REPORT 2025

Saving Lives in Conflicts: Risk Education and Conflict Preparedness to Protect Civilians in EWIPA Settings

From challenges to solutions: strengthening Explosive Ordnance Risk Education (EORE) and Conflict Preparedness and Protection (CPP) through evidenced, practical recommendations.

Contents

Acknowledgements

This report would not have been possible without the generosity, time and insight of interviewees who often contributed to the research under conditions of exceptional difficulty, facing insecurity, displacement and communication blackouts. The interviewees and the participants in the June 2025 EORE/CPP workshop in Brussels – joining from Gaza, Lebanon and Ukraine – played a central role in shaping this report. The workshop participants returned to war zones where they continue to deliver life-saving EORE/CPP. Some of them candidly shared with us their fear for loved ones, their sleepless nights, and the heavy toll of working under constant threat. Nevertheless, they all continue to hope, not just for a ceasefire, but for a future where civilians are protected from the devastating impact of explosive weapons in the places where they live, work and seek refuge.

Their courage and commitment are compelling. It is precisely in times of crisis – when international humanitarian law is most under threat – that we must stand together to uphold it.

Acronyms

AI	Artificial Intelligence	**IHL**	International Humanitarian Law
APMBC	Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention	**IMAS**	International Mine Action Standards
CBRN	Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear	**IMSMA**	Information Management System for Mine Action
CCM	Convention on Cluster Munitions	**INGO**	International Non-Governmental Organisation
CCW	Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons	**KABP**	Knowledge, Attitudes, Behaviours and Practices
CPP	Conflict Preparedness and Protection	**LMAC**	Lebanon Mine Action Centre
CSO	Civil Society Organisation	**MA**	Mine Action
DGA	Disability, Gender, Age	**MA AoR**	Mine Action Area of Responsibility
DG ECHO	Directorate-General for European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations	**MHF**	Myanmar Humanitarian Fund
DRR	Disaster Risk Reduction	**MHPSS**	Mental Health and Psychosocial Support
EO	Explosive Ordnance	**NGO**	Non-Governmental Organisation
EOD	Explosive Ordnance Disposal	**NMAA**	National Mine Action Authority
EORE	Explosive Ordnance Risk Education	**NORAD**	Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation
ERW	Explosive Remnants of War	**NPA**	Norwegian People's Aid
EW	Explosive Weapons	**QA**	Quality Assurance
EWIPA	Explosive Weapons in Populated Areas	**RE**	Risk Education
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations	**UN**	United Nations
GBV	Gender-Based Violence	**UNDSS**	United Nations Department of Safety and Security

GPC	Global Protection Cluster	UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
HI	Handicap International - Humanity & Inclusion	UN OCHA	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
IASC	Inter-Agency Standing Committee	VA	Victim Assistance
IED	Improvised Explosive Device	WFP	World Food Programme

Glossary of key terms

Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC)

Also known as the Ottawa Treaty, the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC) was adopted in 1997 and entered into force in 1999. It is one of the most widely ratified disarmament treaties, with 165 States Parties committed to prohibiting the use, stockpiling, production and transfer of anti-personnel mines. Over the past 25 years, it has become a symbol of global progress in protecting civilians from the devastating impact of anti-personnel mines and explosive remnants of war (ERW). States Parties are obligated to clear all mined areas under their jurisdiction or control, provide risk education to inform civilians about threats, and assist landmine victims. States Parties must report annually on progress, including clearance, victim assistance and risk education efforts. These data obligations promote transparency, inform collective progress tracking, and support evidence-based implementation of the Convention.[1]

Convention on Cluster Munitions (CCM)

Adopted in 2008, the Convention on Cluster Munitions (CCM) prohibits the use, production, transfer and stockpiling of cluster munitions. It includes similar obligations to the APMBC, requiring States Parties to clear contaminated areas, assist victims, and provide risk education to prevent further harm.[2]

Political Declaration on Explosive Weapons in Populated Areas (EWIPA)

The Political Declaration on Strengthening the Protection of Civilians from the Humanitarian Consequences arising from the Use of Explosive Weapons in Populated Areas was formally

---

[1] See, Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction, 1997.
[2] See, Convention on Cluster Munitions, 2008.

adopted by 83 States on 18 November 2022. As of March 2025, 88 States had endorsed it.[3] Although not legally binding, it is the first instrument of its kind committing States, among others, to review their military policy and practices in order to restrict or refrain from the use of explosive weapons in populated areas, where such use may cause civilian harm. When properly implemented, it can contribute significantly to alleviating civilian suffering and strengthening respect for IHL.[4]

Populated Area

For the purposes of interpreting and applying the commitments in the declaration, the term "populated areas" should be regarded as being synonymous with the term "concentration of civilians" which appears in existing IHL [Protocol III of the 1980 Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW, Article 1)]. It is understood to refer to "any concentration of civilians, be it permanent or temporary, such as in inhabited parts of cities, or inhabited towns or villages, or as in camps or columns of refugees or evacuees, or groups of nomads." The references to refugees, evacuees and nomads and the use of the term "inhabited" suggests that the presence of civilians and civilian objects, which need not be in great numbers, is a defining characteristic of areas in which the use of certain weapons should be restricted.[5]

Explosive Weapons

Explosive weapons are conventional weapons that detonate to affect an area with blast and fragmentation. There are many types of explosive weapons, including grenades, mortar bombs, artillery shells, aircraft bombs and missiles, and improvised explosive devices (IEDs). These weapons explode, killing and injuring people, or damaging vehicles and buildings, through the blast and fragmentation that an explosion creates around the point of detonation. Different types of explosive weapons may be delivered in different ways (some are thrown, others are fired from the ground or dropped from the air), and they may vary in the scale of effects that they create. There is a pattern of harm associated with explosive weapons in general, but the risk to civilians is most severe when the weapons have wide-area effects[6] due to the wide destruction radius of the munition used, the inaccuracy of the delivery system, and/or the delivery of multiple munitions over a wide area. The use of these weapons in populated areas has been widely documented to increase the incidence of civilian deaths, injuries, psychological impact, environmental harm, and damage to

[3] See, Political Declaration on Strengthening the Protection of Civilians from the Humanitarian Consequences Arising from the Use of Explosive Weapons in Populated Areas. Endorsing States (May 2025): Albania, Andorra, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Bulgaria, Cabo Verde, Cambodia, Canada, Central African Republic, Chile, Colombia, Comoros, Costa Rica, Cote d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Guatemala, Guyana, Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, Holy See, Hungary, Iceland, Indonesia, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Kenya, Kingdom of the Netherlands, Kiribati, Kosovo, Kuwait, Laos, Liberia, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Malta, Mexico, Maldives, Monaco, Montenegro, Morocco, New Zealand, North Macedonia, Norway, Palau, Palestine, Peru, Philippines, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, San Marino, Senegal, Serbia, Sierra Leone, Slovakia, Slovenia, Somalia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, Togo, Türkiye, United Kingdom, United States of America, Uruguay. See, List of Endorsing States.

[4] ICRC, Explosive Weapons in Populated Areas Factsheet, June 2023, p. 4.

[5] Article 36, Implementing the Political Declaration on the use of Explosive Weapons in Populated Areas: key areas and implementing actions, November 2022, p. 3.

[6] International Network on Explosive Weapons (INEW), A commitment to Act: Protecting Civilians from the Use of Explosive Weapons in Populated Areas, September 2015, p. 5.

civilian objects, including critical infrastructure necessary for essential services.[7] In many cases, the use of explosive weapons results in the presence of explosive ordnance (EO), munitions that have failed to explode or have been abandoned, and which continue to pose a threat long after hostilities have ended.[8]

Explosive Ordnance

Explosive ordnance is interpreted as falling under mine action's response to the following munitions: mines, cluster munitions, unexploded ordnance, abandoned ordnance, booby traps, other devices as defined by the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons, Amended Protocol II (CCW APII), and improvised explosive devices (IEDs). IEDs meeting the definition of mines, booby traps, or other devices fall under the scope of mine action when their clearance is undertaken for humanitarian purposes and in areas where active hostilities have ceased.[9]

Direct and Indirect Effects

Direct effects are effects that are caused by an explosion as a result of the high-pressure blast wave from the detonation and from the fragmentation of the munition. Direct effects can cause deaths and injuries, as well as damage to and destruction of civilian objects, explosive ordnance contamination, displacement and psychological trauma. Indirect or reverberating effects are consequences of the direct effects, often causing harm to civilians beyond the time of the explosion and the immediate blast zone. For example, damage and destruction to critical civilian infrastructure caused by explosive weapons may disrupt or impede access to essential services (e.g., education, healthcare, water and sanitation), which can result in death and injury, and short- and long-term human suffering, including displacement, loss of income-generating assets, reduced economic and financial activity, and environmental damage from hazardous substances released by weapons.[10]

Mine Action

Mine Action refers to activities aimed at reducing the social, economic and environmental impact of landmines, cluster munitions and ERW. It includes five pillars: clearance, risk education, victim assistance, advocacy and stockpile destruction.[11]

Explosive Ordnance Risk Education (EORE)

Explosive Ordnance Risk Education (EORE) refers to activities designed to reduce the risk of injury from explosive ordnance by raising awareness and promoting safe behaviour. It is recognised as an obligation under both the APMBC and the CCM, where States Parties are required to provide risk education in contaminated areas. Initially implemented in post-conflict settings to support humanitarian demining and community liaison, EORE is now increasingly delivered in emergencies and active conflict environments, including in EWIPA contexts, where it plays a critical role in

---

[7] Human Rights Watch and International Human Rights Clinic, A Humanitarian Interpretation of the Political Declaration on the Use of Explosive Weapons in Populated Areas, October 2022, p.13.

[8] IMAS 4.10, Glossary of mine action terms, definitions and abbreviations, Amendment 12, October 2024, p. 14.

[9] IMAS 4.10, Glossary of mine action terms, definitions and abbreviations, Amendment 12, October 2024, p. 14.

[10] Definition adapted from UNIDIR, Understanding Civilian Harm from the Indirect or Reverberating Effects of the Use of Explosive Weapons in Populated Areas: Strengthening Data Collection to Implement the Political Declaration, October 2024, p.11.

[11] IMAS 4.10, Glossary of mine action terms, definitions and abbreviations, Amendment 12, October 2024, p. 23.

providing timely, actionable information to protect civilians during hostilities. EORE has also expanded its scope beyond landmines, explosive remnants of war, and cluster munitions to address a wider range of explosive threats not explicitly covered by the APMBC or CCM, including improvised explosive devices (IEDs), small arms and light weapons (SALW), and chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear (CBRN) risks. This evolution reflects the growing complexity of today's conflict environments and the need for more adaptive, integrated risk education strategies that are tailored to specific hazards, conflict phases and at-risk groups.

Conflict Preparedness and Protection (CPP)

Conflict Preparedness and Protection (CPP) is an approach initially developed to complement EORE by addressing a broader range of conflict-related risks, beyond explosive ordnance, faced by civilians before, during and after conflict. Initially conceptualised as *Conflict Preparedness and Protection* by Norwegian People's Aid (NPA) in the late 2010s, the approach has since been adopted by other EORE operators to help reduce risks from explosive weapons and conflict-related incidents. CPP is tailored to community needs and context-specific threats, including risks from EWIPA, such as shelling or bombing, and their direct consequences (e.g. physical injury, psychological trauma, forced displacement, emergency evacuation, power blackouts, fire, family separation, and exposure to controversial and other indiscriminate weapons, such as white phosphorus). While its scope and position within humanitarian and development coordination mechanisms remains under discussion, participants at the June 2025 workshop on EORE and CPP in EWIPA settings suggested renaming CPP to "Civilian Preparedness and Protection," noting that this may help strengthen acceptance and ownership across the diverse sectors involved in protecting civilians in EWIPA and other conflict-affected settings.

Executive Summary

Saving Lives in Conflicts: Risk Education and Conflict Preparedness to Protect Civilians in EWIPA Settings

Civilians living in conflict situations around the world are facing devastating consequences from the use of explosive weapons in populated areas (EWIPA). In many EWIPA settings, including Gaza, Lebanon, Myanmar and Ukraine, communities have experienced unprecedented levels of harm, caused by the direct and indirect impact of explosive weapons attacks, repeated displacement and the collapse of basic services. Current conflicts have also seen systematic and repeated violations of International Humanitarian Law (IHL), including strikes on schools, hospitals and shelters, and the use of antipersonnel mines and cluster munitions. In this context, States that have endorsed the Political Declaration on Strengthening the Protection of Civilians from the Humanitarian Consequences arising from the Use of EWIPA, and those that are States Parties to the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC) and the Convention on Cluster Munitions (CCM), must demonstrate collective leadership to honour their commitments to protect civilians and ensure the implementation of concrete risk reduction measures, including restricting or refraining from the use of explosive weapons in populated areas. Recognising, resourcing and institutionalising Explosive Ordnance Risk Education (EORE) and Conflict Preparedness and Protection (CPP) as core components of civilian protection is both a humanitarian imperative and a necessary measure to uphold States' legal and political commitments under IHL, the APMBC, the CCM, and the Political Declaration on EWIPA.

Both EORE and CPP equip affected populations with life-saving information, practical tools, and protection strategies before, during and after conflict. Yet despite their critical importance, CPP remains under-recognised in humanitarian and national response frameworks, while EORE is often chronically underfunded. The escalating humanitarian toll of EWIPA demands a decisive shift in how these interventions are understood, prioritised and integrated across protection and preparedness efforts.

The **following key recommendations** were consolidated through a six-month research and consultation process and validated during a multi-stakeholder workshop held in June 2025. They constitute an agenda for action to guide States, United Nations (UN) agencies, EORE/CPP operators, donors and other relevant stakeholders in strengthening civilian protection in EWIPA settings.

1. **The use of EWIPA has become a defining feature of contemporary armed conflicts, putting civilians at unacceptable risk. Yet despite the urgent need for preparedness and protection measures in conflict-affected contexts, EORE and CPP are still not systematically positioned and resourced within humanitarian coordination and protection and preparedness frameworks.** Ensuring the consistent integration of both EORE and CPP into these frameworks is critical to protecting civilians from the immediate and long-term impacts of EWIPA. The humanitarian reset provides a timely opportunity to systematically position EORE and CPP within revised coordination and preparedness structures and ensure accessible funding.

Donors and Affected States, UN Agencies, EORE/CPP Operators:

- Leverage synergies between the APMBC, CCM and the Political Declaration on EWIPA by improving the collection, analysis and sharing of data on the use of explosive weapons, resulting contamination, and civilian casualties. Use this data to highlight the direct and

indirect effects of EWIPA and to inform coordinated protection and preparedness measures, risk education, and land release priorities across commitments.

