

Mine Action Support Group Meeting

Thursday, 24 October 2024

Mine Action in the Middle East (beyond Gaza)

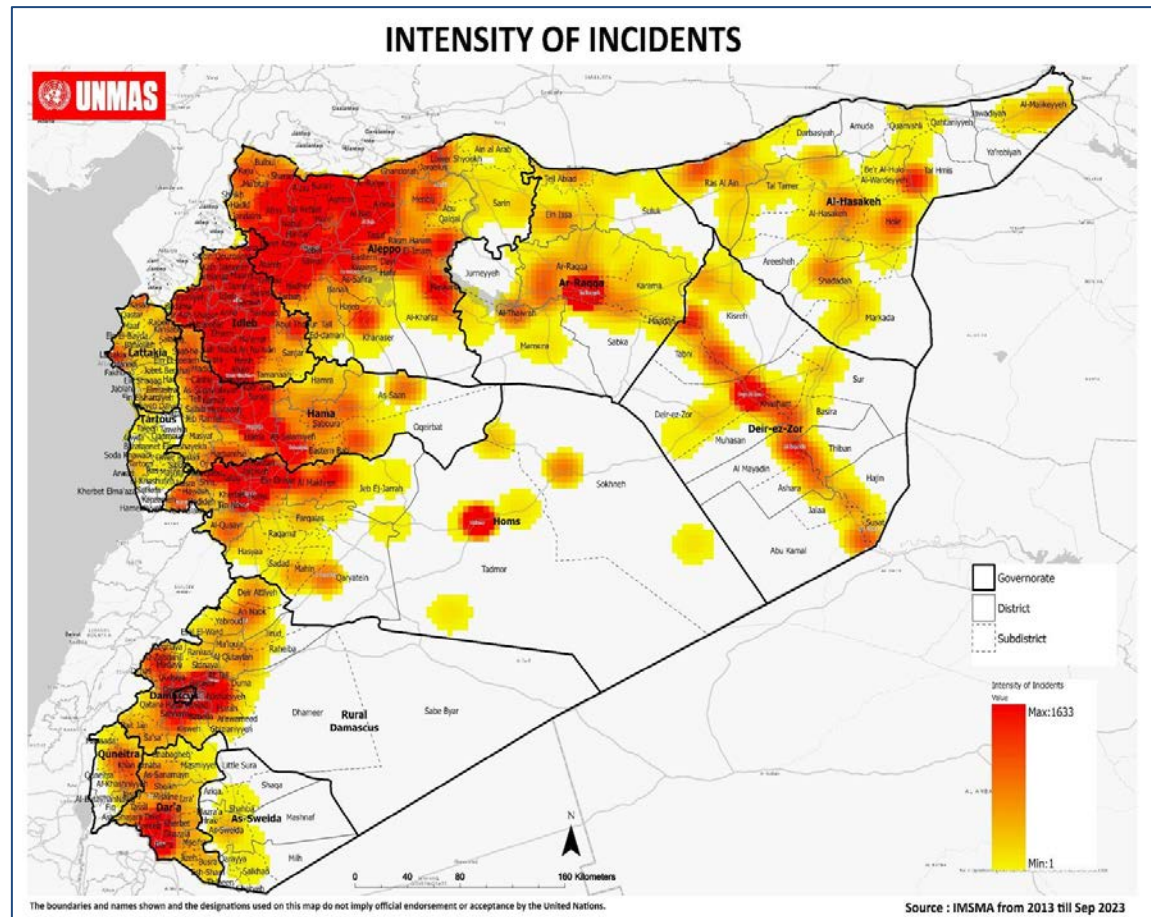
A snapshot on the situation in Syria, Yemen
and Lebanon

Explosive Ordnance Contamination in Syria

Scale and scope of explosive ordnance (EO) contamination remains undefined with multiple overlapping ongoing conflicts, including overspill from Gaza/ Lebanon.

Overview in 2024:

- 14.4 million people (1 in 2 people in Syria – HNO 2024) are estimated to be living at risk of death or injury from explosive ordnance.
- OCHA estimates EO contamination affects delivery in 54% of Sub Districts
- 4000 Victims from EO in 2023-24 with 1 in 10 victims being a child.
- Mine action is integrated into the Humanitarian Needs Overview (HNO), the Humanitarian Response Plan and UN-Govt of Syria 2022-24 Strategic Framework.
- UNMAS mission acts as an enabler of United Nations humanitarian and early recovery operations.



Mine Action in Government-Controlled Areas

Mine Action Response:

- Survey, clearance, on-site and bulk demolitions are conducted for UNDP and UNOCHA
- 80M sqm of urban and agricultural land surveyed in 2024, and over 2500 items removed.
- Explosive Ordnance Risk Education (UNMAS and UNICEF) and limited Victim Assistance (UNDP) – over 17000 beneficiaries and 170 facilitators from UNAFPs trained.

