FACTSHEET 2026

Landmines: use, contamination and civilian harm in Ukraine

Acronyms

AP mines	Anti-personnel mines
AV mines	Anti-vehicle mines
CCW	Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons
ERW	Explosive Remnants of War
F-1	Fragmentation grenade, model 1
HI	Humanity & Inclusion
HMA	Humanitarian Mine Action
IDPs	Internally Displaced Persons
MBT	Mine Ban Treaty (Ottawa Convention, 1997)
MVT	Mine-Explosive Trauma
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organizations
PFM-1	Petal mine, anti-personnel mine designed to injure individuals
PMN-4	Pressure-activated anti-personnel mine, detonates when stepped on
POM-2	Scatterable anti-personnel mine, remotely delivered mine
PTM-3	Anti-vehicle mine, designed to disable or destroy vehicles
PTM-4	Anti-vehicle mine, newer variant targeting vehicles
RDNA5	Fifth Rapid Damage and Needs Assessment
RGD-5	Hand grenade, fragmentation type, widely used in Soviet/Russian arsenals
RGN	Offensive hand grenade, designed for use in close combat
UANMAC	Ukrainian Mine Action Center
UXO	Unexploded Ordnance
WHO	World Health Organization

Landmine use and contamination is one of the most serious challenges facing Ukraine as a result of the large-scale invasion of the Russian Federation and the ongoing conflict. Virtually all newly accessible areas contain numerous explosive devices, from modern anti-personnel mines to Soviet-era ones and improvised devices. According to official data from the Ukrainian government, about 132,076 km² of territory remains potentially dangerous, which is almost a quarter of the country's area. This makes Ukraine one of the most contaminated countries in the world. The scale of the problem is unprecedented: land mines and explosive remnants of war block access to housing, schools, medical facilities, as well as agricultural land, which has a critical impact on food security and economic recovery. For the civilian population seeking to return to the newly accessible areas, the risk of mine explosions remains a daily threat, and for the state - a long-term challenge that requires systematic and large-scale efforts in the field of humanitarian demining.

One of the most tragic consequences of war in Ukraine for the civilian population is the contamination of territories with explosive ordnances, primarily anti-vehicle and anti-personnel mines. Their clearance can take decades: explosive substances used in ordnance do not expire, and across the entire territory of Ukraine incidents continue to be recorded involving munitions left over from World War II. Today, the scale of the problem is unprecedented. According to the National Mine Action Platform "Demining Ukraine", as of February 2026, about **132,076 km² of Ukrainian territory is at risk of contamination** with mines and explosive remnants of war, which **is almost a quarter of the country's area**. More than **41,924 km² have already been returned to safe use**[1], but a significant part of the territories remains inaccessible due to active hostilities and the occupation of about 18% of the country's territory. The most affected regions: the eastern and southern regions (Kharkiv, Donetsk, Luhansk, Zaporizhia, Kherson, Mykolaiv). It was there that the most intense fighting and prolonged occupation took place, and in some of these regions both fighting and occupation continue to this day.

"Removing anti-personnel landmines and other explosive ordnance from eastern and southern Ukraine may take decades. These threats will continue to put civilians at risk and disrupt their livelihoods for years. Meanwhile, people in these regions must keep living their lives - working their land and sending their children to school - even though the danger of mines is all around them". Anne Héry, Humanity & Inclusion's Director of Advocacy and Institutional Relations

1. The use of landmines in Ukraine.

Anti-personnel mines are explosive devices designed to be detonated by the presence, proximity, or contact of a person. Their primary purpose is to injure or kill individuals, and they pose a long-term threat to civilians even decades after conflicts end. The Mine Ban Treaty (Ottawa Convention, 1997) prohibits the use, stockpiling, production, and transfer of anti-personal mines. **Anti-vehicle mines** designed to target vehicles rather than individuals. These are not covered by the Mine Ban Treaty, though their use is regulated under international humanitarian law.