States, Donors, UN Agencies and EORE/CPP Operators:

- Promote and ensure EORE and CPP are fully recognised, adequately funded, and systematically implemented as essential components of civilian protection in EWIPA settings, across all phases of conflict. This could include developing and implementing national or regional plans incorporating practical preparedness measures for the protection of civilians from EW.

EORE Advisory Group and Mine Action Area of Responsibility/ Global Protection Cluster (MA AoR/GPC):

- In collaboration with donor states, advocate for the systematic integration of EORE/CPP into country-based pooled funds (CBPFs) and bilateral funding streams.

2. **The lack of international standards or guidelines for CPP affect programme consistency and limit institutional buy-in. There is a need to collectively establish context-adaptable guidance for CPP, building on field-tested practices from EORE, Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) and other sectors.**

EORE Advisory Group, MA AoR/GPC:

- Jointly develop, translate, and disseminate a global guideline on EORE/CPP tailored to emergency contexts, including EWIPA. A Technical Note for Mine Action (TNMA) on Explosive Weapons Risk Education could provide specific and relevant guidance for the mine action sector.

3. **Working in EWIPA contexts fundamentally increases the access and security risks for actors delivering EORE/CPP in the field, highlighting the need for robust safety and security protocols and, in some contexts, dialogue with armed actors to ensure safe access.**

States:

- Affected States to facilitate with involved actors the provision of EORE/CPP. Third States not involved in or not affected by the conflict to mobilise diplomatic channels to negotiate access for EORE/CPP.

Donor States, UN Agencies and EORE/CPP Operators:

- Provide funding support for robust security risk management and ensure EWIPA-specific duty of care measures for local and international EORE/CPP staff and partners. Include tailored safety protocols, access to psychosocial support, and adequate equipment and insurance.

State Military and/or Non-State Armed Groups:

- As a last resort, where access to EWIPA-affected populations is compromised, facilitate and support the mainstreaming of EORE/CPP messages.

4. **In rapidly-changing and insecure environments, affected populations face diverse and overlapping risks shaped by intersecting factors of vulnerability. Psychological distress,**

trauma, or normalisation of threat may influence the ability to accept, receive and retain messages. Specific groups have heightened vulnerability in EWIPA settings, including children and persons with disabilities. Community-based actors are often best placed to co-develop and adapt messages, maintain feedback loops, and ensure delivery even in areas inaccessible to others. Sustained investment in low-tech, low-profile delivery methods is essential.

EORE/CPP Operators, UN Agencies and National Mine Action Authorities (NMAAs):

- Develop specific efforts to collect data and information on Disability, Gender, Age (DGA) and other diverse groups with intersecting vulnerabilities to better respond to their needs in the provision of EORE/CPP. Where possible, work with stakeholders with specific expertise and knowledge of DGA groups.

EORE/CPP Operators:

- Enable community-driven EORE/CPP by leveraging local networks to co-develop and adapt messages, test messages and materials, establish feedback loops for continued relevance, and ensure sustainability through low-tech, low-input and low-profile methods suited to volatile and high-risk environments.

5. **Improving the quality and use of data is fundamental to informing EORE/CPP programming, but persistent challenges constrain the collection and use of timely, context-specific and inclusive data. Strengthening data collection protocols and collaboration across sectors can ensure more targeted, timely and credible interventions. A robust conflict-sensitive analysis should inform this evidence base to ensure programming remains context-appropriate, avoids exacerbating tensions, and does no harm.**

EORE/CPP Operators, MA AoR/GPC:

- Take the lead on streamlining data sources and data products to ensure the accuracy, quality and reliability of data, and make data more accessible for other operators and actors for informed decision-making and programming. Map out existing data sources relevant to EORE/CPP and develop shared data-sharing protocols to improve interoperability and ensure timely access to context-specific information for programming.

EORE/CPP Operators, MA AoR/GPC and UN Agencies:

- Prioritise and resource systematic conflict sensitivity analysis as part of EORE/CPP programme design and adaptation. Use findings to guide decision-making, strengthen accountability, and adapt programming to avoid unintended harm.

6. **Scaling up effective EORE and CPP requires increased investment in the workforce. Local and national actors are often at the forefront of delivery but face persistent gaps in training, technical support and quality management. A shift toward structured capacity development, responsive technical support, and strengthened national capacity is needed to ensure consistent, adaptive and context-sensitive programming.**

EORE/CPP Operators, MA AOR/GPC:

- Prioritise sustained capacity-development for national and local CSOs, especially in high-risk or access-constrained settings. Document and share practical approaches that have

improved local delivery, training or quality assurance in challenging contexts to facilitate broader uptake.

NMAAs, non-MA national authorities, EORE/CPP Operators and UN Agencies:

- Reinforce national coordination and technical leadership by supporting NMAAs to align EORE/CPP delivery with emergency preparedness and protection systems. Promote joint training, shared quality standards, and collaboration with key ministries (e.g. health, education, civil defence) to ensure consistent and context-sensitive interventions at scale.

7. **Integrating EORE and CPP into broader mine action and humanitarian sectors – such as health, education, shelter and MHPSS – can significantly expand reach and relevance, especially during the early stages of crisis response. Stronger positioning of EORE/CPP within cross-sectoral coordination systems is needed to offer the potential for joint planning and funding with other sectors.**

EORE/CPP Operators, UN Agencies and NMAAs:

- Enhance synergies between EORE/CPP and Victim Assistance so that explosive weapons survivors benefit from the same support and services as EO survivors, and strengthen progress towards the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

OCHA, relevant UN Agencies and EORE/CPP Operators:

- Systematically embed EORE and CPP in initial response packages and inter-agency contingency planning to ensure preparedness messaging reaches at-risk communities from the outset of emergencies, particularly in EWIPA settings.

EORE/CPP Operators, UN agencies, MA AoR/GPC:

- Train other humanitarian stakeholders, including local organisations, in EORE/CPP delivery to integrate EORE/CPP into broader aid or protection delivery (e.g., food distributions, MHPSS, mobile clinics).

8. **Local and national actors remain at the forefront of EORE/CPP delivery in many high-risk contexts. Their long-term leadership, including that of DGA-led and survivor-led organisations, must be supported through equitable partnerships, meaningful inclusion and sustainable investment. These efforts can also enhance linkages to global protection and peacebuilding agendas, such as the Women, Peace and Security agenda, and align with the commitments of the Political Declaration, APMBC and CCM.**

States and NMAAs:

- Establish mechanisms to monitor and report on progress in facilitating cooperation and assistance for EORE/CPP, in line with obligations under the APMBC and CCM, and commitments under Paragraph 4.6 and 4.7 of the Political Declaration. This includes enabling roles for local actors, promoting inclusive partnerships, and documenting efforts to support national ownership and sustainability.

Donor States and UN Agencies:

- Encourage localisation by stipulating funding streams that allocate resources to community-based actors, including through simplified sub-grant mechanisms. Prioritise flexible, multi-year funding for community-led EORE/CPP initiatives in EWIPA settings.

This report – and the recommendations it presents – reflects the courage, adaptability and insight of international, national and local actors, frontline workers, and community members responding to some of today's most dangerous conflict environments. Their voices, and the practical lessons drawn from their work, demand urgent attention. Strengthening EORE and CPP is not only about mitigating harm, it is about upholding the right of civilians to prepare, protect and build resilience in conflict.

Introduction and Methodology

Introduction

In recent years, the use of explosive weapons in populated areas (EWIPA) and the targeting of essential infrastructure have led to devastating humanitarian consequences. Civilians account for the vast majority of those killed and injured, and survivors often face long-term physical and mental health challenges. Damage to critical infrastructure further disrupts access to healthcare, education and utilities, while displacement and loss of livelihoods have particularly severe effects on persons with disabilities, older persons and children.[12]

In response, 88 States have now endorsed the Political Declaration on Strengthening the Protection of Civilians from the Humanitarian Consequences Arising from the Use of EWIPA, first adopted in November 2022.[13] While not legally binding, the Declaration affirms existing IHL and human rights obligations and calls for concrete action to reduce civilian harm, including restrictions on explosive weapon use in populated areas.

To support implementation, HI, Article 36, and Insecurity Insight launched a two-year project in 2023, with support from DG ECHO and the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The project addresses four key humanitarian concerns in EWIPA settings – safety and humanitarian access, access to healthcare, EORE and CPP, and the needs of vulnerable groups – where critical challenges persist, and where greater awareness, strategic focus and decisive action are urgently needed.[14]

This report focuses on the role of EORE and CPP in mitigating harm and strengthening civilian resilience. It examines how these approaches can contribute before, during and after conflict, in line with the Declaration's operative commitments, particularly those promoting mine action and risk education.

The research draws on desk review, data analysis, interviews and a stakeholder workshop held in Brussels (11–12 June 2025), with a focus on Gaza, Lebanon, Myanmar and Ukraine.[15] This report identifies the delivery gaps, showcases promising practices, and outlines practical recommendations, providing an agenda for action for States, UN agencies, EORE/CPP operators, and other key actors to advance the implementation of the Political Declaration and strengthen the protection of civilians in EWIPA contexts.

---

[12] HI, Out of Reach The Impact of Explosive Weapons in Ukraine – Focus on hard-to-reach areas, February 2024, p. 2; and International Committee of the Red Cross, Explosive Weapons with wide area effects: a deadly choice in populated areas, January 2022, p. 24.

[13] UNODA, The Political Declaration on Strengthening the Protection of Civilians from the Humanitarian Consequences Arising from the use of Explosive Weapons in Populated Areas and the List of Endorsing States, as of March 2025.

[14] See HI workshop reports on Safe and Principled Humanitarian Access (May 2024) and Strengthening Access to Healthcare (February 2025); A fourth research study on vulnerable groups and specific needs will be carried out later in 2025. This research report notes some specific gaps in addressing the needs of those with intersecting vulnerabilities in terms of the provision of EORE/CPP. It is hoped that the fourth research study will go some way to providing recommendations in this regard.

[15] See, HI, Saving Lives in Conflicts: Risk Education and Conflict Preparedness to Protect Civilians in EWIPA contexts, June 2025.

Overview of Methodology

This research was guided by six key questions, agreed upon by HI and the consultants. These focused on delivery challenges for EORE/CPP in EWIPA contexts, identifying at-risk groups, improving cross-sectoral synergies, strengthening local and national capacity, fostering civil society leadership and participation (especially of Disability Gender, Age - DGA - and other diverse groups), and integrating CPP and EORE. DGA considerations were integrated throughout the research. Where possible, data was disaggregated by sex, age and disability, and interviewees were selected to reflect diverse experiences. An intersectional lens was applied to explore how overlapping DGA factors shaped access to and provision of EORE/CPP, although data availability varied across contexts.

A mixed-methods approach was used to ensure robust, evidence-based findings. The methods included:

- A comprehensive desk review of over 50 resources, including reports, news articles, and outputs from EORE Advisory Group Emergency Risk Education Task Team.[16]
- Quantitative data provided by NPA, covering incident and weapon types, geographic distribution, and casualty data (disaggregated by age/gender when available).[17] Additional data referenced in this report was gathered through the literature review, including sources such as the Explosive Weapons Monitor and the Landmine and Cluster Munition Monitor.
- 42 semi-structured interviews with global and country-level stakeholders (25 women and 17 men), selected through purposeful and snowball sampling. Interviewees represented donors, UN agencies, INGOs, national authorities, and CSOs from Gaza, Lebanon, Myanmar and Ukraine. Country-level interviews (28) included 14 national and 14 international staff from diverse organisations. Interviews were consent-based and confidential. They provided a rich source of qualitative insights, including direct quotes that illustrate key challenges, practices and recommendations featured in the report. This qualitative process also reflects a deliberate effort to give voice to humanitarian actors, particularly those working directly in EWIPA contexts. Their perspectives offer critical understanding of field realities in EWIPA contexts and serve as a powerful foundation for more informed, grounded and compelling advocacy.
- A multi-stakeholder workshop in Brussels (11–12 June 2025), gathering 38 participants from diverse sectors.[18] The workshop comprised case study insights, panel discussions and working groups to validate and discuss findings. A key outcome of the workshop was the identification of concrete, actionable recommendations for relevant stakeholders to strengthen EORE and CPP in EWIPA contexts. These have been fine-tuned and incorporated throughout the report.

---

[16] In early 2024, the EORE Advisory Group established an Emergency Risk Education Task Team to provide guidance on delivering EORE and CPP in emergency contexts. The team, composed of representatives of mine action and protection organisations, was created to address specific threats such as armed conflict, natural disasters and the use of incendiary weapons.

[17] The data shared by NPA was primarily compiled and analysed by NPA using open-source information from Armed Conflict Location and Event Data (ACLED) and specialised data from Fenix Insight.

[18] Three participants attended the workshop online, presenting their experiences from Gaza and other contexts.

Case Studies and Contexts

According to the Explosive Weapons Monitor, *"there were four contexts of use in which state armed forces reportedly caused harm to civilians from the use of explosive weapons in more than 1,000 incidents."*[19] These four contexts are: Palestine, Lebanon, Ukraine and Myanmar. For this research, Gaza was selected as the case study for Palestine, alongside Lebanon, Myanmar and Ukraine to illustrate the varied EWIPA settings in which EORE and CPP are implemented, each with distinct risk profiles, operational and coordination challenges, and stakeholders. Insights are presented in Section 1.2, with additional examples featured in text boxes throughout the report.

---

[19] Explosive Weapon Monitor, Annual Report 2024, May 2025, p. 5.

I. Foundations for Action: Adapting EORE/CPP to EWIPA settings

1.1 Evolving Threats and Implications for EORE and CPP

> *"We see entire villages destroyed, people trying to return to their homes and finding them contaminated, their fields mined, their schools and hospitals bombed. The level of destruction is beyond what anyone can imagine, and yet people are forced to adapt, to survive in this reality." INGO, Kharkiv Oblast, Ukraine.*[20]

The use of explosive weapons in populated areas (EWIPA) has become a defining feature of contemporary armed conflicts, with devastating consequences for civilian populations. In 2024, civilians in 11 countries and territories, including the Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, Lebanon, Mali, Myanmar, Nigeria, Palestine, Sudan, Syria, Ukraine and Yemen were heavily affected by the use of explosive weapons, according to the Explosive Weapons Monitor.[21] Explosive weapons attacks in populated areas undermine core civilian protection obligations under international law and underscore the urgency of implementing the Political Declaration on EWIPA.

The Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC) and the Convention on Cluster Munitions (CCM) both recognise the provision of risk education as a legal obligation for States Parties. Under Article 5 of the APMBC and Article 4 of the CCM, affected States are required to take all necessary and appropriate measures to inform and warn civilians about the risks posed by landmines, cluster munitions and ERW including through risk education. These obligations reinforce the imperative to deliver timely, inclusive, and effective EORE as part of broader protection strategies. In contexts affected by the use of cluster munitions, anti-personnel mines and other EOs and explosive weapons (EW), integrating EORE with conflict preparedness measures also supports compliance with these legal commitments while enhancing civilian safety in high-risk environments. The 2025–2029 APMBC Siem Reap–Angkor Action Plan calls for the delivery of risk education and risk reduction programmes, including *"in emergency settings and when newly mined areas are discovered."*[22] This renewed focus reflects the growing operational reality that EORE must be deployable especially when survey or clearance operations are not yet possible. It further reinforces the centrality of EORE as a primary protection measure in EWIPA contexts.

