

SRI LANKA NATIONAL MINE ACTION COMPLETION STRATEGY

2023-2027

Women, girls, boys and men thrive in a mine-free Sri Lanka where EO victims are fully integrated into society and have their needs met

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Glossary of acronyms and abbreviations.....	ii
Foreword	iii
Introduction.....	4
Purpose and outline	5
Methodology.....	5
Sri Lanka’s mine action programme	6
Institutional mine action architecture and normative framework	6
Background and Structure.....	6
Normative framework	6
EO Contamination: origin, type, extent and impact.....	7
Origin and type	7
Extent and impact	8
Previous strategic period: key achievements and challenges	10
Strengths, Opportunities, Weaknesses and Threats	11
Enabling factors.....	12
Quality Management.....	13
Mine Action Standards	13
Information Management.....	13
Contribution to broader agendas	14
The Sustainable Development Goals.....	14
Environmental considerations	16
The Grand Bargain and localisation.....	16
Gender and Diversity.....	16
Strategic orientation 2023 - 2027	18
Strategic Objective 1: Land Release and EORE.....	19
Strategic Objective 2: Coordination and National Ownership.....	25
Strategic Objective 3: Management of Residual Contamination.....	28
Strategic Objective 4: Staff Transition	30
Strategy implementation, monitoring and review	34

GLOSSARY OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

APMBC	Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention
AP	Anti-personnel
AV	Anti-vehicle
CCM	Convention on Cluster Munitions
CCW	Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons
CHA	Confirmed Hazardous Area
CRPD	Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
DASH	Delvon Assistance for Social Harmony
EO	Explosive Ordnance
EOD	Explosive Ordnance Disposal
EORE	Explosive Ordnance Risk Education
ERW	Explosive Remnants of War
GICHD	Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining
GoSL	Government of Sri Lanka
IED	Improvised Explosive Device
IM	Information Management
IMAS	International Mine Action Standards
IMSMA	Information Management System for Mine Action
LTTE	Liberation Tigers of Tamil Elam
MAG	Mines Advisory Group
NMAS	National Mine Action Standards
NTS	Non-Technical Survey
OAP	Oslo Action Plan
QA	Quality Assurance
QC	Quality Control
QM	Quality Management
RMAO	Regional Mine Action Office
SADD	Sex and Age-Disaggregated Data
SADDD	Sex and Age and Disability-Disaggregated Data
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SHA	Suspected Hazardous Area
SHARP	Skavita Humanitarian Assistance and Relief Project
SLA HDU	Sri Lanka Army, Humanitarian Demining Unit
SOP	Standard Operating Procedure
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
UXO	Unexploded Ordnance
VA	Victim Assistance

FOREWORD

This National Mine Action Completion Strategy presents the strategic orientation for Sri Lanka's mine action programme from 2023 to 2027, developed by National Mine Action Center (NMAC) with the support of the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD). It reinforces Sri Lanka's commitment to implementing its international convention obligations under the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC), the Convention on Cluster Munitions (CCM), the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) and the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW), in line with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The Government of Sri Lanka (GoSL) remains committed to mine action, evident in its increased budgetary support to the mine action programme over the last few years. It will continue working in close collaboration with its national and international stakeholders to 'getting the job done' as a mine threat free Sri Lanka by 2027. This will result in the release of previously landmine contaminated land, thereby enabling cultivation and other livelihood activities, safe access to public services (including schools and health facilities), the rehabilitation of infrastructure, the preservation of wildlife and the development of tourism.

The possibility of declaring completion of Sri Lanka's clearance obligations under the APMBC in the near future provides the GoSL and the international community with an opportunity to be part of a truly inspiring success story. The Government is confident that Sri Lanka's National Mine Action Completion strategy provides a clear strategic orientation for achieving this goal. As Sri Lanka embarks on its completion process, the GoSL will ensure that the NMAC, and the Regional Mine Action Office (RMAO) remain fully funded and resourced, to safeguard the enabling environment for survey and clearance activities. Likewise, the Government will also ensure that the Sri Lanka Army Humanitarian Demining Units (SLA HDU) remain funded and resourced to continue their critical survey and clearance efforts. The programme further relies on the generous support of Sri Lanka's international partners that allow national and international humanitarian operators to continue their important activities that will allow Sri Lanka to cross the finishing line by 2027.

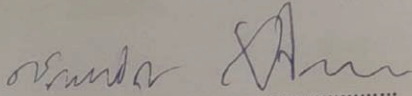
As completion approaches, the Government will, in line with commitments presented in this strategy, ensure that relevant plans are in place to ensure a smooth demobilization of deminers and effective management of residual contamination.

The GoSL is grateful and immensely appreciate to all international donors that support Sri Lanka's mine action programme (Australia, Canada, China, Germany, India, Japan, Norway, Russia, the United Kingdom, Switzerland and the United States) and value their continued support. The Government is also very thankful to all stakeholders, its national and international clearances partners (SLA-HDU, DASH, SHARP, The HALO Trust and MAG) for their tireless efforts in locating and clearing landmines and for sharing their experiences to develop this strategy. The Government also greatly appreciates the important work of all organizations involved in victim assistance and explosive ordnance risk education.

Thank you.

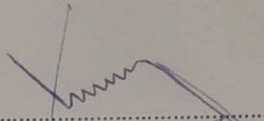
Endorsement

This document titled "Sri Lanka National Mine Action Completion Strategy 2023-2027" updates and supersedes all previous Sri Lanka Mine Action Strategy documents and is hereby endorsed by the Government of Sri Lanka through the authorized signatories below.



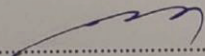
Prasanna Ranatunga, M.P
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INTRODUCTION

PURPOSE AND OUTLINE

This National Mine Action Completion Strategy (strategy) presents the strategic orientation for Sri Lanka's mine action programme between 2023 and 2027. It builds on accomplishments and draws on good practice and lessons learnt from Sri Lanka's previous National Mine Action Strategy. It reinforces Sri Lanka's commitment to implementing its international convention obligations under the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC), the Convention on Cluster Munitions (CCM), the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW), in line with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

METHODOLOGY

In line with Oslo Action Plan's¹ (OAP) action #2 on *developing evidence-based, costed and time-bound national strategies and work plans to fulfil and implement Convention obligations as soon as possible*, this strategy was developed based on updated information and findings from thorough context analysis exercises.

Eight working principles guided the development of this strategy:

1. Ensure a consultative and inclusive approach
2. Promote national ownership
3. Ensure gender and diversity inclusion
4. Develop the Theory of Change based on context analysis findings
5. Enable monitoring by adopting a Results Based Management (RBM) approach²
6. Ensure transparency and accountability
7. Align the strategy with International Mine Action Standards (IMAS)
8. Promote collaboration and coordination within the programme

Reflecting international good practice, this strategy was developed in an inclusive and participatory manner under the lead of Sri Lanka's National Mine Action Centre (NMAC), with support of the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD). Several Sri Lankan government ministries and national and international organisations participated in the strategy stakeholder workshop, facilitated by NMAC and the GICHD in Colombo in June 2022.

Upon the conclusion of the June workshop, the mine action programme's draft Theory of Change was presented to a wide range of stakeholders, including international donors. NMAC and GICHD then organised a strategy validation workshop in Colombo in September 2022 ahead of the strategy's submission to the Government of Sri Lanka (GoSL) for official approval.

¹ The [2019 Oslo Action Plan](#) is the fourth action plan of the APMBC, following the 4th Review Conference held in Oslo, Norway, in November 2019.

² IMAS 07.40 Monitoring of mine action organisations, Second Edition, 2016: *“Long term monitoring is of direct relevance to RBM aspects addressing questions such as whether land has been used for the expected purpose and whether that land use leads to expected medium-term outcomes and impacts such as increased health of a population. Monitoring systems should consider the use of RBM indicators related to the results of product use and longer-term impacts”*, p.15.

In addition to this English version, the strategy is also available in Sri Lanka's two official languages Sinhala and Tamil, in line with Chapter IV, Article 18 of Sri Lanka's constitution.³

SRI LANKA'S MINE ACTION PROGRAMME

INSTITUTIONAL MINE ACTION ARCHITECTURE AND NORMATIVE FRAMEWORK

BACKGROUND AND STRUCTURE

With coordination and management support of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Sri Lanka's mine action programme was first established in 2002. Sri Lanka's Cabinet officially approved the establishment of NMAC in 2010, resulting in the programme's transition from UNDP-management to full national ownership. Since then, NMAC has been housed within several different ministries and is as of mid-2022 placed within the Ministry of Housing and Construction, with the State Secretary serving as NMAC's Director. The Regional Mine Action Office (RMAO) is based in Kilinochchi and is responsible for coordinating, tasking and conducting quality management (QM). NMAC and RMAO work closely with District Steering Committees for Mine Action, which are chaired by government agents (GAs), who head government district authorities.

NORMATIVE FRAMEWORK

The Constitution of Sri Lanka stipulates its commitment to international peace, security and cooperation: Sri Lanka *"shall promote international peace, security and cooperation, and the establishment of a just and equitable international economic and social order and shall endeavour to foster respect for international law and treaty obligations in dealings among nations."*⁴

Sri Lanka acceded to the CCW, including Amended Protocol II on landmines booby-traps etc. in September 2004 but has not yet ratified the 2003 Protocol V on Explosive Remnants of War (ERW).⁵

The GoSL issued a formal statement at the 14th APMBC Meeting of States Parties (MSP) in Geneva in December 2015, for the first time publicly announcing its commitment to acceding to the APMBC. Sri Lanka acceded to the APMBC in December 2017, with the convention entering into force on 1 June 2018. In its first transparency report submitted in November 2018, Sri Lanka reported stockpiled anti-personnel mines under its ownership or possession (completed in 2021).

