

KEY DATA

NO APMBC ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE:

State not party to the APMBC

AP MINE CONTAMINATION:

Unknown, but at least 20km² in the north-east and other areas

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS

Release of AP mined area	Release in 2024 (km ²)	Release in 2023 (km ²)
Clearance	3.61	3.10
Technical Survey	0.61	1.90
Non-Technical Survey	0.02	2.74

Destruction of AP mines during clearance, survey, and spot tasks	2024	2023
AP Mines destroyed	84 (incl. 28 in spot tasks)	69 (incl. 15 in spot tasks)

MAIN AP MINE SURVEY AND CLEARANCE OPERATORS IN 2024:

In areas formerly controlled by the Assad regime:

- Syrian Arab Red Crescent Society (SARC)
- International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)
- Norwegian People's Aid (NPA)
- Safety Solutions

Operating in the north-west:

- Syria Civil Defence (SCD)
(also called the White Helmets)
- The HALO Trust (HALO)

Operating in the north-east:

- DanChurchAid (DCA)
- Humanity & Inclusion (HI)
- ITF Enhancing Human Security (ITF)
- Mines Advisory Group (MAG)
- ReachOut
- Roj Mine Control Organization (RMCO)
- SafeLand Organisation

KEY DEVELOPMENTS

The fall of the Assad regime in December 2024 has enabled a shift to a countrywide approach to mine action coordination, with operators reporting improved access and cooperation. Clearance output increased in 2024 while survey output fell, but operators have been expanding survey and clearance capacity in 2025 to reach previously inaccessible areas. However, major challenges remain, including a surge in casualties, persistent funding shortfalls, the absence of a national contamination baseline, only nascent managerial capacity in the transitional government, and ongoing security risks.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

- Syria should accede to the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC) as a matter of priority.
- Syria should urgently establish a baseline of anti-personnel (AP) mined area to enable effective prioritisation and planning, with particular focus on agricultural land due to its importance for food security and economic recovery, and the high number of victims.

- Syria should continue strengthening the structure and capacities of its national mine action programme in close collaboration with the Syria Mine Action Area of Responsibility (MA AoR) and partners, as well as with other stakeholders promoting application of the International Mine Action Standards (IMAS) for establishment of a mine action programme (IMAS 02.10).
- Syria should continue to strengthen coordination mechanisms and information management by promoting consistent, timely data sharing among all mine action operators and integrating the Northeast Syria Mine Action Centre (NESMAC) into a unified national system.
- Syria should develop national mine action standards (NMAS) in consultation with operators and ensure their application across all survey and clearance activities.
- Syria should systematically assess and address informal clearance practices by untrained civilians, which pose severe risks to life.

AP MINE SURVEY AND CLEARANCE CAPACITY

MANAGEMENT

- Ministry for Emergency and Disaster Management

NATIONAL OPERATORS

- Syria Civil Defence (SCD) (also called the White Helmets) (concluded operations in August 2025 and are now embedded in the Ministry for Emergency and Disaster Management)
- Roj Mine Control Organization (RMC0)
- SafeLand Organisation
- ReachOut

INTERNATIONAL OPERATORS

- Norwegian People's Aid (NPA)
- The HALO Trust (HALO)
- DanChurchAid (DCA)
- Mines Advisory Group (MAG)
- Enhancing Human Security (ITF)
- Humanity & Inclusion (HI)

OTHER ACTORS

- United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS)
- Syrian Arab Red Crescent Society (SARC)
- International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)

UNDERSTANDING OF AP MINE CONTAMINATION

Syria is heavily contaminated by mines, including of an improvised nature, which were used extensively by parties to the country's 13-year-old armed conflicts. It also has mined areas left by a succession of Arab-Israeli wars since 1948. The Syrian government laid mines along borders with Türkiye and Lebanon in 2012, with Turkish authorities claiming that up to 715,000 mines had been planted along its border with Syria.¹ Syrian government forces also placed mines with a view to slowing the advance of opposition fighters as well as, along with Hezbollah forces, in besieged areas such as Madaya and al-Zabadani (Rural Damascus).²

Non-State armed groups (NSAGs) also laid mines, including around besieged towns such as Kafarayya and al-Fouaa in 2015–18.³ In Raqqa, where 80% of the city has been

destroyed, rubble was mixed with booby-traps left by the parties to the armed conflict.⁴ Retreating Islamic State forces emplaced huge numbers of AP mines of an improvised nature and other improvised explosive devices (IEDs).

The full extent of AP mine contamination is unknown. No comprehensive countrywide survey of contamination has yet been conducted. Prior to the fall of the Assad regime in December 2024, such a survey was not feasible. The United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS) is now leading efforts to coordinate with selected mine action implementing partners to prioritise a baseline non-technical survey (NTS) of explosive ordnance (EO) contamination across accessible areas in north-west and central Syria more fully.⁵

1 Human Rights Watch, "Syria: Army planting banned landmines", 13 March 2012, at: <http://bit.ly/2Ybz9rK>; "Thousands of landmines planted along Turkish-Syrian border", *Middle East Monitor*, 21 November 2013, at: <https://bit.ly/2Mt7efE>.

2 Physicians for Human Rights and the Syrian American Medical Society, "Madaya: Portrait of a Syrian town under siege", July 2016, at: <https://bit.ly/3MKrpE7>, p. 6; Syria Direct, "Walking in the darkness: Hunger drives the most desperate to risk Madaya land mines", 18 April 2016, at: <https://bit.ly/3ZsrmV0>; and Syrian Association for Citizens Dignity, "The displacement of Madaya and Zabadani, the complex crime and prospect of return (translation from original Arabic)", 5 May 2021, at: <https://bit.ly/3XKV0na>.

3 Syrian Network for Human Rights (SNHR), "On the International Day for Mines Awareness and Assistance in Mine Action: Landmines Continue to Plague Large Areas of Syria and Threaten the Lives of Millions", Report, 4 April 2023, at: <https://bit.ly/43Vp2UQ>, pp. 3 and 17; and "Inside Foua: A Shi'a town in the eye of the Syrian storm", *Middle East Eye*, 19 August 2018.

4 Humanity & Inclusion (HI), "Syria: it will take at least two generations to rebuild", 25 February 2021, at: <https://bit.ly/3fPFoaF>.

5 Emails from Adesh Singh, Technical Advisor, DanChurchAid (DCA), 6 June 2025; and Joseph McCartan, Chief Mine Action Programme, UNMAS, 25 June 2025.