The Operative Section of the Political Declaration on EWIPA calls on States to develop and implement national policies for the protection of civilians during armed conflict involving explosive weapons use (section 3, Paragraph 3.1). Paragraph 3.5 further highlights mine action, and explicitly highlights risk education as an enabler of civilian protection, particularly *"after active hostilities."*[23] While the Declaration offers a vital normative framework, EORE and CPP are increasingly provided, and urgently needed, not only after active hostilities, but also during and beforehand, as part of more comprehensive response and preparedness strategies.

---

[20] Interview dated 8 April 2025.
[21] Explosive Weapon Monitor, Annual Report 2024, May 2025, p. 4.
[22] Draft Siem Reap-Angkor Action Plan 2025-2029, Fifth Review Conference of the APMBC States Parties, November 2024, p. 11.
[23] Section 3, Paragraph 3.5. Risk education is given a mention within the Political Declaration because of specific advocacy efforts from organisations such as HI, NPA, UNICEF, and the EORE AG Advisory Group.

This shift is driven by the growing complexity of EWIPA settings. Whether in urban or rural areas, the boundaries between civilian and military infrastructure, and between phases of conflict, are increasingly indistinct. In the case studies, violations of international humanitarian law, the breaking of ceasefire agreements, and the lack of designated safe zones were reported and documented, leaving both civilians and humanitarians uncertain about which areas and behaviours can still be considered safe. This is further compounded by direct attacks on humanitarian actors: in 2024 alone, explosive weapons were used in attacks on humanitarian aid in 16 countries and territories, nearly 90% of which were recorded in Gaza, according to the Explosive Weapons Monitor.[24]

At the same time, conflict dynamics continue to change rapidly, with intensified shelling, drone strikes, aerial bombardments, and the use of both conventional, banned and controversial weapons, including landmines, cluster munitions, white phosphorus, and improvised explosive devices (IEDs). These developments increase civilian harm, restrict humanitarian access, and expose the limits of existing civilian protection frameworks. In response, EORE and CPP programming must be anticipatory, agile, and capable of adapting in real time to shifting risks and shrinking humanitarian space. This includes accounting for new weapon systems, moving frontlines, and the destruction of homes, schools, shelters, and community spaces that previously served as safe delivery sites.

Further complicating the landscape is the lack of specific guidance and standardised content for CPP, which remains a relatively new approach within the mine action and protection sectors. This results in uncertainty around what messaging to deliver, particularly regarding safety positions and behaviour near infrastructure during explosive incidents, as well as gaps in coverage and inconsistencies in quality and conflict sensitivity. A recent scoping review highlighted the extent of this challenge, revealing significant variation and knowledge gaps in sheltering guidance related to explosive events.[25] The establishment of the EORE Advisory Group Task Team on Emergency Risk Education in early 2024 aims at partly addressing those gaps by providing coordinated guidance, fostering a shared understanding of CPP, and supporting harmonised approaches across actors and contexts.

Recommendations - Agenda for Action

Endorsing States of the Political Declaration on EWIPA, alongside States Parties to the APMBC and CCM

- Use all available diplomatic, political and legal channels to uphold IHL and strengthen the protection of civilians.

Donors and Affected States, UN Agencies and EORE/CPP Operators

- Leverage synergies between the APMBC, CCM and the Political Declaration on EWIPA by improving the collection, analysis and sharing of data on the use of explosive weapons, resulting contamination, and civilian casualties. Use this data to highlight the direct and indirect effects of EWIPA and to inform coordinated protection and preparedness measures, risk education, and land release priorities across commitments.

States, Donors, UN Agencies, and EORE/CPP Operators

---

[24] Explosive Weapon Monitor, Annual Report 2024, May 2025, p. 5.
[25] Alexandra Christine Hansen et al, Civilian Sheltering Guideline for EWIPA: A Scoping Review, *Disaster Medicine and Public Health Preparedness, Vol.* 19, May 2025.

- Promote and ensure EORE and CPP are fully recognised, adequately funded, and systematically implemented as essential components of civilian protection in EWIPA settings, across all phases of conflict. This could include developing and implementing national or regional plans incorporating practical preparedness measures for the protection of civilians from EW.

1.2 Insights from EWIPA Case Studies

Across the four case study contexts - Gaza, Lebanon, Myanmar and Ukraine - the indiscriminate use of explosive weapons has caused high civilian casualties, disrupted essential services, triggered repeated displacement, and created long-term protection and recovery needs, including trauma, injury and the collapse of critical infrastructure.[26]

As of 2024, 26 countries and territories affected by explosive weapons had endorsed the Political Declaration. Among them, Palestine was the most heavily impacted context and accounted for nearly two-thirds of all reported civilian fatalities from explosive weapons globally.[27]

These case studies illustrate how EWIPA affects civilians and shapes the EORE/CPP operating environment. Each case presents different conflict typologies (e.g., international vs. non-international), access constraints, and patterns of civilian harm. The report draws on both qualitative findings and incident and casualty data provided by NPA, visualising patterns of explosive weapon use and their geographic distribution.[28] Discrepancies with casualty figures reported by national authorities or UN agencies inevitably exist, as these sources include all conflict-related deaths and injuries, whereas the dataset here is limited to casualties directly caused by explosive weapons.[29]

Despite limitations, the data offers critical insight into the direct impact of explosive weapons on civilians. It reinforces the urgency of strengthening civilian protection and systematically collecting disaggregated data, as called for in the Political Declaration.[30] It also highlights the responsibility of States, especially those endorsing the Declaration or party to disarmament treaties, to uphold IHL, condemn indiscriminate weapon use, and ensure accountability. This must be matched by

[26] While this research focuses on four case studies, the impact of explosive weapons has been documented in other EWIPA settings including Iraq, Syria and Yemen. See for example, HI, No safe recovery: The impact of Explosive Ordnance contamination on affected populations in Iraq, October 2021; The Waiting List: Addressing the immediate and long-term needs of victims of explosive weapons in Syria, September 2019; Explosive Weapons in Populated Areas (EWIPA), Contamination and Mine Action in Syria, November 2024; Death Sentence to Civilians: The Long-Term Impact of Explosive Weapons in Populated Areas in Yemen, May 2020; and Mwatana and Pax, Not a single body in one piece: How civilian harm from explosive weapons in Yemen calls for immediate action, December 2022.
[27] Explosive Weapon Monitor, Annual Report 2024, May 2025, p. 4.
[28] Data courtesy of NPA. Figures are based on data compiled and analysed by NPA using two primary sources: ACLED datasets and Fenix Insight. Maps and graphs were developed by the consultants for this report. Datasets provided were from 10 July 2023 to 16 May 2025 for Palestine; from 10 July 2023 to 5 February 2025 for Lebanon; from 2 January 2021 to 4 April 2025 for Myanmar; and from 24 February 2022 to 16 May 2025 for Ukraine.
[29] For example, on 14 May 2025, the Ministry of Health in Gaza reported that at least 52,928 Palestinians were killed and 119,846 were injured. In Ukraine, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) reported at least 12,654 civilians killed and 29,392 injured between February 2022 and February 2025. See, OCHA, Humanitarian Situation Update #288, Gaza Strip, 14 May 2025; and OHCHR, Factsheet: Three years since the full-scale invasion of Ukraine, February 2025.
[30] Paragraphs 1.8, 4.2, and 4.3 of the Political Declaration encourage States to collect, disaggregate (by sex and age where feasible), and publicly share data on the direct and indirect effects of explosive weapons in populated areas. This data is intended to inform harm reduction policies, support accountability and investigations, and facilitate the work of the UN, ICRC, and civil society actors.

sustained global action and reinforced by the critical role of civil society in monitoring violations, advocating for change, and amplifying the voices of affected communities.
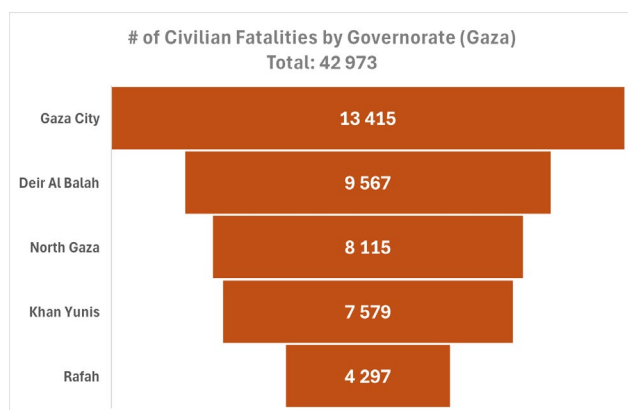
Case- Study - Gaza, Palestine

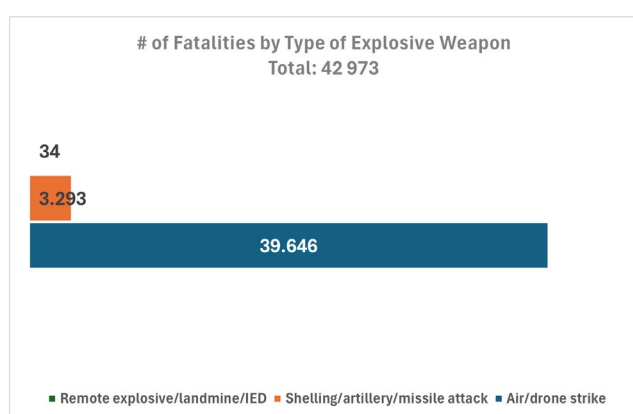Figure 1. Number of Civilian Fatalities by Governorate in Gaza. Source: NPA.

Figure 2. Number of fatalities by type of explosive weapon in Gaza. Source: NPA.

"Gaza is the most complex environment for humanitarians to operate in. Starting, of course, with the restricted movement and sometimes operators are denied access on the ground. [...] Northern Gaza was, and is still facing, the most aggressive and massive military operations, including deliberate targeting and shelling of all avenues." – INGO, Gaza and the West Bank, Palestine.[31]

Gaza is one of the most severe EWIPA contexts globally, marked by massive and sustained use of explosive weapons by Israel in densely populated areas.

Israel had reported a total of 40,000 airstrikes between October 2023 and October 2024. Estimates suggest that 5% to 10% of weapons used may have failed to detonate, posing ongoing risks to civilians.[32] Over 90% of the population has been displaced, often repeatedly, and 66% of infrastructure damaged, including 92% of civilian housing. The widespread devastation has generated an estimated 50 million tonnes of rubble, obstructing movement and access.[33]

Available data on civilian harm illustrate the concentration of violence, the disproportionate lethality of certain weapons, and the urgent need to prioritise protection and preparedness in high-risk urban environments. Between July 2023 and May 2025, at least 16,248 explosive weapon attacks were recorded by ACLED, resulting in over 42,973 civilian deaths and more than 11,934 injuries. Over 92% of deaths were caused by air or drone strikes. Gaza City alone accounts for more than 13,000

---

[31] Interview dated 8 April 2025.

[32] Reuters, Gazan survive among unexploded bombs, 17 April 2025.

[33] Human Rights Watch, Questions and Answers on Israel's Use of White Phosphorus in Gaza and Lebanon, 12 October 2023; Explosive Weapons Monitor, Fragments: Explosive Weapons Monitor Quarterly, Vol. 2, Issue 4, December 2024, p.2; and United Nations, Gaza: Destruction of vital lifting gear halts search for thousands buried under rubble, 22 April 2025.
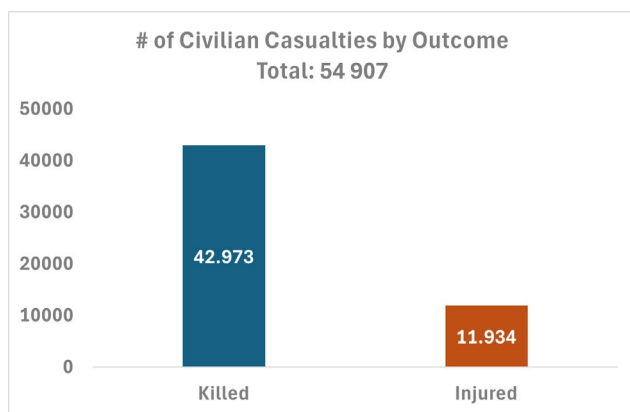
of Civilian Casualties by Outcome
Total: 54 907

Figure 3. Number of civilian casualties by outcome in Gaza. Source: NPA.

of Civilian Casualties by Age and Gender
Total known: 2 260
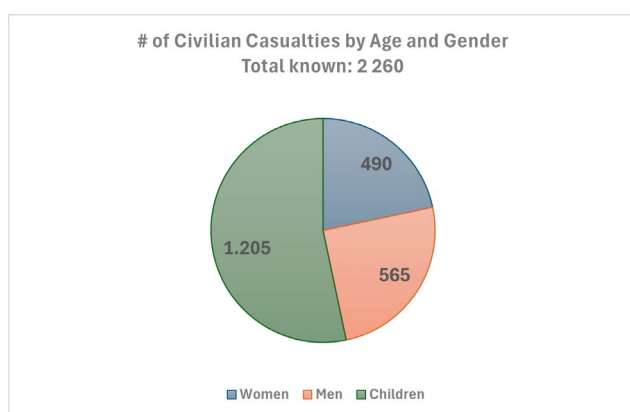
Figure 4. Number of civilian casualties by age and gender in Gaza. Source: NPA.

fatalities. Available disaggregated data shows that children represent the largest known casualty group.

Humanitarian access, including for EORE/CPP, is extremely restricted. Risks to staff and volunteers, including first responders, hinder traditional programming. Since the collapse of the ceasefire in March 2025, the humanitarian blockade imposed by the Israeli authorities, coupled with the collapse of health and water systems, has further degraded the situation.[34]

The Gaza case study highlights the **extreme operational risks** and evolving threat landscape of EWIPA settings, and **the critical need for anticipatory action and robust support for frontline actors**.