Sri Lanka also acceded to the CCM in 2018, which entered into force on 1 September 2018 and announced that it does not have any cluster munition stockpiles, nor any cluster munition

³ The Constitution of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka, Revised Edition, 2021 (<https://www.parliament.lk/files/pdf/constitution.pdf>)

⁴ *Idem*.

⁵ Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (<https://geneva-s3.unoda.org/static-unoda-site/pages/templates/the-convention-on-certain-conventional-weapons/high-contracting-parties-and-signatories-ccw/SRI%2BLANKA.pdf>)

contamination in areas under its jurisdiction or control.⁶ Sri Lanka is also a State Party to the CRPD since March 2016.⁷

In line with its APMBC obligations, Sri Lanka's Parliament adopted the Prohibition of anti-personnel mines act, no. 3 of 2022, in February 2022.⁸

EO CONTAMINATION: ORIGIN, TYPE, EXTENT AND IMPACT

ORIGIN AND TYPE

The nearly three decade-long armed conflict between Sri Lanka's security forces and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Elam (LTTE) left many areas, mainly in the northern and eastern parts, contaminated by a wide range of Explosive Ordnance (EO).⁹ Both Sri Lanka's security forces and the LTTE laid mines and used other EO extensively. The Indian Peacekeeping Forces also used landmines during their presence between 1987 and 1990.

Sri Lanka's security forces used anti-personnel (AP) and anti-vehicle (AV) mines which were all recorded. After ratifying CCW's Amended Protocol II in September 2004, all mines laid by the security forces were reported in accordance with the provisions of this protocol. The security forces handed over all minefield records to the mine action programme at the end of the conflict, with all information entered Sri Lanka's national Information Management System for Mine Action (IMSMA) database.

LTTE used protective minefields in front of their defensive positions, laying mostly AP mines but also some AV mines. No LTTE minefield records were available. The LTTE also made use of nuisance mines, to prevent access to facilities including wells, buildings, roads and footpaths. Some mines were also scattered on the ground during the LTTE rapid retreat in the north and the east during the final stages of the conflict between 2006-2009. The LTTE also used complex improvised explosive devices (IEDs)¹⁰ in the form of mortar shells connected to tripwires to act as fragmentation mines, bar mines, electrical and magnetically initiated explosive devices/ mines placed at strategic locations and mines connected with detonating cord to mortar/artillery shells a distance away. LTTE manufactured most of the mines they used themselves, while Sri Lanka's security forces only used factory-made mines that were imported. Some were designed with an anti-lift/anti-tilt mechanism to prevent the removal of the mine from the ground after it was laid. Sri Lanka's IED contamination poses unique clearance challenges to operators because of its complex and unpredictable mechanisms. In line with OAP action

⁶ Convention on Cluster Munitions (https://www.clusterconvention.org/files/country_profiles/Sri-Lanka-10.pdf)

⁷ Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/15/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=CRPD%2fC%2fLKA%2f1&Lang=en

⁸ The Prohibition of anti-personnel mines act, no. 3 of 2022: <https://www.parliament.lk/uploads/acts/gbills/english/6231.pdf>

⁹ IMAS 04.10 Glossary on Mine Action Terms, Definitions and Abbreviations, Amendment 10, 2019: "Explosive Ordnance (EO) (2018) interpreted as encompassing mine action's response to the following munitions: Mines, Cluster Munitions, Unexploded Ordnance, Abandoned Ordnance, Booby traps, other devices (as defined by CCW APII), Improvised Explosive Devices", p.15.

¹⁰ *Ibid*, p.20: "Improvised explosive device: a device placed or fabricated in an improvised manner incorporating explosive material, destructive, lethal, noxious, incendiary, pyrotechnic materials or chemicals designed to destroy, disfigure, distract or harass. They may incorporate military stores but are normally devised from non-military components [IATG 01.40:2011]".

#21, Sri Lanka recognises that it needs to apply all provisions and obligations under the APMBBC to anti-personnel mines of an improvised nature, as it does for all other types of anti-personnel mines.¹¹

Starting in 2002, some EO-contaminated areas in the northern and eastern provinces were cleared. The escalation of the conflict in 2006, however, resulted in areas being re-contaminated, particularly in the northern and eastern provinces.

Sri Lanka's EO contamination also comprises unexploded airdropped bombs, artillery-delivered shells, mortar bombs, handheld anti-tank projectiles, rifle grenades and hand grenades. There are also sizeable caches of abandoned explosive ordnance, particularly in the north. The Government of Sri Lanka has reported that cluster munitions were not used in Sri Lanka during the conflict.

EXTENT AND IMPACT

Sri Lanka's mine action programme has since its establishment in 2002 until 2022 cleared over 200 square km of minefields and conducted more than 100 km² of Battle Area Clearance,¹² destroying more than 843'000 AP mines, an approximate 2'050 AV mines and more than 360'700 UXO. Mine action has played an instrumental role in the safe resettlement of IDPs in Sri Lanka's northern and eastern provinces, releasing safe land for resettlement, reconstruction and livelihood activities. Over 900'000 IDPs have been resettled as of July 2022.¹³ As of September 2022, NMAC estimates that a total of 17 km² of hazardous areas remain in eight out of Sri Lanka's 25 administrative districts. Mullaitivu remains the most heavily EO-contaminated district, followed by Kilinochchi, Vavuniya and Mannar districts.¹⁴

¹¹ OAP action #21: *"States Parties affected by anti-personnel mines of an improvised nature will ensure that they apply all provisions and obligations under the Convention to such contamination as they do for all other types of anti-personnel mines, including during survey and clearance in fulfilment of Article 5 and disaggregate by types of mines when reporting in fulfilment of Article 7 obligations"*.

¹² IMAS 04.10, Glossary of mine action terms, definitions and abbreviations, Amendment 10, 2019: *"Battle Area Clearance (BAC) (2005) the systematic and controlled clearance of hazardous areas where the hazards are known not to include mines"*, p.5.

¹³ Information from the Ministry of Housing and Construction.

¹⁴ A mine action progress map is included in Annex I

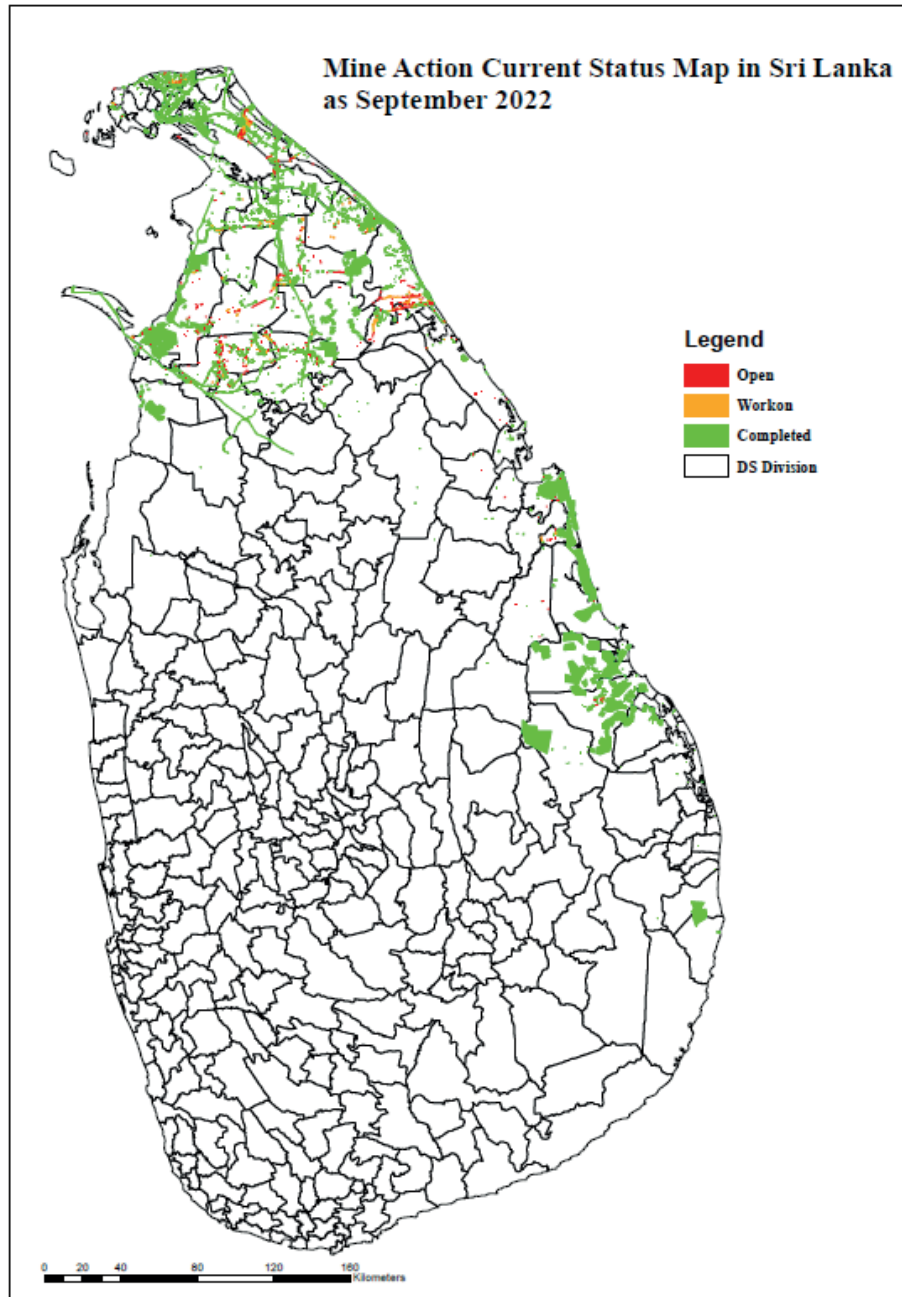


Figure 1: Mine action progress map, as of September 2022 NMAC, IMSMA Data 22 September 2022.