Estimates indicate that more than 65% of all Syrians—15.4 million of the 23.6 million population—are at risk from explosive ordnance, with extensive impact on communities, farmland, and infrastructure.⁶ Contamination is particularly high in Deir ez-Zor in the north east where roughly a quarter of all accidents since December have taken place. Contributing factors include former frontlines being dismantled and redistributed as arable land, restricted humanitarian access on both sides of the Euphrates river, and limited access to essential services, forcing people to travel long distances.⁷ The 2024 Humanitarian Needs Overview estimated that the highest percentages of explosive contamination were in Quneitra, As-Sweida, Rural Damascus, Aleppo, Idlib, Raqqa, Deir-ez-Zor, and Dar'a governorates and Damascus governorate neighbourhoods.⁸ The Syria Civil Defence (SCD), also known as the White Helmets, published a map of hazardous areas of northern Syria, showing the highest intensity of EO contamination in the sub-districts of Saraqeb (Idlib governorate) and Al-Atareb (Aleppo governorate), followed by Jisr Al-shighur, Nabul (Idlib), Al-Bab, and Tadaf (Aleppo) uncovered between 26 November 2024 and 1 March 2025.⁹

Since December 2024, Syria has witnessed a surge in casualties from explosive ordnance. More than 1,000 victims, a third of them children, were reported in December 2024 to May 2025. The 414 people killed and 592 injured compares to the 912 casualties reported for the whole of 2024.¹⁰ The highest numbers of casualties were reported in Deir ez-Zor, Idlib, and Aleppo governorates.¹¹ In June 2025, the Minister for Emergency and Disaster Management noted that the ministry records victims of mines and other EO on daily basis.¹² The recent rise in casualties in Syria is linked to multiple factors. Abandoned military vehicles and weapons stockpiles have increased civilian exposure, while military strikes on ammunition storage areas have scattered ordnance more widely. Since December, many internally displaced persons (IDPs) have returned to areas with contamination, often unaware of the risks. Economic hardship has also pushed people to collect scrap metal, which includes EO. Without a fully functioning mine action programme, civilians are increasingly trying to clear or dismantle explosives themselves, often at great personal risk.¹³

Data on the types of destroyed mines provided by operators confirm that many AP mines used in Syria are of an improvised nature. For example, all AP mines found and destroyed by Mines Advisory Group (MAG) and DanChurchAid (DCA) in 2023 were of an improvised nature.¹⁴ Many of the mines have acquired local names from the way they were crafted (e.g., the ruler, the rosary, or the stone). Other organisations or media outlets documented use of Russian-made PMN-2 and POMZ AP mines.¹⁵ The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and the Syrian Arab Red Crescent (SARC) jointly assessed the needs of 573 communities in Aleppo, Al-Hassakeh, Daraa, Deir Ezzor, Hama, Homs, Idlib, Quneitra, and Sweida governorates. According to the assessment, 530 (92%) communities reported the presence of explosive remnants of war (ERW). Of the assessed communities, 57% reported the presence of AP mines, 46% reported cluster munition remnants (CMR), and 25% other EO.¹⁶

In 2024, DCA conducted NTS in multiple areas of Raqqa governorate, including the Hurriyeh, Nahda, and Tass Heyah neighbourhoods of Raqqa, as well as Abu Jadi and Um-Saharij villages. Direct evidence of EO contamination, including improvised anti-personnel mines, was identified. A total of 61,131m² was recorded as contaminated and added to the information management database. Most of the areas were located in urban residential settings and were cleared by DCA's mine action teams.¹⁷

MAG has been conducting surveys across several governorates in the north-east of Syria since 2016. Between January and December 2024, MAG conducted 111 Contamination Baseline Assessments, identifying 76 hazardous areas (suspected and confirmed). It was found that improvised AP mines and CMR are both present and significantly hinder daily activities, including farming, livestock grazing, movement between communities, and access to humanitarian assistance. At the beginning of 2025, conventional AP mined area was also identified in newly liberated areas in the south of Raqqa. In total, 449,190m² of previously unrecorded AP mined area was added to the national database in 2024.¹⁸

Humanity & Inclusion (HI) conducted a total of 37 Community Impact Surveys (CIS) across 37 communities in north-east Syria, with contamination posing a significant risk in 31 communities (83% of locations accessed). In north-west Syria, CIS reports were made of 27 communities, with

6 UNMAS, Syria, data as of June 2025, at: <https://bit.ly/4IFMXkn>.

7 Mine Action Area of Responsibility (AoR) Syria, Situation Update No. 3, covering 1–30 April 2025, at: <https://bit.ly/4eBpEWT>.

8 Syria 2024 Humanitarian Needs Overview, February 2024, OCHA, at: <https://bit.ly/4erk3St>.

9 The White Helmets website (in Arabic), accessed on 4 August 2025, at: <https://bit.ly/4tk3Wl>.

10 Syrian Arab Republic: Humanitarian Situation Report No. 6, as of 27 May 2025, OCHA, at: <https://bit.ly/3TmDkey>; and International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), "International Mine Awareness Day: Addressing the threat of explosive ordnance in Syria", News release, 3 April 2025, at: <https://bit.ly/3ldKMgy>.

11 Email from Aida Burnett-Cargill, Co-coordinator, Syria Mine Action AoR, 5 September 2025.

12 "The Minister of Emergency and Disaster Management to Al-Ikhbariah: The Ministry's mission is to plan and prepare before disasters strike", *Al-Ikhbariah* (in Arabic), 20 June 2025, at: <https://bit.ly/46FjmDz>.

13 ICRC, "International Mine Awareness Day: Addressing the threat of explosive ordnance in Syria", 3 April 2025.

14 Emails from Adesh Singh, Acting HMA OM, DCA, 16 May 2024; and Riaan Boshoff, MAG, 21 May 2024.

15 SNHR, "On the International Day for Mines Awareness and Assistance in Mine Action: Landmines Continue to Plague Large Areas of Syria and Threaten the Lives of Millions", Report, p. 6; See also The Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Monitor, "Syria's Landmines: Silent Killing", Report, April 2021, pp. 11–15.

16 ICRC and SARC, Mine Risk Needs Assessment and Education, PowerPoint presentation to the 24th NDM, 25 May 2021, slides 7–8, at: <https://bit.ly/3zxkRRk>.

17 Email from Adesh Singh, DCA, 6 June 2025.

18 Email from Najat El Hamri, Regional Director, MAG, 3 June 2025.

contamination found to pose a significant risk in 22 communities (81% of locations accessed).¹⁹ In the same year, HALO conducted NTS of three minefields in north-west Syria and added 22,262m² of previously unrecorded AP mined area to its database.²⁰ Norwegian People's Aid (NPA) discovered

previously unrecorded AP mined area in areas then controlled by the then Assad regime in 2024. However, NPA were not permitted by the authorities in power at the time to record the areas, as they were located around military and security installations.²¹

OTHER EXPLOSIVE ORDNANCE CONTAMINATION

Syria also has significant contamination from CMR and other ERW (see Mine Action Review's *Clearing Cluster Munition Remnants 2025* report on Syria for further information).