The problem of mines and explosive devices was acute for Ukraine even before the full-scale Russian invasion, as hostilities have been taking place on its territory since 2014. However, after February 2022, this problem has become much more acute. The area of hostilities has expanded significantly; the hostilities themselves have become more difficult and longer, and a much wider range of weapons is used, including cluster munitions.

"In Ukraine, what I have seen is much denser emplacement, particularly anti-vehicle mines laid much closer together than we would normally expect. Anti-personnel mines have also been laid in significant numbers, and this trend is increasing with reports also indicating that drones are being used to drop Anti-personnel mines too. There is a very complex mix of

[1]Data from the Demine Ukraine platform; figures have not been independently verified and may not reflect the most up-to-date situation. Available at: Main | Demine Ukraine.

contamination: older munitions combined with very modern systems, including technologies that we have not previously encountered in humanitarian clearance contexts." Gary Toombs, Global land release technical operations manager, Humanity & Inclusion

Russia's use of land mines in Ukraine

Russia, which is not a party to the Mine Ban Treaty, is using extensively anti-personnel landmines since the 2022 large scale invasion, causing hundreds of casualties and contaminating vast tracts of land. The scale of mine and explosive ordnance contamination in Ukraine represents the most widespread use of anti-personnel mines in decades. At present, it is not possible to systematically document, survey, and attribute the continuing use of anti-personnel mines in Ukraine, given the available evidence and lack of access to areas where active hostilities are ongoing. However, existing data indicates that **Russia's use of anti-personnel mines in Ukraine is widespread, with at least 13 types of anti-personnel mines being deployed**. Factory markings on some of the mines used by Russia show that they were manufactured during the Soviet era and later in Russia; some anti-personnel mines were also produced in Russia as recently as 2021. Russian forces have also emplaced victim activated booby traps around positions they have taken, occupied, or fortified. These booby traps were made using various types- of hand grenades equipped with tripwires, including F1, RGD5, and RGN grenades. Booby traps can effectively function as anti-personnel mines when the fuze mechanism is victim-activated, meaning it can be triggered unintentionally by the presence, proximity, or contact of a person. Russian forces, through social media posts in late 2023 and in 2025, confirmed the use of drones to deploy several different types of landmines, including PFM-1, POM-2, and PMN4 anti--personnel mines, as well as PTM-3 and PTM4 anti--vehicle mines.[2] In June 2025, Human Rights Watch reported **Russia's use of armed quadcopter drones to terrorize civilians in Kherson**, Ukraine[3]. The scale of this practice is increasing - anti-personnel "butterfly" mines are being camouflaged and dropped from drones directly onto city streets. Recorded incidents have occurred not only in the Dnipro district, where such mines had previously been found, but also in the city centre and the Korabelnyi district of Kherson.

This pattern demonstrates both the **scale of production and deployment** - drawing on old stockpiles while continuing modern manufacture - and Russia's **position of defiance** toward international humanitarian norms. While not bound by the Ottawa Convention, Russia is still party to the Convention on Conventional Weapons (CCW) and its Amended Protocol II, which regulates mines and booby-traps. Its actions therefore represent a **clear breach of obligations under international law**, contributing to widespread civilian harm and long-term contamination across Ukraine.

Ukraine's use of anti-personnel land mines and treaty obligations

Ukraine is a State Party to the Mine Ban Treaty (Ottawa Treaty) However, since 2022, there have been indications and a set of clues that Ukraine has also used anti-personnel mines, although the scale of this use remains unclear. Ukraine inherited a

[2] Landmine Monitor 2025. Available at: Landmine-Monitor-2025-Final-Online.pdf

[3] Human Rights Watch, Russia Using Drones to Attack Civilians in Ukraine. Available at: HRW_Ukraine: Russia Using Drones to Attack Civilians

substantial stockpile of anti-personnel mines after the breakup of the Soviet Union. Although Ukraine destroyed more than 3.4 million anti-personnel mines between 1999 and 2020, including PFM mines, it last reported a stockpile of nearly 3.4 million anti-personnel mines, which are thus available for use. Ukraine is still investigating reports that its armed forces used rocket delivered PFM1 anti-personnel mines in and around the city of Izium during 2022, when it was occupied by Russian forces[4]. In June 2024, Ukraine stated that it is in compliance with its international obligations, including the Mine Ban Treaty, and is investigating the possible use of anti-personnel mines by its military personnel. Ukraine made a similar statement at the treaty's intersessional meetings in June 2025.

