



Project Title	Protection of children through the delivery of explosive ordnance risk education and awareness to conflict affected communities in Somalia
Funds Requested	USD \$6,000,000
Project Duration	24 months
Project area	Five Federal Member States and Banadir Regional Administration (BRA) of Somalia
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1. Project Rationale

In Somalia, UNMAS operates under UN Security Council resolutions 2710 and 2705 (2023) to strengthen national explosive threat-mitigation capabilities, within the broader framework of the security transition. UNMAS works collectively across the mine action sector with local communities, civil society, the public sector and national authorities. The organization plays a crucial role in mitigating the risks posed by explosive ordnance to civilians, facilitating humanitarian access, and supporting the protection of civilians and stabilization efforts in the country.

In situations that are included in the Secretary-General's report on Children and Armed Conflict, UNICEF – in coordination with UNMAS and other UN agencies – supports the United Nations monitoring and reporting mechanism (UNMRM) on grave violations against children, including the killing and maiming of children as a result of improvised explosive devices (IED) and other explosive ordnances, through its role as co-chair of the UN Country Task Force on Monitoring and Reporting (CTFMR). UNICEF works with partners to respond to grave violations documented and engages in advocacy to end and prevent grave violations against children. The MRM system is guided by international legal frameworks on children and armed conflict, and is mandated by Security Council resolutions 1261, 1379, 1460, 1612, 1882 and 1998 that task the UN with monitoring and reporting on grave violations against children perpetrated by parties to the conflict to inform response and promote compliance through advocacy and dialogue. UNICEF provides services to children affected by armed conflict and survivors of grave violations including for injuries and disabilities sustained as a result of explosive ordnances. Care and assistance to victims is of utmost priority. According to the

2024 Secretary General report, the majority of child casualties documented (629) in 2023 were a result of explosive ordnances (305), this includes ERW (118), IEDs/SVBIED/PVBIED (102), mortars (56) and grenades (29). In most instances, children's curiosity and lack of awareness on explosive ordnances led to casualties. For instance, on 9 June 2023, 27 children (20 boys and 7 girls) aged between 9 to 14 years old were killed and six others were injured when an unknown explosive device they were playing with exploded in Qoryoole district Lower Shabelle region.

The explosive ordnance contamination in Somalia remains an obstacle to Stabilization and Civilian Protection, further worsening the overall level of insecurity in the country. The mandate of the UN Assistance Mission in Somalia, reflected in the UN Security Council Resolution 2705 (2023), echoes the importance of humanitarian mine action in national stabilization efforts by highlighting that IEDs, ERW, and the proliferation of weapons and ammunition "have lasting social and economic consequences that can impede humanitarian aid and sustainable development and prevent state-building and stabilization efforts". Furthermore, Article 5 Implementation Committee of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC) obligates Somalia to continue risk education, along with two other milestones, to enhance the safety of vulnerable communities. The Committee on the Rights of the Child reiterated the need for risk education through issuance of observations to Somalia in 2022 which included that the States need to ensure mine risk education (29 a.)

After three decades of violent conflict across Somalia, the country continues to face a humanitarian and protection crisis. The negative impacts of historical and ongoing conflicts have resulted in a persistent threat from legacy explosive ordnance such as landmines and explosive remnants of war (ERW). Additionally, the use of improvised explosive devices (IEDs) by armed opposition groups against security forces, government personnel and other targets, has contributed to an even greater level of insecurity among the local civilian population. These conflicts have had an enormous impact on the lives and welfare of communities, including children, living in high-risk environments throughout Somalia, resulting in multiple fatalities and injuries with those injured often living with permanent disability. Children represent 60-70 percent of internally displaced persons and other vulnerable populations in Somalia putting them at risk of encountering mines and explosive hazardous materials¹ while crucial infrastructure such as water sources, health facilities and schools may be impacted by explosives further threatening children and preventing them from accessing essential services. For instance, since 2019, the MRM verified 12 attacks on schools (1) and hospitals (11) and the destruction of two water facilities using explosive ordnances. Furthermore, over the last decade, there has been a significant increase in civilian related injuries as a result of explosive ordnance incidents; especially those resulting from IEDs. Whereas these devices typically target pro-government forces, they have resulted in 2,056 civilian casualties (637 killed and 1, 419 injured) between January 2022 and December 2023. Over the same period, an additional 132 civilians, mostly children (88 boys and 16 girls), were victims of legacy landmines and ERW (42 killed and 90 injured). According to the UNMRM¹, between 2019 and 2023, 3,198 children have either been killed or severely injured by improvised explosive devices, grenades, shelling/mortar, and explosive remnants of war. Majority of these incidents occurred in South and Central Somalia which are areas affected by the ongoing military offensives against al-Shabaab and also due to the complex attacks launched by al-Shabaab which include Person-Borne Improvised Explosive Devices (PBIED) and Vehicle-Borne Improvised Explosive Devices (VBIED). In this context, there is a need to increase communities' awareness of the threat posed by explosive ordnance, and to impart safe behaviors that can contribute to saving lives.