Challenges and Needs:

- Continued conflict with additional layers of EO contamination.
- Unpredictable funding - need for mine action components in funding proposals and long-term investment to build a sustainable capacity.
- Limited number of mine action actors.

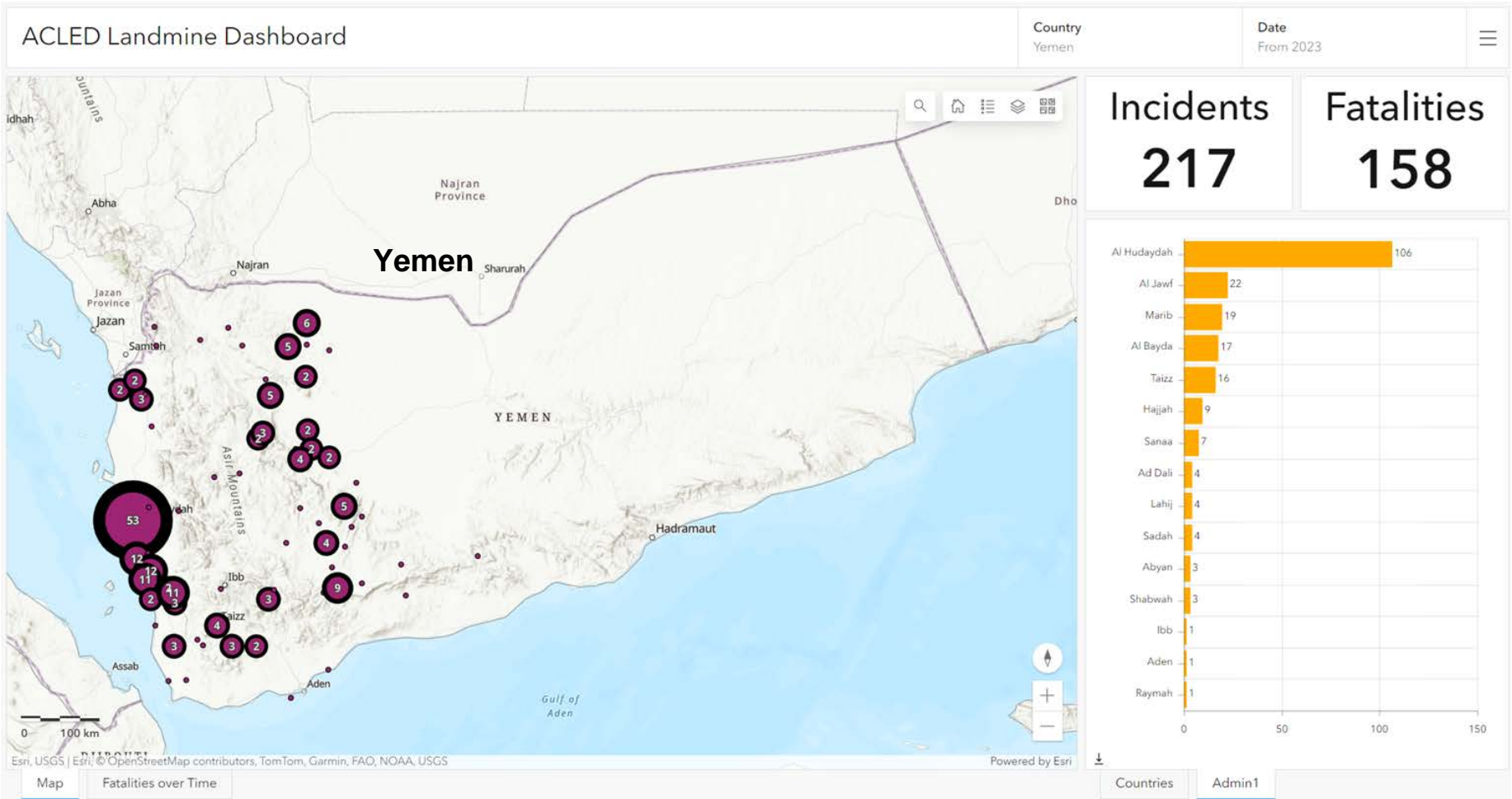


EOD expert conducting a safety brief to UNDP rubble removal workers in Aleppo



Mr. Noor from Darraya , Rural Damascus:
'Before you came, I was planning to sell my land, as I am 75 years old and had lost the will to start over again. I am very thankful for everyone who made this happen.'

