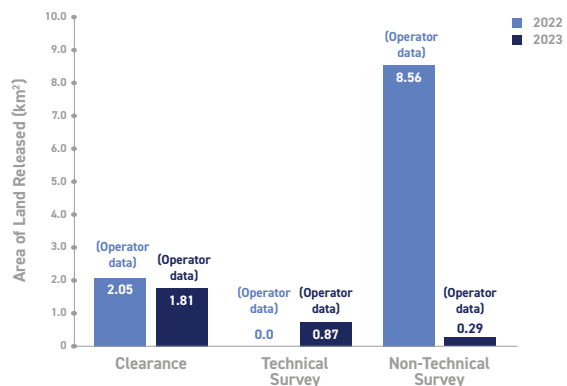
(OPERATOR DATA)

AP MINES DESTROYED IN 2023

96

(INCLUDING 17 DESTROYED DURING SPOT TASKS)

LAND RELEASE OUTPUT



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

KEY DEVELOPMENTS

Mine survey and clearance were again severely impeded by armed conflict in 2023, preventing safe access to many areas. Land release through non-technical survey (NTS) dropped considerably compared to 2022, as Norwegian People's Aid (NPA) ceased operations in February 2023, having completed its work in Puntland. The number of anti-personnel (AP) mines found and destroyed in Somalia remained extremely low. In June 2023, Somalia responded to the decision of the Nineteenth Meeting of the States Parties to the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC) by submitting a detailed work plan to implement its clearance obligations under the Convention. Full transition to Information Management System for Mine Action (IMSMA) Core has been delayed by a year and was expected only by the end of 2024. On 1 June 2024, following halting progress since 2016, the Office of the Prime Minister finally submitted Somalia's Mine Action Bill to the Federal Parliament for its approval.

FIVE-YEAR OVERVIEW

Somalia's rate of clearance of AP mined area has remained fairly steady over the last five years. But only very limited progress has been made to establish a comprehensive baseline of contamination, due in large part to widespread insecurity. Insufficient resources and dependence on external funding also persist. The Somali Explosive Management Authority (SEMA) lacks formal recognition and has not received funding from the Federal Government of Somalia since the expiry of its grant in 2015. SEMA anticipates that, once passed, the Mine Action Bill will allow SEMA to be funded from the State budget.

While information management has improved, particularly since 2022, Somalia has still to issue the revised national mine action standards (NMAS) that were completed in June 2023 and an updated national mine action strategy, which has been pending approval since 2022. Somalia has also yet to provide a gender policy and implementation plan, though operators have worked to mainstream gender and diversity into their mine action operations, including by recruiting female deminers. As at August 2024, Somalia had still to submit Article 7 reports covering 2021, 2022, and 2023 – this failure breaches the APMBC.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

- Somalia should ensure that robust land release standards, policies, and methodologies are in place that are in line with the International Mine Action Standards (IMAS), reserving full mine clearance for areas confirmed to be mined.
- Somalia should submit comprehensive annual Article 7 transparency reports that include details on AP mines of an improvised nature.
- Having been recognised as a government institution by presidential decree in 2013, the status of SEMA should be recognised in law and national resources budgeted annually for its operating costs.

ASSESSMENT OF NATIONAL PROGRAMME PERFORMANCE

Criterion	Score (2023)	Score (2022)	Performance Commentary
UNDERSTANDING OF CONTAMINATION (20% of overall score)	6	5	There is no accurate baseline of AP mined area in Somalia, though the authorities provided an updated estimate of mine contamination in June 2023, the first since 2019. According to Somalia's updated work plan for 2022–27, published in June 2023, nationwide NTS is now a priority, following the completion of NTS in Puntland state by NPA in April 2023. The HALO Trust continued NTS in Galmudug state in 2023 as well as in Hirshabelle.
NATIONAL OWNERSHIP AND PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT (10% of overall score)	4	4	SEMA was recognised as a government institution by presidential decree in 2013, but legislation and budget approval remained pending and the Federal Government still does not fund its operations. On 1 June 2024, the Office of the Prime Minister submitted the Mine Action Bill to the Federal Parliament for approval. SEMA continued to receive external capacity development and financial support for salaries from international operators in 2023 as it had in the two years previously.
GENDER AND DIVERSITY (10% of overall score)	5	5	Somalia's National Mine Action Strategic Plan 2018–2020 included provisions on gender and diversity. SEMA has been positive towards action on gender and diversity, particularly within survey and community liaison teams. However, cultural challenges exist to achieving gender mainstreaming in Somalia. Clan affiliation is also an important consideration when considering diversity. The need to improve integration of gender and diversity is recognised in Somalia's updated work plan for 2022–27.
ENVIRONMENTAL POLICIES AND ACTION* (10% of overall score)	4	Not Scored	A section on environmental management is contained within Somalia's draft NMAS. But the standards, including the relevant chapter on "Environment, Health, and Safety", were still waiting approval as at May 2024. Operators all report having an environmental policy in place and outline specific measures taken to protect the environment during survey and clearance operations. There are also some wider environmental initiatives: for example, HALO Somaliland is implementing a partnership project aimed at retaining water and preventing soil erosion on cleared land.
INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING (10% of overall score)	4	5	SEMA has assumed full ownership and responsibility for the national mine action database. Somalia completed a data consolidation process in 2022 and aimed to complete transition of the national database to IMSMA Core by the end of 2023 but missed the deadline. As at July 2024, Somalia had still to submit Article 7 reports covering 2021, 2022, and 2023. Somalia respected the decision of the 19MSP by submitting an updated work plan for Article 5 implementation on 2 June 2023.
PLANNING AND TASKING (10% of overall score)	5	5	Somalia's National Mine Action Strategic Plan 2018–2020 was approved in 2020 and extended for one year to allow SEMA sufficient time to develop a new strategy. As at July 2024, SEMA had not reported on whether a new strategy, reportedly pending approval since 2022, has been published. Somalia submitted a costed, detailed work plan for 2022–27 in June 2023, which is "based on Somalia's national strategy, approved by the Minister of Internal Security".
LAND RELEASE SYSTEM** (10% of overall score)	5	5	Current NMAS are not deemed fit for purpose. A process to revise Somalia's National Technical Standards and Guidelines was due to be completed in 2019 but the new draft standards were still awaiting approval as at July 2024. Somalia acknowledged in June 2023 that the revised NMAS were ready to be endorsed by the Minister of Internal Security, but no date for this to occur was given.

Criterion	Score (2023)	Score (2022)	Performance Commentary
LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND ARTICLE 5 COMPLIANCE (20% of overall score)	4	4	Somalia is not on track to meet its Article 5 deadline and overall land release decreased in 2023 compared to the previous year, due in large part to the departure of NPA in early 2023 following completion of its major NTS project in Puntland. The successful implementation of nationwide NTS will help to determine whether Somalia can get back on track towards meeting its 2027 clearance deadline. Such large-scale survey will not be possible until access and security, impeded in recent years by internal conflict, improves.
Average Score	4.7	4.7	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

- Somali Explosive Management Authority (SEMA)
- Mine Action Department within the Somaliland Ministry of Defence (MoD)

NATIONAL OPERATORS

- None

INTERNATIONAL OPERATORS

- The HALO Trust (HALO)
- Norwegian People's Aid (NPA) (ceased operations in April 2023)
- Ukroboronservice (UOS)

OTHER ACTORS

- Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD)
- United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS)

UNDERSTANDING OF AP MINE CONTAMINATION

Somalia lacks an accurate baseline of contamination. In its updated plan for 2022–27 of June 2023, Somalia stated that, following improvements in data consolidation and recent NTS, it had identified a total of 1,114 hazardous areas for all explosive ordnance, covering a total of just over 169.7km².¹ But of this total, which excludes Somaliland, only four areas measuring just 559,537m² are known or suspected to contain only AP mines. This comprises three confirmed hazardous areas (CHAs) measuring 558,102m² and a single suspected hazardous area (SHA) covering 1,435m² (see Table 1).² This is a significant reduction from the estimate given at the end of 2019, when Somalia reported 29 CHAs containing AP mines covering a total area of 6.1km² and an SHA of unknown size in Puntland.³

Table 1: AP mined areas (at June 2023), excluding Somaliland⁴

Type of hazardous area	State	District	Areas	Area (m ²)
CHA	Galmudug	Abudwaq	1	305,435
	Hirshabelle	Beletweyne	1	240,835
	Puntland	Galkayo	1	11,832
Subtotals			3	558,102
SHA	Puntland	Galkayo	1	1,435
Subtotals			1	1,435
Totals			4	559,537