NATIONAL OWNERSHIP AND PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

There is not yet a fully functioning national mine action authority or national mine action centre in Syria although both are in the process of being established. In March 2025, the Syrian transitional government appointed Raed al-Saleh, former head of the White Helmets, as Minister of Emergency and Disaster Management with responsibility for coordinating mine action in the country. UNMAS will provide capacity development support to the ministry to establish a national mine action authority and national mine action centre.²²

On 20 June 2025, the Minister of Emergency and Disaster Management stated that the Ministry intends to establish a national mine action centre "soon", in collaboration with national and international partners. He added that the Ministry also plans on establishing a national emergency response system²³ and designate zones that are safe for return, construction, and agriculture, within three years.²⁴

In north-east Syria, mine action is coordinated by the Northeast Syria Mine Action Centre (NESMAC), which was established by local authorities in 2021. Until July 2024, iMMAP was embedded within NESMAC to provide capacity-building support, particularly in information management. When iMMAP withdrew due to the loss of funding, MAG assumed a more active role in supporting NESMAC.²⁵ In 2024, MAG continued to strengthen NESMAC's capacity, particularly in information management (IM), delivering four training courses in IM, explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) Level 2, quality management, and gender equity, diversity, and inclusion (GEDI), for 11 NESMAC staff. MAG's IM unit also supported NESMAC in collecting and analysing data from mine action actors to develop an ongoing portal-dashboard project.²⁶ DCA provided limited in-kind support to sustain NESMAC's operations in 2024, providing equipment such as solar panels, batteries, and electronics to

improve office capabilities.²⁷ In November 2024, HI trained 16 NESMAC staff (7 women and 9 men) in disability, gender, and age (DGA) issues as part of its victim assistance activities.²⁸ HI also reported, however, that coordination with NESMAC remains a challenge.

Since iMMAP ended its capacity support in July 2024, NESMAC has faced significant operational constraints, limiting its ability to provide consistent technical oversight, coordination, tasking, and information management. Limited institutional capacity and lack of formal recognition also hinder robust quality assurance (QA) and standardised procedures. As a result, mine action actors in north-east Syria must rely on external coordination and technical support, highlighting the need for continued capacity-building and resources to strengthen NESMAC's role. Meanwhile, no formal relationship exists between NESMAC and UNMAS, which cites "political sensitivities" and unclear dynamics between Damascus and Hassakeh as barriers. NESMAC remains a de facto coordination body for mine action in north-east Syria but is not officially recognised by international frameworks or the UN system.²⁹

Prior to the fall of the Assad regime on 8 December 2024, mine action coordination in Syria was divided into three separate regions: government-controlled areas, the north-west, and the north-east, with coordination mechanisms operating separately in each and with no effective integration between them. This was the case even though the "Whole of Syria" coordination mechanism was based in Amman and had been tasked to bring the response together. Since the fall of the regime, a country-wide approach has become the central framework for mine action coordination.³⁰

19 Email from Lejla Susic, AVR Specialist, HI, 2 June 2025.

20 Email from Simon Jackson, Programme Manager, HALO, 4 June 2025.

21 Email from Chris Tierney, Country Director, NPA, 24 June 2025.

22 UNMAS, UNMAS Syria and the Syrian Minister of Emergency and Disaster Management Discuss Future Cooperation on Mine Action, 15 May 2025, at: <https://bit.ly/44AAfwz>; and email from Joseph McCartan, UNMAS, 25 June 2025.

23 "The Minister of Emergency and Disaster Management to Al-Ikhbariah: The Ministry's mission is to plan and prepare before disasters strike", (Arabic), *Al-Ikhbariah*, (Arabic), 20 June 2025; and "The Minister of Emergency

24 "The Ministry of Emergency and Disaster Management launches a plan for safe zones and a mine action centre", (Arabic), *Ultra Syria*, 21 June 2025, at: <https://bit.ly/4amlali6>.

25 Email from Aida Burnett-Cargill, Syria Mine Action AoR, 6 October 2025.

26 Email from Najat El Hamri, MAG, 3 June 2025.

27 Email from Adesh Singh, DCA, 6 June 2025.

28 Email from Lejla Susic, HI, 2 June 2025.

29 Ibid.

30 Email from Adesh Singh, DCA, 6 June 2025.

The Syria Mine Action Area of Responsibility (MA AoR), part of the Syria Protection Cluster, with UNMAS as the cluster lead agency and with a co-coordinator hosted by HI. That said, as at June 2025, UNMAS was facing delays in staff recruitment and did not yet have an MA AoR Coordinator or full-time IM officer in place.³¹ The Syria MA AoR unifies all previously existing coordination structures and hosts technical working groups (TWGs) in: explosive ordnance risk education (EORE), victim assistance, IM, survey and clearance, and advocacy. The Syria MA AoR coordinates the activities of more than 38 partners nationwide implementing a range of mine action programmes.³² MA AoR partners must be engaged in at least two pillars of mine action, one of which must include survey and clearance to be core members of the AoR. Other partners directly coordinate with relevant technical working groups.³³ AoR coordination meetings are held twice monthly, beginning on 6 February 2025, while TWGs meet monthly, except for the Advocacy TWG which meets twice a month.³⁴ Since July 2025, the NESMAC and national mine action centre have been participating in AoR meetings.³⁵ According to operators, cooperation and information sharing among national and international mine action actors has seen a significant improvement.³⁶

Operators have generally reported a more enabling environment for their work since December 2024, but numerous challenges remain. HI reported facing significant constraints from new requirements as of January 2025 for international NGOs to operate under the umbrella of Syria Trust for Development (STD) or SARC, limiting independence and impartiality, and a provision that calls for international NGOs to hand over all assets to the government prior to closing operations.³⁷ NPA reported that access permission processes are lengthy, taking up to six weeks, although these now cover larger areas at the governorate level for three-month, extendable periods, and visitor visas are easier and cheaper to obtain than before.³⁸ In north-east Syria, DCA and MAG operate in a relatively enabling environment with good international staff access via the Kurdistan Region of Iraq (KRI) border, cooperative local authorities, and streamlined MoU processes. Both operators reported facing delays and restrictions on importing mine action equipment, though, with a ban in place on the importation of explosives and equipment such as detectors, GPS, and Push to Talk radios.³⁹ In north-west Syria, HALO reported improved international staff access via Jordan since December 2024 and strong relations with local authorities enabling wide operational freedom, but persistent challenges in importing large equipment, leading to reliance on local procurement.⁴⁰

