

The background features a photograph of a multi-story building that has been severely damaged, with its concrete structure exposed and many windows missing. In the foreground, a person wearing a headscarf is riding a bicycle on a street. The image is overlaid with a semi-transparent white and light green filter. On the right side, there are several overlapping geometric shapes in shades of orange and green, creating a modern, abstract design.

Non-Government Controlled Syria: Mine Action Needs and Challenges

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North East Syria



- ▶ Over 27 million sqm of land in NES is contaminated. Ar-Raqqa, Deir ez-Zor, and Al-Hassakeh governorates are most affected (IMMAP). According to IMMAP, there were **1,162 deaths and 860 injuries from EO between Sep 2021 and Apr 2022**.
- ▶ **Economic crisis**, worsened by recent hikes in food and fuel prices, increases fragility and fuels **ISIS nostalgia**, particularly in DEZ. **Drought** for 2+years affecting ability to grow food. **Cooperation with other humanitarian and early recovery actors** is key to maximise the impact of mine action.
- ▶ There are continued concerns over Turkey's intentions in NES, but the current political status quo is likely to remain relatively unchanged (short to medium term), with **continued operational space for mine action NGOs**.
- ▶ Establishment of NES Mine Action Office (NESMAO) in 2021 - **new requirements and processes to navigate; capacity development needs**.
- ▶ **Security concerns** remain - even if they do not impact directly on operational areas, security incidents can have an indirect effect through **border closures and in country access** (e.g. Hassakeh prison break).

North West Syria



- ▶ Idleb governorate and northern Aleppo relatively **stable and permissive environments**
- ▶ HALO is conducting NTS in Idleb and **moving towards disposal and clearance in the next 2-3 months**
- ▶ Casualty rates are high in NWS: 5,000 recorded casualties between 2016 and 2020 (over 600 in 2020)
- ▶ But in absolute terms the problem is relatively small; **relatively small sums of funding can make a significant impact**
- ▶ Primary impact of non-renewal of the Cross-Border Resolution (current resolution expires on 10 July) will be **loss of UN funding streams** - physical access issues can be managed
- ▶ **Bilateral funding is needed to replace it** (and even if the Cross-Border Resolution is renewed, it brings annual uncertainty so bilateral funding increases resilience of programming)
- ▶ Turkey is proposing compulsory repatriation of Syrians currently in Turkey to NWS; this will **increase land pressures and increase the need for MA activities** to reduce the potential for returnees to be killed or injured.

Summary

- ▶ **Impact:** High casualty figures across non-GoS controlled areas.
- ▶ **Contamination baseline:** Need for systematic evidence-based survey to determine accurate picture of contamination across NES and NWS. Survey should be followed by clearance.
- ▶ **Access:** Although the environment remains volatile, there is operational space for mine action NGOs to work in both NES and NWS.
- ▶ **Land release should be complemented by EORE and victim assistance.** In addition, the mine action sector should implement specific VA efforts, as per IMAS 13.10, to ensure delivery of VA services, including needed case management, whether by MA actors or others.
- ▶ **Funding:** Needs significantly outweigh available resources. Dedicated multi-year and flexible mine action funding is required. As donors respond to new crises in other parts of the world, they should not divert support from Syria.
- ▶ **Enabling effect:** Early recovery is not possible without mine action. HMA enables safe reconstruction, rehabilitation and returns, as well as long-term livelihoods and economic opportunities.
- ▶ Funds for humanitarian and early recovery efforts in the areas of health, education should be inclusive of the needs of EO survivors and indirect victims.