1 Action Plan for Article 5 Implementation, October 2022–October 2027, 30 April 2023, p. 11.

2 Ibid., p. 16.

3 Email from Dahir Abdirahman Abdulle, SEMA, 11 May 2020.

4 Action Plan for Article 5 Implementation, October 2022–October 2027, 30 April 2023, p. 17.

AP mine contamination in Somalia is thus believed to be light.⁵ Data gathered through historical surveys indicate that most recorded minefields were contaminated with anti-vehicle (AV) mines or had very minimal information about the type of contamination.⁶ That said, the United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS) reports that all reported mined areas are believed to have mixture of AP and AV mines, and unexploded ordnance (UXO).⁷ The HALO Trust expects that the number of mixed AP and AV mined areas and AP mined areas will remain small, relative to the number of AV-only mined areas, which significantly affect the border regions.⁸ NPA believes that, based on its experience in Puntland, the remaining suspected contamination in other states can be significantly reduced through systematic, evidence-driven NTS.⁹

Outside Puntland, HALO has conducted NTS in most of the accessible areas of Somalia that are most likely to have minefields. This said, HALO does cite a need to conduct resurvey in some locations to re-confirm known tasks; reduce the polygons of some; and determine the threat type as AP mined, AV mined, or mixed threat.¹⁰

Somalia's hazardous areas cover all six regions of Somalia, including Somaliland, a self-proclaimed, though generally unrecognised, State in the north-west of the country, which continues to be excluded from the national authority's estimate of contamination. Mine contamination is concentrated along Somalia's border with Ethiopia.¹¹ Somalia restated in June 2023 that most mine contamination along the border is from AV mines, which continue to significantly affect the civilian population.¹²

There is an ongoing NTS project which aims to produce an accurate estimate of total contamination across the whole country and disaggregate Somalia's contamination by weapon type. This project is the primary focus of Somalia's work plan for 2022–27.¹³ This follows Somalia's 2021 Article 5 deadline extension request, which indicated that nationwide NTS would be carried out between October 2022 and October 2027.¹⁴ Somalia expects to cancel a sizable portion of existing mined areas, but also acknowledges that new areas of contamination will likely be recorded.¹⁵

However, lack of safe access has been and continues to be a major obstacle to the completion of survey. Thus, for instance, HALO must fly staff and equipment between Hiran and South West states and to the Bakool and Gedo states, as they are occupied by Al Shabaab.¹⁶ Added to this, road transportation even between settlements that are without conflict is unusable in many cases.¹⁷ Due to these considerable challenges, little progress was made with nationwide survey during 2023, with insecurity affecting most of the south and central regions of the country. HALO, however, was able to focus NTS and technical survey (TS) efforts in Galmudug and Puntland.¹⁸ In 2023, previously unrecorded AP mine contamination was recorded in Somaliland only, covering an area of 0.28km² and identified by HALO.¹⁹

HALO has been working in Somaliland for over 20 years and the general extent of contamination has been well-established by comprehensive survey. However, a combination of low-density minelaying and lack of first-hand survey information means that new contaminated areas are still being found.²⁰ As at June 2022, HALO Somaliland estimated that almost 5.46km² remained to be cleared, including 18 mixed minefields with a total size of 3.9km² as well as 65 roads with a mine threat over 1.4km².²¹ In 2023, HALO Somaliland cleared a further 0.82km²,²² which brings the total contaminated area remaining to 4.92km².

HALO Somaliland's completed its major village-by-village Mine-Impact Free survey project, as far as security allowed, in November 2023, covering a total of 1,870 villages. But the conflict in Laas Caanood in Sool,²³ coupled with the overall security situation in the east of Somaliland, hampered progress, and 359 of a total of 2,229 villages could not be surveyed. To date, 268 villages have been classified as mine-impacted and, as at July 2024, 88 had been followed up to assess if clearance is required. HALO says a plan to complete the survey in the 359 other villages will be made in due course. HALO also notes that a drop in the number of mobile teams significantly limits efforts to determine the extent of contamination.²⁴

5 Emails from Mustafa Bawar, United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS), 17 March 2020; and Lawrie Clapton, Country Director, HALO, 14 June 2020.

6 Emails from Mustafa Bawar, UNMAS, 17 March 2020; and Claus Nielsen, Country Director, NPA, 23 July 2020.

7 Email from Clemence Nyamandi, Monitoring and Evaluation Manager, Programme Strategy and Planning Section, UNMAS, 21 August 2022.

8 Emails from Rob Syfret, Head of Region, Horn of Africa, HALO, 7 July 2023; and Chris Teasdale, Country Director, HALO, 17 July 2024.

9 Email from Robert Iga Afedra, Country Director, Angola, NPA, 7 August 2023.

10 Email from Chris Teasdale, HALO, 17 July 2024.

11 "The Federal Republic of Somalia Summary of updated Article 5 Work Plan", APMBIC Intersessional Meetings, Geneva, 19–21 June 2023.

12 Action Plan for Article 5 Implementation, October 2022–October 2027, p. 16.

13 Ibid., pp. 27–28.

14 Revised 2021 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 58.

15 Action Plan for Article 5 Implementation, October 2022–October 2027, 30 April 2023, p. 16.

16 Email from Chris Teasdale, HALO, 17 July 2024.

17 "The Federal Republic of Somalia Summary of updated Article 5 Work Plan", Intersessional Meetings, 19–21 June 2023.

18 Email from Chris Teasdale, HALO, 17 July 2024.

19 Email from Rob Syfret, HALO, 22 July 2024.

20 Emails from Lawrie Clapton, HALO, 14 June 2020; and Rob Syfret, HALO, 16 May 2023.

21 Email from Tobias Hewitt, Programme Manager – Somaliland, HALO, 20 June 2022.

22 Email from Chris Teasdale, HALO, 17 July 2024.

23 Clashes broke out between Somaliland security forces and clan members in Laas Caanood, in the Sool region in early February 2023. See "Somalia: UN expert deplors high death toll in Laas Caanood clashes", Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, 23 February 2023, at: <https://bit.ly/3SoKdfl>. Mine Action Review has used the spelling "Laas Caanood" as the commonly accepted Somali spelling. Email from Rebecca Wicks, Programme Manager, HALO, 8 August 2024.

24 Email from Rob Syfret, HALO, 22 July 2024.

Following NTS by NPA, completed in early 2023, an accurate baseline of AP mined area has now been established in Puntland state (see Table 2). SEMA is now encouraging all other mine action stakeholders and states in Somalia to follow this example.²⁵ UNMAS concurs that the village-to-village survey conducted by NPA in Puntland provides a more defined understanding of contamination that will support effective planning and prioritisation. UNMAS has started similar projects with NTS components in Galmudug state and anticipates work on resource mobilise for NTS across the remaining states of Somalia.²⁶

Table 2: Mined area in Puntland state (at February 2023)²⁷

District	CHAs	Area (m ²)	SHAs	Area (m ²)	Total area (m ²)
Burtinle	2	990,423	73	2,525,540	3,515,963
Galdogob	6	1,219,005	56	1,742,630	2,961,635
Galkayo	3	103,238	44	548,934	652,172
Jariiban	1	3,900	3	15,948	19,848
Eyl	0	0	0	0	0
Qardho	0	0	0	0	0
Bossaso	0	0	0	0	0
Totals	12	2,316,566	176	4,833,052	7,149,618

Somalia's mine and explosive remnants of war (ERW) contamination is a result of the Ethiopian-Somali wars in 1964 and 1977–78 (also known as the Ogaden war), and more than 25 years of internal conflict.²⁸ According to SEMA, Somalia has seen an increase in the use of mines of an improvised nature in recent years. However, the extent of the threat is not well known. SEMA was planning to begin recording this information in 2020,²⁹ but has still not clarified whether improvised AP mines are included in the baseline of mine contamination. Somalia does recognise that victim-operated improvised explosive devices are considered mines of an improvised nature under the definition in the APMBC.³⁰

NPA has reported that non-State actors have used mines of an improvised nature in areas of northern Puntland, and this has been confirmed by the Puntland Ministry of Security. However, operators did not find any such devices in Somalia in 2022 or 2023.³¹ HALO Somalia is aware that improvised explosive devices (IEDs) of various sizes have been used by Al Shabaab against the African Union Transition Mission in Somalia (ATMIS) and Somalia's armed forces, but no improvised AP mines have been reported in any of its areas of operations (AoOs), including Somaliland.³²

OTHER EXPLOSIVE ORDNANCE CONTAMINATION

Somalia is contaminated with ERW, other than mines, primarily as a result of conflict between 1990 and 2012. In June 2023, Somalia stated that ERW are prevalent across all regions and states of the country³³ and that, following improvements in data consolidation and recent NTS, it had identified a total of 1,114 hazardous areas for all explosive ordnance, measuring a total of just over 169.7km².³⁴ Somalia also has limited contamination from cluster munition remnants (see Mine Action Review's *Clearing Cluster Munition Remnants 2024* report on Somalia for further information).