FUNDING FOR AP MINE SURVEY AND CLEARANCE

The mine action sector remained underfunded throughout 2024, with only 13% of the required US\$51 million received.⁴¹ In 2024, DCA's survey and clearance operations were funded by the European Union-Foreign Policy Instruments (EU-FPI) until June, with internal gap funding covering the remainder of the year. DCA secured United Kingdom (UK) Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) for survey and clearance operations in 2025.⁴² HALO's survey and clearance in 2024 and 2025 were funded by France, Ireland, and Norway, and the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) Syria Cross-border Humanitarian Fund (SCHF). In addition, the Gould Foundation provided funding for a single project in 2024, and new donors Germany and Canada began funding in 2025. Ireland, Norway, and France were, though, ending their support by December 2025.⁴³

MAG's survey and clearance operations were funded by US Department of State Weapons Removal and Abatement (PM/WRA) and Norway NMFA-Norad in 2024, with the Netherlands

joining in 2025. US funding faced a temporary suspension until a waiver was issued to continue operations although, as at June 2025, no official outcome has been received.⁴⁴ HI's 2024 survey and clearance donors were the US Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance (BHA), the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), OCHA SCHF, and the German Federal Foreign Office (GFFO). In 2025, BHA stopped funding while the rest of the donors have remained.⁴⁵

UNMAS's 2024 donors included UN OCHA Syria Humanitarian Fund (SHF), Belgium, Estonia, Finland, and the Republic of Korea, which joined as a new donor. For 2025, donors included OCHA SHF, Belgium, UN Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF), UN-Habitat, Italy, and Finland, with Canada in the pipeline.⁴⁶ NPA was funded in 2024 by the Norwegian MFA, Japan, and SHF. This continued into 2025 with Norwegian funding responsibility moving to Norad and plans for OCHA to also support.⁴⁷

31 Email from Joseph McCartan, UNMAS, 25 June 2025.

32 Mine Action AoR, Situation Update No. 3 (covering April 2025).

33 Online meeting with Aida Burnett-Cargill, Syria Mine Action AoR, 7 August 2025.

34 Emails from Lejla Susic, HI, 2 June 2025; Joseph McCartan, UNMAS, 25 June 2025; and online meeting with Aida Burnett-Cargill, Syria Mine Action AoR, 7 August 2025.

35 Email from Aida Burnett-Cargill, Syria Mine Action AoR, 6 October 2025.

36 Email from Chris Tierney, NPA, 24 June 2025.

37 Email from Lejla Susic, HI, 2 June 2025.

38 Email from Chris Tierney, NPA, 24 June 2025.

39 Emails from Najat El Hamri, MAG, 3 June 2025; and Adesh Singh, DCA, 6 June 2025.

40 Email from Simon Jackson, HALO, 4 June 2025.

41 Email from Joseph McCartan, UNMAS, 25 June 2025.

42 Email from Adesh Singh, DCA, 6 June 2025.

43 Email from Simon Jackson, HALO, 4 June 2025.

44 Email from Najat El Hamri, MAG, 3 June 2025.

45 Email from Lejla Susic, HI, 2 June 2025.

46 Email from Joseph McCartan, UNMAS, 25 June 2025.

47 Email from Chris Tierney, NPA, 24 June 2025.

GENDER AND DIVERSITY

There is no national gender and diversity policy for the mine action programme. However, several operators have their own frameworks in place.⁴⁸ DCA has both a global and a country-specific gender and diversity policy with an implementation plan. MAG and NPA each have institutional gender and diversity policies and implementation plans.⁴⁹ UNMAS has an institutional gender and diversity strategy.⁵⁰ SCD has a gender strategy and a diversity strategy, along with policies to prevent discrimination based on ethnicity, religion, or sex.⁵¹

HI has reported working to integrate gender and diversity considerations into its humanitarian and development programs in Syria, in alignment with the UN Development Programme (UNDP) Gender Equality Strategy for Syria 2024–26,⁵² which aims to advance gender justice and women's empowerment by increasing their participation in decision-making, improving access to resources and services, and engaging men as allies.⁵³

Table 1: Gender composition of operators in 2024⁵⁴

Operator	Total staff	Women staff	Total managerial or supervisory staff	Women managerial or supervisory staff	Total operational staff	Women operational staff
UNMAS	12	6 (50%)	4	2 (50%)	2	1 (50%)
NPA	70	31 (44%)	27	10 (37%)	54	23 (43%)
HALO	58	19 (33%)	14	5 (36%)	48	14 (29%)
MAG	222	43 (19%)	39	7 (18%)	153	34 (22%)
DCA	35	7 (20%)	4	1 (25%)	31	6 (19%)
HI	254	73 (29%)	29	7 (24%)	6	4 (67%)
SCD*	3,246	419 (13%)	630	88 (14%)	2,616	331 (13%)
Totals	3,897	598 (15%)	747	120 (16%)	2,910	413 (14%)

*Data are from 2023.

In 2024, all HALO Syria staff received safeguarding training on gender and power dynamics, with improved reporting mechanisms to help all staff, especially women and vulnerable groups, feel safe speaking up about abuses.⁵⁵ MAG's senior management held workshops and awareness sessions to strengthen staff and NESMAC understanding of gender, diversity, and practical integration in fieldwork.⁵⁶ HI deployed an Inclusion Technical Specialist based in Amman to support projects across Syria, ensuring interventions are responsive to disability, gender, and age through inclusive case management and technical assistance for local service providers in health, education, livelihoods, and protection.

The specialist also advances HI's "BeInclusive" action plan, highlighting its commitment to inclusive humanitarian action.⁵⁷

In 2025, NPA delivered training to 20 students, half of whom were women, and over the past year has promoted more women than men to team leader positions based on performance. Four NPA staff were trained in Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) data collection, with plans to conduct regular or ad-hoc surveys in operational areas, sharing results with the PSEA coordinator at the OCHA Protection Sector.⁵⁸

48 Email from Adesh Singh, DCA, 16 May 2024.

49 Emails from MAG, 24 May 2021; and Chris Tierney, NPA, 17 June 2024.

50 Email from Francesca Chiaudani, UNMAS, 31 March 2022.

51 Emails from Michael Edwards, SCD, 5 March and 15 June 2022.

52 UNDP, Gender Equality Strategy 2024 – 2026, at: <http://bit.ly/44pJL5D>.

53 Email from Lejla Susic, HI, 2 June 2025.

54 Emails from Adesh Singh, DCA, 6 June 2025; Simon Jackson, HALO, 4 June 2025; Lejla Susic, HI, 2 June 2025; Najat El Hamri, MAG, 3 June 2025; Chris Tierney, NPA, 24 June and 29 July 2025; Joseph McCartan, UNMAS, 25 June 2025; and Sami Mohammad, SCD, 24 May 2024.