The UN and civil society organisations have called on States to urgently respond to the situation in Gaza, citing the widespread use of explosive weapons in populated areas and the deliberate obstruction of humanitarian aid.[35]

[34] United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), "UNRWA Situation Report #170 on the Humanitarian Crisis in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, including East Jerusalem," May 9, 2025.
[35] Human Rights Watch, Israel Again Blocks Gaza Aid, Further Risking Lives: Palestinians Deliberately Deprived of Food, Water, and Other Necessities, 5 March 2025 and United Nations, Israel must end 'cruel collective punishment' in Gaza, urges UN relief chief, 1 May 2025.

of Explosive Incidents by Governorate - Palestine

[10 Jul 2023 to 16 May 2025]

90   13,415

Jenin

Tubas

Tulkarm

Nablus

Qalqiliya

Salfit

Ramallah
& Al Bireh

Jericho &
Al Aghwar

Jerusalem

Bethlehem

Hebron

North
Gaza

Gaza

Deir Al
Balah

Khan
Yunis

Rafah
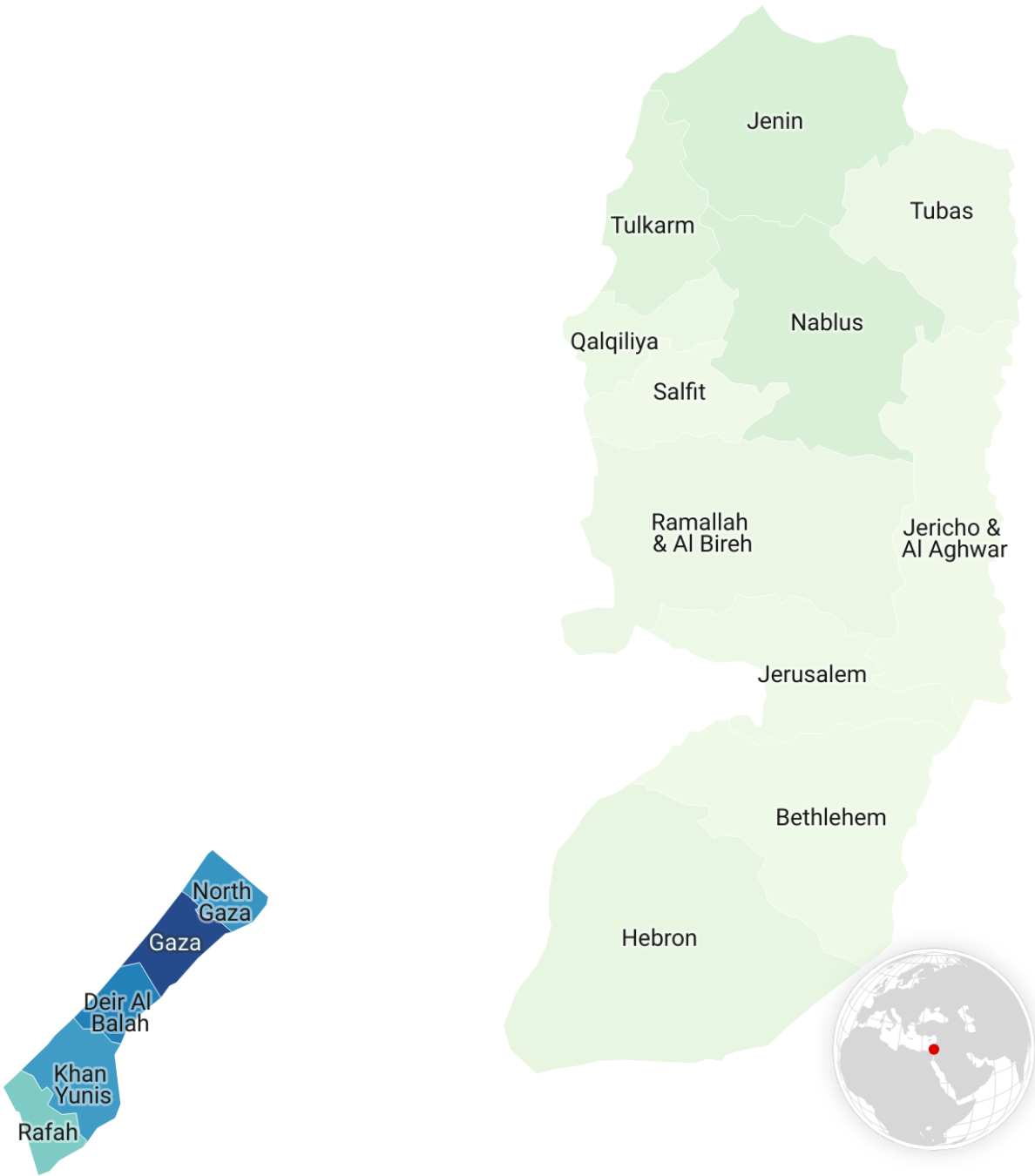
Created with Datawrapper

Figure 5. Map – Number of explosive incidents by governorate - Palestine. Source: NPA.

Case Study - Lebanon

Figure 6. Number of Civilian Fatalities by District in Lebanon. Source: NPA.

Figure 7. Number of fatalities by type of explosive weapon in Lebanon. Source: NPA.

Figure 8. Number of civilian casualties by outcome in Lebanon. Source: NPA.

"Since the conflict started, what we see is that the type of weapons used has changed, the locations targeted are much more civilian, and the level of destruction is more widespread. Even areas considered safe before are now being hit." – Local NGO, Lebanon. [36]
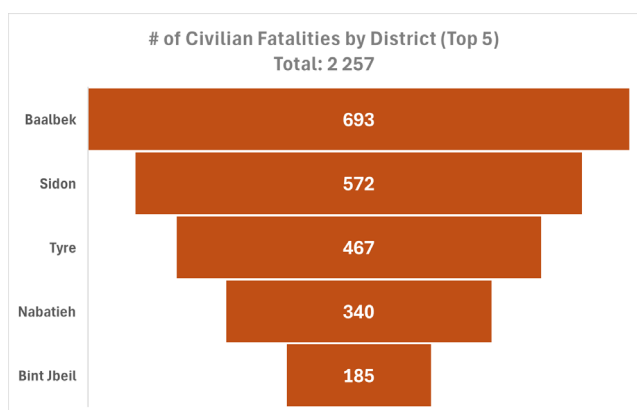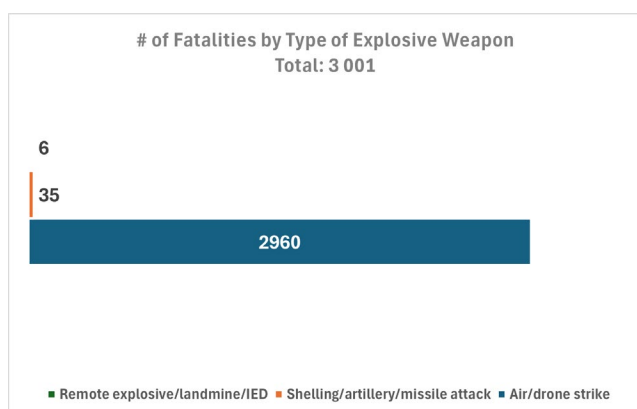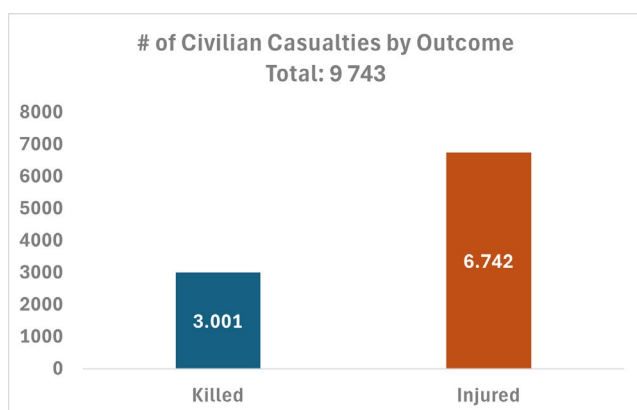
The use of explosive weapons in populated areas (EWIPA) in Lebanon is closely linked to the conflict in Gaza and broader regional dynamics. From October 2023 until the ceasefire in November 2024, Lebanon experienced intensive bombardment by Israel across several areas in the south and east of the country, as well as in Beirut. **This required mine action operators to rapidly shift from planned EORE to a more responsive EORE/CPP approach.**

Between 10 July 2023 and 5 February 2025, over 15,400 explosive weapon attacks were recorded, resulting in at least 3,001 civilian deaths and 6,742 injuries. Air and drone strikes accounted for 99% of fatalities, and children represented nearly half of recorded deaths where age and gender were known. Approximately 100,000 housing units were damaged or destroyed, and over 1.2 million people displaced.[37] The most heavily impacted districts included Baalbek, Sidon, Tyre, Nabatieh and Bint Jbeil.

Lebanon had limited prior experience with CPP, and **gaining the approval of the Lebanon Mine Action Centre (LMAC) for adapted programming was an early but critical step.** LMAC, which oversees all risk education activities, supported the shift. EORE/CPP operators had to quickly develop new messages, train staff, and address technical and contextual challenges. These included threats such as white phosphorus, the need for trauma-sensitive communication, and the ineffectiveness of messaging during intense conflict phases.

---

[36] Interview dated 7 April 2025.

[37] UNHCR, Displaced families in Lebanon yearn for peace and a return home, 6 October 2024.

# of Civilian Casualties by Age and Gender
Total known: 285

106   142   37

■ Women   ■ Men   ■ Children
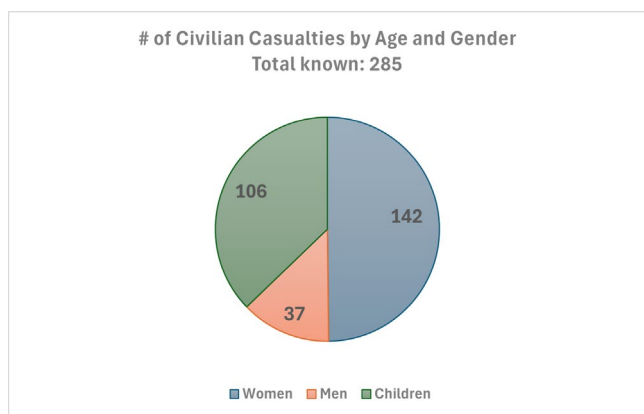
Figure 9. Number of civilian casualties by age and gender in Lebanon. Source: NPA.

Staff safety was a persistent concern, with some teams displaced by the conflict. **Securing access in politically sensitive areas required sustained engagement with community leaders and local authorities.**

Despite the successful move to CPP during the conflict, significant challenges remain. After the ceasefire, EORE was re-prioritised by LMAC, and CPP activities were scaled down. While some donors enabled flexibility during the crisis, CPP's long-term sustainability remains uncertain, particularly as southern Lebanon continues to face regular attacks and the risk of further spillover from the Israel-Palestine conflict persists.

of Explosive Incidents by District - Lebanon

[10 Jul 2023 to 5 Feb 2025]

1   4,230

Akkar

Tripoli

Miniyeh-
Zgharta Danniyeh   Hermel

Batroun   Bsharri

Jbeil

Baalbek

Keserwan

Matn

Beirut

Baabda   Zahlé

Aley

Chouf   Western
Beqaa

Jezzine   Rashayya

Sidon

Nabatieh   Hasbaya

Tyre   Marjayoun

Bint Jbeil
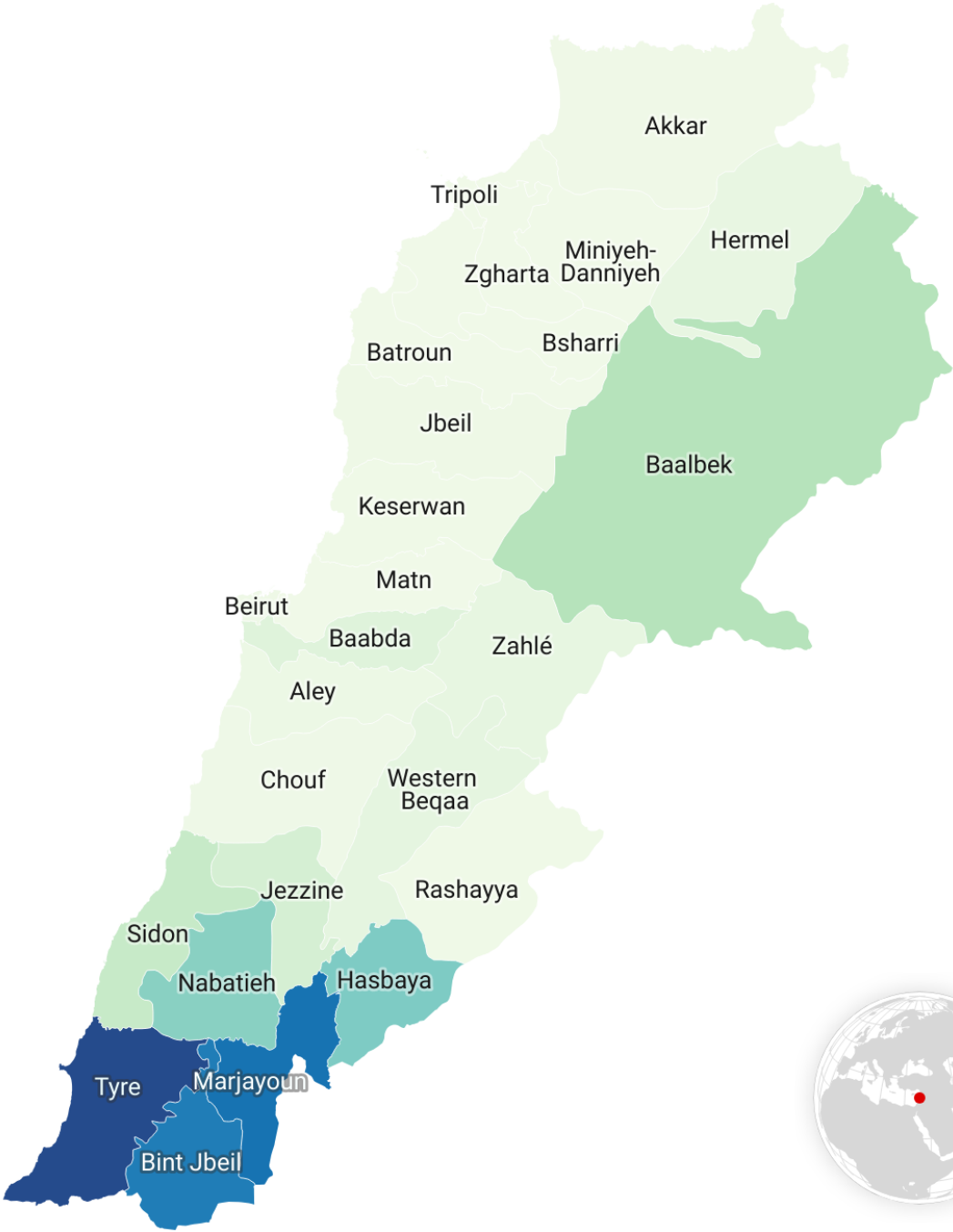
Map data: © OSM • Created with Datawrapper

Figure 10. Map – Number of explosive incidents by district - Lebanon. Source: OSM.

Case Study - Myanmar

Figure 11. Number of Civilian Fatalities by District in Myanmar. Source: NPA.