25 Email from Liberty T. Hombe, NPA, 24 March 2023.

26 Email from Clemence Nyamandi, UNMAS, 30 May 2023.

27 Email from Liberty T. Hombe, NPA, 24 March 2023.

28 UNMAS, "Annual Report 2012", New York, 2013, p. 21. Sovereignty over these territories is claimed both by the self-declared independent Republic of Somaliland and by Puntland.

29 Emails from Claus Nielsen, NPA, 14 April 2020; and Lawrie Clapton, HALO, 14 June 2020.

30 Action Plan for Article 5 Implementation, October 2022–October 2027, p. 45.

31 Emails from Rob Syfret, HALO, 16 May and 7 July 2023; Liberty T. Hombe, NPA, 24 March 2023; Clemence Nyamandi, UNMAS, 30 May 2023; and Chris Teasdale HALO, 17 July 2024.

32 Emails from Chris Teasdale HALO, 17 July 2024; and Rob Syfret, HALO, 22 July 2024.

33 Action Plan for Article 5 Implementation, October 2022–October 2027, p. 16.

34 Ibid., p. 11.

NATIONAL OWNERSHIP AND PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

Mine action management in Somalia is the responsibility of SEMA. There is a separate regional office in Somaliland, the Mine Action Department within the Somaliland Ministry of Defence (formerly, the Mine Clearance Information and Coordination Authority (MCICA), and before that the Somaliland Mine Action Centre, SMAC) in Somaliland.³⁵ SEMA maintains a presence across Somalia through its five Federal Member States: the Galmudug State Office, Hirshabelle State Office, Jubaland State Office, Puntland State Office, and South West State Office.³⁶

SEMA serves as the de facto national mine action authority for Somalia. However, full implementation of mine action legislation in Somalia and formal recognition of SEMA as the national mine action authority remains unfulfilled.³⁷ Somalia has reported that on 1 June 2024, the Office of the Prime Minister finally submitted the Mine Action Bill to the Federal Parliament for approval,³⁸ indicating some progress. Due to the lack of a national law, SEMA has not received funding from the Federal Government since the expiry of its grant in 2015. But, once passed, the Mine Action Bill will allow SEMA to receive national funding to “sustainably support the oversight of the humanitarian mine action sector in Somalia”.³⁹ The Government does not provide any national funding for mine survey or clearance.⁴⁰

In the absence of national funding, mine action stakeholders have provided support for SEMA’s operational costs, including contributions to salaries made by NPA between 2015 and 2022;⁴¹ contributions from UNMAS to the running costs of SEMA and its five regional offices between 2021 and January 2024;⁴² and financial contributions from HALO in 2022 and 2023.⁴³

Operators are involved in key decision-making processes by the national authorities. They also describe an enabling environment for mine action in Somalia, with no challenges related to matters such as visas, importing equipment, and establishing Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs).⁴⁴

UNMAS states that SEMA regularly organises coordination meetings to discuss the implementation of APMBC Article 5, the Oslo Action Plan, and the challenges and lessons

learned from the field. Additionally, the UN has launched a Mine Action Area of Responsibility (MA AoR) in Somalia.⁴⁵ Topics discussed in 2023 included progress in clearance, the need for survey of new contamination, such as that resulting from the conflict in Laas Caanood, and broader mine action capacity development.⁴⁶

In November 2023, Somalia claimed significant strengthening in the capabilities of SEMA in planning, information management (IM), coordination, and prioritisation.⁴⁷ The Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD) provided IM support in 2023 as part of the implementation of IMSMA Core.⁴⁸ UNMAS supported SEMA throughout 2023 with coordination and quality assurance (QA). It renewed its Partnership Cooperation Agreement with SEMA in May 2024 and provided a further grant to HALO to provide mentoring, training of trainers and on-the-job training to SEMA personnel.⁴⁹ HALO Somalia also provided operational capacity development for the regional Galmudug Mine Action Centre.⁵⁰ Somalia, along with Ethiopia, Nigeria, and South Sudan, is also engaged in a regional initiative intended to strengthen national ownership. This was launched at a workshop in October 2023 and is organised by the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), in co-operation with UNMAS and the Cambodian Mine Action Centre (CMAC).⁵¹

In its 2021 Article 5 deadline extension request, Somalia estimated the annual cost of implementing the operational work plan through to 2027 at US\$6.4 million per year.⁵² However, there was no information on where this funding would come from and how much will be contributed by the Federal Government. In its updated work plan covering 2022–27, Somalia restated that there was no State budget for mine action. The government has, though, provided land for SEMA’s offices and covers the utility bills of SEMA’s national office in Mogadishu and some of its regional offices.⁵³

Somalia estimates the cost of implementing the activities under the updated work plan and meeting the key milestones set for the end of 2027 at US \$23 million, of which only US \$6.2 million had been secured by June 2023. Somalia

35 Email from Mohamed Abdulkadir Ahmed, SEMA, 14 October 2016; and telephone interview with Dahir Abdirahman Abdulle, SEMA, 19 August 2020.

36 Email from Mohamed Abdulkadir Ahmed, SEMA, 14 October 2016.

37 Statement of Somalia, APMBC Twenty-First Meeting of the States Parties (21MSP), Geneva, 20–24 November 2023.

38 Statement of Somalia, Intersessional Meetings, Geneva, 18–20 June 2024.

39 Statement of Somalia on Clearance, Intersessional Meetings, Geneva, 18–20 June 2024.

40 Email from Daniel Redelinghuys, HALO, 29 May 2022.

41 Emails from Claus Nielsen, NPA, 26 May 2021; and Liberty T Hombe, NPA, 24 March 2023.

42 Emails from Mustafa Bawar, UNMAS, 3 August 2020 and 4 July 2021; Helen Olafsdottir, Technical Specialist, UN Development Programme (UNDP), 7 June 2022; and Clemence Nyamandi, UNMAS, 30 May 2023.

43 Emails from Rob Syfret, HALO, 1 June 2023 and 5 June 2024.

44 Emails from Clemence Nyamandi, UNMAS, 30 May 2023; and Rob Syfret, HALO, 1 June 2023 and 5 June 2024.

45 Email from Clemence Nyamandi, UNMAS, 30 May 2023.

46 Emails from Ghirmay Kiros, HEMS (Humanitarian Explosive Management for Stabilisation), Project Manager, UNMAS, UN Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNSOM), 20 May 2024; and Rob Syfret, HALO, 5 June 2024.

47 Statement of Somalia on Article 5, 21MSP, Geneva, 20–24 November 2023.

48 Email from Noor Zangana, Advisor, Information Management Capacity Development, GICHD, 10 July 2023.

49 Email from Ghirmay Kiros, UNSOMA, 20 May 2024.

50 Email from Rob Syfret, HALO, 5 June 2024.

51 “HDP Nexus in Mine Action – for stronger national ownership”, JICA, 20 October 2023, at: <https://bit.ly/45c2MbT>.

52 2021 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 47.

53 Action Plan for Article 5 Implementation, October 2022–October 2027, pp. 39–40.

cautioned that, beyond 2024, funding was uncertain.⁵⁴ In its updated 2022–27 work plan, Somalia recognises “a strong need” to develop a resource mobilisation strategy for Article 5 implementation.⁵⁵ Somalia initiated an Individualised Approach to the Twenty-First Meeting of the States Parties (21MSP) in November 2023.⁵⁶

PUNTLAND

The SEMA Puntland State Office, formerly known as PMAC, was established in Garowe with United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) support in 1999. Since then, on behalf of the regional government and SEMA, the Puntland State Office has coordinated mine action with local and international partners, NPA and the Puntland Risk Solution Consortium.⁵⁷ In 2021, SEMA reported that the Puntland State Office coordinated mine action under SEMA, working with its international partner, NPA.⁵⁸ NPA completed NTS of mined areas in Puntland in February 2023 and closed its operations in Somalia in April 2023.⁵⁹

While Mine Action Review has been able to gain some information about the Puntland State Office, due to NPA's former presence in Puntland, no information is available for SEMA's other state offices in Galmudug, Hirshabelle, Jubaland, and South West.