55 Email from Simon Jackson, HALO, 4 June 2025.

56 Email from Najat El Hamri, MAG, 3 June 2025.

57 Email from Lejla Susic, HI, 2 June 2025.

58 Email from Chris Tierney, NPA, 24 June 2025.

ENVIRONMENTAL POLICIES AND ACTION

UNMAS's partnerships with implementing partners follow guidelines that include environmental requirements. UNMAS applies the International Mine Action Standard (IMAS) 10.70 on environmental management, and the "do no harm" principle. It also considers the environmental impacts of assessing and removing explosive ordnance, such as the necessary removal of vegetation for operations.⁵⁹

Table 2: Environmental policies, assessments and focal points⁶⁰

Operator	Environmental policy in place for country programme	Environmental assessments conducted to support survey and clearance	Environmental focal point at country-programme level
NPA	Yes	Yes	Yes
HALO	No - SOP	No	No
DCA	No - SOP	Yes	No
HI	No - SOP	Yes	Yes
MAG	No - SOP	Yes	Yes
SCD	No - in development	No	N/R

N/R = Not Reported

In 2024, two female staff from NPA were trained on the Green Field Tool and have translated the accompanying Survey123 form for use in Syria. Training sessions on the tool with programme staff were held in July and August 2025, with implementation of the tool on all projects scheduled thereafter. NPA also signed an MoU with a national NGO, the Athar Organization, to recycle NPA's empty 10-litre plastic water bottles with Athar.⁶¹ DCA began using an environmental assessment tool in its clearance operations in 2024 and planned to adopt the Green Field Tool via Survey123 in 2025.⁶² HI assessed MUNIREM technology in 2024, a chemical neutralisation agent for EOD, as a more environmentally friendly option for disposal but found it impractical in Syria due to the need for specialised equipment

and high water consumption. Instead, HI adopted Dragon Fire, a thermite-based system, which leaves minimal residue, reduces the logistical burden in the field, and meets IMAS and environmental protection principles.⁶³

Operators report considering climate and extreme weather risks during operational planning.⁶⁴ In 2024, DCA delivered risk education sessions in the informal settlement camps of Hweijet Zehra and Al-Khalil, targeting communities displaced by flooding. DCA also accounts for risks such as vegetation fires during dry periods, heat-related health hazards in summer, and reduced accessibility during the rainy season when planning and prioritising survey and clearance.⁶⁵

INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING

In 2025, UNMAS assumed responsibility for coordinating information management across all of Syria. This includes managing existing and incoming data related to survey and clearance.⁶⁶ Until the fall of the Assad regime, IM remained fragmented between the north-west, the north-east, and government-controlled areas, with no data sharing between them. The Information Management Working group led by UNMAS and co-led by NPA have taken on the task of consolidating all data from mine action partners into a centralised Information Management System for Mine Action (IMSMA) database, to which, as at June 2025, most international operators had submitted data on NTS and EO incidents.⁶⁷ To streamline data flow and ensure timely,

standardised reporting, UNMAS has asked each operator to formally designate a dedicated user who will be granted access to submit data directly to the IMSMA server via structured forms or automated scripts (depending on their technical capacity).⁶⁸

The IM TWG meets regularly, both monthly and on an ad-hoc basis, with participation from personnel representing the majority of international mine action implementing partners. Co-chaired by UNMAS and NPA, the TWG seeks to ensure that information is collected, stored, and analysed in a uniform and coordinated manner.⁶⁹

⁵⁹ Email from Hassana Mardam Bey, UNMAS, 19 June 2024.

⁶⁰ Emails from Adesh Singh, DCA, 6 June 2025; Simon Jackson, HALO, 4 June 2025; Lejla Susic, HI, 2 June 2025; Najat El Hamri, MAG, 3 June 2025; Chris Tierney, NPA, 24 June 2025; and Sami Mohammad, SCD, 24 May 2024.

⁶¹ Emails from Chris Tierney, NPA, 24 June and 19 September 2025.

⁶² Email from Adesh Singh, DCA, 6 June 2025.

⁶³ Email from Lejla Susic, HI, 2 June 2025.

⁶⁴ Emails from Adesh Singh, DCA, 6 June 2025; Lejla Susic, HI, 2 June 2025; and Chris Tierney, NPA, 24 June 2025.

⁶⁵ Email from Adesh Singh, DCA, 6 June 2025.

⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁷ Email from Joseph McCartan, UNMAS, 25 June 2025.

⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁹ Emails from Adesh Singh, DCA, 6 June 2025; Lejla Susic, HI, 2 June 2025; Chris Tierney, NPA, 24 June 2025; and Joseph McCartan, UNMAS, 25 June 2025.

PLANNING AND TASKING

Syria does not have a national mine action strategy in place. Operators use their own prioritisation frameworks for clearance.

NPA reported that before December 2024, prioritisation was mainly determined by access permissions and since then, NPA has established its own prioritisation system with priority agricultural areas to support the return of IDPs, strengthen food security, and enable livelihoods activities.⁷⁰ DCA prioritises clearance based on humanitarian impact and urgency of need, focusing first on areas where civilians live amid known or suspected contamination, followed by areas likely to see the return of IDPs, while also considering access to critical infrastructure, livelihoods, and services.⁷¹ As at June 2025, HALO was finalising its clearance prioritisation matrix in coordination with UNMAS and local authorities, using indicators such as type of threat, proximity to residential areas, number of accidents, direct beneficiaries, intended land use, and frequency of EOD

call-outs.⁷² MAG prioritises clearance based on threats to local populations and land needed for agriculture.⁷³ HI's prioritisation framework aligns with the International Mine Action Standards (IMAS) principle of "All Reasonable Effort", and considers humanitarian impact, community engagement, and technical assessments. It collaborates closely with local communities to identify priority areas, such as agricultural lands, schools, and healthcare facilities, in an inclusive manner.⁷⁴

UNMAS uses a structured, needs-driven approach aligned with IMAS, national priorities, and humanitarian principles, coordinating closely with implementing partners. Its criteria include humanitarian impact, severity and type of contamination, support for humanitarian and development access, requests from authorities or communities, and operational feasibility and security. UNMAS also employs evidence-based tools like IMSMA to inform and guide prioritisation decisions.⁷⁵

LAND RELEASE SYSTEM

STANDARDS AND LAND RELEASE EFFICIENCY

There are no formal national mine action standards (NMAS) in Syria. As a result, most of the operators work to their own standard operating procedures (SOPs). HALO has highlighted that the absence of national standards and the lack of requirements for all actors, including local volunteer and military organisations, to follow them results in partially cleared areas that must be treated as uncleared, wasting time and resources.⁷⁶ DCA has also stressed the urgent need to assess and address widespread informal clearance by untrained civilians, which poses a severe risk to life.⁷⁷