Yemen



Humanitarian Mine Action in Yemen



- Landmines and UXO are impacting the humanitarian response, e.g flood ;
- High concentrations of IDPs in some affected areas (Marib, Taiz);
- OSESGY highlights blockage to mobility and the peace efforts;
- Senior Officials Meeting (SOM) 2024 recommendation: ‘humanitarian and development actors should increase their engagement in mine action and strengthen the coordination and implementation of demining activities’;
- Governance and coordination framework requires updated legislation;
- DRC, HALO Trust, HI and NPA are operating in the Internationally Recognised Government (IRG) areas; HI and ICRC are operating in the De Facto Authority (DFA) areas; operating space workable but challenging;
- The national demining actor, YEMAC N/S, lacks range of capacities; timely APMBC compliance unlikely;
- UNOPS has completed the transitional ECHO-funded project; RC-HC has requested UNDP to resume as substantive lead.

Lebanon

Israel-Hezbollah Conflict



Situation Update | 8-14 Oct. 2024

By Oct 2023,

- all MA operations in the South suspended.
- **EORE teams** intensified efforts in the South, focusing on new threats such as White Phosphorus and UXOs in destroyed building - targeting IDPs, humanitarian workers, and those still in conflict zones.

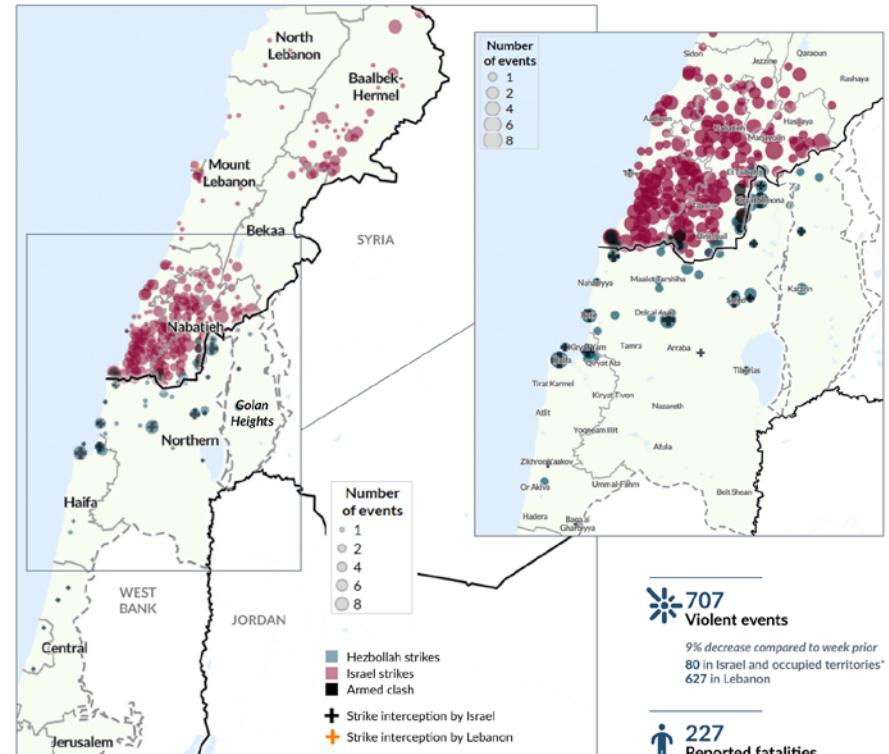
By Sept 23rd 2024,

- all MA NGOs suspended operations **nationwide**.

By October 19th 2024,

- **10,519 attacks** recorded, mostly in the **South, Beirut's Southern Suburbs** and the **Beqaa**.
- **2,448 killed** and **11,471 wounded**
- **191,912 IDPs** are now displaced across Lebanon, with **shelters at maximum capacity**.
- **Humanitarian impact:** vital infrastructure like schools, healthcare centers, and roads are destroyed. Extent of EO contamination unknown.

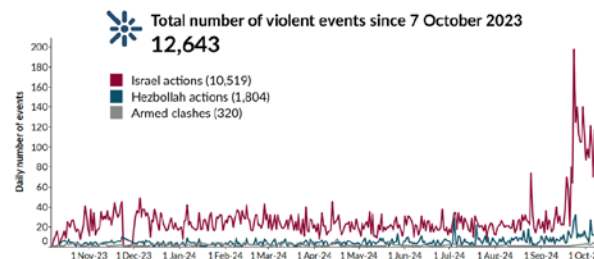
Source: SITREP #23 – DRM Unit Supported by UNDP



707
Violent events
9% decrease compared to week prior
80 in Israel and occupied territories*
627 in Lebanon

227
Reported fatalities
11% decrease compared to week prior
7 in Israel and occupied territories*
220 in Lebanon

Political violence events between the IDF and Hezbollah



Population exposed to violence
according to ACLED's Conflict Exposure Tool
1,528,719 in Lebanon
29% of country's population
734,414 in Israel
8% of country's population

*These figures include occupied Golan Heights and disputed territories of Shebaa Farms and Kfar Chouba hills.