SOMALILAND

As part of a larger process of government reform in early 2018, the Somaliland Mine Action Centre (SMAC), which had been responsible for coordinating and managing demining in Somaliland since 1997, was restructured and renamed the MCICA. The Agency underwent a change of line ministry from the Office of the Vice President to the Ministry of Defence (MoD).⁶⁰ It was renamed the Mine Action Department in January 2019.⁶¹

HALO describes the environment in Somaliland as “one of the best in the world for enabling the conduct of humanitarian mine action”, with the state-level ministries of Defence and Planning facilitating the duty-free importing of demining equipment; relevant government departments issuing visas for international staff as needed; and HALO working closely with the Somaliland Ministry of Defence and other decision-makers to inform and guide policy and prioritisation. HALO Somaliland continued to provide capacity development support to the Somaliland Mine Action Department (SMAD) in 2023. Two teams of national authority deminers were employed by HALO and deployed within its clearance operations.⁶²

No funding was provided by the Somaliland authorities for survey or clearance of AP mined area in 2023.⁶³ In 2022, the Somaliland Ministry of Defence provided funding to two manual clearance teams.⁶⁴ The Somaliland government has been working on an Explosive Hazard Management National Action Plan for 2023–27, though this had not been finalised as at July 2024.⁶⁵

GENDER AND DIVERSITY

The National Mine Action Strategic Plan 2018–2020 recognised gender and diversity as cross-cutting issues for the national programme, in line with Somalia's National Development Plan objectives to “implement gender equality in education and mainstream gender in all of its programmes with a focus on adolescent girls”. Despite this, SEMA informed Mine Action Review in 2019 that it did not have an internal gender or diversity policy or implementation plan.⁶⁶

In Somalia's revised Article 5 deadline extension request, a gender policy for mine action was due to be developed by

October 2022.⁶⁷ This did not happen and one of the key next steps identified during the mine action stakeholder workshop in Mogadishu in March 2023 was the development of a gender work plan.⁶⁸ While Somalia's updated work plan for 2022–27 does not provide detail on this issue, it does outline the intention to ensure that gender and diversity are integrated into plans for nationwide NTS. For example, it envisages gender-balanced recruitment, flexible working arrangements, and data collection methods that help to ensure diverse beneficiaries voices are heard.⁶⁹

54 Somalia Summary of updated Article 5 Work Plan', Intersessional Meetings, Geneva, 19-21 June 2023; and Action Plan for Article 5 Implementation, October 2022–October 2027, 30 April 2023, p. 7.

55 Action Plan for Article 5 Implementation, October 2022–October 2027, p. 40.

56 "Somalia's Mine Action Programme: Overview of Remaining Challenges and Needs", Individualised Approach Meeting, 21MSP, Geneva, 23 November 2023.

57 UNMAS, "UN-suggested Explosive Hazard Management Strategic Framework 2015–2019", p. 9; and emails from Claus Nielsen, NPA, 23 July 2020 and 26 May 2021. SEMA has claimed that this NGO is no longer functioning but this information has not been confirmed by operators in the field.

58 Email from Dahir Abdirahman Abdulle, SEMA, 22 June 2022.

59 Email from Liberty T. Hombe, NPA, 24 March 2023.

60 Email from Chris Pym, HALO, 9 May 2019.

61 Email from Chris Pym, HALO, 2 June 2019.

62 Emails from Rob Syfret, HALO, 16 May 2023 and 22 July 2024.

63 Email from Rob Syfret, HALO, 22 July 2024.

64 Email from Tobias Hewitt, HALO, 21 May 2022.

65 Email from Rob Syfret, HALO, 16 May 2023.

66 Email from Abdulkadir Ibrahim Mohamed Hoshow, SEMA, 9 May 2019.

67 Revised 2021 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 50.

68 Email from Clemence Nyamandi, UNMAS, 30 May 2023.

69 Action Plan for Article 5 Implementation, October 2022–October 2027, 30 April 2023, p. 31.

In 2021, the United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS) reported that 17% of the workforce of SEMA were women.⁷⁰ At the time of writing, a more recent update on the situation was not available, though Mine Action Review has annually requested information from SEMA on the gender-balance of staff and on Somalia's wider efforts to mainstream gender and diversity into mine action. All operators in Somalia have, however, reported on their efforts to integrate gender and diversity considerations into mine action.

UNMAS Somalia has introduced some gender and diversity provisions into project proposals, including on the recruitment of women, youth and, where relevant, clan-affiliated personnel, into field and community liaison teams.⁷¹ In 2023, for example, contractors were required to organise awareness-raising sessions on gender and diversity for all personnel. UNMAS's Humanitarian Mine Action (HMA) team of six people retained the same gender balance in 2023 as in 2022, with one woman in post in one of the four management or supervisory positions and none in either of the two operational positions (see Table 3).⁷²

UNMAS's implementing partner in 2023, Ukroboronservice (UOS), has implemented a gender-focused policy, with the objectives of preventing and alleviating human suffering without discrimination; and guaranteeing that the distribution of resources, benefits, and access to services remains free from gender-based discrimination. In 2023, UOS teams saw a 9% increase in female staff overall compared to 2022.⁷³ Women made up 15% of all UOS staff in 2023, with 23% of management or supervisory positions occupied by women along with 8% of operational positions (see Table 3). This is the same proportion among operational staff as in 2022.⁷⁴

In HALO Somalia (i.e. excluding HALO's separate operations in Somaliland), 19% of its employees were women, which is down from the 23% of 2022. However, the proportion of operational positions occupied by women halved, from 18% in 2022 to 9% in 2023. The proportion of management or supervisory positions occupied by women appears to fall substantially, from 44% in 2022 to 15% in 2023 when a direct comparison is made.⁷⁵ According to HALO, however, this can be attributed mainly to changes it has made in calculating the proportion of staff in managerial positions, which have been implemented to improve scrutiny around gender balance and help deliver improvement.⁷⁶

While the overall representation of women in HALO Somalia's workforce is well below its 50/50 target, efforts

are intensifying to increase this percentage, while remaining sensitive to local cultural contexts. Measures to recruit and retain female staff include childcare stipends, maternity leave, and the provision of "baby boxes" for women with young children. Furthermore, in 2023, HALO provided English language lessons and a three-day computer literacy training course for eleven female staff.⁷⁷

HALO Somalia also ensures that survey and community liaison teams are mixed gender; an important prerequisite in a largely traditional Muslim society where it is not permissible for men to approach women alone in rural areas. HALO recruits teams from the areas in which they will be working to ensure participation from the affected groups. Particular care is taken to ensure that, if an area has more marginalised clans, they are recruited into teams. HALO understands that, in many communities, the voices of women and girls can be marginalised and uses household surveys to provide them with an opportunity to share their insights.⁷⁸

HALO Somaliland has a gender and diversity policy and implementation plan⁷⁹ and remains committed to being an equal opportunities employer.⁸⁰ Since 2020, HALO Somaliland has made active efforts to recruit women to its demining teams, for example, by working with local communities to increase acceptance of women spending time away from their communities and families to work as deminers. Additionally, to promote retention of female recruits, HALO Somaliland has implemented 20-week-long maternity leave, the provision of baby boxes for new mothers, a childcare stipend for mothers of children up to two years old, yearly medical check-ups, and hygiene kits made available in camps.⁸¹

The proportion of positions occupied by women in HALO Somaliland across all staff increased from 11% in 2022 to 17% in 2023 and in operational positions it increased from 11% to 20%.⁸² In 2023, HALO Somaliland maintained gender-balanced community outreach and risk education (CORE) teams, to promote access and participation by all groups, including women and children, and ethnic or minority groups. Survey teams remained exclusively male, as they had done in 2022, due to long-serving staff and funding constraints. HALO Somaliland was not in a position to make any changes to the composition of survey teams in 2024, due to a lack of recruitment and training opportunities, but aims to integrate more women into its survey teams in future.⁸³ HALO Somaliland's operations often take place near marginalised, rural communities. It maintains complete

70 Email from Mustafa Bawar, UNMAS, 4 July 2021.

71 Email from Clemence Nyamandi, UNMAS, 30 May 2023.

72 Email from Ghirmay Kiros, UNSOM, 22 May 2024.

73 Ibid.

74 Emails from Clemence Nyamandi, UNMAS, 30 May 2023; and Ghirmay Kiros, UNSOM, 22 May 2024.

75 Emails from Rob Syfret, HALO, 1 June 2023; and Chris Teasdale, HALO, 17 July 2024.

76 Email from Rob Syfret, HALO, 9 August 2024.

77 Email from Rob Syfret, HALO, 5 June 2024.

78 Email from Rob Syfret, HALO, 7 July 2023.

79 Email from Rob Syfret, HALO, 16 May 2023.

80 Email from Rob Syfret, HALO, 22 July 2024.

81 Emails from Tobias Hewitt, HALO, 21 May 2022; and Rob Syfret, HALO, 22 July 2024.

82 Emails from Rob Syfret, HALO, 16 May 2023 and 22 July 2024.

83 Email from Rob Syfret, HALO, 22 July 2024.

operational independence to prioritise tasks based on humanitarian need, regardless of any pressure that majority communities may try to exert in order to have clearance conducted for other reasons.⁸⁴