Explosive ordnance risk awareness raising sessions can provide communities, including children, with the skills and knowledge to adopt safe behaviors and to mitigate the risks posed by explosive ordnance. Raising awareness among the local population can also contribute to facilitating the safe return of displaced persons, therefore contributing to stabilization and civilian protection efforts. The most recent Knowledge Attitude and Practice (KAP) survey conducted by UNMAS in the first quarter

¹ Isha Dyfan, a UN independent expert on the human rights situation in Somalia, announced on Thursday, 9th May 2024.

2024, which aimed to assess the retention of traditional EORE safety messages delivered to affected populations across four federal member states of Somalia, showed that 30% of children surveyed (18 years and under) were not aware of explosive ordnance warning signs while 34% were not aware of the dangers posed by explosive ordnance.

2. Project Description

UNMAS conducted an assessment of at-risk behaviors in Somalia and has developed an IED risk education package that has been finalized in consultation with various stakeholders operating in the country such as the Somali Explosive Management Authority (SEMA), the Protection Cluster and international mine action partners. UNMAS is currently developing information, education and communication materials to support risk education messaging including child-friendly audio scripts and graphic content, which will address common risk-taking behaviors as well as appropriate modes of delivery for specific at-risk target groups including children, parents and community members in the Somali context. The IED risk education package and new awareness materials related to IEDs, in addition to traditional risk education packages, will aim to increase safe behaviors related to legacy landmines and ERW.

The project will focus on prevention efforts to protect vulnerable populations, including children, from the threats posed by explosive devices, through the implementation of age-appropriate explosive ordnance risk education and awareness activities which includes IEDs, legacy landmines and ERW². The project will deliver tailored safety messages to vulnerable populations across five FMS **focusing on areas** with a high prevalence of explosive ordnance victims including towns and locations situated along main supply routes, hard to reach areas and recently recovered settlements. The project will impart knowledge on how school-going children, non-school going children and communities can practice safe behavior towards the risks posed by explosive ordnance including IEDs, landmines and ERW and will aim to address common risk-taking behaviors exhibited by civilians in relation to explosive ordnance threats. Furthermore, a KAP survey will be initiated at the of the project to measure the level of EORE knowledge and awareness among project beneficiaries.

The project will adhere to the principles of "Do No Harm" to mitigate any unintended negative consequences that may arise from these interventions. Thus, considering the nature of explosive threats in Somalia, the project will also consider various modes of delivery such as using educational materials, face to face sessions, mass media (including radio broadcasts and digital platforms), and other child-friendly innovative approaches such as risk education talking devices (RETDs) to disseminate information, raise awareness, and enhance knowledge on the risks posed by explosive ordnance.

Risk Education interventions will take into account the differential risks faced by girls, boys, men and women including parents and caregivers, and approaches will address how diverse groups are differentially affected by explosive ordnance. The project will also aim to establish gender balanced trainers and ensure equal gender representation among beneficiaries. UNMAS will require the implementing partner to demonstrate a variety of outreach methods when advertising employment opportunities; particularly those that target women, including mothers and caregivers, as to enhance diversity and inclusion when delivering training. Furthermore, significant efforts will be made to hire men and women in a variety of roles so they will be accepted to approach both boys and girls.

² Explosive remnants of war (ERW) include unexploded and abandoned artillery shells, grenades, mortars, rockets, air-dropped bombs, and cluster munitions. Under the international legal definition, ERW consist of unexploded ordnance (UXO) and abandoned explosive ordnance (AXO), but not mines.

To reinforce prevention efforts, the Government of Somalia will be supported to accelerate implementation of the 2012 Action Plan to Eliminate the Killing and Maiming of Children and the 2015 Safe School Declaration that includes keeping schools free of explosive ordnances. This will be achieved through increased advocacy on

- 1) the need to implement sanctions for any breaches of weapons used in populated areas placing children at risk,
- 2) ensuring impacted children have timely access to adequate medical treatment, including necessary services to support social and economic reintegration
- 3) ensuring schools formerly occupied by parties to conflict or exposed to EOR are prioritized for risk education
- 4) receiving commitment to include child rights and international humanitarian law in training of armed forces and
- 5) obligation to investigate incidents allegedly attributed to armed forces. The Ministry of Family Human Rights and Development (MoFHRD) and other child protection agencies, including provision of psychosocial support, support care and protection of children whose families are impacted by explosives.

Advocacy and coordination with relevant government and non-government stakeholders will be supported to ensure integrated services for affected children and their families, including free medical service for child victims of mines/ERW, access to schools and livelihood skills trainings. Working closely with Cluster Leads (Health, Education) and concerned government entities (Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education etc.) mapping of services and establishment of functional referral mechanism will be supported to assist increased access to affordable health care, rehabilitation (provision of mobility devices), education and livelihood services. Access to rehabilitation services for children with disabilities will be promoted through a case management approach, to facilitate access to integrated services.