Figure 12. Number of fatalities by type of explosive weapon in Myanmar. Source: NPA.
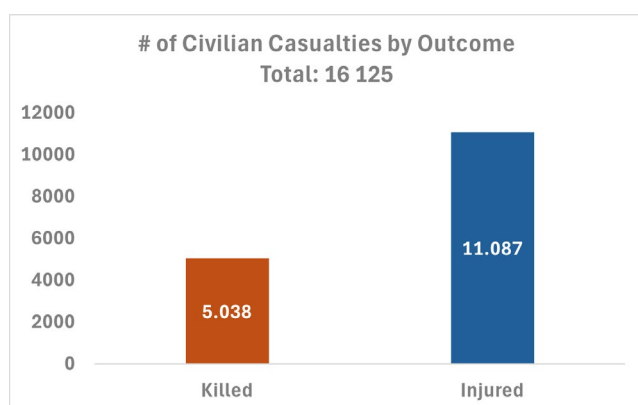
Figure 13. Number of civilian casualties by outcome in Myanmar. Source: NPA.

"A new element is the increased diversity and types of weapons from 2022. There are a lot more airstrikes, and there are also improvised air dropped weapons, primarily with drones and repurposed mortar shells. We've had to respond to these new realities in terms of our EORE/CPP." – INGO, Myanmar. [38]

Myanmar remains a largely forgotten crisis, struggling to attract sustained attention or funding. Since the February 2021 military coup, all parties to this internal conflict have intensified their use of explosive weapons, including in areas previously unaffected by contamination. While Myanmar is predominantly rural, civilians are increasingly targeted in areas where they live and work. Between January 2021 and April 2025, nearly 20,000 explosive weapon attacks were recorded, resulting in over 16,000 civilian casualties – 5,038 deaths and 11,087 injuries. Airstrikes (53%) and shelling (35%) were the main causes of death.

The conflict has expanded into new areas lacking mine action capacity, placing further strain on the local response. Most international NGOs are unable to access affected zones. In this context, **local civil society organisations and community networks have become the main providers of EORE and CPP**, often operating under precarious and dangerous conditions.

Access is highly restricted and risky. Many communities are unreachable due to ongoing fighting, poor infrastructure or seasonal flooding, and must be accessed on foot.[39] Risk education materials can be viewed as politically sensitive and carrying them across checkpoints poses real risks. Content featuring explosive ordnance often must be adapted to avoid raising suspicion, and telecommunications blackouts hinder coordination and message dissemination. Quality assurance and monitoring is challenging, with some international actors

---

[38] Interview dated 27 March 2025.

[39] UNOCHA, Humanitarian Needs Update No.44: Myanmar, 19 February 2025.
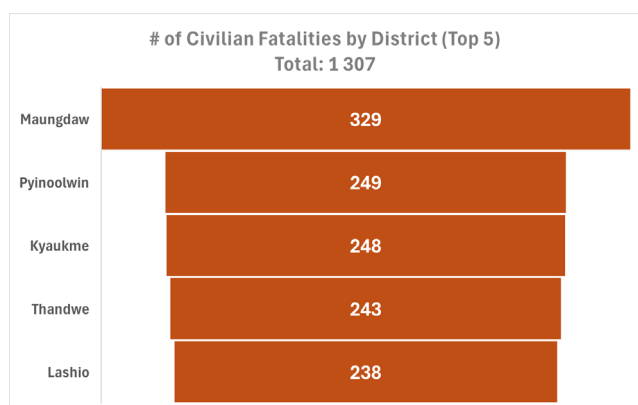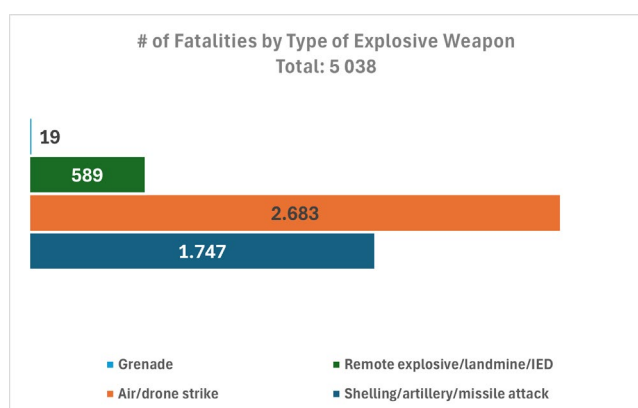
# of Civilian Casualties by Age and Gender
Total known: 2 716

861
1.064
791

■ Women ■ Men ■ Children
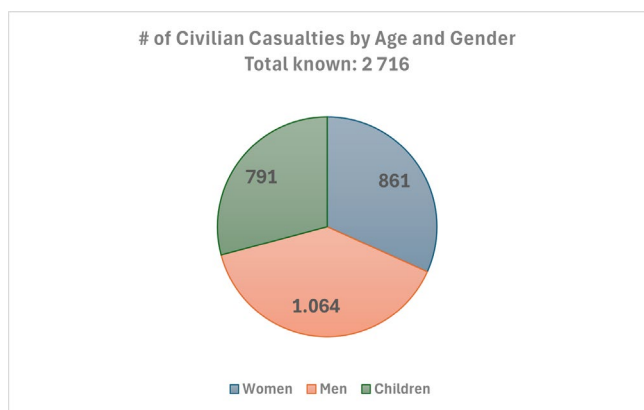
Figure 14. Number of civilian casualties by age and gender in Myanmar. Source: NPA.

relying on remote monitoring or self-reporting by partners.

Funding for EORE/CPP remains limited, with most actors reliant on **small grants or integration into broader protection or health programmes**. This has restricted coverage and forces difficult prioritisation decisions. However, in 2024, EORE became a mandatory requirement for accessing the humanitarian country-based pool funds (CBPF) in recognition of the widespread contamination and related protection needs.[40]

The March 2025 earthquake further heightened civilian protection needs in Myanmar, showing how natural disasters can intensify the impacts of EWIPA by displacing people into contaminated areas and disrupting already limited humanitarian access.

Despite immense challenges, local actors continue to deliver lifesaving EORE/CPP, adapting approaches, building trust, and navigating threats in an increasingly volatile and restrictive environment.

[40] UNOCHA, Myanmar Humanitarian Fund, no date; and GICHD, EORE Sector Mapping and Needs Analysis, October 2024, p.23.

of Explosive Incidents by District - Myanmar

[2 Jan 2021 to 4 Apr 2025]

1   1,272
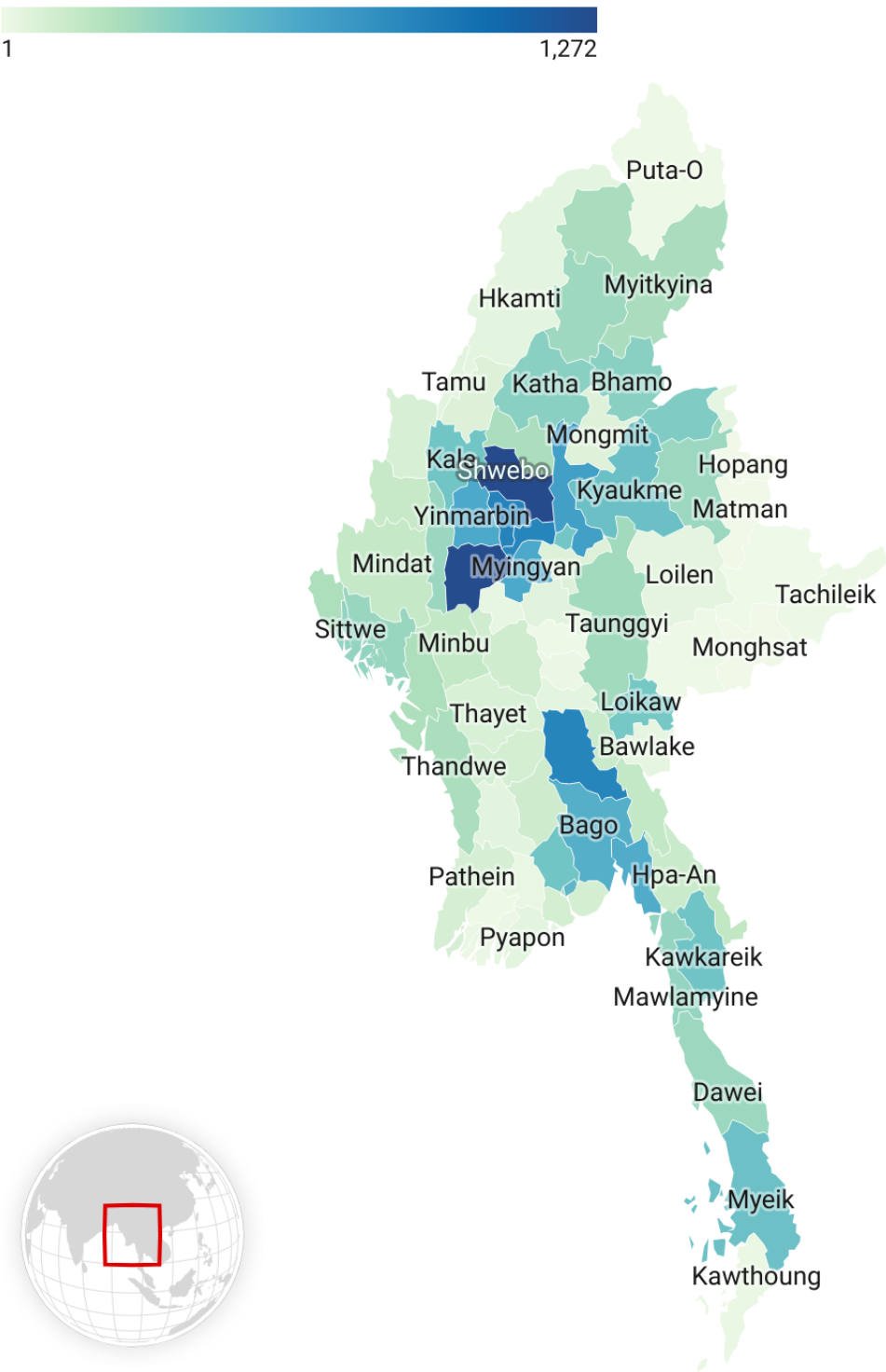
Map data: USAID • Created with Datawrapper

Figure 15. Map – Number of explosive incidents by district - Myanmar. Source: USAID.

Case Study - Ukraine
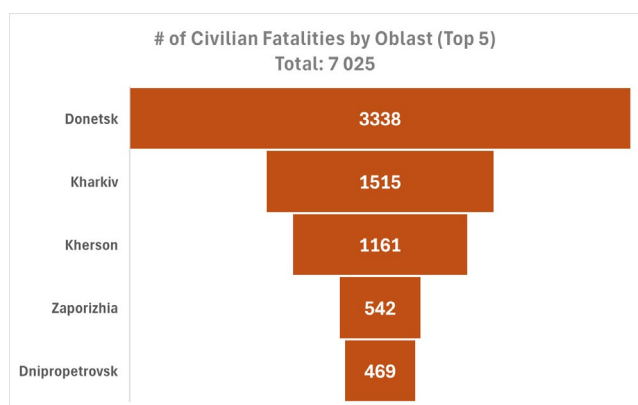
Figure 16. Number of Civilian Fatalities by District in Ukraine. Source: NPA.
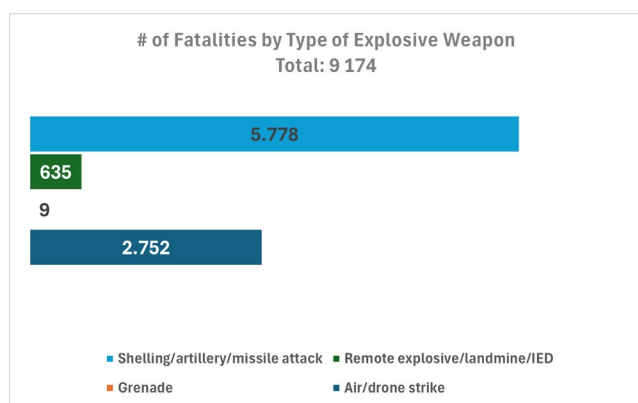
Figure 17. Number of fatalities by type of explosive weapon in Ukraine. Source: NPA.

"If you look at Kharkiv, Chernihiv, Mykolaiv, or even Odessa now, the strikes are constant, the damage is massive, and the risk is everywhere. People live surrounded by unexploded ordnance, destroyed buildings, and areas where even humanitarians cannot go. And all this is happening while people try to go on with their lives, send their kids to school, or go to the market." – INGO, Kharkiv, Ukraine. [41]

Since the full-scale Russian invasion on 24 February 2022, **Ukraine has been heavily targeted by explosive weapons, particularly in the eastern oblasts, but also in other urban centres, including Kyiv**.[42] Strikes have hit homes, hospitals, schools and energy infrastructure. Between February 2022 and May 2025, over 121,400 explosive weapon attacks were recorded by ACLED, resulting in more than 9,174 civilian deaths and 29,337 injuries. Indirect-fire and aerial-delivered weapons, including shelling, artillery, missile attacks, airstrikes and drone strikes, account for approximately 96% of all recorded civilian fatalities. Donetsk, Kharkiv, Kherson, Zaporizhzhia and Dnipropetrovsk are the most affected oblasts.[43]

Casualty records show that 95% of EW-related deaths lack disaggregated information by sex and age, yet where data exists, **children and women represent a significant share of fatalities**. The increased use of drones and aerial glide bombs to target urban areas, especially on the frontline, require responsive EORE/CPP programming. [44]

Ukraine is a resource-rich but complex EWIPA setting, **with the highest level of**

---

[41] Interview dated 8 April 2025.

[42] From June 2025, attacks increased again in Kyiv, with the largest drone attack conducted on 4 July, including targeting of residential areas and civilian infrastructure. See Reuters, Russia pounds Kyiv with largest drone attack, hours after Trump-Putin call, 4 July 2025.

[43] As of May 2025, the OHCHR had recorded a total of 13,341 civilian deaths and 32,744 injuries from conflict-related violence, including EWIPA. See OHCHR, Ukraine: Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict, May 2025 Update, 11 June 2025.

[44] ACLED, Bombing into submission: Russian targeting of civilians and infrastructure in Ukraine, 18 February 2025.

# of Civilian Casualties by Outcome
Total: 38 511
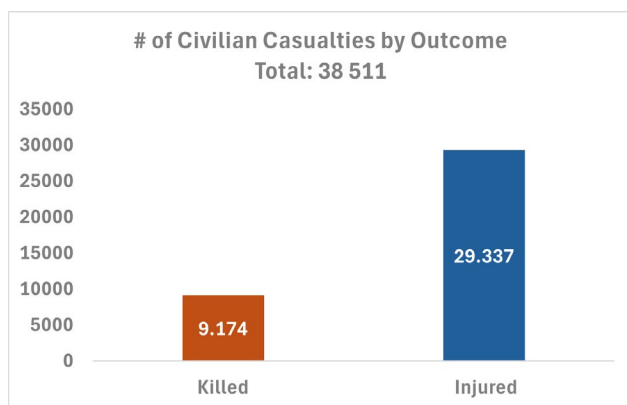
Figure 18. Number of civilian casualties by outcome in Ukraine. Source: NPA.