All operators in Somalia have noted that clan affiliation is also an important consideration when recruiting and deploying operational staff. It is important that the hiring process includes people from across the different clan and ethnic groups to ensure diversity and that there is sensitivity to this when teams are deployed.⁸⁵ HALO Somaliland notes that local women, operating as deminers, can more freely move across

clan lines without fear of reprisals, as women are not seen as combatants in inter-clan conflicts.⁸⁶

Prior to ceasing operations in Puntland in April 2023, NPA reported that establishment of its NTS teams was guided by NPA's Gender & Diversity Policy, which mandated a fair representation of men and women in its operations. NPA involved local authorities and local leaders in gathering information and decision making before, during and after all survey and clearance activities, using impact assessment tools to facilitate access and participation by all groups.⁸⁷

Table 3: Gender composition of operators in 2023⁸⁸

Organisation	Total staff	Women employed	Total managerial or supervisory staff	Women in managerial or supervisory positions	Total operational staff	Women in operational positions
SEMA	N/K	N/K	N/K	N/K	N/K	N/K
HALO Somalia	339	66 (19%)	27	4 (15%)	288	28 (9%)
HALO Somaliland	467	81 (17%)	84	12 (14%)	323	63 (20%)
UOS	161	15 (9%)	13	3 (23%)	148	12 (8%)
UNMAS HMA team	6	1 (17%)	4	1 (25%)	2	0 (0%)
Totals	973	163 (17%)	128	20 (16%)	761	103 (14%)

N/K = Not known

ENVIRONMENTAL POLICIES AND ACTION

SEMA has made little progress on environmental matters in mine action recent years. It was reported in 2022 that a section on environmental management is contained within Somalia's NMAS,⁸⁹ but this, along with other revised chapters, remained pending approval as at May 2024. There was also no timeline for the development of an Environmental Policy.⁹⁰ UNMAS, NPA, and HALO, however, all report having an environmental policy in place.⁹¹

UNMAS Somalia ensures that mine action activities comply with the UN environmental policies as well as national environmental laws and regulations.⁹² UOS has an environment, health and safety policy, designed to ensure that areas cleared of explosive hazards are undamaged and suitable for their intended purpose after land release

activities. Additionally, UOS adheres to a Health, Safety, Social, and Environmental management plan and reports on this to UNMAS on a monthly basis. UOS has conducted a risk assessment of its operations and devised mitigation measures to ensure environmental protection, including responsible vegetation cutting during clearance; ensuring materials such as scrap metals, non-biodegradable sandbags, plastic water bottles, and used tyres are not left behind; the use of rechargeable batteries and solar panels in field camps; effective waste management; and effective management of vehicle oil spillage.⁹³

HALO Somalia continues to liaise closely with mine-impacted communities in the pre-clearance phase, to outline the extent of vegetation removal necessary to conduct clearance and

⁸⁴ Email from Rob Syfret, HALO, 16 May 2023.

⁸⁵ Emails from Mustafa Bawar, UNMAS, 17 March 2020; Claus Nielsen, NPA, 14 April 2020; and Lawrie Clapton, HALO, 14 June 2020.

⁸⁶ "The Sustainable Development Outcomes of Mine Action in Somalia", GICHD & UNDP, June 2023, at: <https://bit.ly/40r19ZL>.

⁸⁷ Email from Liberty T. Hombe, NPA, 24 March 2023.

⁸⁸ Emails from Ghirmay Kiros, UNSOMA, 20 May 2024; Chris Teasdale, HALO, 17 July 2024; and Rob Syfret, HALO, 17 and 22 July 2024.

⁸⁹ Email from Clemence Nyamandi, UNMAS, 17 March 2022.

⁹⁰ Email from Ghirmay Kiros, UNSOM, 20 May 2024.

⁹¹ Emails from Clemence Nyamandi, UNMAS, 17 March 2022; Robert Iga Afedra, NPA, 12 March 2022; and Daniel Redelinghuys, HALO, 29 May 2022.

⁹² Email from Ghirmay Kiros, UNSOM, 20 May 2024.

⁹³ Ibid.

to understand any concerns, with the community ultimately deciding if clearance should go ahead. HALO Somalia has also continued to expand its installation of solar panels at permanent operational facilities across the country, reducing dependence on diesel generators and cutting programme emissions. HALO Somalia has been working with HALO's regional (Horn of Africa) Mine Action and Environment Project Manager, recruited in April 2023, to implement various measures, including the development of standard operating procedures (SOPs) for vegetation cutting as well as greater integration of environmental concerns into manual clearance SOPs as well as NTS and risk education.⁹⁴ HALO Somalia digs down to 20cm in every signal investigation. This has been found to help the ground absorb more water during the rainy season. On some minefield tasks, hundreds of excavations are made and anecdotal evidence suggests these areas produce more grass and other vegetation for grazing animals.⁹⁵

HALO Somalia does not currently conduct a formal environmental assessment for survey and clearance tasks. However, as at June 2024, HALO's regional environmental team was developing an assessment template for areas designated for clearance, which HALO Somalia expects to implement when available. When planning operations, HALO Somalia routinely factors in the possibility of flooding, which has occurred for some years in its Area of Operations.⁹⁶

In its separate operations in Somaliland, HALO does not yet have an environmental management system. However,

environmental measures are incorporated into its SOPs⁹⁷ and HALO Somaliland is making progress towards a more environmentally sound approach across its operations. In 2023, HALO recruited a full-time Environment Officer into the Somaliland programme. Specific measures undertaken in 2023 include production of guidelines on vegetation cutting and preservation, with notable success in replanting of native aloe species; monitoring and minimising vehicle use around camps; and restricting use of generators where solar power is an option. HALO Somaliland has also continued its project with a partner organisation to facilitate bunding of land (the creation of raised embankments to retain water and prevent soil erosion) to encourage vegetation and increase the availability of grazing land post-clearance. Additionally, as at July 2024, HALO Somaliland was rolling out new guidelines on camp management, including solid waste management, which will help standardise the organisation's approach to environmental issues in line with the regional strategy. HALO is working towards integrating climate-related or extreme weather risks into planning and prioritisation of tasks under its new Environment Officer.⁹⁸

Prior to ceasing operations in April 2023, NPA's environmental efforts in Somalia focused on minimising the cutting down of trees, ensuring responsible waste disposal in the field and at camp sites, avoidance of wildfires during demolitions, and implementing fire safety drills and precautions in camps.⁹⁹

INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING

SEMA decided to upgrade its database to IMSMA Core starting in 2022. However, the GICHD has cautioned that data are of poor quality.¹⁰⁰ Despite this, mine action stakeholders collaborated productively on information management improvements in 2023.¹⁰¹ In May 2024, UNMAS reported that migration of risk education and accident records into IMSMA Core was complete, with clean-up and migration of land release data ongoing. UNMAS also notes that the SEMA IM team has demonstrated improved capacity to run the system.¹⁰² While partners had expected completion of implementation by the end of 2023,¹⁰³ this was postponed to the end of 2024.¹⁰⁴ In June 2024, Somalia said it was at the "final stage to use IMSMA core system to manage the national database effectively".¹⁰⁵

An IM working group established in 2023 provided support to SEMA with the updating of risk education, explosive ordnance disposal (EOD), and clearance forms. Also during 2023, HALO Somalia migrated all survey collection to Survey123, which will directly update into IMSMA Core.¹⁰⁶

The regional mine action centres in Puntland and Somaliland maintain IMSMA databases separate to the national database.¹⁰⁷ UNMAS has said that efforts to migrate data from these regional databases into the national IMSMA Core database are "ongoing".¹⁰⁸ In Somaliland, HALO creates its own data collection forms, which are reviewed regularly. HALO Somaliland says the database is up-to-date, accurate and sustainable.¹⁰⁹

94 Email from Rob Syfret, HALO, 5 June 2024.

95 Email from Rob Syfret, HALO, 7 July 2023.

96 Email from Rob Syfret, HALO, 5 June 2024.

97 Email from Rob Syfret, HALO, 16 May 2023.

98 Email from Rob Syfret, HALO, 22 July 2024.

99 Email from Liberty T. Hombe, NPA, 24 March 2023.

100 Email from Noor Zangana, GICHD, 6 May 2022.

101 Email from Ghirmay Kiros, UNSOM, 20 May 2024; and panellist contribution from Dan Richards, Operations Officer, HALO Somalia, Individualised Approach meeting, 21MSP, Geneva, 23 November 2023.