Lebanon

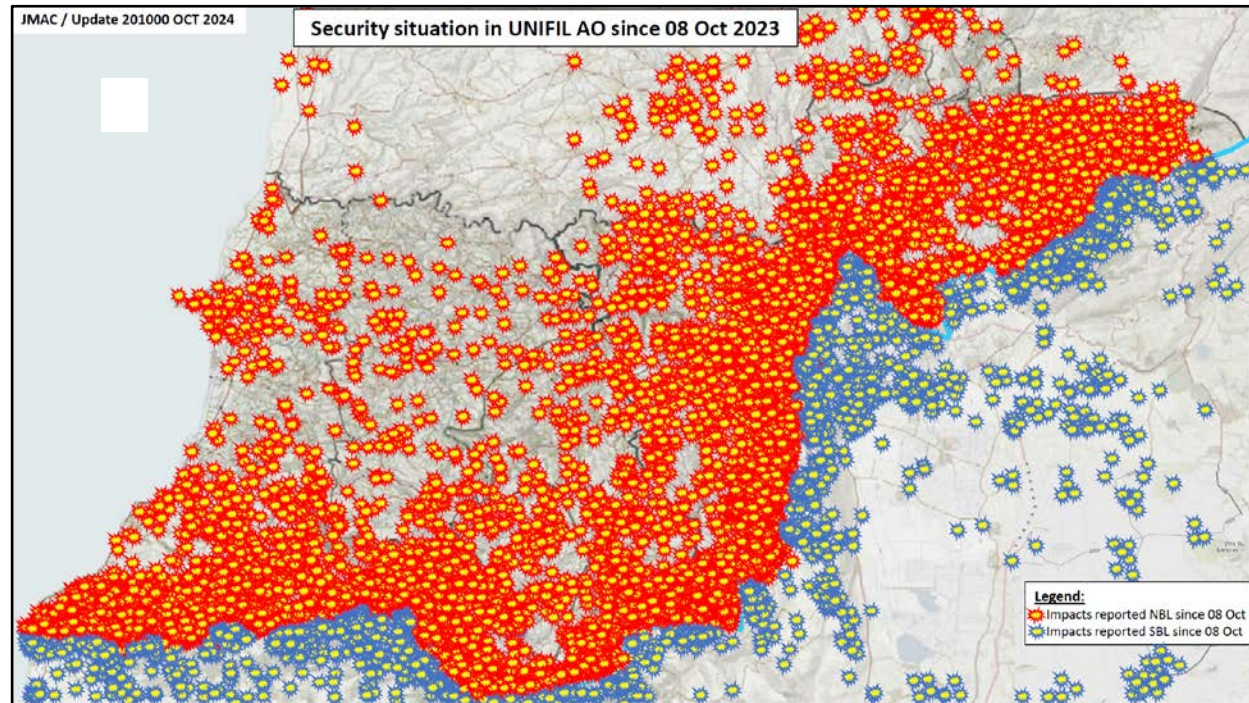
Mitigate the impact of conflict escalation and maintain Social Stability

- MA is a precondition for the safe return of civilians, the provision of humanitarian assistance, and recovery efforts.
- Lebanon has one of the **most robust mine action programs** in the world
- LMAC, with UN and INGO support, has strengthened its coordination efforts - weekly meetings - to respond effectively to the ongoing crisis. Further coordination capacities needed!
- TWG on **IM, EORE** and **Debris Management** established to ensure that Lebanon can respond effectively to the new situation.
 - **EORE** messages must be tailored to the new threat
 - **Survey** and **Rapid Response teams** (EOD teams) needs to be trained and equipped
 - Establish guidelines for **debris management** to be established (drawing on Ukraine, Syria and Gaza experience)
- Funding required now to be able to be ready to deploy “the day after

UNIFIL Area of Operations (AO) Update

Explosive ordnance threat increased by many magnitudes:

- 10,000+ points of impact (Sep 24 - 22 Oct 24)
- 490 air attacks in Sep 2024 in the UNIFIL AO
- IED use verified
- **39,000** rocket, artillery, and mortars tracked from Israel to southern Lebanon since 8 Oct 2023





UNIFIL Area of Operations (AO) Update



Challenges:

- Intense, daily bombardment prevents safe access, surveys, and operations.
- UNMAS UNIFIL, national, and NGO capacity and resources aligned to previous threat and resources.
- Expanded capacity required for safe mandate delivery and rapid, efficient “Day After” response.
- Bilateral funding needed to scale up implementing organizations to meet growing needs “at scale”.

UNMAS UNIFIL response and resource needs:

- UNMAS is providing technical expertise and support to contingency and “Day After” planning, risk awareness training, coordination, and quality assurance guidance.
- Additional UNMAS capacity and TCC clearance teams required for “Day After” response; additional IED threat mitigation expertise needed; and extra-budgetary funding needed for rapid mine action response in southern Lebanon.

Thank you.