

# MINE ACTION IN UNSTABLE TIMES

Recommendations for Denmark's  
Development Policy Strategy

## Humanitarian Mine Action in unstable times

Despite more than three decades of work by mine action organisations around the world, the number of people killed and wounded by landmines and explosive remnants of war worldwide has been increasing since 2013. This has global security implications, not least in the current geopolitical and security political environment.

More than 117 million people are currently displaced mainly due to armed conflict and violence<sup>1</sup>. A rise in the number, size, and complexity of Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs)<sup>2</sup> used in recent and current conflicts, make indiscriminate attacks and the use of explosive weapons in populated areas the primary causes of civilian casualties and displacement.

Moreover, ineffectiveness in physical security and stockpile management in arms depots pose a threat to security and peace in fragile and conflict affected States - with regional and global security implications. Many armed non-state groups are pursuing economic opportunities, co-opting smuggling and trafficking networks taking the advantage of porous borders and un-governed areas to facilitate trafficking of weapons and ammunition.

The legacy contamination of landmines, cluster munitions and explosive ordnance and the proliferation of small arms and light weapons (SALW) pose a global threat to the safety and security of women, men, girls and boys, impacting on their safety and access to land and livelihoods, thereby restricting their human rights and hampering sustainable development.

The cessation of US funds to HMA activities makes it even more evident, that the future lies in the nexus between humanitarian mine action, recovery and reconstruction and resilience work - rooted in local civil society and communities as part of the localization agenda.

Considering this, the strategy should:

- Acknowledge the relationship between human security and development. The new strategy should envision humanitarian mine action as an enabler to broader humanitarian activities that can build strong, resilient communities, which in turn contributes to building strong and resilient states and lasting peace.
- Recognise the criticality of HMA as a Protection Activity in pre and post conflict settings thus Saving lives by providing access to basic needs for civilians and humanitarian workers through clearing of key infrastructure for immediate food security and livelihood, Child Protection, PSS/MHPSS, legal support, victim assistance and support.
- Reflect that according to INEW (2024) in areas where explosive weapons have been used over 60 percent are in densely populated areas. Hence, the strategy should strengthen the commitment to not only focus on rural clearance, but also urban and Improvised Explosive Disposal and clearance.

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.inew.org/about-inew/>

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- Accordingly, the strategy should set direction to further explore and investigate work addressing weapons and ammunition management (WAM) aligning it with activities in Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding.
- Investigate and apply alternatives pathways for the funding humanitarian activities including Innovative financing & methods which can be used throughout the Triple Nexus spectrum
- Promote Universalisation of international Conventions. This includes adhering and promoting Denmark's own convention obligations (APMBC, CCM, CCW, CRPD) and promoting and supporting fragile countries work on obeying conventions.

