SYRIA

KEY DATA

NO APMBC ARTICLE 5 DEADLINE:

State not party to the APMBC

AP MINE CONTAMINATION:

Unknown, but heavy

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS

Release of AP mined area	Release in 2025 (km²)*	Release in 2024 (km²)
Clearance	1.93	3.61
Technical Survey	3.52	0.61
Non-Technical Survey	0.09	0.02

Destruction of AP mines during clearance, survey, and spot tasks	2025	2024
AP Mines destroyed	1,521 (incl. 41 in spot tasks)	84 (incl. 28 in spot tasks)

* According to operator reporting, 4.93km² was cleared and 0.52km² was reduced through TS in 2025. Mine Action Review revised these figures to 1.93km² cleared and 3.52km² reduced given the extremely large clearance output in one governorate with only a very small number of AP mines destroyed. See 'Land Release Outputs and Progress Towards Completion' section for more information.

MAIN AP MINE SURVEY AND CLEARANCE OPERATORS IN 2025:

- DanChurchAid (DCA)
- Danish Refugee Council (DRC)
- The HALO Trust
- Humanity & Inclusion (HI)
- The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)
- Reachout (in partnership with ITF Enhancing Human Security [ITF])
- Mines Advisory Group (MAG)
- Norwegian People's Aid (NPA)
- Roj Mine Control Organisation (RMCO)
- Safety Solutions
- The Syrian Army Engineering Unit

KEY DEVELOPMENTS

The fall of the Assad regime in December 2024 enabled a shift towards country-wide mine action coordination, including the establishment of the Syria National Mine Action Centre (SNMAC) and work towards establishing a centralised database, national standards, and a mine action strategy. Land release outputs and the number of anti-personnel (AP) mines destroyed increased in 2025, but Syria still lacks a national contamination baseline. Despite intermittent suspensions of activities due to insecurity and the need to comply with new registration requirements, operators reported an overall expansion of capacities and outreach, and access generally improved across the country. The difficulties in importing demolition explosives and some technical equipment are a major hurdle to safe and effective clearance.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

- **Syria should accede to the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC) as a matter of priority.**
- **Syria should continue to build the capacity of the newly established SNMAC, so that it can ensure effective coordination, tasking, and accreditation.**
- **Syria should establish and adhere to safety standards for its demining personnel, including its military engineering units, civil defence, and volunteers. Demining incidents should be investigated, and lessons learned documented and used as improvement instruments.**

- **Syria should establish a reliable national baseline of anti-personnel (AP) mines, including through systematic survey of newly accessible areas and areas affected by recent fighting.**
- **Syria should continue efforts to consolidate data in one centralised database, and improve data quality and sharing.**
- **Syria should continue efforts to finalise and adopt the mine action strategy, and develop an accompanying implementation plan.**
- **Syria should continue efforts to finalise and adopt national mine action standards (NMAS) in consultation with operators and ensure their application across all survey and clearance activities.**
- **Syria should establish clear procedures and fast-track operators' registration, accreditation, tasking, and approval processes to enable a more efficient deployment.**
- **Syria should remove obstacles to the importation of mine action equipment and assets, including access to and the authorised use of demolition explosives.**
- **Donors should provide flexible and sustainable funding for mine action in Syria, and consider more direct support to operators to strengthen autonomy and cut through the administrative burdens.**

AP MINE SURVEY AND CLEARANCE CAPACITY

MANAGEMENT CAPACITY

- The Syria National Mine Action Centre (SNMAC)
- Ministry for Emergency and Disaster Management
- The Syrian Army Engineering Unit

NATIONAL OPERATORS

- Syrian Arab Red Crescent (SARC)
- Civil Defence (SCD) (also called the White Helmets, now integrated in the Ministry for Emergency and Disaster Management)
- Roj Mine Control Organization (RMCO)
- SafeLand Organisation
- Reachout

INTERNATIONAL OPERATORS

- DanChurchAid (DCA)
- Danish Refugee Council (DRC)
- The HALO Trust (HALO)
- Humanity & Inclusion (HI)
- Mines Advisory Group (MAG)
- Norwegian People's Aid (NPA)
- Safety Solutions.
- ITF Enhancing Human Security (ITF)

OTHER ACTORS

- Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD)
- International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)
- United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS)

UNDERSTANDING OF AP MINE CONTAMINATION

There is no established baseline of AP mine contamination in Syria, but the country is heavily contaminated, including by mines of an improvised nature. Hundreds of kilometres-long earth barriers and trench systems along former frontlines in the north-west of the country are heavily mined. The Syrian Arab News Agency (SANA), the official government agency, estimated these lines to extend to about 200km.[1] All parties to the conflict and controlling forces have used landmines during the 14-year-old conflict.[2] Syria also has legacy mined areas left by a succession of Arab-Israeli wars since 1948.

SANA reported that the Kurdish-led Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) left mines, improvised devices, and booby-traps during withdrawals of their locations in Ashrafieh, Manbij, and Sheikh Maqsoud neighbourhoods of Aleppo city in 2025 and early 2026. Syrian officials accused SDF of having rigged doors, corridors, tunnels, household furniture, and vehicles, and of hiding explosives in rocks, bricks, and other everyday objects. SANA said the SDF had also laid mines around the Tishrin Dam and Qara Qozak before withdrawing from locations. Civilian deaths were subsequently extensively reported in houses and on access routes. Associated Press journalists saw first responders disarming improvised mines during a government-organised visit.[3]

On 27 October 2025, media sources reported that Israeli forces laid AP mines around a newly established post in the Jubata al-Khashab reserve (Quneitra governorate). The mines were said to be confined to the perimeter of the military position.[4] In May 2025, the SDF said that it

1 HALO, Syria page, accessed 19 August 2026, https://shorturl.at/6YU9G; and "Launching of mines and UXO project in affected areas in Syria" (in Arabic), *Syrian Arab News Agency (SANA),* 14 May 2026, https://shorturl.at/WC0Aq.

2 Syrian Network for Human Rights, "Maps of the Most Prominent Areas Contaminated by Landmines in Syria, and Recommendations to Address This Issue", 31 December 2024, https://tinyurl.com/yyxr4huz.

3 "First responders enter devastated Aleppo neighbourhood after days of deadly fighting", *AP News*, 11 January 2026, https://shorturl.at/cLREc; "Interior ministry engineers neutralize explosives, drones in Aleppo", *SANA*, 11 January 2026, https://shorturl.at/CA3Pv; and "Syrian Army warns civilians to avoid former SDF sites, citing explosive dangers", *SANA*, 21 January 2026, https://shorturl.at/Z08qW.

4 "Israeli occupation forces planted mines in Quneitra: Syria's Al-Ikhbariah", *Ahramonline*, 27 October 2025, https://tinyurl.com/yrkdm^{2}2m; and "Israeli army plants landmines around military post in Quneitra, southern Syria", *Enab Baladi*, 27 October 2025, https://tinyurl.com/zvcstax8.

detained an Islamic State member carrying a landmine while attempting to lay it on the Hajin Road (Deir Ezzor governorate). Other allegations made by the SDF during the same period of use of landmines by Islamic State do not identify the mine types, but the nature of incidents indicates that they were most likely anti-vehicle (AV) mines.[5] A Human Rights Watch report in 2016 documented widespread use of victim-activated improvised explosive devices (IEDs) that meet the definition of AP mines by Islamic State in Manbij (Aleppo governorate). Devices were left in homes, schools, and streets. In Raqqa, Human Rights Watch documented hundreds of victim-activated IED casualties after ISIS's withdrawal from the city in 2018.[6]

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.[7] 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).[8]

For more information on use, please see the country profile on Syria on the *Landmine and Cluster Munition Monitor* website.[9]

No comprehensive countrywide survey of contamination has yet been conducted in Syria. Prior to the fall of the Assad regime in December 2024, such a survey was not feasible.[10] A non-technical survey (NTS) covering the north-east of Syria was completed by the end of 2024 but has to be redone due to renewed fighting and floods that have impacted the region subsequently.[11]

The contamination in Syria is both extensive and exceptionally complex, resulting from successive conflicts involving multiple armed actors. Operators are encountering a wide range of unexploded ordnance (UXO), conventional AP and AV mines, and IEDs, including victim-activated IEDs. These are often mixed and laid in a haphazard or semi-haphazard manner, or buried under rubble, making detection and disposal of threats particularly difficult. In urban areas, such as in Jobar neighbourhood in the capital Damascus, explosive devices are sometimes found inside houses, behind doors, and inside cupboards, and the risks are often compounded with trip-wired IEDs and booby-traps.[12]

The Mine Action Area of Responsibility (Mine Action AoR), using data sourced from the International NGO Safety Organisation (INSO), recorded 268 explosive ordnance-related incidents between March and July 2026, resulting in the death of 130 people and injury of 322.[13] Children accounted for nearly a third of the recorded casualties, while men constituted half. Approximately two thirds of explosive ordnance-related incidents occur in agricultural lands and grazing areas.[14] Syria recorded the highest number of casualties globally in 2025, with annual casualties more than double the second-highest ranking country, Myanmar.[15] For more information on casualties, please see the country profile on Syria on the *Landmine and Cluster Munition Monitor* website.[16]