Some of Sri Lanka's remaining contamination is in forest areas. Sri Lanka's diverse topography and varied tropical climate have given rise to a unique biodiversity, protected by a number of legislative instruments, policies, strategies and programmes. Addressing remaining contamination, in line with IMAS 07.13 on Environmental Management, will be critical to minimise impact on the environment.¹⁵ Sri Lanka's mine action programme is committed to doing so in line with good practice. While Sri Lanka

¹⁵ IMAS 07.13 on Environmental Management, First Edition, 2017

does not have a specific National Mine Action Standard (NMAS) on Environmental Management, most operators refer to IMAS 07.13 and have relevant Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) in place.

Sri Lanka experienced a major reduction in mine accidents over the last ten years with three EO casualties recorded in 2021. The total number of recorded EO casualties from 1985 to 2021 is 1'716¹⁶. In line with international good practice, NMAC started collecting EO casualty data in a sex and age disaggregated manner in 2010 and has since then recorded a total of 184 EO casualties, out of which 29 were women, 8 girls, 55 boys and 92 men. The higher proportion of male casualties (particularly above the age of 18) reflects global EO accident patterns. In Sri Lanka, this can be partly explained by the fact that men and boys engage in livelihood activities further from their households and villages, whereas women and girls' responsibilities are generally more limited to their homes and villages.¹⁷ Explosive Ordnance Risk Education (EORE) activities need to take these gender and age dimensions into account in their design and delivery, further elaborated upon under strategic objective 1.

PREVIOUS STRATEGIC PERIOD: KEY ACHIEVEMENTS AND CHALLENGES

Sri Lanka made considerable progress in its commitments to international humanitarian law (IHL) during the previous mine action strategic period (2016-2020), including its accession to the APMBC and the CCM. Sri Lanka also submitted all its annual Article 7 transparency reports, achieved its APMBC Article 4 obligations in August 2021 and completed its APMBC Article 9 obligations in March 2022, following the adoption of Act n°03 of 2022 on the Prohibition of the anti-personal mines by the Parliament.

Concerning EORE, Sri Lanka strengthened the sustainability of its risk education activities, including through integrating EORE into the school curriculum in the northern and eastern provinces. EORE training materials and tools were also developed and disseminated in Tamil and Sinhala, facilitating effective outreach and targeting.

Sri Lanka's previous national mine action strategy included gender and diversity as a cross-cutting theme. Alignment with SDG5, the Women, Peace and Security agenda and the UN Gender Guidelines for Mine Action Programmes provided a strong framework to guide operations during the last strategic phase. Operators made significant efforts to promote gender and diversity in all their work, through targeted recruitment and the introduction of safeguarding mechanisms. This contributed to Sri Lanka having among the highest proportion of female to male deminers in the world in 2020.¹⁸

Regarding survey and clearance activities, operators completed resurvey activities in early 2017, resulting in the release of large areas of safe land and greater clarity on the remaining EO contamination problem. A principal challenge as from 2019, however, was the unexpected discovery of previously unknown mine contamination, which can partly be explained by community members discovering mines while resettling and venturing into previously uninhabited and unexplored areas,

¹⁶ Sri Lanka 2022 APMBC Article 7 [Report](#).

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁸ In 2020, 39% of those employed in mine action were women. GICHD, The Socioeconomic Impact of Employing Female Deminers in Sri Lanka: Key Findings, Geneva, June 2020. (https://www.gichd.org/fileadmin/GICHD-resources/rec-documents/GICHD_Sri_Lanka_Study.pdf)

including isolated jungles. Another aspect was that some hazardous areas turned out to be considerably larger compared to what was recorded in IMSMA, which resulted in operators spending significantly more time completing clearance tasks, compared to what had been initially planned for. These factors greatly contributed to Sri Lanka not being in a position to achieve the 2020 vision of completion. Starting in 2021, the programme addressed this past challenge as part of the completion process, through a dedicated survey to identify any previously unknown contamination. This provided greater clarity on the remaining contamination problem and mitigated the risk of discovering large areas of previously unknown contamination leading up to 2027.

A key challenge during the previous strategic period concerns the frequent institutional changes triggered by political developments, including shifts in NMAC's ministerial homes and in State and Ministry Secretaries, who serve as NMAC directors. These changes resulted in repeated loss of institutional capacities and expertise, which in turn negatively impacted national coordination and management more broadly.

COVID-19-related restrictions significantly impacted Sri Lanka's mine action programme in 2020 and 2021, with a total of 334 operational stand-down days for the four NGO operators. Survey and clearance outputs in 2020-2021 decreased as a consequence.

STRENGTHS, OPPORTUNITIES, WEAKNESSES AND THREATS

One of Sri Lanka's mine action programme's key strengths is its strong national ownership and integration into Sri Lanka's government structures. In 2021, the GoSL provided national budgetary support of an estimate 50 million Sri Lankan rupees¹⁹ to support NMAC and RMAO and 150 million Sri Lankan rupees to cover the Sri Lanka Army's Humanitarian Demining Unit (SLA HDU)'s operational costs.

Closely related to national ownership, Sri Lanka is a leading example of localised mine action in the global mine action sector, with two of the four operators being national NGOs that have successfully operated fully independently for many years. This and the experience and expertise of female and male national staff are good examples of locally owned mine action.

Risks related to future institutional challenges and lack of continuity at the NMAC Directorate level remain. Also, insufficiently resourced (human, financial and technical) NMAC and RMAO may negatively impact their abilities to effectively execute their responsibilities in the years to come. It will be crucial for the GoSL to ensure that NMAC and RMAO are adequately resourced to support the critical, final stage of the mine action programme, including through solid coordination, information management (IM) and quality management (QM).

As Sri Lanka approaches the completion of its pro-active survey and clearance operations, the GoSL will ensure that the completion process is sufficiently resourced and coordinated and that the programme implements the completion survey in a consistent manner. As completion approaches, thousands of mine action staff will need to be transitioned to other income generating opportunities, taking into consideration a wide range of gender and diversity aspects. This process has already

¹⁹ As of 7 October 2022, this was LKR amount equalled 136,893 USD

started, with close collaboration between NMAC and operators. Maintaining staff morale and ensuring adequate staffing levels while planning for this transition will be critical for operators in the years to come. Awareness raising related to the completion and staff transition processes among, and coordination with, relevant ministries will be key for the mine action programme’s success leading up to 2027. In line with its commitments to collaboration and transparency, Sri Lanka will share lessons learnt and good practice from these processes with the global mine action sector.

As completion approaches, Sri Lanka is also set to transition to reactively responding to reported EO threats. SLA HDU’s prominent role in the mine action programme means that Sri Lanka is well positioned and prepared to manage its future residual EO contamination with well-functioning national capacities. The SLA HDU will need to be adequately resourced and trained to facilitate a smooth and sustainable transition, elaborated upon further in the present strategy’s objective 3.

The financial and political crisis that culminated in mid-2022 resulted in widespread hardships throughout Sri Lanka and negative impacts on the mine action programme. As a result, critical fuel shortages lead to the suspension of mine action operations for a total of 74 days for the four NGO operators. It is likely that the financial crisis will have enduring effects on the programme. Other external factors such as the war in Ukraine, Covid-19 and other potential pandemics, as well as climate change, represent risks for the mine action programme that should be considered in all future planning. Solid collaboration and transparent information sharing will be essential to managing these risks. The programme’s resilience and its ability to bounce back during exceptionally challenging times will be critical to meet its strategic objectives until 2027.

Financial sustainability is one of the most prominent risks to Sri Lanka’s mine action programme as it directly impacts the extent to which strategic targets may be reached and completion be achieved by the end of 2027. The effects of COVID-19 greatly aggravated financial challenges in 2020 and 2021, as resources were diverted to tackle the consequences of the pandemic, both within Sri Lanka and globally. Strategic objective 2 addresses the challenge of financial sustainability, with a commitment to develop a resource mobilisation strategy. Regular coordination and information sharing with the GoSL and international donors will also be critical to keep them engaged and informed, elaborated upon further in the second strategic objective.

ENABLING FACTORS

The implementation of this strategy relies on several factors, including a robust QM system (QMS), a solid commitment to continual improvement and an appropriate information management system. Likewise, approved IMAS-compliant NMAC, ideally developed consultatively with all relevant stakeholders, are critical, as is the development and full compliance of operator SOPs that reflect these NMAC. A sufficiently resourced and staffed national QMS is a

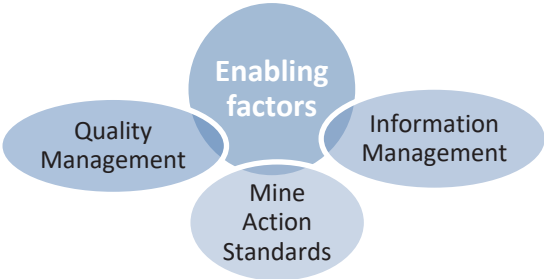


Figure 2: Enabling factors

precondition to ensuring SOPs comply with NMAS and that operations are implemented in line with SOPs. As underlined in IMAS 07.12 on QM, SOPs are a key part of a mine action QMS.²⁰

QUALITY MANAGEMENT

IMAS 07.12 presents several principles that are central to QM in mine action.²¹ Sri Lanka's mine action programme embraces all these principles, reflected in subsequent strategic objective sections. The driver behind continual improvement processes is the PDCA cycle (plan – do – check – act) which occurs at every level of the programme and within every mine action activity.²²

Quality assurance (QA) and quality control (QC) are key components of operational QM processes. The RMAO has several QA officers based out of Kilinochchi, responsible for conducting QA visits to all operations. Insufficient funding and resources, however, seriously hamper RMAO's ability to fulfil this responsibility effectively and efficiently.