There are increasing indications of Ukraine's use of anti-personnel mines, but the precise scope of this use has yet to be determined. On 20 November 2024, the administration of U.S. President Joe Biden announced the transfer of anti-personnel mines to Ukraine, seemingly reversing the longstanding U.S. moratorium on the export of anti-personnel mines, in force since October 1992. An additional transfer of anti-personnel mines was announced on 2 December 2024. Neither announcement disclosed the types or quantities of anti-personnel mines transferred. Ukraine has not provided updated information regarding the investigation into mine use at subsequent Mine Ban Treaty meetings.

On 18 July 2025, Ukraine notified the UN that it had decided to "suspend the operation" of the Mine Ban Treaty. However, the treaty does not permit States Parties to suspend its operation. The treaty also does not allow States Parties to withdraw if they are engaged in armed conflict.

Suspension of Ukraine's MBT obligations undermines international humanitarian law and sets a dangerous precedent[5].

"Ukraine faces one of the most complex and dense contamination environments we have seen in modern conflict, and any expansion of anti-personnel mine use will only deepen the long-term humanitarian burden the country will eventually have to resolve. The contamination in Ukraine is not just a wartime issue, it is a generational one. The decisions taken today will shape civilian safety, reconstruction, and economic recovery for decades." Gary Toombs, Global land release technical operations manager, Humanity & Inclusion

2. Civilian casualties

Incidence and consequences for the civilians

Globally, the **Landmine Monitor** consistently report that **around 90% of all landmine and explosive remnants of war (ERW) casualties are civilians**. This figure is widely cited in humanitarian advocacy and UN documentation. In Ukraine, however, **comprehensive national statistics are still incomplete** due to the ongoing war, restricted access to

[4] Human Rights Watch, Ukraine: Banned Landmines Harm Civilians (31 January 2023). Available at: https://www.hrw.org/news/2023/01/31/ukraine-banned-landmines-harm-civilians

[5] Human Rights Watch, Challenging Ukraine's Mine Ban Treaty Suspension. Available at Challenging Ukraine's Mine Ban Treaty Suspension.pdf

occupied territories, and delays in documentation. That means we cannot yet produce a fully reliable national percentage breakdown. Survivors often suffer injuries that lead to **lifelong disability, limiting their ability to work, support their families, and participate fully in community life**. Beyond the immediate physical trauma, the presence of mines perpetuates fear, restricts access to farmland, schools, and essential services, and undermines socio-economic recovery in affected regions.

The statistics of victims of mines and explosive devices in Ukraine have undergone catastrophic changes since the start of the full-scale invasion. Since 24 February 2022 to 24 February 2026 **mines and explosive remnants of war have killed 483 civilians** (384 men, 53 women, 27 boys, 5 girls, as well as 12 adults and 2 children, whose sex is not yet known) **and injured 1196 civilians** (870 men, 125 women, 106 boys, 25 girls, as well as 53 adults and 17 children, whose sex is not yet known)[6]. The real figures may be significantly higher due to limited access to occupied territories and delays in documentation.