Informal clearance by civilians remains a serious concern in Syria, particularly in areas where communities live close to contamination and formal clearance is limited. DanChurchAid (DCA) noted that informal handling of explosive ordnance by civilians, a common practice in the Syrian context, is driving up casualties and causing secondary contamination. Civilians often move or hand over found objects to armed actors. The ordnance is then stored outside the appropriate disposal systems, or sometimes circulated or even repurposed.[17]

Danish Refugee Council (DRC) has also noted a pattern of placing UXO in agricultural irrigation channels in Rural Damascus, and as at September 2026, was conducting systematic survey and clearance of these areas.[18] The difficulties in accessing authorised demolition explosives have added another layer of danger to civilians, and led mine action operators to rely on ad hoc measures to dispose of threats that are too unstable to move. At times, operators may mark the hazard, inform nearby residents about the risks, and refer the item to local authorities for disposal. Meanwhile, civilians unwilling or unable to wait, attempt to move, detonate, or hand over the items to non-specialised persons or armed groups. Incidents resulting from such handling are extensively reported by humanitarian organisations and media outlets.[19]

5 SDF Press Centre, Our Forces Foiled an ISIS Bombing Attempt, Eliminated One Terrorist, 27 May 2025, https://tinyurl.com/sr3aup8b; "ISIS claims deadly attack on Asayish patrol in NE Syria", 2 June 2025, https://tinyurl.com/283abwdk; and Syrian Observatory of Human Rights (SOHR), "Bloody attack | Six members of SDF killed and injured in ISIS attack in Deir Ezzor countryside", 25 September 2025, https://tinyurl.com/mrxhtrk6; and SOHR, "Deir Ezzor | Member of "SDF" killed in attack by ISIS cells on military vehicle", 20 October 2025, https://tinyurl.com/5je7dfvs.

6 Human Rights Watch, "Syria: Improvised Mines Kill, Injure Hundreds in Manbij", 26 October 2016, https://tinyurl.com/y2emyd8v; and "Syria: Landmines Kill, Injure Hundreds in Raqqa", 12 February 2018, https://tinyurl.com/56p5e24p.

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

8 Physicians for Human Rights and the Syrian American Medical Society, "Madaya: Portrait of a Syrian town under siege", July 2016, 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, https://bit.ly/3ZsrmV0; and Syrian Association for Citizens Dignity, "The displacement of Madaya and Zabadani, the complex crime and prospect of return" (in Arabic), 5 May 2021, https://bit.ly/3XKV0na.

9 https://the-monitor.org.

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

11 Online interview with Aida Burnett-Cargill, Humanitarian Mine Action Co-coordinator, Mine Action AoR, 10 April 2026.

12 Presentation by Fadi Al-Saleh, Director, Syria Mine Action Centre (SNMAC), Geneva, 22 June 2026.

13 Mine Action AoR, Syria Mine Action AoR Situation Update No. 8 (March–July 2026), p. 4.

14 OCHA, "Syrian Arab Republic: 2026 Humanitarian Needs and Response Plan", Issue of April 2026, p. 10; and presentation by Basil Diri, Minister of Agriculture, Geneva, 23 June 2026.

15 *Landmine and Cluster Munition Monitor*, Preliminary Global Casualty Data for 2025, June 2026, https://shorturl.at/8sBNL.

16 https://the-monitor.org.

17 Emails from Julian Cooney, Operations Manager, DCA, 7 and 12 June 2026.

18 Emails from Jakub Walenda, DRC, 7 May and 31 August 2026.

19 Human Rights Watch, "Syria: Landmines, Explosive Remnants Harming Civilians", 8 April 2025, https://shorturl.at/577FT; "Seven Civilians Killed in Syria UXO Blast, Says War Monitor", *Al-Sharq Al-Awsat*, 20 February 2025, https://shorturl.at/LqEyp; "Syria: Two War Remnant Blasts Kill Four in Raqqa", *Enab Baladi*, 4 April 2026, https://shorturl.at/NNI2p; UNICEF, "Children in Syria remain at deadly risk from explosive remnants of war", 4 April 2026, https://shorturl.at/kQUMI; and "Victims in two unknown explosions in Idlib", (in Arabic), *Enab Baladi*, 14 August 2025.

A total of at least 20.32km^2 of new AP mine contamination was recorded in Syria in 2025. Of this, The HALO Trust (HALO) identified 11.62km^2 in Aleppo, Daraa, Deir Ezzor, and Idleb governorates,[20] and Mines Advisory Group (MAG) identified a legacy minefield covering 8.7km^2 in Raqqa governorate. Of the 1,422 AP mines found and destroyed by MAG in 2025, 84 were of an improvised nature.[21]

OTHER EXPLOSIVE ORDNANCE CONTAMINATION

Syria also has significant contamination from cluster munition remnants (CMR) and other explosive remnants of war (ERW) (see Mine Action Review's *Clearing Cluster Munition Remnants 2026* report on Syria for further information).

NATIONAL OWNERSHIP AND PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

Prior to the overthrow of the Assad regime, there was no national mine action centre or authority in Syria. 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.[22] Since then, Syria has stated on several occasions its intent to transition to a nationally-managed mine action programme and announced a roadmap to establish a national mine action centre, with strong backing from the international community.[23]

In August 2025, Syria established SNMAC (the Syria National Mine Action Centre) under the Ministry of Emergency and Disaster Management.[24] In March 2026, the Presidential General Secretariat directed all mine action stakeholders to collaborate with SNMAC as a central coordination body. While SNMAC is already set up, a formal decree on its establishment has not yet been issued.[25] The Damascus-based centre has not yet been able to assume the functions of a fully operational national mine action centre. In the meantime, the United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS) continues to facilitate the coordination of mine action and support capacity development of SNMAC.

SNMAC has established regular contact with the North-East National Mine Action Centre (NESMAC), with discussions under way on the integration of NESMAC personnel into the SNMAC workforce. SNMAC, however, does not have the funds to pay the salaries for this integration. Discussions are also ongoing on consolidation of NESMAC's database into the national database being developed.[26] SNMAC runs on a limited capacity of seven staff members,[27] and has been prioritising emergency response and urgent coordination, but the centre is slowly moving towards a role of strategic planning and partnership.[28]

In May 2026, UNMAS completed an assessment of SNMAC's institutional and operational capacities. The assessment identified potential areas of support in the areas of institutional structure and operational capacity.[29]

Before the overthrow of the Assad regime in December 2024, mine action in Syria was split across political control lines and coordinated through three response mechanisms: in then government-controlled Damascus, and the north-east and north-west, which were outside government control. By 2025, this partition began to slowly shift towards a countrywide approach. UNMAS assumed the lead for mine action coordination through the Mine Action AoR and five technical working groups (TWGs) covering survey and clearance, information management, advocacy, victim assistance, and risk education.[30]

The Mine Action AoR operates under the Global Protection Cluster, with UNMAS as the cluster lead agency and with a co-coordinator hosted by Humanity & Inclusion (HI). In 2025, it coordinated the activities of 25 partners implementing a range of mine action programmes nationwide.[31] Following delays in recruiting information management (IM) capacities, the Mine Action AoR coordination team received adequate IM support in 2025. Following an interim period, UNMAS deployed a permanent Mine Action AoR coordinator in September 2026.[32]

NESMAC, which coordinated mine action in that region until December 2024, continues to support local coordination functions in the north-east while operators are also part of the nationwide Mine Action AoR.[33] At the request of the Syrian authorities, UNMAS has not established formal relations with NESMAC and is awaiting a political decision on the future structure of the SNMAC and its relationship with NESMAC.[34]

In January 2026, the Syrian government forces led a military offensive against SDF-held areas, seizing swathes of northern and eastern Syria, and pushing the SDF to the east of the River Euphrates. On 29 January 2026, Damascus

20 Email from Simon Jackson, Programme Manager, HALO, 20 May 2026.
21 Email from Steven Warner, MAG, 16 April 2026.
22 UNMAS, UNMAS Syria and the Syrian Minister of Emergency and Disaster Management Discuss Future Cooperation on Mine Action, 15 May 2025; and email from Joseph McCartan, UNMAS, 25 June 2025.
23 "The Ministry of Emergency and Disaster sets a roadmap to launch a national mine action centre", Al-*Ikhbariah*, 25 June 2025.
24 Email from Joseph McCartan, UNMAS, 25 June 2025.
25 Interview with Mohamed Rashid, Deputy Director of [the Syrian] National Center for Operations, in Geneva, 15 June 2026.
26 Interview with Mohamed Rashid, SNMAC, in Geneva, 15 June 2026.
27 HALO, "Surviving the war, dying in peace", 23 March 2026, https://shorturl.at/dsVNg.
28 Intervention by Fadi Al-Saleh, SNMAC, in Geneva, 22 June 2026.
29 Emails from Joseph McCartan, UNMAS, 25 June 2025 and 21 May 2026; and Hassana Mardam Bey, UNMAS, 1 September 2026.
30 Emails from Joseph McCartan, UNMAS, 21 May 2026; Roger Eid, Chief of Operations, HI, 27 April 2026; and Steven Warner, MAG, 16 April 2026.
31 Emails from Joseph McCartan, UNMAS, 25 June 2025 and 21 May 2026; and Mine Action AoR, "Syria Mine Action AoR – 2025: A Year in Review", 8 December 2025, p. 2.
32 Email from Joseph McCartan, UNMAS, 21 May 2026.
33 Email from Steven Warner, MAG, 16 April 2026.
34 Email from Joseph McCartan, UNMAS, 21 May 2026.