# of Civilian Casualties by Age and Gender
Total known: 451
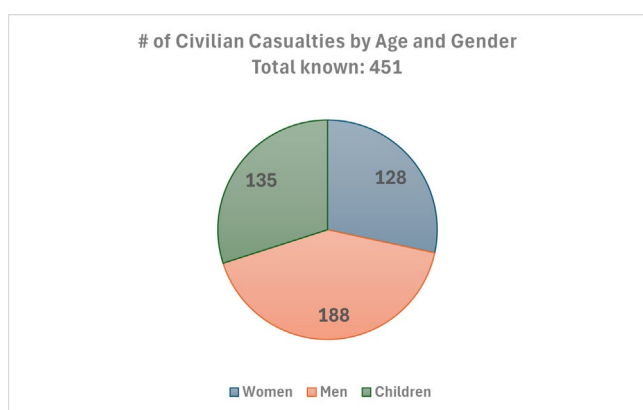
Figure 19. Number of civilian casualties by age and gender in Ukraine. Source: NPA.

mine action funding globally in 2022–2023 and a wide network of international, national, and local actors engaged in EORE and humanitarian response. This creates opportunities to integrate CPP and ensure inclusion of diverse and at-risk groups, including those defined by disability, gender, and age (DGA). However, the security environment varies significantly by region, affecting how EORE and CPP can be delivered.

While some national EORE actors are certified, **many local humanitarian organisations deliver EORE messages without certification**, **which has raised concerns about consistency and quality**.[45] The lack of coordination between certified and uncertified actors, and across oblasts, complicates message harmonisation and data reliability. However, some organisations collaborated to develop and share harmonised CPP messaging.[46] Formal integration of CPP into mine action remains limited and ad hoc, as current efforts at national level focus on developing national EORE standards, leaving CPP under-recognized and underfunded. As a result, **CPP activities are often integrated informally into broader EORE programming, with limited visibility and support.**

---

[45] GICHD, Mapping of the Explosive Risk Education Sector in Ukraine, 9 September 2024, pp.4 & 11.
[46] HI, NPA, UDA (Ukrainian Deminers Association), Conflict Preparedness & Protection Messages in Ukraine, 12 December 2023.

of Explosive Incidents by Oblast-Ukraine

[24 Feb 2022 to 16 May 2025]

3   36,455
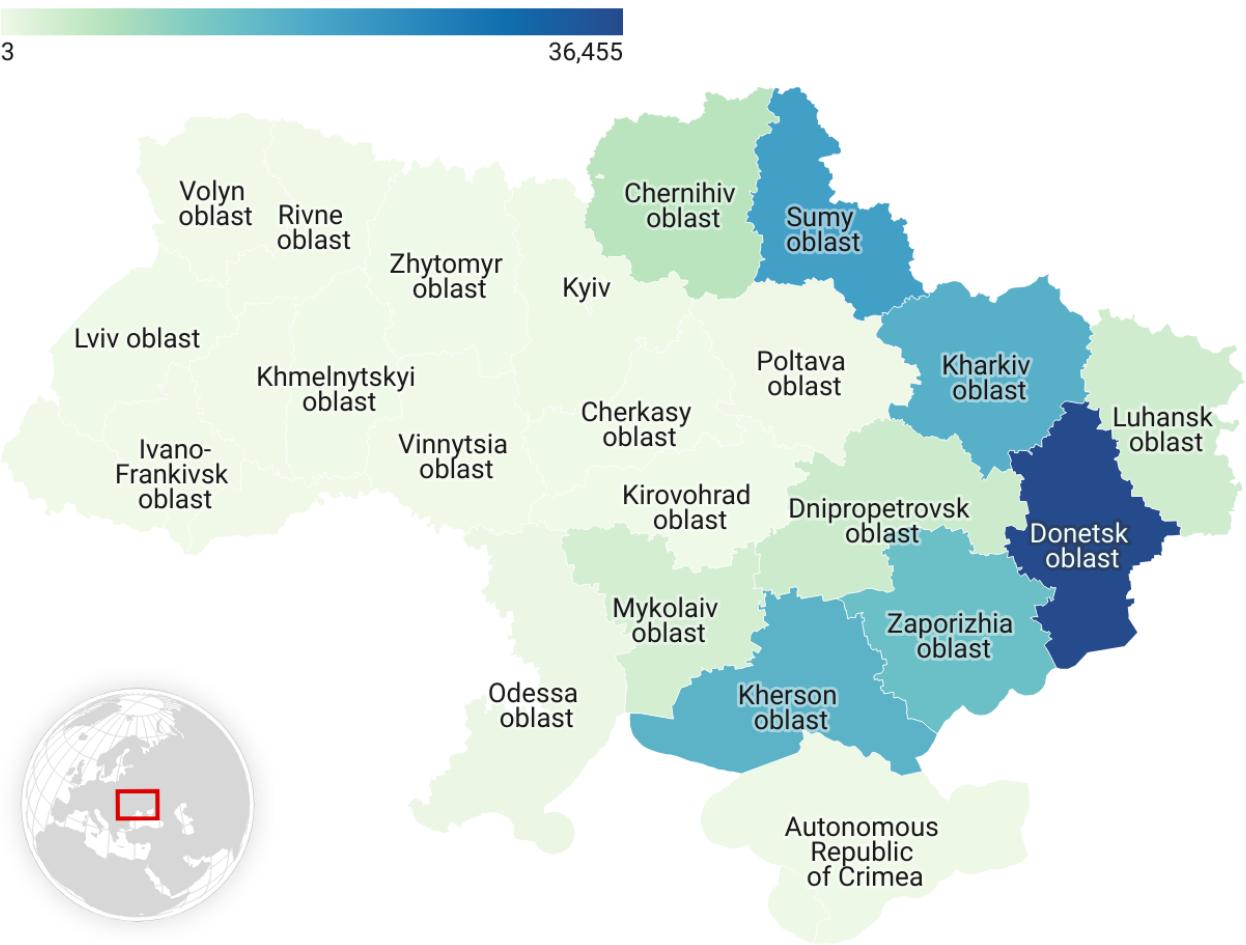
Created with Datawrapper

Figure 20. Map – Number of explosive incidents by oblast - Ukraine. Source: NPA.

1.3 Structural Gaps: Framing, Positioning and Resourcing

1.3.1 Definitions and Standards

> *"While EORE focuses on preventing accidents from explosive ordnance, CPP addresses broader risks associated with displacement, conflict, and lack of access to essential services. Together, they ensure communities are informed about immediate physical risks; equipped with strategies to protect themselves during active conflict or displacement; and better prepared to make safe decisions in unpredictable, high-risk environments." National Mine Action Centre, Lebanon* [47]

Despite growing interest, CPP remains inconsistently understood and unevenly positioned within existing coordination and institutional structures. While EORE is widely recognized and embedded as a formal pillar of mine action, the scope, definition, ownership, and institutional "home" of CPP remain unclear.

Some stakeholders see CPP as a natural extension of EORE, particularly in contexts requiring preparedness and self-protection during active conflict, drawing on the mine action sector's experience in safety messaging, civil-military coordination, and operational risk management in collaboration with national mine action authorities. There is also a clear link between the use of explosive weapons during active hostilities and the presence of explosive ordnance, whether intentionally laid or resulting from failed detonations, which reinforces the case for EORE/CPP and other mine action pillars such as Land Release and Victim Assistance. The EORE sector has previously adapted its scope to include risk education related to improvised explosive devices (IEDs) and small arms and light weapons (SALW), even though such weapons are not fully covered under the core mine action treaties. Stakeholders with holistic approaches, such as the ICRC and HI, have also embedded preparedness and conflict risk reduction components within their risk education programmes.[48]

Other actors, however, view CPP as part of broader protection, disaster risk reduction (DRR), or emergency preparedness efforts, positioning it outside the traditional scope of mine action. From this perspective, CPP includes elements such as disaster/conflict preparedness, mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS), first aid, fire safety, and evacuation planning, which typically fall under the remit of other sectors or national authorities (e.g., health, civil defence, or education). Participants from the workshop were cautious about not "*putting CPP in a tiny box*," recognising its broader potential to address multiple hazards depending on the needs of affected communities.

This lack of consensus around the positioning of CPP directly affects programme design and decision-making. Unlike EORE, which has benefited from formalisation through the International Mine Action Standards (IMAS) and their integration into national standards and frameworks, CPP lacks internationally validated tools, minimum quality requirements, and formal monitoring or reporting mechanisms. As a result, efforts remain fragmented, and the quality, scope and accountability of CPP programming vary widely across contexts.

In the absence of IMAS or comparable technical guidance, some mine action actors, including National Mine Action Authorities (NMAAs), are hesitant to move beyond traditional roles and may encounter both internal and external resistance in doing so. To address this lack of guidance, some

---

[47] Presentation made by the Lebanon National Mine Action Centre (LMAC) during the EORE/CPP EWIPA Workshop, 11-12 June 2025.
[48] GICHD, EORE Sector Mapping and Needs Analysis, October 2024, p. 21.

mine action organisations have developed, or are in the process of developing internal Standard Operating Procedures and tools to support harmonisation and consistency of CPP initiatives at field level. At global level, to address the scope of CPP, the EORE Sub-task team, as part of the EORE AG Emergency Risk Education Task Team, is in the process of developing a definition of CPP that could be broadly adopted by the sector.

Some interviewees and workshop participants suggested that the EORE sector, through the EORE Advisory Group, could help address this gap by developing a Technical Note for Mine Action (TNMA).[49] This new TNMA could help define which components of CPP are mine action responsibilities, and which fall within the remit of other sectors or require joint approaches.

From IED Risk Education to Explosive Weapons Risk Education – A Model for Technical Guidance.

In 2022, the Technical Note for Mine Action (TNMA) 12.10/01 on IED Risk Education (IED RE) was developed by an ad hoc task team led by the GICHD and UNICEF. This TNMA was created in response to the growing need for EORE actors to address improvised explosive devices, an area not previously covered by existing IMAS. The note provided timely technical guidance to harmonise practices already in place and encouraged several NMAAs to formally integrate IED RE into their national EORE modules, which had previously focused only on mines and other explosive remnants of war. Unlike IMAS, which establish minimum requirements for the mine action sector, TNMAs are non-binding and serve to complement the application of IMAS through practical, adaptable guidance. They also follow a relatively rapid production and approval process, making them especially useful in fast-evolving operational contexts. Building on this precedent, several stakeholders have called for the development of a new TNMA focused on explosive weapons risk education, designed specifically for EWIPA contexts. "We faced some technical difficulties adopting CPP. But having a Technical Note developed by experts, like the ones we have under IMAS, would really help. We already manage everything that comes after conflict, so why not also have guidance for what happens during it?" – National Mine Action Centre, Lebanon.

This persistent lack of clarity and standardisation contributes to limited institutional buy-in, whether from national authorities, implementing and partner organisations, or donors. Workshop participants recommended the development of broader global guidance that would complement, rather than duplicate, a potential TNMA. This could include an update of the Emergency Mine Risk Education Guidelines to reflect both conflict and natural disaster contexts, as well as new guidance on delivering CPP across mine action and other relevant sectors.[50]

Recommendations - Agenda for Action

EORE Advisory Group and MA AoR/GPC

- Jointly develop, translate, and disseminate a global guideline on EORE/CPP tailored to emergency contexts, including EWIPA. A TNMA on Explosive Weapons Risk Education could provide specific and relevant guidance for the mine action sector.

---

[49] See, TNMA 12.10/01 on IED RE, Edition 1, November 2022.
[50] Global Emergency Risk Education guidance was developed by UNICEF and the GICHD in 2008–2009, but is now widely considered outdated. See, GICHD and UNICEF, Emergency Risk Education: A Training Manual in support of IMAS MRE Best Practice Guidebook 9, 2009, and UNICEF, Emergency Mine Risk Education Toolkit, July 2008.

1.3.2 Positioning EORE/CPP within Broader Frameworks

"Coordination between the Mine Action Area of Responsibility and Protection actors is improving, but CPP still lacks a clear home within these structures." INGO, Global.[51]

Integrating CPP into emergency preparedness and response remains a challenge because there is no global standard or clear positioning within broader protection frameworks or national and humanitarian coordination mechanisms. One interviewee described CPP as "*sitting in a grey area,*" reflecting the hesitation of many actors, including some National Mine Action Authorities, to integrate it into their operations.[52] This reluctance is often linked to concerns about causing panic, as CPP messaging may imply the need to prepare for imminent conflict, or political sensitivity, particularly in contexts where prior advocacy on the purpose and scope of CPP has not been undertaken. In addition, many coordination systems remain focused on reactive responses to conflict and insufficiently focused on preventative approaches. This may partly explain why CPP is often sidelined as current humanitarian frameworks are not yet fully equipped to support anticipatory action in conflict settings, particularly those affected by EWIPA.[53]

As a result, protection and preparedness actors rarely coordinate, and many national authorities have no established procedures for CPP delivery. Even in contexts, such as in Ukraine, where non-mine action bodies (e.g., fire services or civil defence) play a role in preparedness, coordination across ministries remains fragmented.

> ### Gaza: Informal EORE/CPP Coordination Emerged Amid Gaps in the Institutional Response.
>
> *The formal Mine Action coordination mechanism was abruptly discontinued in the aftermath of 7 October 2023. Key actors responsible for leading preparedness efforts were unable to operate due to the intensity of violence and EWIPA use. This sudden interruption exposed the lack of adapted contingency planning for a conflict of such magnitude. In the absence of a functioning coordination structure, the response relied heavily on the commitment of a few individuals and the operational flexibility of their organisations. Informal channels, such as WhatsApp groups, were used to rapidly develop and disseminate risk education content. "It was more of a WhatsApp coordination than a structured response." – UN Agency, Global.[54] As coordination gradually resumed, EORE/CPP actors were able to support broader humanitarian efforts and align messaging with other sectors. Gaza's case highlights the bridging role Mine Action actors can play between preparedness and protection, but also between mine action and other key life-saving sectors, when EORE and CPP are recognised, resourced, and embedded in advance in preparedness/response mechanisms. Without formal planning and institutional anchoring, such contributions risk being delayed or lost precisely when they are most needed.*

Although EORE has seen more progress and is often integrated into sectors such as protection, education and health, its inclusion also remains uneven and under-supported.[55]

Workshop participants suggested that the ongoing humanitarian reset discussions provide a timely opportunity to systematically position EORE and CPP within revised coordination and preparedness structures. Proposals under review, such as cluster reform, multi-sectoral

[51] Interview dated 7 May 2025.
[52] INGO, Lebanon. Interview dated 19 March 2025.
[53] Gemma Davies, Veronique Barbelet and Leigh Mayhew (Humanitarian Policy Group), Reducing violence and strengthening the protection of civilians: Debunking Assumptions, November 2024, p. 1.
[54] Interview dated 13 March 2025.
[55] GICHD, EORE Sector Mapping and Needs Analysis, October 2024, pp. 25–27.

coordination, area-based planning and pooled financing, could offer entry points to embed EORE/CPP more explicitly into emergency preparedness and protection systems. Seizing this momentum will require advocacy to ensure that the unique contributions of EORE and CPP are recognised not only as life-saving interventions but also as enablers of safe access, community engagement and anticipatory action in EWIPA contexts.