“I was 20 years old when an explosion struck while I was on my way to work along a field road. In a single moment, I lost my sight and both of my legs and nearly lost my life. But I survived - and now I am learning how to live again.” Yulia, anti-vehicle mine survivor, Kharkiv región

Mine-explosive trauma (MVT) is one of the most complex in medicine, as it combines mechanical, thermal and chemical injuries. The most common are shrapnel wounds — about 95% of cases, affecting soft tissues, internal organs and the head. Limb amputations occur mainly when attacking anti-personnel mines, such as the PFM-1 "Petal". Craniocerebral injuries account for 15-17% of cases, damage to internal organs due to barotrauma - about 68%, and thermal burns of the skin and respiratory tract - up to 64%. These data confirm that MVT is multicomponent in nature and leads to severe, combined injuries that require complex treatment and long-term rehabilitation[7]. At the same time Ukraine’s **emergency medical care system remains severely strained by the conflict**. Since the beginning of the full-scale war on 24 February 2022, WHO has documented at least 2881 attacks on health care in Ukraine, affecting health workers, facilities, ambulances, and medical warehouses. Thousands of health facilities have been damaged or destroyed, leading to reduced trauma care capacity.[8] Attacks on healthcare infrastructure and electricity disruptions have hindered rapid response and evacuation.

"When mine-blast trauma leads to disability, the process of psychological support becomes much more complex. For those who have survived amputations or severe physical injuries, accepting the new reality of their bodies is extremely painful and often deeply destabilizing. Feelings of exhaustion and despair affect not only the victims themselves, but also their families." Nataliia, Psychologist, Humanity & Inclusion Ukraine

For **people who have acquired permanent impairments as a result of mine-related injuries**, the challenges extend far beyond physical and psychological trauma. A major

[6] United Nations Human Rights Monitoring Mission in Ukraine, Four Years On: Fact Sheet (16 February 2026). Available at: 2026-02-16 HRMMU_Four Years On_fact sheet_2.pdf

[7] Analysis of the structure and features of traumatic injuries in victims with combat trauma | Medicni perspektivi

[8] WHO_Attacks on Ukraine’s health care increased by 20% in 2025

additional [9] of Ukrainian towns and especially rural areas: the lack of adapted public transportation, limited access to medical care and rehabilitation services, and the absence of opportunities to participate fully in community life. These systemic barriers deepen isolation and hinder recovery, leaving survivors to struggle not only with the consequences of their injuries but also with environments that fail to support their inclusion[10].

"Before the war, I lived an active life, we were happy with our simple everyday life on our own land. I helped my fellow villagers, loved fishing, went to the forest for mushrooms... And now my life is actually limited to four walls. I lost my leg, freedom of movement and the opportunity to do what I loved." Mykhailo, Petal mine (PFM1) victim, Kharkiv region

Behind each number is not a statistic, but a human life, forever broken or torn apart. These are men and women, children and the elderly, whose destinies were destroyed instantly, and the pain of their families will remain forever. The real scale of the tragedy is much greater, because access to occupied territories is limited, and documentation is often delayed. Each unaccounted case is another story of loss, another evidence that war continues to cripple life even where there is no longer active fighting.

Mines and explosive devices are weapons that do not distinguish between military and civilian. They continue to kill and injure long after the war has ceased. **This is not only a humanitarian problem, but also a challenge for the future: the restoration of territories, the return of people to their homes, the reconstruction of the economy and society** are impossible without systematic demining and support for those affected**. And that is why the fight against mine risk is not only a matter of security, but also a matter of human dignity, the right to life and a future.**

3. Humanitarian impact

Humanitarian needs and impact on civilians

In frontline areas, where the intensity of shelling and destruction is particularly high, an estimated 3.5 million people live within 50 km of the frontline, of whom about 3.1 million will need humanitarian assistance in 2026. A significant proportion of these needs are directly related to the risks from mines and unexploded ordnance, which limit access to housing, services and livelihoods, posing a constant threat to civilian lives.[11]

“In Ukraine, a strong sense of place, of one’s own land and home means that many people, especially the older generation, are reluctant to leave, despite the risks of mine contamination. This bond keeps families in danger, limiting their lives and increasing their risk. Despite the indiscriminate, non-tactical use of the Russian army PFMs as a weapon of terror against civilians. Even

[10] United Nations Ukraine, Situational Analysis on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in Ukraine.