government and Kurdish-led forces agreed a ceasefire according to which the government took control over much of the north-east.[35] Consequently, most mine action operators in the north-east suspended operations for several months, with resumption dependent on issuing a registration from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA) in Damascus. The change of security and control dynamics also meant that field activities in the north-east required closer coordination and careful review before each deployment. At times, activities were delayed or put on hold due to uncertainty about security permissions or local authorities' requirements.[36]

The operating environment for mine action in Syria has steadily improved. Operators reported easier access to the country, broader movement permissions, and a gradual clarification of administrative procedures. HALO described the environment as generally conducive to mine action, noting that procedures for obtaining visas and importing equipment were improving. HALO's international staff were now being granted six-month multiple-entry visas, while MAG reported that processes relating to visas, registration, and access had become clearer and more streamlined, including through the issuance of MoFA visas and the completion of NGO registration in April 2026. This has allowed MAG to expand operations while ensuring compliance with tax and importation requirements. HI also noted that a MoFA procedural guide, issued in January 2026, sets out the requirements for international NGOs to apply for entry visas, residence permits, or renewals for foreign staff, experts, and visitors. The establishment of the SNMAC has also contributed to the emergence of a more unified coordination framework, with authorities showing greater receptiveness to mine action and its role in supporting early recovery.[37]

Yet, as Syria passes through a complex and a transitional period, numerous challenges persist. In addition to the insecurity that ensued fighting in the north-east, a number of security incidents, particularly in Sweida governorate, have led to operations being suspended from time to time. In government-controlled areas, NGO registrations remained restrictive and administratively burdensome, while coordination between local, regional, and national stakeholders is still developing, at times creating overlapping roles or procedural uncertainty. DCA reported that despite the SNMAC being supportive, the bureaucratic impediments from MoFA, in particular related to registrations and project approvals, cause delays. Issues are also emerging around forced conversion of foreign currency by the Central Bank of Syria, posing substantial financial risk to donors and NGOs.[38]

For HALO, the process of NGO registration has been a significant hurdle. The importation of demining equipment is also complicated by sanctions, concerns over compliance with those sanctions, and by approval requirements. HALO did report some improvements in importation, which included permission to import Minelab and Ebinger LLD detectors, drones, and other demining equipment.[39]

HI noted that previous imports had been conducted through the Kurdistan Region of Iraq, and that importation through official crossing points had yet to begin. Although there are plans to start using official crossing points, the process risked taking around two months.[40] In Raqqa and Deir Ezzor governorates, currently controlled by the SDF, HI was able to conduct operations effectively with a high level of coordination with NESMAC. Yet, some coordination challenges emerged, mostly due to security. HI also reported that NESMAC suspended operations on multiple occasions as a result of Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)-related requirements with operators, and imposed heightened rules which, in some cases, contravened humanitarian principles.[41] DCA faced challenges in importing industrial-grade explosives and insurance and registration of vehicles in Damascus.[42]

The difficulties in importing demolition explosives into Syria are often caused by the origin countries. Suppliers from the United Kingdom (UK) and Germany are reluctant to provide items over concerns of perceived risks of sanctions compliance. SNMAC, with the support of the Minister of Emergency and Disaster Management, is engaging with the ambassadors of the source countries to try to unblock shipments. As a workaround, alternative disposal tools such as T-jets and Dragon Lances are being delivered to Türkiye, but these too have been held up by the Turkish customs due to their sensitivity. Other restrictions stem from requirements imposed by the Syrian authorities. Global Clearance Solutions (GCS), a commercial clearance company, has reportedly faced delays in importing machinery into Syria after the government sought a condition that the equipment be handed over to the state following the first two years of use.[43] SNMAC subsequently clarified that this requirement was case-specific, as the equipment had been purchased through a grant intended for the Syrian State, with ownership to be transferred to the State after two years of use.[44]

Mine Action AoR coordination meetings were held twice monthly, with one meeting online and one in hybrid format to accommodate partners across different hubs in Damascus, Amman, Gaziantep, and north-east Syria. The TWGs on victim assistance, risk education, survey and clearance, and information management continued to meet monthly, while the Advocacy TWG, which previously met twice per month, met more often during the transition period in early 2025. There was occasional attendance in coordination meetings by representatives of the SNMAC.[45]

In addition to hosting the co-coordinator of the Damascus-based Mine Action AoR, since August 2025, HI has also led coordination efforts in Deir Ezzor through the appointment of an impartial sub-national mine action coordinator. A TWG was also

35 "Damascus brings more of Syria under its control as US policy shifts", *Reuters*, 22 January 2026, https://shorturl.at/rDBdc; and "Syria's Kurdish-led force and the Damascus government reach a new agreement to stabilize ceasefire", *AP News*, 30 January 2026, https://shorturl.at/FRhWi.

36 Email from Julian Cooney, DCA, 7 June 2026.

37 Emails from Simon Jackson, HALO, 20 May 2026; Roger Eid, HI, 27 April 2026; Steven Warner, MAG, 16 April 2026; and Joseph McCartan, UNMAS, 21 May 2026.

38 Email from Julian Cooney, DCA, 7 June 2026.

39 Email from Simon Jackson, HALO, 20 May 2026.

40 Emails from Julian Cooney, DCA, 7 June 2026; Simon Jackson, HALO, 20 May 2026; Roger Eid, HI, 27 April 2026; Steven Warner, MAG, 16 April 2026; and Joseph McCartan, UNMAS, 21 May 2026.

41 Email from Roger Eid, HI, 27 April 2026.

42 Email from Julian Cooney, DCA, 7 June 2026.

43 Interview with Aida Burnett-Cargill, Mine Action AoR, Geneva, 24 June 2026; email from Simon Jackson, HALO, 20 May 2026; and intervention from Fadi Al-Saleh, SNMAC, Geneva, 23 June 2026.

44 Email from SNMAC, 8 October 2026.

45 Emails from Simon Jackson, HALO, 20 May 2026; Roger Eid, HI, 27 April 2026; Steven Warner, MAG, 16 April 2026; and Joseph McCartan, UNMAS, 21 May 2026.

being established in Raqqa to facilitate collaboration between demining NGOs operating in the region, the International Cooperation Department, and SNMAC.[46]

Operators felt increasingly consulted in decision-making, local prioritisation, and data management during TWGs and workshops, with regular engagement of SNMAC and a growing environment of collaborative decision-making,[47] including consultations on the National Mine Action Strategy and NMAS.[48] DRC, in coordination with SNMAC, trained five members of the Ministry of Emergency and Disaster Management clearance department in explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) Level 2 in 2025.[49]

HALO played an active informal advisory role with SNMAC and contributed to the development of NMAS through the TWG. HALO deployed mechanical assets to clear high-priority tasks assigned by SNMAC and conducted EOD call-outs on demand.[50]

MAG supported NESMAC through an IM training, community liaison, clearance, logistics, and guidance on gender equity. MAG was also in close engagement with the newly established NMAC, in coordination with UNMAS, the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD), and other organisations.[51]

FUNDING FOR AP MINE SURVEY AND CLEARANCE

Mine action is one of the most underfunded humanitarian sectors in Syria. In 2024, only 13% of the requested US$51 million was funded, although this increased to 31% of the US$75 million requested in 2025. A further US$75 million has been requested for 2026, and as at August, secured funds were well below this.[52]

In 2025, DCA has implemented survey and clearance in Syria with funding from the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) and the Danish International Development Agency (DANIDA) throughout 2025.[53] HALO's survey and clearance activities were supported by a diverse group of institutional donors, including Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (NORAD), Irish Aid, the German Federal Foreign Office (GFFO), the French Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs (CDCS), the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS), and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). This increase in donor support comes following several new partnerships, expanded operational access, and rising clearance needs across Syria. The CDCS-supported project reached completion in 2025 in line with its implementation timeframe. Other than CDCS, HALO expected the funding streams to continue through 2026.[54]

MAG's survey and clearance was funded by the Office of Weapons Removal and Abatement (PM/WRA), NORAD, the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs (BUZA), and Canada. MAG expected the same donors to continue funding its programme, in addition to a new funding stream from GFFO.[55] HI received funds from GFFO, BUZA, CDCS, the Syria Cross-border Humanitarian Fund (SCHF), and the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC). In 2026, HI expected GFFO, CDCS, and NORAD to continue their financial support.[56]

UNMAS's 2025 donors were the OCHA country-based pooled fund, the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF), UN-Habitat, Finland, Italy, Belgium, Estonia, and South Korea, with Canada as a new donor in 2025. In 2026, UNMAS expected to receive funding from Finland, Italy, Belgium, Canada, the European Union – Foreign Policy Instruments (EU-FPI), the World Bank, Japan, Croatia, and Poland.[57] A US$4.4 million, two-year Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)–UNMAS project funded by Japan began in March 2026 in Aleppo, Hama, and Idlib. Under the project, UNMAS will undertake survey, clearance, and risk education, and FAO will assist 1,500 farming households after land release.[58]

ITF Enhancing Human Security (ITF)'s donors were CDCS and Slovenian Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs (Slovenian Aid & Partnerships). Both donors were expected to continue their funding through 2026, with an additional contribution anticipated from South Korea.[59]