MINE ACTION STANDARDS

Standards are a central component of QM and the development and application of IMAS are guided by five key principles, as outlined in IMAS 01.10.²³ One of these principles is national ownership, which reaffirms that the primary responsibility for mine action lies with the Government of the affected state.

Acknowledging the importance of IMAS-compliant NMAS for effective and efficient operations and recognising its role in leading the development of NMAS, NMAC will ensure that the development, approval and full implementation of IMAS-compliant NMAS is ongoing. This is addressed in further detail in subsequent strategic objectives.

INFORMATION MANAGEMENT

The principal goal of information management (IM) is to provide stakeholders with timely, accurate and relevant information products that meet agreed requirements. IMAS 05.10 defines IM as the ongoing specification and evaluation of information requirements, the collection, validation, storage and analysis of relevant data followed by the dissemination of information products to stakeholders in a timely manner.²⁴ As highlighted in IMAS 05.10, QM principles should guide the implementation of all elements of IM (organisation, resources, processes, and products).

Sri Lanka's mine action programme uses IMSMA NG to store and analyse all mine action information. NMAC has started the process of transferring from IMSMA NG to IMSMA Core with support from the GICHD. Recognising that comprehensive IM processes are a prerequisite to achieving all objectives in this strategy, NMAC will ensure that clear and standardised information requirements and processes,

²⁰ IMAS 07.12 Quality Management in Mine Action, First Edition, 2016.

²¹ *Ibid.*: Key QM principles: 1. Customer focus, 2. Leadership, 3. Engagement of people, 4. Gender and diversity, 5. Process approach, 6. Continual improvement, 7. Evidence-based decision making, 8. Relationship management, 9. Risk management and quality.

²² *Ibid.*

²³ IMAS 01.10 Guide for the application and development of IMAS, Second Edition, Amendment 10, 2021: Key principles are national ownership, humanitarian principles, capacity development, other international standards, and international treaties.

²⁴ IMAS 05.10 Information Management for Mine Action, Second Edition, Amendment, 2020.

reflecting IMAS principles and Convention obligations, are documented in NMAS and that they inform all data collection.

CONTRIBUTION TO BROADER AGENDAS

THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

The 2030 Agenda with its 17 SDGs and 169 targets have since early 2016 shaped global development efforts and policy making.²⁵ The Agenda is centred on the principle that sustainable development be participatory, inclusive and non-discriminatory.



Figure 3: Sustainable Development Goals

The GoSL commits to development that is culturally sensitive and environmentally sustainable in its overarching policy framework ‘Vistas of Prosperity and Splendor.’²⁶ Sri Lanka is also committed to promoting linkages between the SDGs and the mine action programme. Survey and clearance of contaminated areas and the subsequent release of safe land will be intimately linked with the SDGs as Sri Lanka’s minefields are close to, or in, rural communities with significant socio-economic, humanitarian, commercial and environmental impacts. Sri Lanka’s mine action programme has an opportunity to highlight impacts and opportunities clearance will bring in terms of facilitating development and contributing to the fulfilment of SDGs. NMAC and operators will collect, analyse and share relevant information, to raise awareness of mine action’s enabling role for broader development.

A GICHD-UNDP 2017 study identifies connections between mine action and several SDGs²⁷, many of which are relevant to Sri Lanka’s mine action programme.

²⁵ Sustainable Development Goals (<http://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/development-agenda/>)

²⁶ National Policy Framework, Vistas of Prosperity and Splendour
(<http://www.doc.gov.lk/images/pdf/NationalPolicyframeworkEN/FinalDovVer02-English.pdf>)

²⁷ UNDP and GICHD, Leaving no one Behind: Mine Action and the Sustainable Development Goals, Preliminary Findings, February 2017

(https://www.gichd.org/fileadmin/GICHD-resources/rec-documents/Leaving_no_one_behind-Mine_Action_and_SDGs.pdf)

As of September 2022, NMAC estimates that just over 17 km² of hazardous areas remain to be addressed, most of which are confirmed hazardous areas (CHA). The release of these areas is expected to enable safe conservation, tourism, agriculture, fishing, infrastructure development and access to education and health facilities (as per figure 4 below). Appreciating that some of the remaining contamination is within forest areas, Sri Lanka will ensure that survey and clearance in environmentally sensitive areas are conducted in line with relevant standards and in agreement with relevant authorities to minimise negative impact on the environment. Regular coordination between NMAC and the Departments of Wildlife Conservation and Forest, housed within the Ministry of Wildlife and Forest Resources Conservation²⁸, will be necessary to achieve this.











Land use categories and the SDGs		
Category	Type of area	Contribution to SDGs
Access to basic services and resources	Foot path, roadside, minor road, railway line	  
	Residential areas	
	Schools, hospitals, temples	
Agriculture	Paddy field, agricultural land	 
	Pasture and grazing land	
	Water Tank	
Military use	Military installation	
Natural Resources and Tourism Potential	Forests	   
	Coasts	
	Riverbanks	

Figure 4: Land use categories and corresponding SDGs

Sri Lanka’s Vistas of Prosperity and Splendor has identified Sri Lanka’s northern and eastern districts as opportunities for economic development. Also, as outlined in Sri Lanka’s Strategic Plan for Tourism 2022-2025²⁹, tourism potential in the north and east is an opportunity to improve the diversity of tourism destinations and to address the concentration of tourist flows in Greater Colombo, the southern coast, the Hill Country and the cultural triangle. Also, Sri Lanka’s National Forest Policy³⁰ recommends nature-based tourism, provided it does not damage the ecosystem and that the local population benefits. Nature-based tourism is one of the fastest growing tourism sectors in the world, including in Sri Lanka and the country’s natural assets will continue to play an important role in the success of the industry’s performance.³¹

²⁸ Ministry of Wildlife and Forest Resources Conservation: <https://www.mwfc.gov.lk/about-us/>

²⁹ Strategic Plan for Sri Lanka Tourism 2022-2025 (https://www.sltda.gov.lk/storage/common_media/Sri_Lanka-Final_V6_Edited850147500.pdf)

³⁰ Sri Lanka National Forest Policy

³¹ Sri Lanka Tourism Alliance, 2021 (<https://www.srilankatourismalliance.com/reopening-updates/>)

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS

Sri Lanka is exposed to climate change-induced hazards, including tropical cyclones and flooding. The disruption of monsoons and altered rainfall is already impacting many sectors of Sri Lanka's economy such as tourism, fisheries, tea plantations and agriculture. Climate-induced changes also impact the mine action programme and operational planning. Climate change projections predict long-term changes to the monsoon pattern and shifting of ecological regions and view Sri Lanka as vulnerable to climate change impacts³², despite the country facing moderate disaster risk levels.³³ In response to these challenges and in line with its obligations as State Party to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and signatory to the Paris Agreement³⁴, Sri Lanka has a comprehensive normative framework in place, comprising national policies, strategies and action plans on climate change and sustainable development.

Forestry has been identified by the GoSL as one of the key sectors which will actively contribute to reaching carbon reduction commitments³⁵, in line with Sri Lanka's obligations towards the UNFCCC and the Paris Agreement. When engaging in Forest Areas, the mine action programme has an opportunity to adhere to the GoSL's efforts to mitigate climate change by integrating specific mitigation actions in its planning, ensuring appropriate survey and clearance activities.

THE GRAND BARGAIN AND LOCALISATION

Commonly used since the signature of the Grand Bargain in 2016, the term localisation refers to the "support provided for the leadership, delivery and capacity of local responders [...] in addressing humanitarian needs".³⁶ Broadly recognized as a key enabler of a more efficient and effective humanitarian response, localisation remains a priority in the Grand Bargain 2.0 framework, which runs until June 2023. Sri Lanka's mine action programme directly contributes to this global agenda, through its national operators.

GENDER AND DIVERSITY

Sri Lanka recognises that women, girls, boys and men are affected differently by EO contamination due to their roles and responsibilities and therefore have specific and varying needs and priorities. Women, girls, boys and men also often hold distinct information on EO contamination and its impact. Mine action activities and assistance need to reflect the distinct needs of women, girls, boys and men through targeted design, for activities to be effective and non-discriminatory and results to be

³² Sri Lanka ranks 104th out of 181 countries in the 2020 [ND-GAIN Index](#), which calculates a country's vulnerability to climate change as well as their readiness to improve resilience.

³³ Sri Lanka ranks 95th out of 191 countries in the INFORM Index of Risk Management developed by the European Commission. Sri Lanka Country Profile 2022, (<https://drmkc.jrc.ec.europa.eu/inform-index/INFORM-Risk/Country-Risk-Profile>)

³⁴ UNFCCC webpage, Sri Lanka ratification status: <https://unfccc.int/node/61204>

³⁵ Ministry of Environment, Updated Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC) of Sri Lanka, September 2021.