[11] United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, Ukraine Humanitarian Needs and Response Plan 2026 – Section 1.2: Humanitarian Needs and Risks. Available at: Situational Analysis on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in Ukraine

after four years of full-scale invasion - and for many, more than a decade of war - the strength of this bond remains striking. This leads to a reluctance to move from frontline regions, which in turn increases the likelihood of living in contaminated areas and encountering higher risks." Alexandra Kennett, HMA coordinator, Danish Refugee Council Ukraine

"In Mykolaiv, we had a case in the city park "Dubky" – a place where people walk, run, and spend their free time. There, we found two minefields containing 46 explosive devices that posed a deadly threat to every visitor. This shows that the danger of mines exists not only on the front lines, but also in places that should be safe and relaxing for civilians. Every meter cleared of mines in such places means a life saved." Ivan Kubrak, Demining program Coordinator, DanChurchAid & Norwegian Church Aid in Ukraine

Over 500,000 children in Ukraine attend schools in mine-contaminated areas and the same time 1 in 9 landmine casualties is a child.[12] The danger is everywhere. Children encounter explosives on their way to school, in playgrounds, in forests, and even inside their homes. 40 percent of all incidents happen on school grounds or on the path to school.[13]

"The danger of mines will remain a part of our lives for many years, perhaps even decades. Therefore, rules of conduct related to mine safety must become as familiar as traffic rules - from childhood to adulthood. This is an extremely serious problem that requires systematic work at all levels, from government policy and education to local communities Ivan Kubrak, Demining program Coordinator, DanChurchAid & Norwegian Church Aid in Ukraine

Heightened risks for internally displaced persons: Displacement in Ukraine is not only about losing homes - it also means facing lethal risks when attempting to return, as newly accessible areas often remain unsafe and contaminated with mines or unexploded ordnance. Many IDPs dream of going back, yet roads, fields, riverbanks, and residential areas conceal hidden dangers that continue to claim lives and cause injuries. To reduce casualties and ensure dignified resettlement, IDPs require sustained mine risk education, safe return planning, and ongoing humanitarian support.

"Landmines are the most dangerous type of contamination because you never know where they are hidden. Russian military engineers camouflaged them underground, changed their factory settings, and left "surprises" in populated areas after their departure. Advances in modern technology now allow for remote mining using drones. This creates a combined danger that will remain with us for years to come. For the civilian population, it is a constant fear and an invisible threat that is impossible to protect oneself from

[12] United Nations Human Rights Monitoring Mission in Ukraine, Four Years On: Fact Sheet (16 February 2026). Available at: 2026-02-16 HRMMU_Four Years On_fact sheet_2.pdf

[13] Ukraine Mine Safety: Children, GlobalGiving report. Available at: Ukraine_Mine_Safety_Children_GlobalGiving_Report_1.pdf

on one's own." Yuriy Sereda, Regional Manager for Non-Technical Survey, FSD (Fondation suisse de déminage)

Impacts on agriculture and the environment

Since 2022, **landmines have been one of the most serious factors in the decline of Ukraine's agricultural sector**. Significant areas remain uncultivated due to explosives, which leads to reduced crops, crop losses, and farmers' incomes. Even in relatively safe regions, mine hazards increase production costs, deter investment, and complicate recovery. As a result, the agricultural sector, which is key to Ukraine's and the world's food security, is suffering long-term losses and requires large-scale demining programs to restore its potential[14]. **Mine contamination remained a key barrier to agricultural development and green recovery**. It hindered the use of fertile land, limited investment, and threatened food security. Ukraine remained one of the most heavily mined countries in the world, making it difficult to realize its potential as a global grain supplier and a leader in climate-resilient recovery[15].