Among the funding channels available for mine action in Syria are the Syria Humanitarian Fund (SHF), an OCHA-managed country-based pooled fund, and UNOPS-administered grant opportunities advertised through the Grant+ platform. Under the SHF, grant ceilings are linked to the applicant's "partner risk rating", which is generated using OCHA's One Grant Management System (OneGMS). According to Norwegian People's Aid (NPA), NGOs have limited influence over their classification in the OneGMS, or over the process for moving to a lower-risk category. For example, NPA's current risk rating is "High", limiting the organisation to applications of up to US$500,000. Despite this, NPA considers the SHF relatively flexible and less administratively burdensome, particularly because it allows applications to include activities implemented with partner organisations. More broadly, operators in Syria have raised concerns about the growing tendency of donors to channel funds through pooled or intermediary mechanisms,

46 Emails from Simon Jackson, HALO, 20 May 2026; Roger Eid, HI, 27 April 2026; and Steven Warner, MAG, 16 April 2026.

47 Ibid.

48 Email from Julian Cooney, DCA, 7 June 2026.

49 Email from Jakub Walenda, DRC, 5 July 2026.

50 Email from Simon Jackson, HALO, 20 May 2026.

51 Email from Steven Warner, MAG, 16 April 2026.

52 Presentation by Aida Burnett-Cargill, Mine Action AoR, Geneva, 22 June 2026.

53 Email from Julian Cooney, DCA, 7 June 2026.

54 Email from Simon Jackson, HALO, 20 May 2026.

55 Email from Steven Warner, MAG, 16 April 2026.

56 Email from Roger Eid, HI, 27 April 2026.

57 Email from Joseph McCartan, UNMAS, 21 May 2026.

58 FAO, "UNMAS and FAO welcome generous funding from the People of Japan to restore agricultural livelihoods in conflict-affected areas in Syria", 14 May 2026, https://tinyurl.com/293n3wmv.

59 Email from Maruša Ahčin, Project Manager, ITF, 30 June 2026.

rather than providing direct support to operators. They warned that this more centralised approach is creating additional layers of bureaucracy and reducing operators' autonomy over prioritisation and decision making.[60]

For more information on funding, please see the country profile of Syria on the *Landmine and cluster Munition Monitor* website.[61]

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.[62]

Table 1: Gender composition of operators in 2025[63]

Operator	Total staff	Women staff	Total managerial or supervisory staff	Women in managerial or supervisory positions	Total operational staff	Women in operational positions
DCA	85	24 (28%)	12	2 (17%)	39	9 (23%)
DRC	35	10 (29%)	7	3 (43%)	28	10 (36%)
HALO	233	64 (27%)	68	14 (21%)	53	14 (26%)
HI	114	16 (14%)	6	0 (0%)	21	5 (24%)
ITF	3	0 (0%)	3	0 (0%)	0	0% (0%)
MAG	250	45 (18%)	39	7 (18%)	172	36 (21%)
NPA	62	29 (47%)	7	2 (29%)	45	20 (44%)
Reachout	52	17 (33%)	8	1 (13%)	33	13 (39%)
UNMAS	16	6 (38%)	9	2 (22%)	3	0 (0%)
Totals	**850**	**211 (25%)**	**159**	**31 (19%)**	**394**	**107 (27%)**

According to DCA, the change of authorities and control dynamics in the north-east has created ethnic tensions in areas previously held by SDF and other Kurdish militant groups. This is due to local populations perceiving former authorities as having introduced new contamination with mines and IEDs. Teams of mixed ethnic composition have also become increasingly hard to achieve due to the perceived affiliation of Kurdish deminers with the armed groups, which is negatively impacting acceptance and humanitarian access.[64] Similar perceptions have also extended to international non-government organisations (INGOs) that previously worked in these areas and coordinated with the then authorities.[65]

DRC strives to achieve gender balance across all teams wherever feasible. DRC's NTS and risk education teams are gender-balanced.[66] HALO trained employees on its global equality, diversity, and inclusion policy, and encouraged staff and community members to nominate qualified female candidates for open positions. HALO says it has not faced obstacles in accessing communities with diverse ethnic or religious backgrounds and that it has targeted recruitment for diverse ethnic and minority groups.[67] HI said it was seeking to make progress on gender mainstreaming. While its clearance teams did not include female deminers in 2025, HI achieved gender parity in its community liaison and NTS teams.[68]

ITF staff maintain a supervisory and technical support role of its national partner, Reachout, and ensure that gender is mainstreamed as a priority cross-cutting area. As such, Reachout employs women in all demining teams and ensures that NTS, community liaison, and risk education teams are gender balanced.[69]

UNMAS undertook internal initiatives to strengthen the mainstreaming of gender equality, disability, and social inclusion (GEDSI) across its mine action programme. This included the development of a GEDSI Action Plan to support the integration of gender, disability, and social inclusion considerations into programme implementation, staffing, and operational processes. Measures also included the designation of GEDSI focal points, the promotion of relevant awareness and training initiatives for personnel, and efforts to align with broader UN system frameworks and standards related to inclusion, gender balance, and protection from sexual exploitation, abuse, and harassment. Survivors of explosive ordnance incidents were also integrated into UNMAS risk education teams.[70]

60 OCHA, Syria Humanitarian Fund, accessed 29 June 2026, https://shorturl.at/Dly4K; OCHA, Once GMS, accessed 29 June 2026; UNOPS, Grant+, accessed 29 June 2026, https://shorturl.at/IC08o; interview with Chris Tierney, NPA, Geneva, 24 June 2026; and email from Julian Cooney, DCA, 7 June 2026.

61 https://the-monitor.org.

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

63 Emails from Julian Cooney, DCA, 7 June 2026; Jakub Walenda, DRC, 7 July 2026; Simon Jackson, HALO, 20 May 2026; Roger Eid, HI, 27 April 2026; Steven Warner, MAG, 16 April 2026; Chris Tierney, NPA, 8 July 2026; and Joseph McCartan, UNMAS, 21 May 2026.

64 Email from Julian Cooney, DCA, 7 June 2026.

65 Ibid.

66 Email from Jakub Walenda, DRC, 5 July 2026.

67 Email from Simon Jackson, HALO, 20 May 2026.

68 Email from Roger Eid, HI, 27 April 2026.

69 Email from Maruša Ahčin, ITF, 30 June 2026.

70 Emails from Joseph McCartan, UNMAS, 21 May 2026; and Hassana Mardam Bey, UNMAS, 5 July 2026.

ENVIRONMENTAL POLICIES AND ACTION

DCA developed a Syria-specific environmental management policy in 2025 with an emphasis on reducing DCA's overall carbon footprint.[71] HALO Syria programme follows its global environmental management policy. Although HALO has no plans to develop a Syria-specific environmental policy, a project due to start in 2026 is expected to strengthen the assessment of environmental considerations and may lead to a Syria-specific annex to its global policy.[72]

HI had a comprehensive strategy aimed at empowering beneficiaries to reuse agricultural land, alongside implementing activities to clean and protect drinking water sources, particularly the Euphrates. HI's approach in Syria is centred on a "Planetary Health" framework that links environmental health to the safety and well-being of people with disabilities. In addition, as part of the Syria Water and Sanitation (WASH) sector, HI follows 2025 guidelines that mandate the inclusion of environmental safeguards in all aid activities and adheres to "Do No Harm" environmental principles, which are now being aligned with Syria's newly emerging environmental and disaster management ministries. A primary focus of HI's EOD activities in 2025 is to clear agricultural land with farmers currently the majority of ordnance casualties.[73]

ITF and Reachout have environmental standard operating procedures (SOPs) that are aligned with IMAS. In partnership, ITF and Reachout have been implementing a "Clear then Grow" approach, which aims to provide targeted agricultural support to households returning to recently cleared areas or areas recently cleared of explosive ordnance. ITF-Reachout initiatives also promote environmentally friendly and sustainable agricultural practices, thereby contributing to the long-term resilience of the local environment.[74]

MAG implemented a global carbon accounting project in Syria in 2025. The project aims to support environmental preservation and climate change adaptation by improving forest health, which in turn enhances carbon sequestration, and helps maintain microclimates suitable for communities and wildlife. Environmental responsibility is one of MAG's seven focus areas in its current organisational strategy 2024–28. MAG's global climate and environment strategy (2025–28) commits the organisation to a 45% reduction in absolute greenhouse gas emissions by 2030, using 2024 as the baseline year. MAG incorporates environmental and climate considerations into site prioritisation, planning, and operations, using local knowledge and environmental assessments to avoid sensitive areas. MAG will apply a variation of the Green Field Tool to assess potential impacts, and clearance teams will follow environmentally safe procedures, including careful disposal of explosive ordnance and minimal disturbance to agricultural land and natural habitats. Operations avoid mechanical clearance in water-protected areas and prioritise land reuse for agriculture.[75]

Table 2: Environmental policies, assessments and focal points[76]

Operator	Environmental policy in place for country programme	Environmental assessments conducted to support survey and clearance	Environmental focal point at country-programme level
DCA	Yes	Yes	No
HALO	No – but SOPs are in place (at a global level)	No	No
HI	No – but SOPs are in place	Yes	Yes
ITF/Reachout	No – but SOPs are in place	Yes	Yes
MAG	No – but SOPs are in place	Yes	Yes
NPA	Yes	Yes	Yes
UNMAS	Yes	Yes	Yes

INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND REPORTING

SNMAC considers information management a priority.[77] 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.[78] 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. Since then, UNMAS has been leading efforts to consolidate all data from mine action partners into a centralised Information Management System for Mine Action (IMSMA) database, to which several operators, including DRC, HALO, HI, MAG, NPA, Roj Mine Control Organisation (RMCO), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), and UNMAS have submitted historical and current operational

71 Email from Adesh Singh, DCA, 6 June 2025; and Julian Cooney, DCA, 7 June 2026.

72 Email from Simon Jackson, HALO, 20 May 2026.

73 Email from Roger Eid, HI, 27 April 2026.

74 Email from Maruša Ahčin, ITF, 30 June 2026.

75 Email from Steven Warner, MAG, 16 April 2026.

76 Emails from Julian Cooney, DCA, 7 June 2026; Simon Jackson, HALO, 20 May 2026; Roger Eid, HI, 27 April 2026; Steven Warner, MAG, 16 April 2026; and Hassana Mardam Bey, UNMAS, 5 July 2026.