(<https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/NDC/2022-06/Amendmend%20to%20the%20Updated%20Nationally%20Determined%20Contributions%20of%20Sri%20Lanka.pdf>)

³⁶ Metcalfe-Hough, V., Fenton, W., Saez, P. and Spencer, A. (2021) The Grand Bargain in 2021: an independent review. HPG commissioned report. London: ODI (www.odi.org/en/publications/the-grand-bargain-in-2021-an-independent-review).

sustainable. Furthermore, Sri Lanka recognises the benefits and importance of offering employment opportunities to women in mine action. As such, Sri Lanka commits to ensuring that all mine action activities are gender³⁷ and diversity³⁸ sensitive and to continue efforts to mainstreaming gender and diversity and building on past achievements and lessons learned. Commitment from all stakeholders is required for this to be achieved at both organisational and operational levels.

The mine action programme commits to ensuring that all information is communicated and shared in a gender and sensitive-manner, disaggregating data by sex, age and disability, in line with the OAP and Sri Lanka's reporting obligations. Communicating about the needs of women, girls, boys and men has proven effective for awareness-raising and fundraising purposes. It also makes explicit the link between mine action and broader agendas such as the Women, Peace and Security agenda and work around SDG 5 on Gender Equality. NMAC will seek to integrate mine action into Sri Lanka's Women, Peace and Security national action plan.

A 2020 GICHD study, looking into the socioeconomic impact of employing female deminers in Sri Lanka³⁹ found that 50% of female deminers interviewed were the sole income earners in their households and that more than one in three women who were employed as deminers did not receive any income before joining mine action, as opposed to one in 20 men. As Sri Lanka approaches completion, it will be critical to ensuring that the staff transition process integrates gender and diversity considerations to facilitate sustainable and successful results. This is elaborated upon further under strategic objective 4.

³⁷ Gender refers to the roles, behaviours, activities, and attributes that a given society at a given time considers appropriate for women, girls, boys and men. Gender is socially constructed, and thus changes in relation to location and time. Gender is not a synonym for women; it is about the power relations between women and men, as well as among women and among men. Gender is part of the broader socio-cultural context, which includes other dimensions such as age, race, ethnic group, class, etc. Definition as per the UN Gender Guidelines for Mine Action Programmes, 3rd Edition, 2018, https://unmas.org/sites/default/files/mine_action_gender_guidelines_web_0.pdf

³⁸ Diversity refers to identity characteristics such as age, race, ethnicity, language, religion, disability, sexual orientation, etc. A good understanding of diversity enables the use of an intersectional approach where different diversity aspects are seen overlapping and creating interdependent systems of discrimination. *Ibid*

³⁹ The Socioeconomic Impact of Employing Female Deminers in Sri Lanka, GICHD, June 2020, *op.cit.*

STRATEGIC ORIENTATION 2023 - 2027

The Theory of Change for Sri Lanka’s completion strategy is centred around a vision, mission and four strategic objectives. Each objective is accompanied by a set of outcomes, with corresponding indicators, baselines and targets. Five key risks may negatively impact the achievement of strategic objectives, each accompanied by a mitigation measure. The strategy will be implemented through a budgeted work-plan and progress will be measured at the outcome level.

Vision

Women, girls, boys and men thrive in a mine free Sri Lanka where EO victims are fully integrated into society and have their needs met

Mission

To coordinate and implement mine action in line with international good practice to facilitate sustainable development and achieve completion

Strategic Objectives

1. Land Release and EORE	2. Coordination and National Ownership	3. Management of residual contamination	4. Staff transition
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The release of safe land and implementation of inclusive EORE activities result in completion and facilitate sustainable development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthened coordination and national ownership result in raised awareness, greater transparency and increased collaboration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Residual EO contamination is effectively managed with sustainable national structures, ensuring safer communities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sri Lanka’s staff transition process facilitates access to alternative economic activities and promotes safe and sustainable livelihood activities

Risks

Mitigation measures

Sri Lanka’s political and financial crisis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keeping international donors informed of challenges and operational stand-downs, ensuring transparency and continuous communication
Reduced international donor funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National Mine Action Strategy – clarity on strategic priorities Resource mobilisation strategy that presents clear targets
Insufficient funding to NMAC, RMAO and SLA HDU	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lobby the treasury to ensure NMAC, RMAO and SLA HDU are fully resourced to carry out their responsibilities National Mine Action Strategy – clarity on strategic priorities
Limited coordination and communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sri Lanka’s new national mine action strategy Commitment to strengthened communication and coordination
Pandemic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adapt and capitalise on lessons learnt and good practice from the last two years. Sectoral pandemic guidelines
Limited employment and entrepreneurship opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitoring the labour market and economic prospects on a regular basis; adapting staff transition interventions to changing environment and context; keeping international donors informed of challenges and external constraints

Four key principles underpin Sri Lanka's national mine action completion strategy and are central to achieving all strategic objectives:

- accountability⁴⁰
- continual improvement
- transparency⁴¹
- humanitarian principles: humanity, impartiality, neutrality, and independence⁴²

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 1: LAND RELEASE AND EORE

The NMAC and the SLA HDU are working closely with national operators Delvon Assistance for Social Harmony (DASH) and Skavita Humanitarian Assistance and Relief Project (SHARP), and international operators HALO Trust and Mines Advisory Group (MAG) to identify and clear EO and deliver EORE in line with IMAS, drawing on funding from the GoSL and several international donors.⁴³ With Sri Lanka's 2017 accession to the APMBC and in line with its Article 5 obligations, it has committed to identifying and clearing all AP mined areas by 1 June 2028, but is confident that it will be able to do so by the end of 2027.

Sri Lanka will ensure that all land release⁴⁴ operations are conducted in line with international good practice and IMAS and that required information is collected, stored, analysed and reported on in line with IMAS-specified classifications, activities and products.⁴⁵ Applying these standards and principles will allow Sri Lanka to meet its convention reporting obligations, including OAP actions #20 and #22.⁴⁶

⁴⁷ Figure 5 shows the main elements of the land release process, in line with IMAS.

⁴⁰ An obligation or willingness to accept responsibility or to account for one's actions (<https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/accountability>)

⁴¹ Transparency is characterized by visibility or accessibility of information (<https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/transparent>)

⁴² IMAS 01.10 Guide for the application and development of IMAS, Second Edition, Amendment 10, 2021: "*Humanitarian principles: In its response to explosive ordnance, mine action is first and foremost a humanitarian concern. Framing of the standards and their application as part of any humanitarian response shall reflect the fundamental humanitarian principles of humanity, impartiality, neutrality, and independence.*", p.4.

⁴³ As of September 2022, Australia, Canada, Japan, Norway, the UK, Germany, World Without Mines, Switzerland and the US funded Sri Lanka's mine action programme.

⁴⁴ IMAS 07.11 Land Release, First Edition, Amendment 5, 2019: "Land release describes *the process of applying all reasonable effort to identify, define, and remove all presence and suspicion of EO through non-technical survey, technical survey and/or clearance. The criteria for "all reasonable effort" shall be defined by the NMAA*", p.2". Land release should result in disaggregated reporting, distinguishing between the activity (non-technical survey (NTS), technical survey (TS) and clearance) and the products they result in (cancelled, reduced and cleared).

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

⁴⁶ OAP action #22: Report in a manner consistent with IMAS by providing information on the remaining challenges, disaggregating by 'suspected hazardous areas' and 'confirmed hazardous areas' and their relative size, as well as by the type of contamination. Report on progress in accordance with the land release methodology employed (i.e. cancelled through non-technical survey, reduced through technical survey, or cleared through clearance)

⁴⁷ OAP action #20: Annually update their national work plans based on new evidence and report on adjusted milestones in their Article 7 reports by 30 April each year, including information on the number of areas and amount of mined area to be addressed annually and on how priorities have been established.

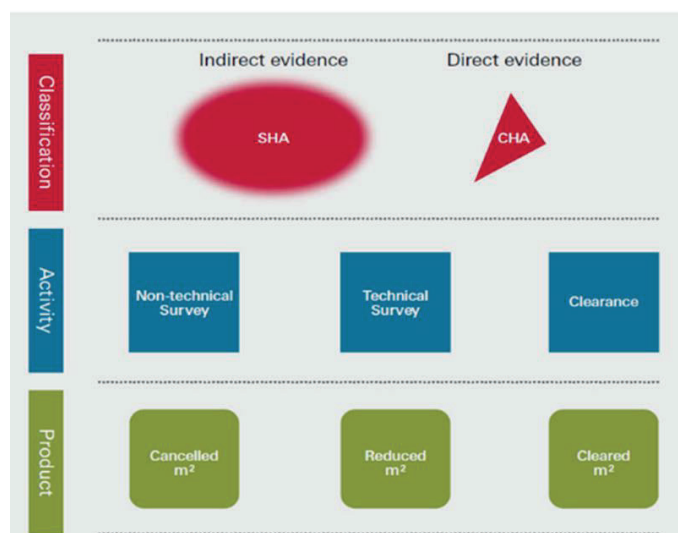


Figure 5: Elements of the Land Release process

With an estimated 17 km² of CHA remaining as of September 2022⁴⁸, Sri Lanka’s Completion Process⁴⁹ presents activities and objectives leading up to Sri Lanka’s completion of Article 5 obligations, expected to be achieved by the end of 2027. The Process includes dedicated non-technical survey (NTS) activities to identify previously unknown contamination⁵⁰, ongoing survey and clearance of registered hazardous areas and the completion survey. Based on clear and coherent processes, supported by solid IM and QM processes, the completion survey will allow the GoSL to declare administrative areas ‘complete’, confirming that it is confident that *all reasonable effort*⁵¹ has been applied to identify and clear all mined areas and that there is no further evidence of mines in the administrative area, at the time of signing the completion documents. All stakeholders will implement completion surveys in line with the completion survey SOP, developed in 2022.