HALO updated its NTS SOP in 2024 to address the anticipated scale of contamination following increased access after the Assad regime's collapse. Aligned with IMAS 08.10, the revised SOP includes a more detailed survey form and expanded data analysis procedures to improve clearance planning

and reporting. HALO also slightly amended its mechanical clearance SOP to maintain safety as it expands its mechanical fleet.⁷⁸ DCA began reviewing its manual and mechanical clearance SOPs in 2025 to align with evolving operational contexts, updated technical standards, and best practices, with planned improvements in safety protocols, task planning, equipment use, and environmental integration.⁷⁹ HI updated its risk education and NTS SOPs in April/May 2025, introducing more concise steps to improve operational clarity, IMAS compliance, and field-level efficiency and consistency.⁸⁰ NPA revised its SOPs on NTS, environmental considerations, and quality in line with updated IMAS and to better reflect procedures adapted to the specific context in Syria.⁸¹

OPERATORS AND OPERATIONAL TOOLS

In 2024, SARC, the ICRC, NPA, and UNMAS implementing partner, Safety Solutions, were conducting survey and clearance in Assad-regime controlled areas; SCD and HALO were operating in the north-west; and DCA, HI, ITF, MAG, and Roj Mine Control Organization (RMCO), were operating in the north-east. Prior to the fall of the Assad regime, in areas under the government's control, most survey and clearance had been conducted by Russian and Syrian military engineers and civil defence organisations.⁸² In 2024, the Syrian army conducted clearance in regime-controlled areas, on a limited scale, which included clearance of CMR and other ordnance.⁸³

⁷⁰ Email from Chris Tierney, NPA, 24 June 2025.

⁷¹ Email from Adesh Singh, DCA, 6 June 2025.

⁷² Email from Simon Jackson, HALO, 4 June 2025.

⁷³ Email from Najat El Hamri, MAG, 3 June 2025.

⁷⁴ Email from Lejla Susic, HI, 2 June 2025.

⁷⁵ Email from Joseph McCartan, UNMAS, 25 June 2025.

⁷⁶ Email from Simon Jackson, HALO, 4 June 2025.

⁷⁷ Email from Adesh Singh, DCA, 6 June 2025.

⁷⁸ Email from Simon Jackson, HALO, 4 June 2025.

⁷⁹ Email from Adesh Singh, DCA, 6 June 2025.

⁸⁰ Email from Lejla Susic, HI, 2 June 2025.

⁸¹ Email from Chris Tierney, NPA, 24 June 2025.

⁸² "Russian military boosts qualified Syrian sappers to demine war-ravaged country", *Tass*, 9 January 2018.

⁸³ Email from Chris Tierney, NPA, 17 June 2024.

Table 3: NTS and TS capacities deployed in 2024⁸⁴

Operator	NTS teams	Total NTS personnel	TS teams	Total TS personnel	Comments
RMCO	10	20	0	0	Until the end of January 2024.
DCA	2	6	0	0	
HALO	2	9	0	0	
MAG	10	27	N/A	N/A	NTS and community liaison teams. Clearance teams conduct TS.
HI	28	72	0	0	11 teams totalling 25 personnel were operational until end of January 2024 and 8 teams totalling 19 personnel until end of August 2024.
Safety Solutions	2	6	0	0	
NPA	4	12	N/A	N/A	Clearance teams conduct TS.
SCD*	6	30	0	0	
Totals	64	182	0	0	

*Data are from 2023. N/A = Not applicable

Table 4: Operational clearance capacities deployed in 2024⁸⁵

Operator	Clearance teams	Total deminers*	Mechanical assets/machines	Comments
Safety Solutions	1	4	0	
NPA	4	30	0	
HALO	2	10	2	Two five-strong mechanical clearance teams deployed on AP mined area.
SCD*	6	54	0	
MAG	9	83	10	
DCA	4	27	11	
HI	6	56	0	3 teams totalling 30 personnel were operational until the end of August 2024
Totals	32	264	23	

*Data are from 2023.

UNMAS signed an MoU with the Syrian government in 2018. The following year, UNMAS reported the government had agreed to the involvement of international demining organisations which would be registered by the government and coordinated by UNMAS.⁸⁶ In 2024, prior to the fall of the Assad regime, four organisations were accredited for mine action in government-controlled areas: DRC, NPA, Safety Solutions, and SHIELD.⁸⁷ UNMAS reported no change in capacity from 2023 to 2024 and but expected an increase in capacity during 2025. The planned increase includes deployment of additional NTS teams and Multi-Task Teams (MTTs) which will conduct TS and clearance and provide risk education.⁸⁸

NPA has been operational in Syria since 2022.⁸⁹ NPA reported no change in capacity from 2023 to 2024. A planned training course for searchers was postponed from December 2024 to January 2025. The newly trained searchers will allow staff to be reassigned to form dedicated risk education teams. NPA also plans to increase its capacity in 2025, contingent on funding, and was beginning operations in Homs governorate in July 2025.⁹⁰

84 Emails from Adesh Singh, DCA, 6 June 2025; Simon Jackson, HALO, 4 June 2025; Lejla Susic, HI, 2 June 2025; Najat El Hamri, MAG, 3 June 2025; Chris Tierney, NPA, 24 June 2025; Joseph McCartan, UNMAS, 25 June 2025; and Sami Mohammad, SCD, 24 May 2024.

85 Ibid.

86 Statement by Agnes Marcaillou, Director, UNMAS, to the UN Security Council, 24 October 2019.

87 Email from Hassana Mardam Bey, UNMAS, 19 June 2024.

88 Email from Joseph McCartan, UNMAS, 25 June 2025.

89 Email from Claus Nielsen, Programme Manager, NPA, 12 April 2023.

90 Email from Chris Tierney, NPA, 24 June 2025.

The ICRC works in partnership with SARC and has trained and supported SARC risk education and NTS teams with SARC teams conducting NTS in Aleppo, Damascus, Deir Ezzor, Hama, Homs, and Latakia governorates. ICRC has its own clearance teams, and in 2024 it also initiated spot-task EOD operations.⁹¹

HALO has operated in Syria since 2016. In 2024, given the scale of the programme and the prevailing security situation, HALO cleared a single AP mined area in Idlib governorate. There was no significant change in HALO's survey and clearance capacity in 2024 compared to 2023. As at June 2025, HALO had increased the number of NTS teams from one to three and mechanical clearance teams from two to six. It planned to add a further five NTS teams during the year. In addition, the number of EOD teams has grown from two to five, with a further seven expected to be deployed by the end of 2025. HALO was restarting operations in Daraa and beginning operations in Deir ez-Zor in July 2025. Subject to funding, it also plans to expand into Rural Damascus and Latakia.⁹²