77 Interview with Mohamed Rashid, SNMAC, in Geneva, 15 June 2026.

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

datasets. The consolidation process currently includes data related to NTS, technical survey (TS), hazardous areas, hazardous areas completion, EOD spot tasks, and explosive ordnance incidents.[79] The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and the Syrian Arab Red Crescent (SARC) are in discussions with the SNMAC about the submission of their survey and clearance data to the IMSMA Core database once it is established.[80]

With respect to the NESMAC database, the current data format is not compatible with IMSMA Core, and a significant share of the records have become obsolete due to the change of context (the recurrent fighting and floods mentioned earlier). The dataset therefore requires cleaning, validation, and updating before it can be merged into the IMSMA Core. Yet, some historical records remain relevant and should still be validated and integrated, particularly data on past clearance activities and IED types, for example, information on especially hazardous IEDs found in various cities in the north-east.[81]

Efforts are ongoing to integrate additional datasets from the remaining mine action partners and to further improve data harmonisation, completeness, and interoperability across systems. Measures introduced to improve the quality of data included the development of standardised IMSMA reporting forms, strengthened validation and quality assurance procedures, updated reporting guidelines, and creation of dedicated user accounts for mine action partners to support standardised data submission processes.[82]

UNMAS said that all mine action partners have access to and report directly to the UN-managed IMSMA database. The NESMAC, however, does not report to the national IMSMA structure, although operational data from north-east Syria may be shared separately and directly from operators.[83] The ICRC, as mentioned above, is also awaiting the establishment of the nationally-owned database to submit its data to the SNMAC.

Operators differed in their assessment of Syria's information management system, but broadly described a system still in transition and acknowledged the ongoing efforts to improve it. Progress has been made in consolidating data through IMSMA and introducing more standardised reporting and validation processes. Yet, gaps in data sharing remain and the data consistency at a national level is yet to be reached. HALO and HI reported that the data quality in the IMSMA database is accurate, up to date, and sustainable thanks to a structured multi-step validation process and ongoing efforts to improve data processes and quality. The database is updated daily, which keeps the information current and supports timely decision-making. HALO initially collects data through Survey123, which are then reviewed and verified by operational and IM teams before being transferred to the central database. This two-stage quality control process helps ensure data accuracy and consistency.[84]

MAG noted, however, that despite the ongoing efforts by UNMAS and operators, a unified national database had not yet been achieved. This was due to the lack of a comprehensive nationwide survey and the continued fragmentation of mine action information systems.[85] DCA described data management and sharing in Syria as "piecemeal at best", while underlining the critical role of the Mine Action AoR in the data sharing and analysis.[86]

Most operators reported having sufficient access to the database, and that data collection forms were generally consistent and enabled the collection of the minimum data requirements, as well as additional information on activities and affected populations.[87] MAG acknowledged the continued efforts to standardise data collection, but noted that current data models were not yet fully standardised at a national level.[88]

The IM TWG continued to meet on a monthly basis in 2025, with participation from personnel representing all 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. Regular IM meetings also provided a forum to identify data-quality issues and apply constant improvements to the database.[89]

PLANNING AND TASKING

Following a workshop in April 2026, SNMAC drafted a two-year National Mine Action Strategy for 2026–28, with the support of the GICHD and in consultation with operators. In parallel, SNMAC is working on elaborating a short and medium-term implementation plan, and estimates to adopt the strategy by the end of 2026. The strategy has three objectives: i) establishment of a sustainable mine action programme; ii) enabling of effective mine action through strong national systems; and iii) reducing risks and supporting early recovery of communities. To facilitate operational management, the Centre divided Syria into five sectors, each with one or two governorates depending on the size and scale of contamination.[90]

79 Email from Joseph McCartan, UNMAS, 21 May 2026.

80 Email from Lin Al Bitar, Deputy Weapon Contamination Coordinator/ Project Manager, ICRC, 9 July 2026.

81 Interview with Chris Tierney, NPA, Geneva, 23 June 2026.

82 Emails from Joseph McCartan, UNMAS, 25 June 2025 and 21 May 2026.

83 Email from Joseph McCartan, UNMAS, 21 May 2026.

84 Emails from Simon Jackson, HALO, 20 May 2026; and Roger Eid, HI, 27 April 2026.

85 Email from Steven Warner, MAG, 16 April 2026.

86 Email from Julian Cooney, DCA, 7 June 2026.

87 Emails from Simon Jackson, HALO, 20 May 2026; Roger Eid, HI, 27 April 2026; and Joseph McCartan, UNMAS, 21 May 2026.

88 Email from Steven Warner, MAG, 16 April 2026.

89 Emails from Adesh Singh, DCA, 6 June 2025; Lejla Susic, HI, 2 June 2025; Chris Tierney, NPA, 24 June 2025; Joseph McCartan, UNMAS, 25 June 2025 and 21 May 2026; and Roger Eid, HI, 27 April 2026.

90 Interview with Mohamed Rashid, SNMAC, in Geneva, 15 June 2026; and a joint presentation by SNMAC and GICHD, Geneva, 23 June 2026.

Operators use their own prioritisation frameworks for clearance. DCA prioritises survey and clearance based on humanitarian impact, urgency of need, access feasibility, and expected benefit to affected communities. Priority is given to areas where civilians are living with known or suspected explosive ordnance contamination, and to areas linked to safe returns, access to services, livelihoods, agricultural land, public infrastructure, and wider humanitarian or early recovery activities. Humanitarian needs are central to prioritisation, but actual implementation depends on whether the task can be approved and delivered safely.[91]

As at June 2026, HALO was finalising its clearance prioritisation matrix, but still required coordination and alignment with SNMAC before this could occur. HALO's matrix uses indicators such as type of threat, proximity to residential areas, number of accidents, direct beneficiaries, intended land use, and frequency of EOD call-outs.[92] HI's prioritisation framework aligns with the IMAS principle of "All Reasonable Effort", and considers humanitarian impact, community engagement, and technical assessments. It works closely with local communities to identify priority areas, such as agricultural lands, schools, and healthcare facilities, in an inclusive manner.[93]

MAG prioritises clearance based on threats to local populations and land needed for agriculture, with additional coordination with the mine action coordination groups and the SNMAC.[94] Since 2025, NPA has been prioritising agricultural areas to support the return of displaced persons, strengthen food security, and enable livelihoods activities. At the beginning of 2026, NPA also prioritised housing units in the Yarmouk refugee camp.[95]

In the absence of a tasking authority in Syria, UNMAS issues task orders for its implementing partners, while most operators who are not in a contractual relationship with UNMAS are self-tasking within the scope of agreement with their respective donors. Task orders are coordinated with relevant working groups, and follow individual assessments and community reports of threats. UNMAS prepares a monthly work plan in agreement with the implementing partners.[96] SNMAC is gradually assuming responsibility for tasking, with the aim of fully assuming it following the adoption of the NMAS.[97]

DCA's task planning and documentation are prepared internally with technical input from its senior technical advisor, IM, and geographic information system (GIS) where required. DCA does not self-task independently, but works through SNMAC for clearance and survey tasking, coordination, and approvals. Tasking and approvals through SNMAC are, though, still a work in progress. Although organisations can prepare the task documentation and deployment requirements, the actual field implementation can still be delayed by the approval procedures. According to DCA, clearer and more timely approval pathways are needed to support a more efficient delivery of survey and clearance.[98]

LAND RELEASE SYSTEM

STANDARDS AND LAND RELEASE EFFICIENCY

There are no formal NMAS in Syria. Plans to develop national standards, led by UNMAS, the GICHD, and mine action actors, in coordination with SNMAC, saw significant progress in 2025. As at June 2026, the ten highest-priority standards, including land release, IM, quality management, accreditation, and risk education, had been drafted and were under review by SNMAC. The NMAS were expected to be finalised by the end of 2026, while adoption is expected by the middle of 2027.[99] The Syrian government is said to have been promoting survey and clearance by the Engineering Unit of the Syrian army, but this clearance is not conducted to humanitarian standards and these areas will most likely need to be re-addressed or rechecked by humanitarian operators.[100]

DCA noted that the lack of authorised access to demolition explosives and fully approved disposal pathways has caused delays in clearance and EOD outputs where explosive ordnance are identified, especially where items cannot be safely moved or where additional control measures are required.[101] In the absence of NMAS, most of the operators work to their own SOPs.