⁴⁸ The remaining contamination recorded in IMSMA as of September 2022 was 15.4 square km. Based on earlier experience, NMAC added another 1.6 square km as a ‘buffer’ to this baseline to account for the risk that some polygons may be larger than what is currently recorded in IMSMA.

⁴⁹ ‘Completion’, in the context of Sri Lanka, refers to Sri Lanka fulfilling its APMBC Article 5 obligations and identifying and clearing other EO, in line with All Reasonable Effort.

⁵⁰ This process started in December 2021 and was 98 per cent complete as of September 2022.

⁵¹ IMAS 07.11 Land Release, First Edition, Amendment 5, 2019: “The term “All Reasonable Effort” describes what is considered a minimum acceptable level of effort to identify and document contaminated areas or to remove the presence or suspicion of EO. “All reasonable effort” has been applied when the commitment of additional resources is considered to be unreasonable in relation to the results expected.”, p.3.

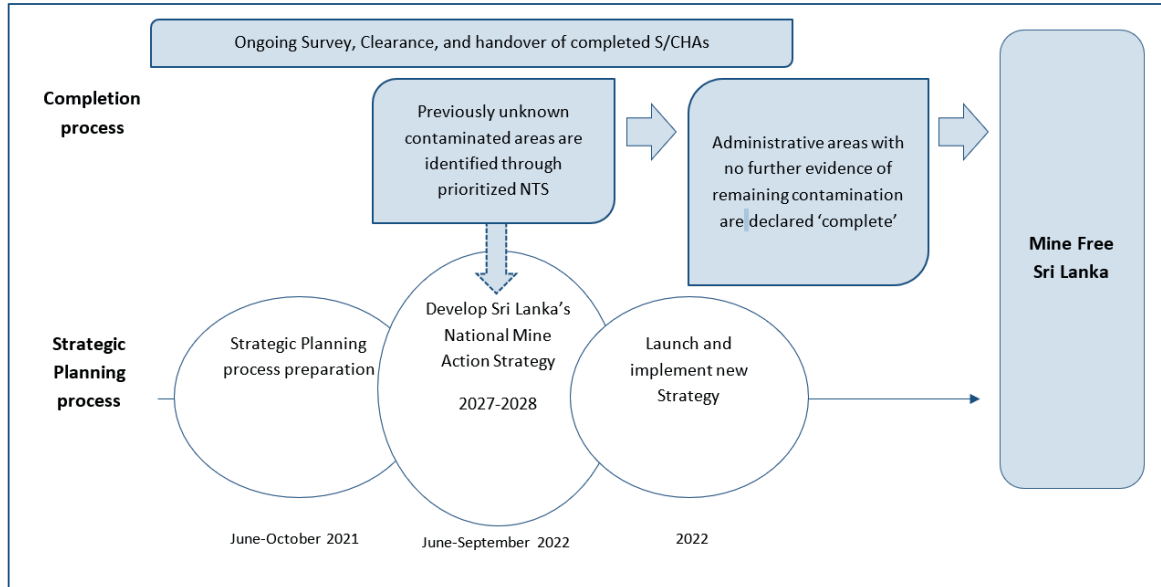


Figure 6: Sri Lanka's Completion Process 2022-2027

While EO accidents have reduced significantly in Sri Lanka over the past 10 years, analysing and understanding trends on activities at the time of accidents, risk taking behaviour and possible seasonal dimensions will remain important in the years to come. This will allow the programme to tailor EORE messages and supporting materials and implement and monitor EORE interventions, in line with principles outlined in OAP action #29.⁵² Sri Lanka's 2022 financial crisis resulted in an increase of firewood collection as an alternative to limited gas and fuel, and scrap metal and explosives to earn a living. Addressing these risky activities through targeted EORE will be critical in the years to come.⁵³

In line with its Completion Process, Sri Lanka commits to ensuring continual improvement and strengthening its QM system, facilitating effective and safe survey and clearance activities and sustainable development. In parallel, the programme will implement the completion survey in a gender and diversity-sensitive manner, facilitating Article 5 completion. Sri Lanka will also ensure that appropriate EORE activities are implemented, promoting community awareness and safe behaviour among women, girls, boys and men in EO-affected communities.

⁵² OAP action #29: Provide context-specific mine risk education and reduction programmes to all affected populations and groups at risk. Ensure that such programmes are developed on the basis of a needs assessment, that they are tailored to the threat encountered by the population, and that they are sensitive to gender, age, disability and take the diverse needs and experiences of people in affected communities into account.

⁵³ Sri Lanka 2022 APMBC Article 7 report, *op.cit.*

Strategic Objective 1: Land Release and EORE			
The release of safe land and implementation of EORE activities result in completion and facilitate sustainable development			
Outcomes	Indicators	Baselines	Targets
1.1. Strengthened quality management, facilitates effective and safe land release activities	Number of IMAS-compliant NMAS updated, finalised and approved	13 NMAS Chapters from 2010; 4 draft NMAS, awaiting finalisation and approval, as of September 2022	NMAS 04.10 on NTS, NMAS 04 on Land Release and NMAS 08 on Quality Management updated and approved ⁵⁴ by the end of 2023
	Number of workshop(s) organised with all operators on updated NMAS and links with SOPs	0 (2022)	NMAS workshop organised by 1 st quarter of 2024
	Number of operator SOPs reviewed in line with updated NMAS	Operator SOPs not always aligned IMAS land release	All operator SOPs are reviewed in line with updated NMAS by the end of 2023
	Number of IMSMA forms reviewed in line with updated NMAS	Current IMSMA forms do not include requirements for additional explanation on reduction and cancellation decisions	All relevant IMSMA forms are reviewed in line with updated NMAS by the end of 2023
	Number of RMAO QM Officers sufficiently equipped and resourced to implement QM activities	12 RMAO QM officers in 2022	At least 2 monitoring visits per sites
1.2. An inclusive and transparent completion survey, facilitates Article 5 completion	Number of completion surveys conducted in line with completion survey SOP	Completion survey SOP developed in 2022	All completion surveys conducted in line with SOP until the end of 2027
	Number of Grama Niladhari Divisions (GN) completion declaration forms/year	0 (2022)	All previously EO-affected GNs declared 'complete' by the end of 2027

⁵⁴ The revisions of the NMAS on NTS, Land Release and Quality Management referred to in Outcome 1.1. refer to recommendations from the Accident Investigation Report N-DA-TR-193, recommendations, 12 December 2021.

	Number of districts declared 'complete'/year	0 (2022)	All previously EO-affected DS' declared complete by the end of 2027
	Number of districts declared 'complete'/year	11 EO-affected districts as of 2022	By the end of 2023, 7 EO-affected districts remain By the end of 2024, 5 EO-affected districts remain By the end of 2025, 3 EO-affected districts remain By the end of 2026, 2 EO-affected districts remain By the end of 2027, 0 EO-affected districts remain
	Number of completed provinces	Tbd	All previously EO-affected provinces declared complete by 2028
1.3. Survey and clearance activities result in the release of safe land, facilitating sustainable development	Number of impact assessments conducted in a standardised manner	Operators conduct impact assessment, but not always in a standardised manner	Land use is documented and reported on all completed tasks in a standardised manner, in line with SDG categories
	Number of km ² released (disaggregated by cancelled, reduced and cleared)	2021 disaggregated land release data Cancelled: 43,281 Sqm Reduced: 335,883 Sqm Cleared: 4,101,273 Sqm	17 km ² released by the end of 2027 4.5 km ² released in 2023 4.5 km ² released in 2024 4 km ² released in 2025 3.5 km ² released in 2026 0.5 km ² released in 2027
	Number of km ² remaining at the end of every year	17 km ² CHA remaining as of September 2022	km ² remaining by the end of 2023, 2024, 2025, 2026 0 km ² remaining by the end of 2027
	Number of survey/clearance permissions granted by the	No survey/clearance permissions granted as of 2022	Relevant permissions granted

	Forestry, Wildlife and Archaeology Departments		
1.4. Gender and diversity inclusive EORE activities result in community awareness and safer behaviour ⁵⁵	Existence of updated NMAS on EORE	NMAS on EORE developed in 2010	NMAS EORE updated and approved by the end of 2023
	Number of EO casualty (SADDD)	2021 EO casualty data: Injured: 1 man Killed: 1 man, 2 boys	EO casualty (SADDD) 0
	Number of people (six years of age or older) in attendance for all core messages of the EORE session, SADD ⁵⁶	Number of people (six years of age or older) in attendance for all core messages of the EORE session, in 2021 (SADD): women: 188 girls: 126 boys: 121 men: 145	At risk women, girls, boys and men are prioritised and targeted
	Number of EORE sessions delivered, as part of the completion survey	0	EORE conducted in all EO-affected GNs by the end of 2027, in collaboration with completion survey teams

⁵⁵ OAP actions #29 #30: Prioritise people most at risk by linking mine risk reduction and education programmes and messages directly to an analysis of available casualty and contamination data, an understanding of the affected population's behaviour, risk pattern and coping mechanisms, and, wherever possible, anticipated population movements.