SCD has been operational in Syria since 2013. In June 2025, SCD announced it will become fully integrated into the Syria government with its emergency response capacity transferred to the Ministry of Emergency and Disaster Management.⁹³ In 2024, SCD was operational in 33 sub-districts of Idlib, Aleppo, and Hama governorates providing NTS and single-item disposal via remote-controlled open burning.⁹⁴ The SCD intended to increase its survey and clearance capacity from six to eleven teams in 2025.⁹⁵

DCA has been operational in north-east Syria since 2015. In 2024, it prioritised survey and clearance operations across multiple locations in Raqqqa governorate. In early 2024, it conducted survey and clearance on three public infrastructure sites. Following clearance, the sites were rehabilitated by DCA's Shelter team and handed over to local authorities and communities for use. After a reduction in clearance teams from 2023 to 2024 following the conclusion of a major grant, an increase in the number of NTS and clearance personnel was expected in 2025. This planned scale-up supports DCA's strategy to expand mine action operations into new areas, including Aleppo, Deir ez-Zor, and Rural Damascus.

Under the Syria Mine Action and Livelihood Outcome-Based Pilot Project funded by the FCDO, a "Nexus" approach will be implemented in 2025. This will integrate mine action, shelter rehabilitation, and livelihood components in targeted areas. In the countryside, clearance will enable safe access to agricultural land. The livelihood component will include agro-ecology training, distribution of agricultural inputs and irrigation kits, and the construction of greenhouses, designed to promote food security and enhance resilience among rural communities affected by EO. In urban settings, contaminated public infrastructure, particularly schools, will be cleared of ordnance, with rubble safely removed and managed. Following clearance, the shelter team will rehabilitate the schools, while

the livelihood team will provide on-the-job apprenticeship training to community members (of mixed gender) in masonry, carpentry, plumbing, painting, and electrical work. In preparation for this expansion, DCA has initiated the registration process with the Syrian MoFA and has established an office in Damascus. As of June 2025, DCA was working to set up a mine action base and recruit survey and clearance personnel, with an initial focus on clearance in Rural Damascus and the surrounding areas.⁹⁶

A local organisation, RMCO, established in 2016, was conducting clearance in the north-east but sustained heavy casualties among its deminers attempting to clear improvised devices.⁹⁷ In 2023, RMCO partnered with DCA for NTS in hard-to-reach areas and this project concluded at the end of January 2024.⁹⁸

HI has been present in Syria since 2012. In 2024, it conducted survey, clearance, and EOD in Raqqqa, including clearance of the riverbed of the Euphrates, which enabled the reopening of the Al-Rashid bridge, improving connectivity between Raqqqa and the surrounding regions. HI increased its survey and clearance capacity by 12 personnel in 2024. Plans to expand the programme further in 2025 depended on securing adequate funding. In 2025, HI began clearance at three schools in Deir ez-Zor. In north-west Syria, HI is delivering EORE in Idlib and Aleppo governorates and training its staff and those from SCD in NTS.⁹⁹

MAG has been operational in north-east Syria since 2016. In 2024, MAG conducted survey and clearance in Raqqqa, Deir ez-Zor, Kisreh, Al Ajil, Hasakah-Markada, Shadaddi, Tal Tamr, and Elwet Eldisheisha. There was no change in operational capacity compared to 2023. In 2025, newly liberated areas with heavy contamination, including locations in southern Raqqqa, Deir ez-Zor governorate, and western Syria, will require an expansion in its operations. MAG has secured new grants to support activities in these areas and expected to receive additional funding. As a result, the number of personnel was expected to increase across the country.¹⁰⁰

ITF has operated in north-east Syria since 2020. From January 2023 to January 2024, ITF deployed 10 NTS teams as part of a consortium with 3iSolution, DCA, and HI to conduct survey of all accessible explosive ordnance-contaminated areas in north-east Syria. From August 2023 to October 2024, under the "Clear then Grow Phase III" project supported by the French and Slovenian Ministries of Foreign and European Affairs, ITF surveyed and cleared former agricultural land and infrastructure contaminated with explosive ordnance in IS-liberated areas, also providing risk education. ITF also provided capacity-building support to its local partner, Reachout, conducting training on IMAS, international donor expectations and project management; developed SOPs and organisational policies; and provided guidance on best practices, including financial management.¹⁰¹

91 ICRC, "ICRC in Syria, A Year in Review: 2024", at: <https://bit.ly/401D9Jl>, p. 8.

92 Email from Simon Jackson, HALO, 4 June 2025.

93 SCD, Statement on the Integration of the Syria Civil Defence (The White Helmets) into the Syrian Government, 2 June 2025, at: <http://bit.ly/3J8f5Qd>.

94 Email from Sami Mohammad, SCD, 24 May 2024.

95 The White Helmets website (Arabic), accessed on 4 August 2025, at: <https://bit.ly/4fks3Wl>.

96 Email from Adesh Singh, DCA, 6 June 2025.

97 S. Kajjo, "Landmine removal crucial in post-IS Syria", *Voice of America*, 3 April 2019; and interview with operators, Erbil, Iraq, May 2019.

98 Emails from Kevin Straker, DCA, 15 March and 28 June 2023; and Adesh Singh, DCA, 6 June 2025.

99 Email from Lejla Susic, HI, 2 June 2025.

100 Email from Najat El Hamri, MAG, 3 June 2025.

101 ITF, 2024 Annual Report, at: <https://bit.ly/4m0FJbd>, pp. 105-10.

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND PROGRESS TOWARDS COMPLETION

Table 5: Summary of land release outputs in 2024

Release of AP mined area	Release in 2024 (m ²)	Comments
Clearance	3,606,311	Operator data
Technical survey	613,873	Operator data
Non-technical survey	24,929	Operator data
Destruction of AP mines during clearance, survey, and spot tasks		2024
AP mines destroyed	84 (including 28 in spot tasks)	Operator data

SURVEY IN 2024

In 2024, DCA cancelled seven areas through NTS in Raqqa totalling 24,929m².¹⁰² This is a decrease from the 2.47km² across 27 areas cancelled through NTS by DCA in Raqqa in 2023.¹⁰³ No area was cancelled through NTS by MAG, HALO, NPA or HI in 2024 or 2023.

In 2024, a total of 613,873m² of AP mined area across 32 areas was reduced through technical survey (TS) in Hassakeh and Raqqa by MAG and HI (see Table 6). This is a decrease from the 1.9km² across 20 hazardous areas reduced through TS by MAG in 2023.¹⁰⁴ DCA, HALO and NPA did not reduce any AP mined area through TS in 2023 or 2024.