DCA reviewed its Syria mine action SOPs and operational documentation in 2025. Revisions included procedures linked to survey, clearance, mechanical support, quality management, task planning, safety controls, and reporting. DCA also strengthened task-specific planning documents, refresher training and internal operational controls to

91 Email from Julian Cooney, DCA, 7 June 2026.

92 Emails from Simon Jackson, HALO, 4 June 2025 and 20 May 2026.

93 Emails from Lejla Susic, HI, 2 June 2025; and Roger Eid, HI, 27 April 2026.

94 Email from Najat El Hamri, MAG, 3 June 2025; and Steven Warner, MAG, 16 April 2026.

95 Email from Chris Tierney, NPA, 24 June 2025, and interview with Chris Tierney, NPA, in Geneva, 24 June 2026.

96 Email from Joseph McCartan, UNMAS, 21 May 2026.

97 Email from Wael Alhammady, Head of Quality Management and Standards Department, SNMAC, 9 October 2026.

98 Email from Julian Cooney, DCA, 7 June 2026.

99 Emails from Julian Cooney, DCA, 7 June 2026; Simon Jackson, HALO, 20 May 2026; Roger Eid, HI, 27 April 2026; Steven Warner, MAG, 16 April 2026; and Joseph McCartan, UNMAS, 21 May 2026; and interview with Mohamed Rashid, SNMAC, in Geneva, 15 June 2026.

100 Online interview with Aida Burnett-Cargill, Mine Action AoR, 10 April 2026.

101 Email from Julian Cooney, DCA, 7 June 2026.

support safe and consistent field implementation. DCA's SOPs were also reviewed through an UNMAS desk accreditation process in 2025 to support technical assurance and alignment with IMAS. The review process continues along with the ongoing development of national standards and processes in Syria.[102]

Following updates in 2024, HALO did not update its SOPs in 2025 but said it will do so following the completion of NMAS.[103] HALO is planning on using drone overflights and artificial intelligence (AI) analysis to target areas of clearance and identify UXO and AP mine contamination. HALO has a longer-term ambition to use MRead detectors to detect the chemical signature of explosive compounds in UXO and different types of mines.[104] HI updated its risk education and NTS SOPs in April/May 2025. In February 2026, HI developed a first edition of its community liaison SOPs.[105] MAG is reviewing its SOPs and updating its clearance requirements.[106] NPA revised its SOPs on NTS, environmental considerations, quality management, and EOD in 2026.[107]

The Ministry of Emergency and Disaster Management tested the use of drones equipped with thermal imaging and advanced scanning to detect landmines and provide data on their weight, depth, and size. The SNMAC Director said that the technology demonstrated its ability to survey about 10,000m^2 in 35 minutes. The test has been conducted in Drousha (Rural Damascus) and is expected to be replicated in Hassia (countryside of Homs governorate).[108]

According to the Mine Action AoR situation update of March 2026, the absence of adequate trauma care capacity in proximity to clearance operations is limiting operators' ability to expand clearance activities in heavily contaminated areas where rapid medical response is a critical safety requirement.[109]

OPERATORS AND OPERATIONAL TOOLS

In 2025, the following operators conducted survey and clearance in Syria:

- DCA: in Raqqa governorate;
- DRC: in Rural Damascus and parts of Daraa;
- HALO: in Aleppo, Daraa, Damascus, Deir Ezzor, Homs, and Idleb;
- ICRC (partnering with SARC, and conducting EOD and battle area clearance [BAC] clearance): with SARC conducting NTS in Aleppo, Deir Ezzor, Hama, Homs, Lattakia, and Rural Damascus; and ICRC conducting TS and clearance in Aleppo, Damascus, Tartous, and Rural Damascus;
- HI: in Deir Ezzor, Raqqa; and Hama;
- ITF (partnering with local NGO Reachout): in Hassakeh (Qamishli) and Deir Ezzor (in 2025);
- MAG: in Hassakeh and Raqqa;
- NPA: in Damascus (Yarmouk camp), Homs, and Rural Damascus;
- RMCO: in Hassakeh (Qamishli in 2025);
- Safety Solutions: in Aleppo, Damascus, Daraa, Homs, and Rural Damascus; and
- SCD's explosive ordnance disposal units: now integrated within the Ministry of Emergency and Disaster Management, responding to EOD callouts and operating in Aleppo, Damascus, Daraa, Deir Ezzor, Hama, Hassakeh, Homs, Idlib, and Rural Damascus.[110]

In 2025, UNMAS provided operational accreditation in various mine action activities, using IMAS as a baseline, to: NPA, HALO, Safety Solutions, HI, The Development Initiative (TDI), MAG, DCA, DRC, GCS, and the Arab Mine Action Consultancy (AMACC). UNMAS expects to support SNMAC in accrediting additional actors or extending accreditation of existing actors to other operational activities.[111]

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.[112] The Engineering Regiments of the Syrian military continued conducting survey and clearance in the post-Assad era, but its work does not adhere to mine action standards. A commander of a Syrian army engineering regiment stated to the media in October 2025 that more than 4,000 landmines of various types have been cleared from various neighbourhoods and key facilities in Palmyra (Homs governorate).[113] Palmyra was an Islamic State stronghold in 2015–17, before being captured by the previous Syrian government forces supported by Russia.

102 Ibid.

103 Email from Simon Jackson, HALO, 20 May 2026.

104 Presentation by Andrew Moore, HALO, Geneva, 22 June 2026.

105 Emails from Lejla Susic, HI, 2 June 2025; and Roger Eid, HI, 27 April 2026.

106 Email from Steven Warner, MAG, 16 April 2026.

107 Interview with Chris Tierney, NPA, in Geneva, 24 June 2026.

108 "Emergency Ministry conduct first practical trial using drone for landmine detection", *SANA*, 16 November 2025, https://tinyurl.com/3de5xt7t.

109 Mine Action AoR, Situation Update No. 7, 16 March 2026, p. 11.

110 Emails from Joseph McCartan, UNMAS, 21 May 2026; Maruša Ahčin, ITF, 18 May 2026; RMCO, "Work map of demining activities", accessed 6 June 2026; ICRC, "International Mine Awareness Day: Addressing the threat of explosive ordnance in Syria", 3 April 2025; Presentation by Andrew Moore, HALO, Geneva, 22 June 2026; interview with Aida Burnett-Cargill, Mine Action AoR, Geneva, 24 June 2026; interview with Hasan Al-Talfah, Head of Mine Action Centre in Damascus Directorate, Geneva, 25 June 2026; and interview with Chris Tierney, NPA, Geneva, 24 June 2026.

111 Email from Joseph McCartan, UNMAS, 21 May 2026.

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

113 "Over 4,000 Landmines Cleared in Palmyra, Says Defense Official", *SANA*, 23 October 2025, https://shorturl.at/e3b6N.

Table 3: NTS and TS capacities deployed in 2025[114]

Operator	NTS teams	Total NTS personnel	TS teams	Total TS personnel	Comments
DCA	0	0	0	0	Clearance teams (indicated in Table 4 below) also conduct TS.
HALO	15	40	0	0	Clearance teams (indicated in Table 4 below) also conduct TS.
HI	8	16	0	0	4 teams of 2 personnel each of north-east and north-west. Clearance teams (indicated in Table 4 below) also conduct TS.
MAG	12	24	0	0	MTT (indicated in Table 4 below) also conduct TS.
NPA	4	16	0	0	NTS teams also conduct risk education. Clearance teams (indicated in Table 4 below) also conduct TS.
Safety Solutions	21	63	0	0	MTT (indicated in Table 4 below) also conduct TS.
SCD	0	0	0	0	SCD's EOD teams (indicated in Table 4 below) are also trained on NTS.
Reachout (partnering with ITF)	5	10	0	0	Clearance teams (indicated in Table 4 below) also conduct TS.
Totals	**65**	**169**	**0**	**0**	

MTT = Multi-task team.

Table 4: Operational clearance capacities deployed in 2025[115]

Operator	Clearance teams	Total deminers	Mechanical assets/machines	Comments
DCA	2	14	6	Of the six machines, only two were used in clearance in 2025 due to lack of funding. Clearance teams also conduct TS.
HALO	6	42	6	Clearance teams also conduct TS.
HI	3	21	1	
ICRC	2	N/R	0	
MAG	10	80	18	Split equally between Raqqa and Hassakeh (two MTTs and three MATs in each). The same teams conduct TS, clearance, BAC, and EOD spot tasks.
NPA	4	24	0	In addition to 1 EOD team.
Safety Solutions	2	8	0	2 MTTs conducting EOD spot tasks, TS, and clearance.
SCD	10	180	0	Only conducting EOD callouts. EOD teams are also trained on NTS.
Reachout (partnering with ITF)	2	20	0	
Totals	**41**	**389**	**31**	

BAC = Battle area clearance. N/R = Not reported. MAT = Mine action team.

114 Emails from Julian Cooney, DCA, 7 June 2026; Simon Jackson, HALO, 20 May 2026; Roger Eid, HI, 27 April 2026; Steven Warner, MAG, 16 April 2026; interview with Chris Tierney, NPA, in Geneva, 23 June 2026; and emails from Maruša Ahčin, ITF, 30 June 2026; and Joseph McCartan, UNMAS, 21 May 2026.

115 Emails from Julian Cooney, DCA, 7 June 2026; Simon Jackson, HALO, 20 May 2026; Roger Eid, HI, 27 April 2026; Steven Warner, MAG, 16 April 2026; interview with Chris Tierney, NPA, Geneva, 23 June 2026; and emails from Maruša Ahčin, ITF, 30 June 2026; Lin Al Bitar, ICRC, 9 July 2026; and Joseph McCartan, UNMAS, 21 May 2026.