The project will ensure comprehensive support to children and young people who are survivors of landmines and ERW. Working with relevant actors across the sectors, children and young people, who are survivors of landmines and ERW will be supported with access to socio-economic reintegration, including emergency medical assistance and psychosocial support. Provision of mobility devices (prosthetic legs, wheelchairs, crutches etc.) for children and young people who are survivors of landmines and ERW, as well as access to education support will be prioritized, while strengthening referral system for long-term medical and rehabilitation assistance.

3. Results

Outcome	Civilian communities experience reduction of the threat posed by explosive hazards.
Output 1: Risk education is delivered to conflict affected children	
Activities	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.1. Train, equip and deploy 10 teams (minimum 2 personnel preferably male and female) with the capability to deliver risk education to children and parents across 5 FMS of Somalia. 1.2. All teams deliver awareness messages reaching out a total of 50,000 beneficiaries including school children, non-school going children, parents of the communities including IDPs, returnees & PwD. 	

- 1.3. Identify and provide ToT for teachers from 100 schools across 5 FMS that can volunteer to provide risk education messages in their respective schools.
- 1.4. Training young people affected by conflict (survivors of mines/UXOs or IEDs and/or formerly associated with armed forces and armed groups and victims) and engage them as resource persons to deliver explosive ordnance risk education in schools and affected communities.
- 1.5. Identify CEC for 100 schools across 5 FMS that can volunteer to provide risk education to the parents.
- 1.6. Monitor the quality of risk education activities in coordination with the Somali Explosive Management Authority in the respective FMS and evaluate (KAP survey) to gauge the impact of the intervention on the beneficiaries.

Output 2: Sustained advocacy efforts to mainstream risk education into the national school curriculum

Activities

- 2.1. Coordinate with relevant state level ministries of Education and organize workshops with key stakeholders such as SEMA, UNICEF, NGOs, focal teachers, community education committees (CEC's) to represent the grass roots communities to encourage the integration of safety messages into the curriculum for a sustained delivery and retention of the awareness messages.
- 2.2. Advocate and provide technical assistance for the inclusion of risk education messaging into the school curriculum at national and state forums highlighting the impact of explosive ordnance on children

Output 3: Risk education is integrated into existing UNICEF interventions

Activities

- 3.1. Include safety messages of explosive ordnance including IEDs, landmines and ERW into the existing UNICEF Education package (such as cover of notebooks, posters, etc.)
- 3.2. Include safety messages of explosive ordnance into the existing UNICEF GBV awareness package.
- 3.3. Include safety messages of explosive ordnance into the existing UNICEF Child Protection campaigns (such as Health, Nutrition, WASH).

Output 4: Functional referral mechanism exists to support children affected by mines/EWR or IEDs with integrated services.

Activities:

- 4.1 Support access to emergency medical treatment and psychosocial support for children, young people and families affected by mines/EWR or IEDs.
- 4.2 Provision of mobility devices including ensuring access to education support for children and young people maimed by explosive devices.
- 4.3 Support establishment of functional referral mechanism for affordable health care for children/young people in need of long-term medical services, including livelihood opportunities to facilitate social and economic reintegration (in coordination with Cluster Leads: Health, Education, etc.).

Output 5: Somalia Security Forces’ capacity to prevent and protect children from killing and maiming is enhanced in line with the government’s commitments³ on children and armed conflict.

Activities:

- 5.1 Provision of training to Somalia security forces on their role in implementing the 2012 action plan on ending killing and maiming of children; and ensuring schools are free of explosive ordnances.
- 5.2 Capacity building for community-based MRM monitors on documenting grave violations against children including killing and maiming due to explosive ordnances and referring survivors to appropriate services.

4. Visibility

UNMAS and UNICEF will ensure that communications and project visibility are in line with the provisions of the Contribution Agreement while taking into consideration security on the ground. Efforts will be made to highlight project successes through periodic updates to the donor and in UNMAS and UNICEF publications. All visibility initiatives will be subject to UN Regulations, Rules, Procedures, and policies.

1. Estimated Budget

Budget	Total US \$
Output 1: Risk education is delivered to conflict affected children	\$1,253,600
Output 2: Sustained advocacy efforts to mainstream risk education into the national school curriculum	\$400,000
Output 3: Risk education is integrated	\$500,000
Output 4: Functional referral mechanism exists to support children affected by mines/EWR or IEDs with integrated services.	\$1,200,000
Output 5: Somalia Security Forces’ capacity to prevent and protect children from killing and maiming is enhanced in line with the government’s commitments⁴ on children and armed conflict.	\$400,000
Technical support	\$938,400
General Operating and Other Direct Costs (Cross sectoral costs)	\$828,000
Indirect Costs (PSC)	\$480,000
Total US \$	\$6,000,000

³ The relevant commitments linked to explosive ordnances include Action Plan between the Federal Government of Somalia and the UN to eliminate killing and maiming of children in contravention of international law – signed August 2012; and the Safe Schools Declaration - endorsed in 2015.

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