102 Email from Ghirmay Kiros, UNSOM, 20 May 2024.

103 Email from Clemence Nyamandi, UNMAS, 30 May 2023.

104 Email from Ghirmay Kiros, UNSOM, 20 May 2024.

105 Statement of Somalia on Clearance, Intersessional Meetings, Geneva, 18–20 June 2024.

106 Email from Rob Syfret, HALO, 5 June 2024.

107 Email from Liberty T. Hombe, NPA, 24 March 2023.

108 Email from Ahmed Hussein Ibrahim, Project Manager, Humanitarian Explosive Management (HEM), UNMAS, 28 May 2024.

109 Email from Rob Syfret, HALO, 16 May 2023.

As at July 2024, Somalia had still to submit Article 7 reports covering 2021, 2022, and 2023. In April 2021, SEMA submitted Somalia's Article 5 deadline extension request seeking an extension through to 2027, but it was poorly formulated and

required significant revisions as it lacked sufficient detail and clarity. Somalia acted upon the decisions of the 19MSP by submitting a detailed and costed, updated work plan for the implementation of Article 5 of the APMBBC on 2 June 2023.¹¹⁰

PLANNING AND TASKING

Somalia lacks an up-to-date and approved national mine action strategy. The National Mine Action Strategic Plan for 2018–2020 was only approved by the Minister of Internal Security at the end of 2020 and was extended for one year to provide SEMA with time to develop a new one.¹¹¹ In 2022, Somalia stated that the revision of the national strategy had been completed, with input from operators and SEMA's state offices, and was awaiting approval from the Ministry of Internal Security.¹¹² As at May 2024, however, this new strategy had still not been approved.¹¹³

According to the conditions of the granting of Somalia's extension request until the end of 2027, an updated work plan was to be provided.¹¹⁴ The work plan submitted in June 2023 was detailed in certain areas but lacking in others. The main focus is comprehensive NTS across the country, which Somalia expects to complete within one year.¹¹⁵ When this will start is, though, unclear. Somalia does, however, state that the AP mined area survey will be conducted simultaneously with survey of other contamination. In parallel, operators will continue to clear CHAs, prioritising areas where the presence of AP mines has been confirmed.¹¹⁶ SEMA acknowledges that sustained capacity development will be required for SEMA and its regional offices to support the survey and has appealed for increased international funding and support to this end.¹¹⁷

Somalia says that annual land release targets for the period covered by the work plan will depend upon the results of the NTS. However, it estimates that, given the available combined capacity of all operators, working at an average manual mine clearance rate of 35.5m² per deminer per day, it can clear just over 1.51km² per year, or almost 7.57km² over the five-year

period. This assumes a total capacity of 22 manual mine clearance teams with a total of 148 deminers.¹¹⁸ The work plan includes a detailed breakdown by operator and year of operational capacity and equipment for survey, clearance, and spot tasks. It also clearly outlines the annual funding secured and yet to be secured for each area of activity and by operator.¹¹⁹ To date, Somalia has exceeded its expected average rate of annual clearance, with 2.05km² of AP mined area cleared in 2022¹²⁰ and 1.81km² cleared in 2023.¹²¹ But while operators are undertaking NTS in accessible areas, as has already been outlined, progress towards nationwide NTS continues to be severely hampered by conflict and insecurity in many areas.¹²²

Tasking by SEMA was introduced in 2023 following challenges around coordination of tasking between SEMA and operators reported in previous years. HALO says tasking has been working well and has demonstrated SEMA's capability to manage and issue tasks effectively.¹²³ HALO reported in June 2024 that once SEMA has fully migrated to IMSMA Core, SEMA will produce task dossiers from the database.¹²⁴

UNMAS and its implementing partners propose survey and clearance tasks based on considerations of security; site accessibility; level of accident risk to the community; and other community impact, such as whether a hazard blocks access to facilities. Proposed tasks are shared with SEMA for their endorsement and record-keeping.¹²⁵

In Somaliland, HALO's NTS teams assign priority levels to a task (low, medium, high) based on information collected in the field, including reported accidents (animal or human), land use, and infrastructure or resource blockages.¹²⁶

110 APMBBC Implementation Support Unit (ISU), "Somalia", accessed 22 July 2023 at: <https://bit.ly/3rHSaB0>.

111 Email from Claus Nielsen, NPA, 26 May 2021.

112 Article 7 Report (covering 2020 and 2021), Form A.

113 Email from Ghirmay Kiros, UNSOM, 20 May 2024.

114 Action Plan for Article 5 Implementation, October 2022–October 2027, p. 7.

115 Ibid., p. 35.

116 Summary of Updated Article 5 Work Plan, Intersessional Meetings, Geneva, 19–21 June 2023.

117 Action Plan for Article 5 Implementation, October 2022–October 2027, p. 25.

118 Action Plan for Article 5 Implementation, October 2022–October 2027, p. 33 and Annex III, p. 49.

119 Ibid., pp. 34–39.

120 Emails from Rob Syfret, HALO, 16 May, 7 July, and 15 September 2023.

121 Email from Chris Teasdale, HALO, 17 July 2024.

122 Emails from Rob Syfret, HALO, 7 July 2023; and Chris Teasdale, HALO, 17 July 2024.

123 Email from Rob Syfret, HALO, 1 June 2023.

124 Email from Rob Syfret, HALO, 5 June 2024.

125 Emails from Ghirmay Kiros, UNSOM, 20 May and 7 August 2024.

126 Email from Rob Syfret, HALO, 22 July 2024.

LAND RELEASE SYSTEM

STANDARDS AND LAND RELEASE EFFICIENCY

UNMAS initially developed National Technical Standards and Guidelines (NTSGs) for Somalia in 2012–13.¹²⁷ The first edition of Somalia's NMAS was subsequently published in 2018. The NMAS are split into four parts covering Land Release, Information Management (IMSMA), Mine Risk Education (MRE), and QA.¹²⁸ In June 2023, Somalia reported that progress on a review of the NMAS had been delayed due to a lack of funding to conduct stakeholder meetings to discuss and agree the standards as well as the level of political unrest in Somalia and a lack of international technical experts to support the review.¹²⁹ As at June 2024, there had been no further update to implementing partners on the pending approval of the NMAS.¹³⁰ In April 2024, SEMA organised a risk education workshop during which a revision of the NMAS on risk education was discussed and was subsequently said to be "ongoing".¹³¹

UNMAS notes that the draft of the revised NMAS are sufficient to serve as a guide for the SOPs of implementing partners to deal with legacy contamination, subject to any

amends that may be made during government review and approval.¹³² HALO, however, notes that the NMAS need to be adapted to support implementation in the context of local threat levels.¹³³ UNMAS also suggests that, considering the significance of the IED-related threats affecting the civilian population, the NMAS should consider procedures to deal with remnants of improvised mines and victim-operated improvised explosive devices.¹³⁴ In its updated work plan for 2022–27, Somalia pledges to consider the development of national standards only on risk education for IEDs.¹³⁵

The number of AP and AV mines found and destroyed in Somalia continues to be low relative to the size of areas cleared (see Table 8). As such, it is possible that, in some cases, more areas could be released through NTS or TS rather than full clearance, indicating the need for stricter application of robust land release methodology. In 2023, HALO Somalia cleared twelve mined areas totalling 0.14km² which proved to contain no AP mines.¹³⁶

OPERATORS AND OPERATIONAL TOOLS

In 2023, HALO, continued to conduct operations in Somalia, with separate operations in Somaliland. UNMAS-contracted commercial clearance company, UOS, deployed teams for survey and clearance of mines and other explosive threats. UNMAS also deployed two EOD teams, totalling ten personnel.¹³⁷ NPA completed NTS of mine contamination in Puntland state in February 2023 and left Somalia thereafter.¹³⁸

Table 4: Operational NTS and TS capacities deployed in 2023¹³⁹

Operator	NTS/TS teams	Total NTS/TS personnel	Comments
UOS (UNMAS)	4	8	Clearance teams also conduct TS.
HALO Somalia	4	16	NTS teams also conduct community liaison. Clearance teams conduct TS.
HALO Somaliland	2	6	Clearance teams conduct TS.
Totals	10	30	

Table 5: Operational clearance capacities deployed in Somalia in 2023¹⁴⁰

Operator	Manual clearance teams	Total deminers	Mechanical teams	Mechanical assets	Comments
UOS (UNMAS)	4	40	0	0	Deployed for clearance and TS Also has 2 teams of 10 personnel for EOD.