DCA has been operational in north-east Syria since 2015, with activities in 2025 focused on areas where access approvals and security conditions allow safe implementation. DCA was licensed by the MoFA to operate in Syria while still awaiting the final registration. The number of DCA's teams and staff has progressively gone down in 2025 due to dwindling funds. DCA plans to maintain the same capacity in 2026, but this is subject to funding and operational conditions.[116]

DRC has been delivering risk education in Syria since 2013, and in response to the increase in needs, it has been scaling up its mine action programme since 2025. Operational in Rural Damascus and parts of Daraa governorates, DRC established a mine action compound in Al-Kisweh, Rural Damascus. It started NTS in November 2025, and following an EOD Level 2 training to 15 staff members, began EOD marking and disposal in April 2026. DRC also recruited ten NTS/risk education staff members.[117]

Following the signature of an MoU with the Syrian government in December 2021, NPA received accreditation and completed its inception phase in 2022. In 2026, NPA trained three national NGOs in Aleppo and Qamishli (Hassakeh governorate) on how to conduct basic NTS and reporting when encountering explosive hazards during agricultural assessments. NPA also expanded its clearance teams in Homs and will provide them with training on NTS and risk education.[118]

The ICRC works in partnership with SARC and has trained and supported SARC with NTS and risk education, with SARC teams conducting NTS in Aleppo, Deir Ezzor, Hama, Homs, Lattakia, and Rural Damascus governorates. ICRC initiated EOD operations in 2024, and in 2025 had its own BAC teams based in Aleppo and Damascus which conduct clearance country-wide.[119]

HALO has operated in Syria since 2016, and before December 2024, had managed a cross-border operation in areas in the north-west outside government control. Since then, HALO expanded its operation and established two fully functional operational locations in Daraa and Deir Ezzor governorates, while maintaining a presence in Homs and Rural Damascus with NTS and EOD teams. In Daraa, HALO is currently operating three NTS teams, four EOD teams, and two risk education teams, while in Deir Ezzor there are two EOD teams, two NTS teams, and one risk education team. Thanks to increased funding in early 2025, HALO's Syria programme saw significant growth in 2025 with an expansion of nearly 200 staff compared to 2024. This capacity was increased across EOD, NTS, risk education, and mechanical teams, including the procurement of four new mechanical assets. HALO expected further operational and geographical growth across all activities in 2026.[120]

SCD has been operational in Syria since 2013. In June 2025, SCD's EOD capacity was integrated in the Ministry of Emergency and Disaster Management. SCD increased its capacity in 2025 from 6 to 10 teams, each of 18 persons, and intends to further increase to 17 teams in 2026. SCD has been conducting EOD call-outs, including for AP mines, but its teams are not trained for systematic survey and clearance. Most of its teams are trained in NTS and EOD Level 1, while five personnel received EOD Level 2 training in 2026. SCD plans to strengthen staff competencies through more advanced EOD training and by establishing manual and mechanical mine clearance, risk education, mapping, and survey teams.[121] SCD teams report conducting 981 EOD call-outs and 369 NTS operations during the first half of 2026.[122]

HI has been present in Syria since 2012. In 2025, it conducted BAC and EOD spot tasks in Raqqa area including Tabqa, and expanded southwards into the Al-Mayadeen area of Deir Ezzor governorate conducting both BAC and EOD spot tasks. HI established a new base of operations in the centre of Deir Ezzor to increase its operational range and undertook four bulk demolitions of more than five tons of UXO. HI is increasing its footprint in Idlib governorate by recruiting new clearance/EOD teams and four community liaison teams, which became operational by April 2026. HI also established a new base of operations in the centre of Hama. The military offensive of early 2026 in north-east Syria had a limited impact on operations and HI managed to maintain its presence and core activities. Some clearance and community activities were temporarily suspended, particularly where staff movement between Raqqa and Kobane was affected.[123] HI's Syria programme has an underwater capacity that proved vital in addressing contamination in water pathways and water plants. This is particularly relevant given the frequent floods that have been hitting the country, but also given the practice of improvised disposal of explosive ordnance into waterways, mostly done by civilians wrongly thinking it would neutralise the explosives.[124]

MAG has been operational in north-east Syria since 2016. In 2025, MAG conducted survey and clearance in southern Raqqa, which it planned to expand further in 2026. MAG also received funding to operate in Homs and Hama, and expects to receive new grants to work in new areas in Deir Ezzor. Enabled by newly secured funding from the Netherlands and Canada, MAG significantly strengthened its NTS and clearance capacity in 2025 and intends to continue developing new proposals to further expand its operations in 2026.[125] In 2026, MAG planned to deploy a total of nine new clearance teams, including five mine action teams (MATs), four multi-task teams (MTTs), and eight community liaison teams across Hama, Homs, Deir Ezzor and Raqqa governorates.[126]

116 Emails from Julian Cooney, DCA, 7 June and 3 September 2026.

117 Email from Jakub Walenda, DRC, 5 July 2026.

118 NPA, New Humanitarian Mine Action in Syria, https://bit.ly/3MHNXTF; and interview with Chris Tierney, NPA, Geneva, 24 June 2026.

119 ICRC, 'ICRC in Syria, A Year in Review: 2024', https://bit.ly/401D9JI, p. 8; and email from Lin Al Bitar, ICRC, 9 July 2026.

120 Email from Simon Jackson, HALO, 20 May 2026.

121 Interview with Hasan Al-Talfah, SCD, Geneva, 25 June 2026.

122 "Ministry of Emergency teams conduct 981 EOD call-out in 6 months" (in Arabic), *SANA*, 20 July 2026, https://tinyurl.com/3swndat7.

123 Email from Roger Eid, HI, 27 April 2026.

124 Presentation by Chalky White, HI, Geneva, 22 June 2026.

125 Email from Steven Warner, MAG, 16 April 2026.

126 Email from Steven Warner, MAG, 30 June 2026.

ITF has been operational in north-east Syria, mostly in Hassakeh and Deir Ezzor governorates, in partnership with the national NGO, Reachout. ITF's work has included direct support to mine action, including NTS, BAC, EOD, and risk education, along with capacity development of Reachout. It aims to strengthen Reachout's operational management and reporting systems while progressively transferring responsibility to national leadership and staff. In March 2026, Reachout received legal registration and an operating licence from the Syrian Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs. During the same period, 25 Reachout staff members completed the IMAS Level 1 EOD qualification process. As at September 2026, ITF's MoU with the Syrian Ministry of Foreign Affairs was pending.[127]

In addition, ITF commenced phase IV of "Clear then Grow" project in November 2025. The new phase supports humanitarian mine action in Hassakeh and Deir Ezzor governorates through clearance, risk education, NTS, and capacity development. ITF-supported clearance has included the clearance of conventional explosive hazards such as rockets, mortars, and other ERW. Neither ITF nor Reachout encountered AP mines in 2025.[128]

In January 2026, the SNMAC with the support of HALO, SARC, and the ICRC launched a campaign to clear the Damascus neighbourhood of Jobar from mines and ERW. The first phase focused on opening roads, comprehensive survey, risk assessment, removal and technical supervision, with HALO deploying two field teams and using mechanical assets for road clearance. The campaign was also intended to cover Qabour.[129]

DEMINER SAFETY

Demining incidents are documented in official statements and by civil society organisations and while exact figures are not available, demining casualties appear higher in Syria than any other mine action programme. On 28 September 2025, the Minister of Defence stated that 31 Syrian army personnel had been killed and 60 others injured during mine and UXO clearance over the preceding nine months. The injured included 12 personnel who had undergone amputations.[130] In April 2026, the Syrian Network of Human Rights reported that 47 people had been killed during demining operations since 8 December 2024, including 40 members of Ministry of Defence engineering teams.[131] An investigation by the Syrian Investigative Reporting for Accountability Journalism (SIRAJ) identified 57 workers and volunteers killed during clearance operations or while handling UXO in 2025–26. SIRAJ recorded 27 incidents, of which it linked 26 to direct field clearance activities, and reported that most of those killed belonged to Ministry of Defence engineering units.[132]

LAND RELEASE OUTPUTS AND PROGRESS TOWARDS COMPLETION

Table 5: Summary of land release outputs in 2025

Release of AP mined area	Release in 2025 (m²)	Comments
Clearance	1,927,861	Operator data. 3km² of reported clearance by MAG has not been counted, given the very small number of mines destroyed. Mine Action Review has instead counted this as reduction through technical survey.
Technical survey	3,523,444	Operator data. Includes 3km² reported as clearance by MAG, but which Mine Action Review has recorded as technical survey, given the very small number of mines destroyed.
Non-technical survey	93,272	Operator data.
Destruction of AP mines during clearance, survey, and spot tasks	**2025**	**Comments**
AP mines destroyed	1,521	Operator data. Incl. 41 destroyed in spot tasks.

SURVEY IN 2025

A total of 3,616,716m² was released through survey by MAG in 2025. Of this, 93,272m² was cancelled through NTS (see Table 6). A further 3,523,444m² was reduced through TS (see Table 7).[133] The area reduced through technical survey includes 3km² reported by MAG as clearance in Hassakeh governorate, but which Mine Action Review has instead recorded as TS given the very small number of AP mines destroyed. This compares to 638,802m² released through survey in 2024, of which 24,929m² was cancelled through NTS and 613,873m² was reduced through TS.[134]

127 Emails from Maruša Ahčin, ITF, 18 May, 30 June, and 4 September 2026.

128 Ibid.

129 "Ministry of Defence launches a campaign to clear Jobar neighbourhood in Damascus from UXO", (in Arabic), *SANA*, 26 January 2026, https://shorturl.at/sjWNR.