Table 6: Technical survey of AP mined area in 2024¹⁰⁵

Governorate	Operator	Areas reduced	Area reduced through TS (m ²)
Hassakeh	MAG	17	407,632
Raqqa	MAG	8	60,000
Raqqa	HI	7	146,241
Totals		32	613,873

CLEARANCE IN 2024

In 2024, a total of more than 3.6km² was cleared across 68 areas in Idleb, Hassakeh, Raqqa and Raqqa with the destruction of 56 AP mines (see Table 7).¹⁰⁶ This is an increase from the 3.1km² of reported mine clearance in 2023 with the destruction of 54 AP mines.¹⁰⁷

In addition, a total of 28 AP mines and 24 anti-vehicle (AV) mines were destroyed during spot tasks by DCA, HALO, MAG and UNMAS/Safety Solutions.¹⁰⁸ Of the 19 AP mines found and destroyed by DCA in 2024, 18 were of an improvised nature.¹⁰⁹ Of the 12 mines destroyed by UNMAS/Safety Solutions, 3 were improvised.¹¹⁰ All 47 AP mines destroyed by MAG were improvised.¹¹¹

Table 7: Mine clearance in 2024¹¹²

Governorate	Operator	Areas cleared	Area cleared (m ²)	AP mines destroyed	AV mines destroyed	UXO destroyed
Idleb	HALO	1	62,265	0	0	12
Hassakeh	MAG	48	2,376,448	45	2	61
Raqqa	MAG	8	1,038,877	1	3	1,745
Raqqa	DCA	6	12,201	10	0	345
Raqqa	HI	5	116,520	0	0	95
Totals		68	3,606,311	56	5	2,258

102 Email from Adesh Singh, DCA, 6 June 2025.

103 Email from Adesh Singh, DCA, 16 May 2024.

104 Email from Riaan Boshoff, MAG, 21 May 2024.

105 Emails from Najat El Hamri, MAG, 3 June 2025 and Lejla Susic, HI, 2 June 2025.

106 Emails from Simon Jackson, HALO, 4 June 2025; Najat El Hamri, MAG, 3 June 2025; Adesh Singh, DCA, 6 June 2025; and Lejla Susic, HI, 2 June 2025.

107 Emails from Riaan Boshoff, MAG, 21 May 2024; Damian O'Brien, HALO, 27 May 2024; and Adesh Singh, DCA, 16 May 2024.

108 Emails from Adesh Singh, DCA, 6 June 2025; Simon Jackson, HALO, 4 June 2025; Najat El Hamri, MAG, 3 June 2025; and Joseph McCartan, UNMAS, 25 June 2025.

109 Email from Adesh Singh, DCA, 6 June 2025.

110 Email from Joseph McCartan, UNMAS, 25 June 2025.

111 Email from Najat El Hamri, MAG, 3 June 2025.

112 Emails from Simon Jackson, HALO, 4 June 2025; Najat El Hamri, MAG, 3 June 2025; Adesh Singh, DCA, 6 June 2025; and Lejla Susic, HI, 2 June 2025.

PROGRESS TOWARDS COMPLETION

Syria is not yet a State Party to the APMB, nonetheless, it has obligations under international human rights law to clear AP mines from its territory as soon as possible. NPA reported conducting quarterly advocacy meetings with the national mine action committee of the former Assad regime to encourage Syria to join both the APMB and the Convention on Cluster Munitions (CCM). NPA has continued this advocacy with the interim government through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates, the Ministry of Interior, and the Ministry of Finance. These efforts have been framed as a means to reintegrate Syria into the international community, enable funding from other States Parties, and demonstrate that the interim government prioritises the well-being of the Syrian people. On 22 June 2025, during a meeting on the national disaster plan, the Minister for Emergency Services and Disaster Management announced that the government is considering acceding to the APMB, with a decision expected in the coming months.¹¹³

In 2024, until the fall of the Assad regime in December, survey and clearance in Syria remained divided across three main regions as described above. Overall land release output fell from 2023 to 2024 due to the lack of survey, although clearance output increased. An overall rise in survey and clearance capacity was expected in 2025, with operators planning to deploy additional teams. However, this expected increase will not be sufficient to meet expanding demand in newly accessible areas following the change of regime unless funding significantly increases, with a dramatic rise in the number of incidents from EO especially on agricultural and grazing land. Population movements into newly accessible areas combined with high-risk civilian behaviours, such as informal clearance for cash, further compound the challenge.

Funding remains a critical constraint with HALO reporting a lack of long-term, sustainable funding and the absence of multi-year contracts, while NPA notes that mine action continues to receive low funding priority despite the manifest humanitarian need. In 2025, UNMAS was prioritising a baseline survey of accessible areas across Syria to improve understanding of contamination, including from AP mines,

which will support the development of a nationwide prioritisation process. However, coordination challenges remain with HALO reporting the absence of shared data from other mine action and non-mine action actors while HI highlights the lack of formal recognition and limited capacity of NESMAC with no direct relationship with UNMAS due to political sensitivities. HALO has also raised concerns about the absence of enforced national standards, leading to inconsistent clearance quality and the need to re-clear partially cleared areas.

The interim government of Syria is still building its institutional capacity and does not yet have a formally mandated national mine action authority or mine action centre to manage mine action. UNMAS is providing capacity support to the Minister for Emergency Services and Disaster Management. Nevertheless, NPA reports significant regulatory and administrative challenges, including centralised and understaffed registration and licensing processes in Damascus; frequently changing visa policies; sanctions that restrict direct or indirect support to the interim government; and retrospective customs reviews of previously imported goods.

The security situation in Syria remains fractured and volatile with Kurdish-led Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) maintaining control over the north-east; foreign militaries, notably Turkish troops still holding parts of the north-west; regular Israeli strikes on Syrian military positions; and sporadic attacks from Islamic State.¹¹⁴ In 2024, NPA reported the loss of equipment, including a large-loop detector on loan to the national mine action committee that was stolen during the looting of its building; a 20-foot shipping container used as a temporary ammunition store stolen from Yarmouk; and team uniforms stolen while awaiting clearance at the Lebanese border with Syria.¹¹⁵ In 2025, three SCD volunteers were killed by a remotely detonated device during EOD operations in eastern Hama. Initial observations raise serious concerns that the team may have been deliberately targeted by individuals monitoring the site.¹¹⁶

113 Email from Chris Tierney, NPA, 24 June 2025.

114 Council on Foreign Relations, Global Conflict Tracker, Conflict in Syria, accessed 5 July 2025, at: <https://bit.ly/3Gv2Knk>.

115 Email from Chris Tierney, NPA, 24 June 2025.

116 SCD, Statement by the Syria Civil Defence (White Helmets) on the killing of three volunteers from the UXO removal team in Hama Countryside, 22 May 2025, at: <http://bit.ly/407TBl6>.