⁵⁶ [Standardising Beneficiary Definitions in Humanitarian Mine Action: Second Edition 2020 | MAG \(maginternational.org\)](#)

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 2: COORDINATION AND NATIONAL OWNERSHIP

Sri Lanka will continue to demonstrate strong national ownership of its mine action programme, including by ensuring its national mine action structures are sufficiently equipped and resourced to effectively execute their mandate. This supports Oslo⁵⁷ and Lausanne⁵⁸ Action Plans action #1, on demonstrating national ownership, including by making financial commitments.

NMAC commits to ensuring regular and structured coordination and transparent information sharing with Sri Lanka government representatives, international donors, operators and other partners, and will, in close collaboration with partners, organise bi-annual coordination meetings. This supports OAP action #43 on national coordination efforts and is in line with Grand Bargain principles.

As a State Party to the APMBC, CCM and CRPD, Sri Lanka commits to a rights-based approach to victim assistance⁵⁹ (VA), with the understanding that VA's overall mission is the full and effective participation of EO victims⁶⁰ in society on an equal basis to others. Sri Lanka fully supports the principle that specialised VA efforts are short-term solutions that should be implemented only until they are effectively integrated into broader frameworks. Sri Lanka's mine action programme notes that its VA responsibilities are more of a facilitating role, focusing on awareness raising, coordination and information. As such, the mine action programme commits to addressing strategic challenges related to information management, coordination and awareness raising.

Resource mobilisation will be an ongoing effort, targeting the GoSL and international partners. Sri Lanka's mine action programme will seek to increase national funding from the GoSL, expand its international donor base and explore other sources of funding. In line with OAP action #43⁶¹, NMAC will develop a resource mobilisation strategy which will bring greater clarity on funding targets and key principles that will guide all resource mobilisation efforts in the mine action programme until the end of 2027.

⁵⁷ OAP action#1: Demonstrate high levels of national ownership, including by integrating Convention implementation activities into national development plans, poverty reduction strategies, humanitarian response plans and national strategies for the inclusion of persons with disabilities as appropriate, and by making financial and other commitments to implementation.

⁵⁸ Lausanne Action Plan (LAP) Action #1 : Demonstrate high levels of national ownership in implementing the Convention's obligations, including by integrating implementation activities into national development plans, poverty reduction strategies, humanitarian response plans and national strategies for the inclusion of persons with disabilities, as appropriate, by enhancing national capacity to carry out obligations and/or making financial and other material commitments to the national implementation of the Convention .

⁵⁹ IMAS 13.10, Victim Assistance in Mine Action, First Edition, 2021: *"The term VA in the context of mine action refers to a set of activities that address the needs and rights of EO victims, and comprises emergency and ongoing medical care, rehabilitation, psychological and psycho-social support, and socio-economic inclusion (...). VA also includes data collection, laws, and policies."*, p.8.

⁶⁰ Victims include people injured and killed, their families, and communities affected by EO. The term 'victim' carries legal significance with respect to the APMBC, CCW and CCM. *Ibid.*

⁶¹ OAP action #43 States Parties seeking assistance will develop resource mobilisation plans and use all mechanisms within the Convention to disseminate information on challenges and requirements for assistance, including through their annual Article 7 transparency reports.

Strategic Objective 2: Coordination and National Ownership			
Strengthened coordination and national ownership result in raised awareness, greater transparency and increased collaboration			
Outcomes	Indicators	Baselines	Targets
2.1. Regular mine action coordination meetings strengthen collaboration between, and information sharing with, the Government of Sri Lanka, international donors, operators and other actors	APMBC Article 7 transparency report submitted by 30 April every year, drawing on the guide to reporting ^{62,63}	Sri Lanka's Article 7 report was submitted by deadline in 2022	Sri Lanka submits its APMBC annual Article 7 reports in a timely manner ⁶⁴ and includes information on OAP actions #33-41 on Victim Assistance
	Number of mine action donor coordination meetings organised/year	One mine action donor coordination meeting organised in 2021	Bi-annual mine action donor coordination meetings organised every year 2023-2027
	Number of mine action operator meetings organised/year	Four operations coordination meetings organised in 2021	Quarterly operations coordination meetings organised every year 2023-2027
2.2. NMAC leads on multi-sectoral efforts to ensure the needs and rights of EO victims are effectively addressed ⁶⁵	Number of relevant national policies and programmes that integrate VA obligations	VA is not integrated into National Disability Plan	VA is integrated into four national plans and policies by 2027
	Number of steering committee quarterly meetings where NMAC VA focal point participates	NMAC VA focal point does not participate in rehabilitation steering committee meetings as of June 2022	NMAC VA focal point participates in national and regional-level rehabilitation steering committee quarterly meetings

⁶² (APLC/MSP.14/2015/WP.2, <https://bit.ly/Guide-Reporting>)

⁶³ OAP action #8, Indicator 1.

⁶⁴ Deadline for submission of APMBC Annual Article 7 report is 30 April

⁶⁵ OAP action #35: Establish or strengthen a centralised database that includes information on persons killed by mines as well as on persons injured by mines and their needs and challenges, disaggregated by gender, age and disability, and make this information available to relevant stakeholders to ensure a comprehensive response to addressing the needs of mine victims.

	Inclusion of EO casualty SADD in injury surveillance system database, housed within the Ministry of Health	EO casualty SADD not included in Sri Lanka's injury surveillance system database as of June 2022	EO accidents are included as a cause of disability in the injury surveillance system forms (MoH); EO accident data is integrated into the injury surveillance system database
2.3. NMAC takes the lead in developing a resource mobilisation strategy to clarify funding gaps and targets until completion ⁶⁶	Existence of a government-approved resource mobilisation strategy ⁶⁷	As of June 2022, there was no resource mobilisation strategy for the mine action programme	Resource mobilisation strategy developed and approved by mid-2023

⁶⁶ OAP action #42: States Parties seeking assistance will develop resource mobilisation plans and use all mechanisms within the Convention to disseminate information on challenges and requirements for assistance, including through their annual Article 7 transparency reports and by taking advantage of the individualised approach. States Parties will share the outcomes of the individualised approach with the wider mine action community in order to maximise its impact

⁶⁷ In line with recommendations from the June 2022 online gender and diversity workshop facilitated by GICHD, this strategy should mainstream gender and diversity considerations.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 3: MANAGEMENT OF RESIDUAL CONTAMINATION

Sri Lanka expects to transition from pro-active survey and clearance of known EO contamination to reactively responding to reported residual contamination by the end of 2027. IMAS 04.10 specifies that residual contamination refers to contamination which gives rise to residual risk, which is the risk remaining following the application of all reasonable effort to identify, define, and remove all presence and suspicion of explosive ordnance through non-technical survey, technical survey and/or clearance. Risk is the combination of the probability of occurrence of harm and the severity of that harm.⁶⁸

Recognising the importance of planning for this transition in a timely manner, Sri Lanka's previous strategy included an objective on the management of residual contamination, emphasising that the SLA HDU will be responsible for managing residual contamination. In line with the OAP action #26, the GoSL acknowledges the need to continue planning for this transition, in close collaboration with all concerned stakeholders.⁶⁹ Sri Lanka's Police Task Force will play a role in explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) call outs, in line with what is stipulated in Sri Lanka's 2022 Prohibition of anti-personnel mines act.

The SLA HDU has been a key national stakeholder in Sri Lanka's mine action programme for decades, conducting mine clearance and EOD callouts, and delivering EORE. SLA HDU has also seconded staff to IM and QM positions at the RMAO for many years, developing solid humanitarian mine action expertise within its structures. These experiences place SLA HDU in a good position to manage Sri Lanka's future residual contamination effectively. As Sri Lanka approaches completion, the GoSL will ensure that the SLA HDU is appropriately equipped, staffed and sufficiently resourced to fulfil its responsibilities. As part of this transition process to a residual context, it will also be important to ensure that mine action information (including data on previously surveyed and cleared areas, EO accident locations, etc) is easily accessible and that any future residual EO contamination data can be collected and stored. This will facilitate sustainable and transparent IM processes, including effective information sharing and reporting. It will be critical that the transfer of Sri Lanka's national database to SLA is a staged process, and that relevant SLA staff are trained in IMSMA Core in the years leading up to completion to ensure a sufficient level of technical knowledge and a smooth transition.

Sri Lanka will also ensure that sustainable EORE structures will continue to be strengthened to promote safe behaviour and reduce the risks of future EO accidents. These EORE activities will also ensure that communities are informed of any EO that may be discovered and that they are aware of report procedures. Sri Lanka has successfully established sustainable EORE structures over several years, including by integrating EORE messages into the national school curricula. In line with OAP action #31, these structures will be further strengthened to ensure they can adapt to changing needs in the case that previously unknown contamination is discovered.⁷⁰

⁶⁸ IMAS 04.10 Glossary of mine action terms, definitions and abbreviations, Second Edition, Amendment 10, 2019.

⁶⁹ OAP action #26: Ensure that national strategies and work plans for completion make provisions for a sustainable national capacity to address previously unknown mined areas, including newly mined areas discovered following completion. In addressing these areas, they will consider the commitments made at the Twelfth Meeting of the States Parties.

⁷⁰ OAP action #31: Build national capacity to deliver mine risk education and reduction programmes with the ability to adapt to changing needs and contexts, including the delivery of such programmes to affected communities in the case that previously unknown mined areas are discovered.