Recommendations - Agenda for Action

Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC), Global Protection Cluster and the Mine Action AoR

- Ensure that EORE and CPP are explicitly included in any revised humanitarian coordination architecture emerging from the humanitarian reset, particularly within emergency preparedness, protection and anticipatory action frameworks. This includes recognising EORE/CPP as cross-cutting enablers of safe access, community engagement and civilian protection in EWIPA settings.

1.3.3 Funding Gaps and Sustainability Risks

> *"Preparedness efforts are too often sidelined in humanitarian prioritisation and funding decisions, despite their life-saving potential." Donor, Global* [56]

Across all contexts, funding shortfalls remain one of the most critical structural barriers to sustainable EORE and CPP programming. Despite the sector's growing relevance in recent emergencies, this has not translated into predictable or sufficient financial support. Many actors rely on resource optimisation or alternative private funding streams, but these are not enough to meet increasing demands.[57]

Preparedness initiatives, including CPP, are particularly vulnerable to being deprioritised within humanitarian funding cycles that favour short-term, reactive responses over anticipatory actions. One regional actor observed, *"the amount of funding is decreasing… logically the allocation of funds for the anticipation of conflict might be less and less available as the ongoing conflict would be prioritised."*[58] Proposal formats and donor reporting systems often fail to capture the cross-cutting, blended nature of EORE/CPP interventions. As CPP remains poorly conceptualised and institutionalised, some organisations embed preparedness components informally within other funded projects, as they are unable to secure dedicated funding.

While integration into broader protection, education or DRR programming can increase reach and maintain the response in a context of shrinking funding, such mainstreaming is rarely accompanied by dedicated budgets or technical oversight, reducing effectiveness and compromising quality due to the lack of resources for monitoring.[59]

Local organisations are frequently the most affected by structural funding gaps. As some of the earliest responders and uniquely positioned to access the most affected or hard-to-reach communities, they play a vital role in sustainable, community-owned EORE/CPP delivery. Yet they are typically the first to face budget cuts. Meanwhile, international actors and donors remain hesitant to fully shift resources and responsibilities, citing perceived legal, financial or operational risks, or pointing to restrictive funding frameworks. Without dedicated support mechanisms,

---

[56] Interview dated 9 April 2025.

[57] GICHD, EORE Sector Mapping and Needs Analysis, October 2024, pp. 13–14.

[58] INGO, Middle-East. Interview dated 19 March 2023.

[59] GICHD, EORE Sector Mapping and Needs Analysis, October 2024, p. 27.

localisation risks remaining a rhetorical commitment rather than a practical reality, particularly in underfunded or overlooked crises.[60]

Mine action actors, interviewees and workshop participants have called for clearer disaggregation of EORE funding from clearance budgets, greater donor engagement through platforms such as the Mine Action Support Group, and broader recognition of EORE and CPP as enablers of safe access and civilian protection in EWIPA settings.[61] Funding remains uneven across EWIPA contexts. While some high-profile conflicts attract substantial donor attention, such as Ukraine, others, like Myanmar, struggle with chronic underfunding. The 2025 global cuts to humanitarian aid further compound the challenge. The ongoing "humanitarian reset" presents a timely opportunity to reframe EORE/CPP as essential components of anticipatory action and risk reduction, and to ensure that both international and local actors are adequately equipped and resourced to deliver them.

Myanmar: EORE Mainstreamed into Country-Based Humanitarian Funding.

In 2024, the Myanmar Humanitarian Fund (MHF) became one of the first country-based pooled funds to systematically integrate Explosive Ordnance Risk Education (EORE) into its project requirements. This decision reflected recognition by the Humanitarian Country Team of the widespread threat posed by explosive ordnance across EWIPA-affected states in Myanmar. As a result, all projects seeking MHF support must now include EORE components, ensuring that life-saving preparedness messages reach at-risk communities. This requirement was not only a protective measure, but also an indicator of institutional buy-in. EORE was recognised as a cross-cutting enabler of safe access and civilian protection in this largely underfunded EWIPA context. "Everyone saw the need. Now, every project – health, protection, WASH – has to explain how they include EORE. It's made a huge difference in how risk education is viewed." – INGO, Myanmar.[62] This example highlights how pooled funding mechanisms can support the institutionalisation of EORE within broader humanitarian response frameworks, and offers a replicable model to embed both EORE and CPP into responses in other EWIPA-affected settings.

Recommendations - Agenda for Action

EORE Advisory Group and Mine Action AoR/GPC

- In collaboration with donor States, advocate for the systematic integration of EORE/CPP into country-based pooled funds (CBPFs) and bilateral funding streams.

---

[60] See Véronique Barbelet, Gemma Davies, Josie Flint and Eleanor Davey, ODI Global Advisory (2021), Interrogating the evidence base on humanitarian localisation: a literature study, p. 11; Markus Schindler, Localization in Mine Action: Where the Possible Meets the Necessary, The Journal of Conventional Weapons Destruction Issue 28. 1, 2024, pp. 6–8; and Mark Wilkinson (DanChurchAid), Lisa Mueller-Dormann, Camilla Roberti (Danish Refugee Council), and Lene Rasmussen (DanChurchAid), Local Is Possible: An Analysis of HMA localization efforts and proposed pathways for future projects, *Journal of Conventional Weapons Destruction*, Issue 28.2, 2024, pp. 44–45.
[61] See also Calls for Action on Funding in GICHD, EORE Sector Mapping and Needs Analysis, October 2024, pp. 13–14.
[62] Interview dated 2 April 2025.

II. Reaching the Most Affected: Access, Risk Dynamics and Targeting Strategies

2.1 Enabling Access in High-Risk Environments

2.1.1 Access and Communication Challenges in High-Risk Environments

> *"In Gaza, it's now a full-scale war zone, and carrying out any EOD tasks is currently impossible. One party to the conflict has imposed restrictions that prevent sharing the location of ERW… This makes risk assessments and safe movement extremely difficult." UN Agency, Gaza and the West Bank, Palestine.*[63]

Delivering EORE/CPP in active conflict zones presents a distinct set of operational challenges for EORE/CPP providers. Access to affected communities may be constrained by security risks, displacement, infrastructure damage or government restrictions, which not only create challenges in delivery, but also put field teams at substantial risk.

Frontline movements, active shelling, sieges and urban fighting constitute high operational risks for field teams. Whereas in contexts dealing with legacy contamination the boundaries between safe and unsafe areas can be well defined, in an EWIPA context these boundaries are increasingly blurred, and in some cases, such as Gaza, almost non-existent. Active and ongoing bombardment severely restricts the ability of operators to deliver EORE/CPP, and teams are more likely to encounter new EO contamination and hazards following shelling or bombing.

Even when operators have access, physical access to affected communities is often impeded by the destruction of infrastructure such as roads and public buildings. Rubble and destroyed and damaged infrastructure create hazards for teams trying to reach people affected by EWIPA. As one interviewee noted, "*we often lack safe spaces to conduct EORE sessions in active conflict zones, which severely limits delivery options.*"[64] Electricity blackouts or intermittent telecommunications not only undermine the delivery of activities and messaging, but also pose serious protection concerns. As the ICRC has noted, connectivity is increasingly essential to civilian survival and humanitarian action. A loss of connectivity can prevent safe evacuation, disrupt aid coordination and expose populations to heightened risks of violence, misinformation and isolation.[65]

Prioritising and reaching the people who need EORE/CPP may also be challenging due to the increased movement of people escaping the conflict. In contexts where there has been an existing EORE capacity, conflict may spread to areas where there is no current capacity, creating challenges when endeavouring to scale up a response.

---

[63] Interview dated 14 May 2025.
[64] INGO, Global. Interview dated 28 March 2025.
[65] Cléa Thouin, "Offline and in Danger: The Humanitarian Consequences of Connectivity Disruptions," ICRC Humanitarian Law & Policy Blog, 1 July 2025.

> **Myanmar and Ukraine: Navigating Insecurity and Access Constraints.**
>
> *In EWIPA contexts, the rapidly changing threat landscape, access restrictions, security concerns and damaged infrastructure can make the delivery of EORE/CPP particularly challenging. In Ukraine, regular drone attacks and shelling in areas close to the frontline require teams to be constantly alert and to regularly replan routes. Damaged infrastructure, exposure to EO contamination, and a lack of shelter options prevent teams from accessing affected communities. EORE/CPP sessions are frequently conducted in a low-profile manner due to the security concerns of gathering people in groups. School children are often reached in underground shelters as schools are closed. "The teams conduct sessions in subway schools in Kharkiv because it's the only place where face-to-face sessions are safe."[66] Regular communication and power blackouts increase the challenges for managers of communicating with the field staff and prevent teams from delivering planned EORE/CPP sessions. In Myanmar, the logistical challenges of reaching affected communities are also severe. "Another issue, also affecting our staff, is the difficulty of reaching the villages. Travel takes hours, and movement is not easy. In some areas, we have to walk or use motorbikes because the roads are destroyed, making it very challenging to deliver awareness sessions and provide support." – Local NGO, Myanmar.[67]*

Recommendations - Agenda for Action

States:

- Affected States to facilitate the provision of EORE/CPP with involved actors. Third States not involved in or not affected by the conflict to mobilise diplomatic channels to negotiate access for EORE/CPP.

2.1.2 Staff Safety and Security

"Our teams are facing many risks including shelling, drones and ballistic missile attacks, as they are mostly working in areas which are close to the frontline... Since the funding cuts, it is quite clear to see that this duty of care for local humanitarian and frontline workers has been deprioritized." National NGO, Ukraine.[68]

Working in EWIPA contexts fundamentally increases the security risks for those delivering EORE/CPP in the field. There is a higher probability of vehicle accidents or injuries due to rubble and damaged infrastructure, and an increased likelihood of encountering and triggering explosive devices. Incidents of gender-based violence may also increase risk to staff, particularly women, in conflict zones.

Local staff and partners face a dual burden of being civilians under threat from EWIPA and humanitarians working in extremely challenging environments. Many of the national staff providing EORE/CPP in EWIPA contexts are also affected by conflict or displacement, and as such may require support just as much as the communities to safeguard their wellbeing.

---

[66] INGO, Ukraine. Interview dated 23 April 2025.
[67] Interview dated 18 April 2025.
[68] Interview dated 24 April 2025.

> *Bearing the Risk: Local Teams on the Frontline of EWIPA.*
>
> *In many EWIPA settings, EORE/CPP facilitators are not only delivering life-saving messages under fire but are also civilians navigating the same risks as the communities they serve. In Gaza, national staff have endured the destruction of their homes and offices while continuing to work amid active bombardment and displacement, often without adequate security support or psychosocial care.[69] In Ukraine, several facilitators reported having been displaced from areas now under Russian occupation, while others described risky working conditions exacerbated by increased alcohol abuse and tension in frontline communities. In Myanmar, a local staff member described how he built a bomb shelter to protect his family from intensive shelling. These testimonies reflect a common challenge: the humanitarians delivering EORE/CPP are often as exposed as the civilians that they aim to protect. One national staff member from Gaza described the experience starkly: "I was displaced, under bombardment, coordinating everything alone. I just wanted to work. I told them, give me a desk and a laptop. But no one helped. We were the ones risking everything while trying to protect others" – UN agency, Gaza, Palestine.[70] Without sustained security measures, MHPSS support, and duty of care, the risks borne by local teams remain dangerously high, and too often invisible.*

The HI report on humanitarian access in EWIPA contexts found that when humanitarian workers and affected populations are at risk of harm, international humanitarian organisations may cease or pause operations and relocate or evacuate their international staff.[71] This can leave civilians with the most acute needs and without vital access to aid and medical care. It often also leaves local staff and partners to shoulder the operational risks. Some interviewees, along with existing literature, noted that when international organisations delegate delivery through national and local partner organisations in conflict areas, they are often transferring the risk without providing the necessary safety and security support, raising significant ethical concerns.[72] Concerningly, some national and local CSOs interviewed reported that safety and security protocols, including personal protective equipment, secure transport, and psychosocial support for staff, were sometimes insufficiently funded, despite their critical role in protecting staff navigating damaged environments. Ensuring that local partners are not left to shoulder the risk without appropriate preparation is a key ethical consideration.

Recommendations - Agenda for Action

Donor States, UN Agencies and EORE/CPP Operators:

- Provide funding support for robust security risk management and ensure EWIPA-specific duty of care measures for local and international EORE/CPP staff and partners. Include tailored safety protocols, access to psychosocial support, and adequate equipment and insurance. For example, develop, implement and monitor operating procedures for the safety and security of local staff, partners, and community volunteers.

---

[69] Protection Cluster, Protection Analysis Update, Gaza, December 2024, pp. 6–7.
[70] Interview dated 25 March 2025.
[71] HI, Workshop Report Humanitarian Access in EWIPA Settings, July 2024, pp. 6.
[72] HI, Workshop Report Humanitarian Access in EWIPA Settings, July 2024, pp. 3; 9; and Tristan Creac'h, "Fostering Principled and Safe Humanitarian Access: Protecting aid workers and the civilians they serve in contexts of explosive weapons use", Explosive Weapons Monitor, Fragments, Vol.2, Issue 3, September 2024, p. 9.

2.1.3 Enabling Access and Increasing Safety

"It really shows why communities are so important for CPP and risk education. They're best placed to do it – they know the context, they know the people, and they're living through the same dramatic situation. That's why they're so motivated to provide the right messages to others." INGO, Global.[73]

Negotiating access in EWIPA contexts is often challenging and may need to be done at several levels. There was consensus among actors interviewed that ensuring access is best done in coordination between mine action and protection actors to avoid piecemeal approaches and inconsistent information on access.

Humanitarian access may be negotiated through collaborative mechanisms, including involving actors such as the Mine Action Area of Responsibility (MA AoR), the Protection Cluster, the International Safety Organisation (INSO), the United Nations Department of Safety and Security (UNDSS), UNOCHA, or other UN organisations tasked with coordinating access through civil and military coordination. Such collaborative mechanisms can include agreements on the protection of humanitarian actors and opening humanitarian space.