¹²⁷ Emails from Terje Eldøen, NPA, 5 June 2016; and Mohamed Abdulkadir Ahmed, SEMA, 19 June 2015.

¹²⁸ Revised 2021 Article 5 deadline Extension Request, p. 38.

¹²⁹ Action Plan for Article 5 Implementation, October 2022–October 2027, p. 10.

¹³⁰ Emails from Ghirmay Kiros, UNSOM, 20 May 2024; and Rob Syfret, HALO, 5 June 2024.

¹³¹ Email from Ghirmay Kiros, UNSOM, 20 May 2024.

¹³² Email from Clemence Nyamandi, UNMAS, 30 May 2023.

¹³³ Email from Rob Syfret, HALO, 1 June 2023.

¹³⁴ Email from Clemence Nyamandi, UNMAS, 30 May 2023.

¹³⁵ Action Plan for Article 5 Implementation, October 2022–October 2027, p. 45.

¹³⁶ Email from Chris Teasdale, HALO, 17 July 2024.

¹³⁷ Ibid.

¹³⁸ Emails from Robert Iga Afedra, NPA, 1 and 10 June 2022; and Liberty T. Hombe, NPA, 24 March 2023.

¹³⁹ Emails from Rob Syfret, HALO, 17 July and 22 July 2024; Ghirmay Kiros, UNSOM, 20 May 2024; and Chris Teasdale, HALO, 17 July 2024.

¹⁴⁰ Emails from Rob Syfret, HALO, 17 and 22 July 2024; Rebecca Wicks, HALO, 8 August 2024; Ghirmay Kiros, UNSOM, 20 May 2024; and Chris Teasdale, HALO, 17 July 2024; and telephone interview with Rob Syfret, 10 July 2023.

Table 5 Continued

Operator	Manual clearance teams	Total deminers	Mechanical teams	Mechanical assets	Comments
HALO Somalia	20	160	0	0	Deployed for clearance and TS.
HALO Somaliland	31	239	3	2 (JCB excavator and Case Loader.)	Capable of clearance and TS. Case loader no longer deployed from May 2023.
Totals	55	439	3	2	

UOS maintained roughly the same manual clearance capacity in 2023 as it had in 2022. Four new UNMAS teams were deployed for NTS in accessible areas along the Somali-Ethiopian border. UNMAS anticipated that UOS would remain operational until June 2024. It then expected to procure a new contractor by July 2024¹⁴¹ and transition to a different structure under which it would deploy eight multi-skilled teams, able to conduct risk education, NTS, and EOD, across the four states of South West, Galmudug, Jubaland and Hirshabelle. Two teams were to be deployed in each state, with a primary focus on NTS.¹⁴²

HALO Somalia did not have any significant change in survey or clearance capacity in 2023 compared to 2022. It expected some reduction in clearance capacity in the second half of 2024.¹⁴³ HALO Somaliland experienced a significant decrease in clearance capacity, from 32 teams of 283 deminers (including 24 mechanical team personnel) in 2022¹⁴⁴ to 31 teams of 239 deminers in 2023. This was due to funding challenges, which meant that in August–September 2023, 82 operational staff were made redundant, including two of HALO Somaliland's three mechanical teams. From May 2024, HALO Somaliland absorbed eight manual teams and two NTS teams from HALO Ethiopia,¹⁴⁵ following a stop-work order, issued by the Ethiopian government.¹⁴⁶

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND ARTICLE 5 COMPLIANCE

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS IN 2023

A combined total of 3.65km² of AP and AV mined area was released in 2023 across Somalia, including Somaliland. Of this, a combined total of just over 2.39km² of AP and AV mined area was cleared (of which 1.81km² was of AP mined area), 0.29km² of AP mined area was cancelled through NTS, and just over 0.96km² was reduced through TS (of which 0.87km² was AP mined area).¹⁴⁷ A total of 96 AP mines were found and

destroyed of which 17 were destroyed in spot tasks.¹⁴⁸ A total of 40 AV mines were also destroyed (see Table 8).¹⁴⁹

In 2023, HALO Somaliland identified seven new CHAs containing previously unrecorded AP mine contamination covering a total of 0.28km².¹⁵⁰

SURVEY IN 2023

In 2023, a total of just over 1.16km² of AP mined area was released through survey – 0.29km² was cancelled through NTS and 0.87km² was reduced through TS, all by HALO Somalia¹⁵¹ (see Table 7). This is a significant decrease compared to 2022 when a total of just over 8.56km² was released through NTS (though none through TS).¹⁵² HALO Somaliland identified AP mined areas in 2023 with a total of 0.28km² across seven CHAs.¹⁵³

Both cancellation through NTS and the amount of previously unrecorded AP contamination identified overall in 2023 decreased compared to 2022, due to the conclusion of NPA's NTS project in Puntland in February 2023 and its departure from Somalia shortly thereafter.¹⁵⁴ However, HALO was able to increase the amount of land it released through NTS in 2023 compared to 2022 as it dedicated a team to resurveying tasks in Galmudug.¹⁵⁵

141 Email from Ghirmay Kiros, UNSOM, 20 May 2024.

142 Email from Ahmed Hussein Ibrahim, UNMAS, 28 May 2024.

143 Email from Chris Teasdale, HALO, 17 July 2024.

144 Email from Rob Syfret, HALO, 16 May 2023; and telephone interview with Rob Syfret, HALO, 10 July 2023.

145 These additional staff, temporarily absorbed from the HALO Ethiopia programme, are not included in Table 5.

146 Email from Rob Syfret, HALO, 22 July 2024.

147 Emails from Chris Teasdale, HALO, 17 July 2024; Ghirmay Kiros, UNSOM, 22 May 2024; and Rob Syfret, HALO, 22 July 2024.

148 Emails from Chris Teasdale, HALO, 17 July 2024; and Rob Syfret, HALO, 22 July 2024.

149 Emails from Chris Teasdale, HALO, 17 July 2024; Ghirmay Kiros, UNSOM, 22 May 2024; and Rob Syfret, HALO, 22 July 2024.

150 Emails from Rob Syfret, HALO, 22 July 2024; and Rebecca Wicks, HALO, 8 August 2024.

151 Email from Chris Teasdale, HALO, 17 July 2024.

152 Emails from Rob Syfret, HALO, 7 July 2023; and Liberty T. Hombe, NPA, 24 March 2023.

153 Emails from Rob Syfret, HALO, 22 July 2024; and Rebecca Wicks, HALO, 8 August 2024.

154 Email from Liberty T. Hombe, NPA, 24 March 2023.

155 Email from Chris Teasdale, HALO, 17 July 2024.

Table 6: Release of mined area through NTS in 2023¹⁵⁶

State/Region/District	Operator	CHAs cancelled	SHAs cancelled	Area cancelled (m ²)
Hirshabelle, Mohamud Gacal, Beledweyne	UOS (UNMAS)	1	0	20,000,000
South West, Lambarka, Birkan, Ceelbarde	UOS (UNMAS)	0	1	*0
Subtotals of AV mined area		1	1	20,000,000
Galmudug	HALO Somalia	0	2	247,070
Hirshabelle	HALO Somalia	0	1	44,605
Subtotals of AP mined area		0	3	291,675
Totals		1	4	20,291,675

* The area cancelled is 0m² because the SHA concerned was assigned an area size of 0m² in the database. NTS was undertaken and the SHA was cancelled accordingly.

Table 7: Release of mined area through TS in 2023¹⁵⁷

State/Region/District	Operator	CHA/SHAs reduced	Area reduced (m ²)
Jubaland, Kismayo	UOS (UNMAS)	1 (SHA)	90,000
Subtotals of AV mined area		1	90,000
Galmudug	HALO Somalia	2	73,347
Puntland	HALO Somalia	2	759,715
Hirshabelle	HALO Somalia	2	26,906
Southwest	HALO Somalia	1	14,942
Subtotals of AP mined area		7	874,910
Totals		8	964,910

CLEARANCE IN 2023

In 2023, a combined total of just over 2.39km² of AP and AV mined area was cleared, of which 1.81km² of clearance was of AP mined area. Of the AP mine clearance, 0.98km² was undertaken by HALO Somalia and 0.82km² was undertaken by HALO Somaliland (see Table 8).¹⁵⁸ A total of 96 AP mines were destroyed – 17 in spot tasks.¹⁵⁹ Forty AV mines were also destroyed (see Table 8).¹⁶⁰

Clearance of AP mined area in 2023 represents a slight decrease on the 2.05km² of AP mined area cleared in 2022.¹⁶¹

This can be attributed largely to the reduction of operational staff in HALO Somaliland, and two security incidents in August and September 2023, which forced HALO Somaliland to suspend operations for short periods.¹⁶²

UNMAS reported that UOS undertook surface clearance of AV mined area covering 739,412m² in locations across Galmudug, Hirshabelle and South West states, additional to the clearance stated in Table 8.¹⁶³ No AP mines were destroyed during this surface clearance.