130 "Defense Minister: 31 Syrian soldiers martyred clearing mines in 9 months", *SANA*, 28 September 2025, https://shorturl.at/Usd4H.

131 Syrian Network for Human Rights, "On the International Day for Mine Awareness: Documenting the deaths of at least 3,799 civilians from landmines and cluster munitions in Syria, March 2011 – April 2026", 4 April 2026, https://shorturl.at/m4p8x.

132 Syrian Investigative Reporting for Accountability Journalism (SIRAJ), "Explosive terrain... The unspoken cost of demining in Syria", 18 June 2026, https://shorturl.at/m8E5t.

133 Email from Steven Warner, MAG, 16 April 2026.

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

Table 6: Release of AP mined area through NTS in 2025[135]

Governorate	Operator	Areas cancelled	Area cancelled (m²)
Hassakeh	MAG	1	93,272
Totals		**1**	**93,272**

Table 7: Release of AP mined area through TS in 2025[136]

Governorate	Operator	Areas reduced	Area reduced through TS (m²)
Hassakeh	MAG	18	509,959
Hassakeh	MAG	–	*3,000,000
Raqqa	MAG	2	13,485
Totals		**20**	**3,523,444**

* Only 804,240m² of 3,804,249m² reported clearance in Hassakeh governorate is counted towards the national clearance total for 2025, given the very small number of AP mines destroyed. The remaining 3km² is instead counted towards technical survey in 2025.

A total of at least 20.32km² of new AP mine contamination was recorded in Syria in 2025. Of this, HALO identified 11.62km² in Aleppo, Daraa, Deir Ezzor, and Idleb governorates,[137] and MAG identified a legacy minefield covering 8.7km² in Raqqa governorate.[138]

CLEARANCE IN 2025

In 2025, a total of more than 1.93km² was cleared across 36 areas in Aleppo, Daraa, Deir Ezzor, Hassakeh, Idleb, Raqqa, and Sweida governorates, with the destruction of 1,480 AP mines, 705 AV mines, and 20,994 items of UXO (see Table 8).[139] As mentioned, of the 4.9km² reported to have been cleared by operators, Mine Action Review recorded 3km² to instead have been reduced through TS, given the extremely large area of reported clearance in Hassakeh governorate in which only a very small number of AP mines were destroyed. This compares to 3.61km² of reported mine clearance in 2024 where 56 AP mines were destroyed.[140] The total number of AP mines destroyed in 2025 rose sharply on the previous year, most of which were destroyed by MAG in Raqqa governorate.

In addition, 41 AP mines and 130 AV mines were destroyed during spot tasks.[141] Of the 1,422 AP mines found and destroyed by MAG in 2025, 84 were of an improvised nature.[142]

Table 8: Mine clearance in 2025[143]

Governorate	Operator	Areas cleared	Area cleared (m²)	AP mines destroyed	AV mines destroyed	UXO destroyed
Aleppo	Safety Solutions	0	0	0	0	0
Daraa	Safety Solutions	0	0	54	159	0
Deir Ezzor	HI	0	86,784	0	0	17,629
	MAG	1	882	0	0	1
Hassakeh[144]	MAG	21	*804,240	64	1	133
Idleb	HALO	1	3,391	0	0	1
Raqqa	DCA	5	53,294	4	0	0
	HI	0	584,097	0	88	3,206
	MAG	8	147,188	1,358	385	23

135 Email from Steven Warner, MAG, 16 April 2026.

136 Ibid.

137 Email from Simon Jackson, HALO, 20 May 2026.

138 Email from Steven Warner, MAG, 16 April 2026.

139 Emails from Julian Cooney, DCA, 7 June 2026; Simon Jackson, HALO, 20 May 2026; Roger Eid, HI, 27 April 2026; Steven Warner, MAG, 16 April 2026; and Joseph McCartan, UNMAS, 21 May 2026.

140 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.

141 Emails from Julian Cooney, DCA, 7 June 2026; Simon Jackson, HALO, 20 May 2026; Roger Eid, HI, 27 April 2026; Steven Warner, MAG, 16 April 2026; and Joseph McCartan, UNMAS, 21 May 2026.

142 Email from Steven Warner, MAG, 16 April 2026.

143 Emails from Julian Cooney, DCA, 7 June 2026; Simon Jackson, HALO, 20 May 2026; Roger Eid, HI, 27 April 2026; Steven Warner, MAG, 16 April 2026; Joseph McCartan, UNMAS, 21 May 2026; and Hassana Mardam Bey, UNMAS, 1 September 2026.

144 The use of mechanical assets, limited vegetation cutting needs, and the minimal clutter resulted in the large clearance output reported by MAG in Hassakeh. Given the small number of AP mines found on this task, Mine Action Review considered 804,240m² as cleared and 3km² as reduced through TS in the national land release figures (see the Key Data section).

Table 8 continued

Governorate	Operator	Areas cleared	Area cleared (m²)	AP mines destroyed	AV mines destroyed	UXO destroyed
Sweida	Safety Solutions	0	247,985	0	72	1
Totals		**36**	***1,927,861**	**1,480**	**705**	**20,994**

* Only 804,240m² of 3,804,249m² reported clearance in Hassakeh governorate is counted towards the national clearance total for 2025, given the very small number of AP mines destroyed. The remaining 3km² is instead counted towards technical survey in 2025.

PROGRESS TOWARDS COMPLETION

Syria is not a State Party to the APMBC, 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 APMBC and the Convention on Cluster Munitions (CCM).[145] As at June 2026, SNMAC says it intends to strengthen its cooperation with international stakeholders, act in the spirit of the Conventions, and continue attending on an observer status.[146]

The fall of the Assad regime in December 2024 created an opportunity to consolidate a nationwide mine action framework replacing the previously fragmented area-based coordination mechanisms. The establishment of SNMAC and its apparent efforts to absorb the NESMAC and other coordination structures, alongside the development of NMAS, and the preparatory steps towards a National Mine Action Strategy are positive markers of emerging national ownership.

Yet, Syria's nascent mine action structures remain understaffed and under-resourced. As the transition unfolds, operators have had to adapt to new, evolving, and at times ambiguous processes. For example, following the Syrian government's assumption of control over large parts of the north-east, mine action activities were suspended, with resumption dependent on operators completing a new NGO registration process through Damascus. MAG had completed registration by April 2026, while DCA was pending issuance of final registration and signature of a legal pledge. Access and approval constraints became more pronounced as operators adjusted to SNMAC-led tasking and approval processes. In addition, the lack of authorised access to demolition explosives and the absence of fully approved disposal pathways restrained clearance. According to HALO, the sector could also greatly benefit from a special law for mine action organisations to facilitate the importation of technology used in survey, EOD, and mine detection activities.[147]

The change in regime and territorial control widened access for both communities and mine action actors. This opening allowed operators to expand their teams and geographical reach beyond the former frontlines. Yet, along with the greater access came a sharp increase in exposure to explosive ordnance, as people returned to contaminated areas and tried to restore livelihoods. Evidence also suggests that the renewed fighting and the shifting frontlines in the north-east have created new, or possibly changed existing contamination. As a result, areas previously addressed will necessitate resurvey or re-clearance.[148]

Funding to the sector remained a major setback to progress. DCA raised a concern that a growing share of funding is being channelled through UN agencies rather than to civil society organisations, which has serious consequences for the sector. HALO said it had secured funding and expanded its teams and capacities, but that its output would have been stronger earlier in 2025 had resources been available sooner, while HI also cited funding uncertainty as a source of delay in operational planning.[149]

Insecurity and localised violence continued to affect safe access. HALO's teams had to occasionally suspend activities in Deir Ezzor governorate, and to limit operations to within the city limits; UNMAS experienced a disruption due to violent events in Sweida and parts of Daraa governorates in July 2025; while MAG had to suspend NTS and clearance in parts of Aleppo and Raqqa because of insecurity.

Overall, progress towards completion will depend on whether Syria invests in the opportunity of political and institutional change and builds a functioning national mine action system before delays erode operators' support and donor trust. This will require clearer and faster registration, accreditation, and approval processes, as well as a readiness to draw on international assistance to build the capacity of the recently created SNMAC so that it functions at the required scale. Syria should also build on the early progress towards developing NMAS, preparing a National Mine Action Strategy, and consolidating a reliable information management system. Addressing contamination of the scale and complexity of the one present in Syria will also require a broad profile of advanced expertise able to respond safely to multiple and overlapping threats.

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

146 Interview with Mohamed Rashid, SNMAC, in Geneva, 15 June 2026.

147 Emails from Julian Cooney, DCA, 7 June 2026; Simon Jackson, HALO, 20 May 2026; and Steven Warner, MAG, 16 April 2026.

148 Emails from Simon Jackson, HALO, 20 May 2026; Roger Eid, HI, 27 April 2026; and Steven Warner, MAG, 16 April 2026.

149 Emails from Julian Cooney, DCA, 7 June 2026; Simon Jackson, HALO, 20 May 2026; Roger Eid, HI, 27 April 2026; and Steven Warner, MAG, 16 April 2026.