"Currently, priority is given to clearing agricultural land and roads, which is good, but demining cannot be limited to these areas alone. Forest belts, reservoirs, and other areas used by people on a daily basis remain dangerous and require attention. These are areas on the outskirts of agricultural land where community residents collect firewood, fetch water, or simply spend time, and they are no less in need of clearance." Mykola Vihirinsky, Deputy Chief Operating Manager, Ukrainian Deminers Association

To date, Kharkiv and Kherson regions remain the most heavily mined regions of all the newly accessible areas, as Russian troops have been there for a long time. Russian forces have shown a troubling level of ingenuity in the use of booby traps, reportedly attaching them to animals and human remains and laying double or triple traps on roads, fields, and in forests. There are also reports that agricultural land has been deliberately contaminated with explosive hazards, leaving farmland unsafe for cultivation and economic activity.

“In the Oskil community of Kharkiv region, the prevalence of PFMs was stark. Even after emergency clearance, families were left with contaminated gardens, leaving a mother too afraid to let her children play outside. These semiurban areas are overlooked, as clearance efforts prioritize large agricultural lands, creating a dangerous gap in service provision. This highlights the urgent need for structures that enable NGOs to respond to community level risks, working with an impact imperative rather than focusing only on economic imperatives. How can this mother ensure the safety of her garden - for her small harvests, and most importantly, so her children can play?” Alexandra Kennett, HMA coordinator, Danish Refugee Council Ukraine

Mines and other UXO are intensely poisonous for the environment: they damage soil as fragmented explosives release heavy metals like chrome, zinc, iron, copper, mercury; later these enter groundwaters and contaminate the Dniester, Dnipro and Seversky Donets

[14] Grain Market in Ukraine 2025. Available at: Grain-Market-in-Ukraine-2025_ukrainian.pdf

[15] Istituto per gli Studi di Politica Internazionale, Landmines and Land Use: Unblocking Ukraine’s Rural and Climate Recovery. Available at: ISPI Landmines and Land Use: Unblocking Ukraine’s Rural and Climate Recovery

rivers, thus seriously affecting water safety. Animal-activated mines cause forest fires with massive migration of wildlife a devasted biodiversity**. Almost 44% of nature preservations and natural parks of Ukraine (around 900) are under occupation now or on the territory of active fighting. 30 000 sq.km of forestry has been affected by the war** and will be subject to clearance inspection as well.

The requirements for clearance of anchored and floating sea mines in the Black Sea, as well as on the river banks of the Dnipro, Dniester and Seversky Donets rivers are yet to be assessed, but without such assessment and subsequent clearance, there will be no return to normal navigation and the safe use of harbors and commercial seaports will be very heavily circumscribed, if not impossible.[16.]

Recovery and reconstruction needs

Since the escalation of conflict in 2022, **Ukraine has become one of the most mine-contaminated countries in the world**. According to the Fifth Rapid Damage and Needs Assessment (RDNA5), **total recovery and reconstruction needs for explosive hazards management are estimated at US$27,6 billion for the 10-year period 2026–2035**[17].

"Ukrainians today live amid the world's largest mine contamination. In the eastern and southern regions of the country, mines and explosive devices restrict the lives of every person, from fields, forests, and parks to their own homes. It is a constant threat that makes it impossible to feel safe anywhere. The uniqueness of our situation is that humanitarian demining is taking place simultaneously with active hostilities, and as long as the war continues and the land is not cleared, every Ukrainian is forced to live with a sense of danger and fear." Ivan Kubrak, Demining program Coordinator, DanChurchAid & Norwegian Church Aid in Ukraine

4. The demining system in Ukraine

The demining system in Ukraine operates as a multi-level structure coordinated by the state in cooperation with international and national partners. Key actors include the **Ministry of Economy as the national coordinator, the Ukrainian Mine Action Centre (UANMAC) under the Ministry of Defence, and the State Emergency Service, alongside international, humanitarian operators, and national NGOs**. Donors such as the EU and partner governments provide critical funding. The system combines humanitarian clearance for the safe return of civilians, non-technical surveys to identify hazardous areas, explosive ordnance risk education programs for the population, and integration of demining into recovery processes, particularly in the agricultural sector.