¹⁵⁶ Emails from Chris Teasdale, HALO, 17 July 2024; and Ghirmay Kiros, UNSOM, 22 May and 7 August 2024.

¹⁵⁷ Ibid.

¹⁵⁸ Emails from Chris Teasdale, HALO, 17 July 2024; Ghirmay Kiros, UNSOM, 22 May 2024; and Rob Syfret, HALO, 22 July 2024.

¹⁵⁹ Emails from Chris Teasdale, HALO, 17 July 2024; and Rob Syfret, HALO, 22 July 2024.

¹⁶⁰ Emails from Chris Teasdale, HALO, 17 July 2024; Ghirmay Kiros, UNSOM, 22 May 2024; and Rob Syfret, HALO, 22 July 2024.

¹⁶¹ Emails from Rob Syfret, HALO, 16 May, 7 July, and 15 September 2023; and Clemence Nyamandi, UNMAS, 30 May and 8 August 2023.

¹⁶² Email from Rob Syfret, HALO, 22 July 2024.

¹⁶³ Emails from Ghirmay Kiros, UNSOM, 20 and 22 May 2024.

Table 8: Mine clearance in 2023¹⁶⁴

State, District, village	Operator	Areas cleared	Area cleared (m ²)	AP mines destroyed	AV mines destroyed	UXO destroyed
Galmudug, Abduwaq	UOS	0	91,405	0	8	10
Hirshabelle, Beletweyne	UOS	1	191,305	0	1	9
Jubaland, Doolow	UOS	0	94,608	0	3	1
Jubaland, Kismayo	UOS	0	122,142	0	0	0
South-West, Ceelbarde	UOS	0	85,082	0	7	2
Subtotals AV mined area		1	584,542	0	19	22
Galmudug state	HALO Somalia	10	577,727	11	16	0
Puntland state	HALO Somalia	5	177,998	0	3	0
Hirshabelle state	HALO Somalia	4	134,269	0	0	0
Southwest state	HALO Somalia	3	94,535	0	1	0
Maroodi Jeex/Gabiley	HALO Somaliland	1	112,956	20	0	9
Durruqsi/Durruqsi	HALO Somaliland	*0	126,560	1	0	0
Durruqsi/Bisqa	HALO Somaliland	*0	71,708	7	1	0
Boorama/Hindhaysa	HALO Somaliland	*0	857	0	0	0
Oodweyne/Dabagoroyaale	HALO Somaliland	*0	167,976	4	0	6
Sallaxley/Inaguuxaa	HALO Somaliland	*0	217,881	18	0	0
Oodweyne/Raydab khaatumo	HALO Somaliland	*0	84,915	14	0	46
Gabiley/Cabudla	HALO Somaliland	*0	11,075	1	0	0
Gabiley/Gogolwanag	HALO Somaliland	*0	28,974	3	0	0
Subtotals AP mined area		23	1,807,431	79	21	61
Totals		24	2,391,973	79	40	83

* Of the tasks undertaken by HALO Somaliland in 2023, one was completed (in Maroodi Jeex), three were suspended, and five were ongoing at the time of writing.

In 2023, HALO Somalia cleared twelve areas with a total of 0.41km² which proved to contain no AP mines, though 0.27km² of this contained AV mines.¹⁶⁵

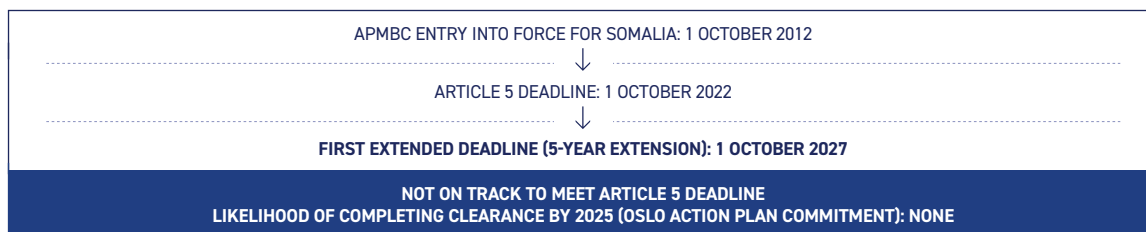
164 Emails from Chris Teasdale, HALO, 17 July 2024; Rob Syfret, HALO, 22 July 2024; and Ghirmay Kiros, UNSOM, 20 May 2024.

165 Email from Chris Teasdale, HALO, 17 July 2024.

DEMINE SAFETY

HALO Somaliland was impacted by two security incidents in 2023, which forced it to suspend operations for short periods. In August, about 15 armed men belonging to the Gajan Libax militia group entered the village of Dabagorayale and attacked HALO's demining camp. The attackers stole six weapons from the local police and took two HALO vehicles. A HALO driver was kidnapped but released 48 hours later. A former HALO deminer who had been dismissed in 2020 was among the attackers. In September 2023, a HALO Somaliland task in Hindhaysa was halted due to unfounded local suspicions that HALO was mining for gold. A group armed with AK-47 assault rifles arrived at HALO's field camp and demanded that HALO leave.¹⁶⁶

ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE AND COMPLIANCE



Under Article 5 of the APMBC, Somalia is required to destroy all AP mines in mined areas under its jurisdiction or control as soon as possible, but not later than 1 October 2027. It will not meet this deadline.

Based on stakeholder engagement during preparation of the 2021 Article 5 Extension Request, Somalia identified the following six major challenges which impeded its ability to complete clearance by its Article 5 deadline:

- Insufficient information about the extent of contamination.
- Insufficient information about the impact of contamination.
- Limited access to contaminated areas, due to security concerns.
- Limited access to supervise teams in contaminated areas, due to security concerns.
- Other types of contamination (such as improvised explosive devices (IEDs)) having taken priority.
- Lack of training, lack of resources and lack of effective coordination and prioritisation.¹⁶⁷

A further impediment is that SEMA's legislative framework has still to be approved by the Federal Government. SEMA expects that, once passed, the Mine Action Bill will finally allow SEMA to receive national funding to help Somalia meet its Article 5 obligations.¹⁶⁸

Table 9: Five-year summary of AP mine clearance

Year	Area cleared (km ²)
2023	1.81
2022	2.05
2021	2.52
2020	2.32
2019	1.82
Total	10.52

Progress in survey and clearance continues to be severely hampered by conflict and insecurity in many areas of the country. In June 2023, SEMA described how the impact of inter-clan conflict limited the deployment of teams across several regions,¹⁶⁹ and in July 2024 HALO reported that it must fly staff and equipment between several areas which are occupied by Al Shabaab.¹⁷⁰ Somalia will continue to update the States Parties on changes to the security situation and accessibility.¹⁷¹

Somalia has made the decision to not include Somaliland in its plans within the extension request or within its updated 2022–2027 work plan, submitted in June 2023, despite the fact that Somaliland remains part of Somalia de jure and is therefore under the jurisdiction of the Federal Government. This is, however, legally incorrect as Article 5 extends over either jurisdiction or control of mined areas.

PLANNING FOR MANAGEMENT OF RESIDUAL CONTAMINATION

UNMAS has trained police EOD teams in every state, which will be available to address residual risks posed by explosive ordnance, including mines, discovered post-completion (i.e. residual capacity).¹⁷² NPA reports that, in Puntland in 2022, it employed police personnel in NTS and EOD in an effort to build capacity for dealing with residual contamination upon completion of clearance.¹⁷³

¹⁶⁶ Email from Rob Syfret, HALO, 22 July 2024.

¹⁶⁷ Statement of Somalia, 19MSP (virtual meeting), 15–19 November 2021.

¹⁶⁸ Statement of Somalia on Clearance, Intersessional Meetings, Geneva, 18–20 June 2024.

¹⁶⁹ "Somalia Summary of Updated Article 5 Work Plan", Intersessional Meetings, 19–21 June 2023.

¹⁷⁰ Email from Chris Teasdale, HALO, 17 July 2024.

¹⁷¹ Action Plan for Article 5 Implementation, October 2022–October 2027, p. 16.

¹⁷² Email from Ghirmay Kiros, UNSOM, 18 June 2024.

¹⁷³ Email from Liberty T. Hombe, NPA, 24 March 2023.