Strategic Objective 3: Management of Residual Contamination			
Residual EO contamination is effectively managed with sustainable national structures, ensuring safer communities			
Outcomes	Indicators	Baselines	Targets
3.1. Sri Lanka's national database is managed by the SLA, safeguarding effective and transparent information collection, storage, analysis, sharing and reporting	Number of SLA staff participating in IMSMA Core trainings	0 SLA staff trained in IMSMA Core as of mid-2022	2 SLA staff participate in the IMSMA Core advanced course/year
	National database fully managed by SLA	NMAC manages national database (2022)	SLA will manage Sri Lanka's national database by 2027
	Number of SLA staff re-trained by above SLA staff in IMSMA Core	0 (2022)	06
3.2. SLA's survey and clearance capacities and structures are appropriately equipped, staffed and resourced to ensure effective management of residual contamination	Number of SLA clearance teams as of 2022	SLA MA capacities as of 2022: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 7 demining teams (1 officer and 41 deminers/team) • 16 demolition teams • 15 survey teams 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SLA HDU planning to increase 1 x male and 2 x female demining team. • demolition and survey team capacity can be increased according to the requirement
	Number of SLA staff participating in mine action trainings/year	Number of SLA HDU MA trainings (2022)	04
3.3. National EORE capacities and structures are strengthened, promoting sustainability and community safety	Existence of updated school curricula with EORE messages mainstreamed	EORE messages are included in school curricula	Need to discuss with education department
	Number of SLA HDU staff participating in EORE trainings/year	0 (2022)	04
	Number of national organisations implementing EORE	2 (2022)	02

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 4: STAFF TRANSITION

Sri Lanka's mine action programme employed more than 3'000 female and male deminers as of mid-2022. As completion is expected by the end of 2027, the importance of ensuring that an appropriate and sustainable staff transition process is in place is becoming increasingly important.

Against this backdrop, MAG took the initiative to develop a *Skills Acquisition and Post-demining Livelihood Transition Strategy* in 2020-2021, to support MAG's demining staff to transition to alternative economic activities when made redundant, and to support the incorporation of mine action staff transition into Sri Lanka's new national mine action strategy. Representatives from DASH, SHARP, HALO and GICHD were members of the Advisory Committee, while NMAC was heavily involved in the process of developing the transition strategy. This strategic objective draws heavily on the staff transition strategy developed by MAG, and the staged process it presents. The staff transition process is structured around three main phases:

1. Roll out interventions to enhance motivation and essential skills of staff until they effectively transition into alternative high-demand occupations
2. Pilot a voluntary redundancy programme with a limited number of staff made redundant to field test, monitor and adjust before the scale up phase
3. Scale up the staff redundancy programme based on an annual target, incorporating the lessons learnt from the pilot

The GoSL, with NMAC in the lead, will promote deminers' smooth transition to alternative, sustainable economic activities. The overall goal will be to preserve and strengthen the safe and sustainable livelihoods of thousands of women and men in Sri Lanka's northern and eastern districts. The GoSL and partners will ensure that the transition process integrates gender-related dimensions⁷¹ in a meaningful manner, to ensure non-discriminatory, effective and sustainable results. As highlighted in MAG's transition strategy, socio-economic aspects in the post-conflict districts – where most NGO deminer employees are from – also need to be considered, including the poverty rate, the availability of market-driven livelihood opportunities and the absorption capacities of the labour market. The GoSL and partners also need to be mindful of risks related to limited alternative income sources that could negatively impact the wellbeing of thousands of former deminers and their families.

The strategic outcomes that underpin this objective are aligned with the three transition phases listed above, emphasising the responsibilities of the GoSL, including those concerning coordination and information sharing.

⁷¹ As highlighted in, *The Socioeconomic Impact of Employing Female Deminers in Sri Lanka*, GICHD, June 2020, *op.cit.*

Strategic objective 4: Staff transition			
Sri Lanka's staff transition process facilitates access to alternative economic activities and promotes safe and sustainable livelihood activities			
Outcomes	Indicators	Baselines	Targets
4.1. The GoSL (line Ministry and NMAC) takes full ownership of the mine action staff transition process	Existence of a government-led Staff Transition Coordination Platform ⁷²	0 (2022)	An Inter-Governmental Coordination Platform is established ⁷³ by mid-2023
	Number of human resources (HR) redundancy processes approved by the MoL/year	0 (2022)	HR redundancy processes approved by the MoL by mid-2024 prior to the implementation of the pilot voluntary redundancy programme
	Existence of a functioning coordination platform with the private sector	0 (2022)	A Coordination Platform is established with the Private Sector by the end of 2023
	Number of Staff Transition Coordination meetings organised and chaired by NMAC with minutes taken and distributed	0 (2022)	Quarterly coordination meetings organised 2024-2027
4.2. Mine action staff have access to tailored training opportunities to gain new skills and find alternative employment after redundancy	Percentage and number of staff (disaggregated by gender and position) participating in one or more tailored trainings (phase 1)	As of June 2022: - MAG: 51% (422 out of 832; 287 male (M); 135 female (F); 59% of Deminers) - HALO: 22.5% (261 out of 1,155; 133 M; 128 F; 38% of Deminers) - DASH: 9% (35 out of 385; 24 M; 11 F; 54% of Deminers) - SHARP: 0	At least 75% of mine action staff complete one or more tailored trainings
	Percentage and number of female staff participating in targeted capacity building activities addressing	0 (2022)	At least 85% of female mine action staff complete one or more women-

⁷² Including between NMAC and the Ministry of Labour (MoL) on legal human resource requirements.

⁷³ This may also include key development agencies (donors, UN agencies, national and international NGOs).

	their specific needs and vulnerabilities (Phase 1)		focused capacity building activities by the end of phase 1
	Percentage and number of staff made redundant (disaggregated by gender and position) participating in gender-responsive and tailor-made vocational/technical training after redundancy	0 (2022)	At least 60% ⁷⁴
	% and number of staff made redundant, supported with placement opportunities to transition to alternative occupations (phases 2 and 3)	0 (2022)	At least 60%
4.3. A voluntary redundancy programme is piloted to field test, monitor and adjust before the scale-up phase	Staff redundancy pilot programme developed	0 (2022)	Step-by-step guide on voluntary redundancy reviewed and approved by the line Ministry/NMAC and the four operators by the end of 2023
	Existence of an approved clear redundancy plan (timeline and staff number)	0 (2022)	Timeline and number of mine action staff to be made redundant reviewed and approved by the line Ministry/NMAC and the four operators by mid-2024
	Existence of pilot programme lessons learnt and good practice documented and shared	0 (2022)	National workshop organised at the end of the pilot programme to present the lessons learnt report by the end of 2024
4.4. Mine action staff retention and morale are safeguarded	Transparent information sharing process is in place	0 (2022)	A gradual downsizing plan for 2025-2027, approved by NMAC and operators by the end of 2024

⁷⁴ To be revised based on the lessons learnt from the pilot voluntary redundancy programme

during the gradual downsizing process	Number of operators that established independent complaint mechanisms	0 (2022)	An Independent Complaint Mechanism established within each operator by mid-2024
	Number of stress management trainings provided/year	0 (2022)	Stress Management Training provided to senior and middle management staff members every year
	Number of staff retreats organised during downsizing phase	N/A	At least 2 staff retreats /operator during the period 2025-2027 to boost staff morale and promote transparent information sharing
	Mine action staff turnover rate (disaggregated by gender and position)	As of June 2022: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - MAG: 1.5% (13 operations (ops) staff out of 832; 15% female (F); 92% Deminers) - HALO: 0.7%⁷⁵ (average of 8 operations staff a month out of 1'153; 35% F; mainly Deminers) - DASH: 2.5%⁷⁶ (10 ops staff out of 385: 20% F; 100% Deminers) - SHARP: 3.9%⁷⁷ (7 ops out of 179; 12.5% F; 90% of Deminers) 	Retention levels maintained 2025-2027

⁷⁵ HALO loses approximately 90 staff (=10 sections a year). The baseline data is based on an average of 8 operations staff who leave the organisation in a month and 1'139 is the total operations staff capacity in June 2022.

⁷⁶ During the period January – June 2022, 61 staff (49M: 12F) left DASH, resulting in an average of 10 staff a month who leave the organisation, with the highest number observed in January (28 staff) and the lowest in June (3 staff only); all being Deminers. 385 is the total operations staff capacity in June 2022.

⁷⁷ During the period January – June 2022, 40 staff (35M:5F) left SHARP, resulting in an average of 7 staff a month who leave the organisation, with the highest number observed in February (12 staff) and the lowest in April and June 2022 (3 staff). It should be noted that during the period July-September 2022, following the salary adjustment, the turnover rate has decreased to 1.1% with an average of 2 staff a month who leave the organisation (against 7 staff prior to the salary adjustment).

STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION, MONITORING AND REVIEW

Under the lead of NMAC, the programme will develop annual strategy implementation plans that will present activities that will enable the programme reach annual strategy targets.

In line with international good practice, NMAC, in close collaboration with national and international partners, will be responsible for monitoring the implementation of this strategy. Effective IM with clear information requirements and reporting systems, and sound coordination and collaboration with stakeholders are preconditions for this. Progress will be discussed and reported on during coordination meetings, results of which will be summarised at the end of every year in annual strategy monitoring reports and referenced in Article 7 transparency reports.

NMAC will organise annual strategy implementation review meetings with relevant stakeholders to take stock of progress made, to determine to what extent strategy targets have been met and if the programme is on track to meet strategic outcomes. These meetings will be organised at the end of every calendar year; international donors will be informed of progress made and potential challenges experienced. The GoSL will also request an external mid-term review of this strategy by mid-2025 to take stock of achievements made, identify challenges, and make necessary modifications to ensure the strategy remains relevant to the context.