“It is impossible to predict how long Ukraine will need to clear its territory of mines. The war continues, the front line shifts, and humanitarian operators are barred from working within 20 kilometres of it, leaving contamination levels unknown. In stable territories, such as the Kyiv region, demining is progressing at a rapid pace, while in Kharkiv proximity to the front and constant shelling complicate progress. Still, parts of agricultural land

[16] Demining in Ukraine, U.S.-Ukraine Foundation report.

[17] Ukraine - Fifth Rapid Damage and Needs Assessment (RDNA5): February 2022 - December 2025

prioritized in 2024–2025 have been cleared. The growing number of registered operators enables faster work, but without knowing when the war will end, neither the full extent of contamination nor the timeframe for clearance can be assessed." Yuriy Sereda, Regional Manager for Non-Technical Survey, FSD (Fondation suisse de déminage)

According to the **National Mine Action Strategy 2024–2033, Ukraine aims to clear up to 80% of** newly accessible areas **within ten years**[18]. The strategy sets out priorities for strengthening national institutional capacity, coordinating efforts with international partners, and integrating mine action into broader recovery and reconstruction frameworks. It also emphasizes survivor assistance and inclusive approaches to ensure that affected communities can safely return and rebuild. However, the system faces significant challenges: immense scale of potentially contaminated areas and its variability due to the long-term active phase of the war, the complexity of modern munitions, high risks for deminers, and the need for stable funding and sustained international support.

"One of the serious obstacles to humanitarian demining at the moment is the constant presence of Russian Federation reconnaissance drones, which constantly monitor what is happening in areas close to the line of demarcation, after which, unfortunately, strikes with combat drones or missiles occur." Yuriy Sereda, Regional Manager for Non-Technical Survey, FSD (Fondation suisse de déminage)

The evidence presented in this factsheet demonstrates the unprecedented scale and complexity of landmine and ERW contamination in Ukraine and its devastating humanitarian consequences. Civilians remain unprotected, facing daily risks to life, health, and livelihoods, while recovery and reconstruction are severely hindered. Both the widespread use of mines by Russia and the suspension of Ukraine's Mine Ban Treaty obligations pose serious threats to international norms and set dangerous precedents. Addressing this crisis requires urgent, coordinated action by national authorities, donors, and the international community to protect civilians, accelerate clearance, and ensure survivor-centred assistance.

5. Recommendations

- **To Russian authorities:** The Russian Federation must immediately cease the use of anti-personnel mines and victim-activated booby traps, which are prohibited under international humanitarian law. Russia should respect its obligations under the Convention on Conventional Weapons and Amended Protocol II, halt the deployment of mines by drones and other remote means, and take responsibility for the widespread civilian harm and environmental damage caused by its actions.
- **To Ukrainian authorities**: Ukraine should fully comply with its obligations under the Mine Ban Treaty and not use anti-personnel mines under any circumstances despite the announced suspension. Authorities must prioritize large-scale clearance operations, integrate mine action into national recovery frameworks, and guarantee survivor assistance as a central component of reconstruction, with particular attention to persons with disabilities, children, and rural communities.

[18] National Mine Action Strategy of Ukraine 2024–2033. Available at: NATIONAL Mine Action STRATEGY

- **To donors:** Donor governments and institutions should continue funding for land release, mine clearance, and victim assistance programs in Ukraine. Mine action must be integrated into broader recovery and reconstruction frameworks, including agriculture, housing, and infrastructure, to ensure safe resettlement and sustainable economic recovery. Donors should also support inclusive survivor-centred services, including rehabilitation, psychosocial support, and livelihood programs.
- **To the international community**: The international community should reinforce global advocacy against the use of prohibited weapons, uphold the integrity of the Mine Ban Treaty, and reject any precedent of suspension during armed conflict. States Parties and humanitarian actors must continue to document and denounce mine use, mobilize political pressure to protect civilians, and ensure that mine action remains a priority in humanitarian response and recovery planning.

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Caption front cover: Road through Kharkiv region, mined fields and nearby houses and gardens of local people. September 2025. © L.Hutsul / HI