Workshop participants suggested that, when context allows, National Mine Action Authorities could play a key role in facilitating dialogue with security actors to enable safe and context-appropriate programming. In settings where direct humanitarian access is severely limited, it was further suggested that, as a last resort, EORE/CPP messages could be relayed through actors with access to affected populations, including military or non-state armed groups, provided this is done with appropriate safeguards and coordination.

The urgency of EWIPA environments complicates planning and coordination around safety and security. International organisations often have staff or departments responsible for assessing humanitarian access and security prior to teams being deployed to the field, although procedures have to be continually adapted and updated to ensure an adequate response to the dangers of working in rapidly evolving EWIPA settings. This includes ensuring safety equipment, secure transport, access to medical facilities, and the conduct of dynamic risk assessments so that staff movement can be constantly monitored. Low-tech communication tools or secure messaging platforms are used by EORE/CPP operators to keep in contact with frontline staff or partners when normal communications fail. However, interviewees noted that decisions regarding access and safety in the field sometimes had to be made quickly and without clear guidance, often relying on frontline staff to assess the situation in real time. This highlights that there is still a need for access and security protocols to be continually strengthened, both within and across organisations.

In high-risk environments where international staff face access constraints, or at the immediate onset of conflict, local teams, national organisations and community agents or focal points frequently take on the majority of operational responsibilities to reach affected areas. However, this reliance on local actors must be accompanied by adequate training and support to help partner organisations and networks with access, safety and negotiation.

The development of practical contingency plans can help to ensure the safety of frontline staff or partners in the case of new threats or conflict escalation, and including for operations under siege and blockades. However, there is a need for sustained investment in local staff training. Organisations like UNDSS, which play an important role in delivering security briefings, and

---

[73] Interview dated 13 March 2025.

practical safety and security training to humanitarian staff, can be utilised to provide relevant training for both international and national actors.[74]

<div style="border: 1px solid blue;">

Gaza: Anticipating Conflict: Lessons from the UN Inter-Agency Contingency Plan.

In Gaza, a joint contingency planning effort led by OCHA, UNDSS, UNMAS, WHO, WFP, and others developed an Inter-Agency Contingency Plan (IACP) in anticipation of intensified conflict. Finalised in September 2020, the plan aimed to ensure minimum preparedness across humanitarian sectors in the event of a major escalation. It outlined scenarios, early warning indicators, and critical response gaps, many of which tragically materialised during the 2021 escalation and again, on a far greater scale, during the hostilities that began in October 2023. While the plan offered a foundational structure for preparedness, it was unfortunately not designed to address crises of such unprecedented magnitude and intensity, nor to withstand the total humanitarian blockade imposed since 2 March 2025. In both instances, the scale of attacks and humanitarian needs overwhelmed the plan's scope, exposing key limitations in collective readiness and inter-agency response. Although not specific to EORE or CPP, the Gaza IACP illustrates how coordinated preparedness planning, across UN agencies and in partnership with national actors, can support operational continuity, risk mitigation, and protection of frontline staff. Several actors interviewed stressed the value of integrating EORE/CPP into such preparedness plans from the outset.

</div>

Some actors are also providing EORE and CPP guidance directly to humanitarian staff across sectors, equipping them with the knowledge and tools needed to navigate contaminated environments safely and to share accurate, life-saving information with affected communities. In Ukraine and Gaza, there was overwhelming demand for safety-briefings for humanitarian workers and dissemination of NGO-specific EORE sessions.[75]

Recommendations - Agenda for Action

EORE/CPP operators:

- Develop capacity for dialogue with armed actors through conflict sensitivity, expert consultations, and civil-military coordination mechanisms (UNOCHA, UNDSS) to negotiate access for EORE/CPP providers.

State Military and/or Non-State Armed Groups:

- As a last resort, where access to EWIPA-affected populations is compromised, facilitate and support the mainstreaming of EORE/CPP messages.

EORE/CPP Operators, UNDSS, UNMAS and Security NGOs:

- Train humanitarian actors, including local partners, in safety and security at work in EWIPA contexts.

---

[74] Training topics covered in safety and security training include situational awareness, personal security measures, movement protocols, digital security, first-aid and context-specific risk mitigation strategies.
[75] Nick Vovk, *Emergency Explosive Ordnance Risk Education: Lessons Learned from Ukraine*, *The Journal of Conventional Weapons*, Issue 28.1, March 2024, p. 27.

2.2 Understanding Risk Patterns and Vulnerabilities in EWIPA Contexts

Partner providing child-focused EORE/CPP in Lebanon. ©HAMAP

2.2.1 Risk Patterns, Survival Strategies and Receptiveness

"People are tired. They've been living under shelling for more than two years now. Many of them have already received risk education and they know the basic messages. But when it comes to following the guidance in the moment – when they are stressed or panicking – they don't always do it. They just want to survive and get to safety." INGO, Ukraine.[76]

The indiscriminate nature of EWIPA means that there are often additional considerations required for understanding exposure to the threat rather than simply targeting traditionally at-risk populations. Risk patterns are determined more by behavioural patterns, situational exposure (e.g., movement during bombardment, livelihood activities), and geographic location, than by socio-demographic categories (e.g., age, gender, occupation), although these continue to play a role. People living under sustained conflict often demonstrate "survival-driven" behaviours whereby they knowingly engage in risk-taking behaviours to meet basic needs, such as accessing food, collecting fuel or water, or checking property. Civilian livelihood activities such as farming, scrap collection, fishing and water/fuel retrieval significantly increase exposure across all demographics.

Exposure to explosive weapons is known to cause psychological distress.[77] Prolonged exposure to violence can also lead to a normalisation of threat and higher risk tolerance.[78] Trauma may also influence the ability to receive and retain messages, and psychological coping mechanisms, such as

---

[76] Interview dated 19 March 2025.
[77] International Committee of the Red Cross, Explosive Weapons with wide area effects: a deadly choice in populated areas, January 2022, pp. 37–40.
[78] HI, Out of Reach The Impact of Explosive Weapons in Ukraine – Focus on hard-to-reach areas, February 2024, p. 14.

fatalism and denial, may also influence risk-related decision-making at individual and community levels.

> **Ukraine: Reaching Civilians Facing Daily Exposure and Fatigue.**
>
> *In Ukraine, repeated exposure to explosive weapons, displacement, and the protracted nature of the conflict have led to widespread psychological distress, which directly influences civilian behaviours and risk patterns. Civilians often engage in dangerous activities, such as crossing contaminated areas to salvage belongings or to access water and fuel, despite knowing the risks. Farmers, for example, are frequently cited among the highest-risk groups due to continued work in potentially EO-contaminated areas.[79] Prolonged exposure has also led to the normalisation of threats and diminished responsiveness to early warning systems like air raid sirens. This desensitisation has impacted receptiveness to risk education and conflict preparedness messaging. In 2023, more than 50% of surveyed Ukrainians admitted to engaging in risky behaviour around explosive weapons.[80] A report by HI noted growing concerns about the normalisation of violence and diminished responsiveness to alerts.[81] "There's a sense of fatigue among people. Everyone is doing EORE, everyone is doing CPP. We have the Telegram channels, the government air alarm system. People have got used to it. There's fatigue, there's a sense of normalisation. It's exhausting. Every day there's an air raid, sometimes three or four." – INGO, Ukraine.[82] This case study shows how EORE/CPP strategies must take into account the psychological toll of EWIPA, ensuring messaging is relevant, empowering, and sensitive to the daily pressures faced by civilians navigating persistent danger.*

As conflicts become protracted, people often become fatigued and desensitised to safety messaging, particularly if the guidance provided feels irrelevant, unrealistic or difficult to act on. Stand-alone messaging, not accompanied by other mine action support such as land release, or other services to provide for immediate needs, can also increase fatigue and frustration. As one interviewee explained, "*people are kind of getting tired of risk education. Not in the sense that they think it's wrong. They're just like, Okay, we get it. Now, can you get rid of these mortars or these land mines, or whatever?*"[83]

In some EWIPA contexts, the urgency to get messages out to affected people has sometimes resulted in EORE/CPP operators sending out standard messages which are non-contextualised. While this might be the only way to get messaging out in the short term, non-contextualised messages can exacerbate fatigue and reduce the credibility of messaging. Ensuring EORE/CPP messages are relevant and credible is crucial.

Recommendations - Agenda for Action

EORE/CPP Operators and Researchers:

- Adapt risk education strategies to behavioural exposure and survival-driven risk patterns (e.g. farmers, scrap collectors, caregivers). Tailor and regularly review messaging accordingly.

---

79 HI, Danish Refugee Council, KABP Survey Report 2023, January 2024, p. 32; and Ukraine Protection Cluster, Ukraine Protection Analysis Update: The Critical Need for Protection amongst Armed Conflict and Violence, July 2024, p.12.
80 HI, Danish Refugee Council, KABP Survey Report 2023, January 2024, p. 70.
81 HI, Out of Reach The Impact of Explosive Weapons in Ukraine – Focus on hard-to-reach areas, February 2024, p. 14.
82 Interview dated 12 March 2025.
83 INGO, Myanmar. Interview dated 27 March 2025.

2.2.2 Population Groups at Heightened Risk

"One challenge is ensuring the accessibility of risk education for women and girls with disabilities, especially in rural areas." Local NGO, Ukraine.[84]

Available data and testimonies indicate that certain groups are consistently more exposed to risk when explosive weapons are used. The research found that men, especially working-age men, frequently make up most of the casualties, due to movement patterns and work responsibilities that place them in high-risk areas.[85] Cultural and psychological patterns, such as heroism narratives or gender expectations, can also shape how individuals perceive and respond to risk. In Ukraine, for example, a widely-shared narrative of heroism in the face of the conflict appears to have played a role in men taking risks with handling and moving EO.[86] Despite being a high-risk group, men are often underrepresented in programming as a result of difficulties in accessing men in communities or workspaces, or the reluctance of men to attend sessions, in some contexts due to conscription fears.

Children, particularly boys, are known to be prone to engaging with EO, due to curiosity and lack of awareness.[87] Globally, children comprise almost half (43%) of all civilian casualties recorded since 1999 and where the age group was known.[88] In EWIPA contexts, children are often reliant on adults, parents, teachers or older siblings to ensure their safety, although in many contexts children also have a role in supporting household income. In Gaza and Lebanon, children were identified as particularly vulnerable during movement or evacuations, when present in damaged neighbourhoods, or involved in daily survival tasks, including salvaging scrap metal.[89]

Women are often seen as important to target with EORE/CPP because of their responsibility for children and ability to reach and influence adult men. However, traditional gender roles are often profoundly disrupted by EWIPA. While women and girls are usually perceived to be more risk-averse around EO, in Gaza their exposure to EWIPA-related dangers has increased, especially as they take on survival tasks like gathering water or searching rubble for reusable materials and belongings. Female-headed households face added barriers when trying to flee, including caring alone for dependents and lacking resources or protection. Those unable to leave remain trapped in highly dangerous areas with limited access to aid, increasing their risk of harm.[90] In Ukraine, a study found that the incidence of Gender-Based Violence had increased since 2023, with women and girls particularly impacted.[91]

---

[84] Interview dated 23 April 2025.

[85] UNIDIR, Second Menu of Indicators to Measure the Reverberating Effects on Civilians from the Use of Explosive Weapons in Populated Areas, February 2022, p. 10; GICHD, Mapping of the EORE Sector in Ukraine, September 2024, pp. 12–13; and Danish Refugee Council, Killing Long After they Fall: the cost of active warfare and explosive ordnance on civilians in Gaza, November 2024, p. 24.

[86] HI, Danish Refugee Council, KABP Survey Report 2023, January 2024, p. 32; and Ukraine Protection Cluster, Ukraine Protection Analysis Update: The Critical Need for Protection amongst Armed Conflict and Violence, July 2024, p.12.

[87] ICRC, Childhood in Rubbles: The Humanitarian Consequences of Urban Warfare for Children, May 2023, p. 8.

[88] International Campaign to Ban Landmines, Landmine Monitor 2024, Geneva, ICBL-CMC, November 2024, p.42.

[89] Protection Cluster, Protection Analysis Update, Gaza, December 2024, pp. 6–7; and ACAPS, Lebanon Briefing Note, March 2025, p. 2.

[90] Danish Refugee Council, Killing Long After they Fall: the cost of active warfare and explosive ordnance on civilians in Gaza, November 2024, p. 20.

[91] World Vision and NGO "Girls", Gender-Based Violence in Ukraine Amid War: An Assessment Report, April 2024.

Humanitarian staff, healthcare workers, first responders, utility workers and civilians clearing debris to restore services or access are also high-risk groups entering areas that have been shelled and may have EO contamination.

The research revealed quite significant gaps in knowledge and evidence as to how intersecting factors of discrimination, including gender, disability, age, displacement or ethnicity, create further vulnerabilities in EWIPA settings, and how EORE/CPP can best respond to these vulnerabilities in approach and messaging. Greater investment is needed in conducting research to better understand specific intersecting vulnerabilities in EWIPA settings, and in ensuring that the design of materials and delivery approaches better address these layered, intersectional risks.

Specific groups, such as persons with disabilities, are thought to have heightened vulnerability in EWIPA settings due to factors that could reduce their capacity for evacuation or self-protection. Persons with disabilities and older people may have mobility issues or sensory impairments which prevent them from receiving information, acting on sirens or evacuating.[92] In Ukraine, older people tend to be attached to their home and land and refuse to leave, exposing themselves to heightened risks, especially in the frontline and buffer zones. In Myanmar, a local facilitator explained that elderly people were often not able to flee when shelling occurred.[93] However, there is a lack of available evidence on how disabilities affect understanding and the ability to act on messages, and how persons with disabilities are being impacted by EWIPA. Efforts have been made in some contexts such as Ukraine and Gaza to ensure that EORE/CPP messaging is presented in an accessible format for certain people with certain disabilities, but this is still inconsistently applied.

> *Children with Disabilities at Greater Risk of EWIPA.*
>
> *Children with disabilities face disproportionate risks in conflict settings, particularly during explosive weapons attacks and forced displacement. During attacks, they often rely on others for support or are unable to flee at all. A 2022 Human Rights Watch report documented these risks through firsthand accounts from families in Syria, exposing the life-threatening barriers faced by children with physical, sensory or intellectual disabilities during EWIPA. The lack of assistive devices such as wheelchairs, prostheses, or hearing aids further compounds the danger, especially during sudden evacuations. Parents and caretakers often face impossible choices; some have had to leave children behind in order to flee safely with others. A father of a child with cerebral palsy recounted: "A house next to us was hit. Everyone started running away, and I didn't know what to do... I was thinking of my child Reem and my other children. How will I be able to flee having to carry Reem?" Some children expressed anxiety about being a burden to their loved ones: "I feel that I am a heavy burden on my family; they have to help me escape, which puts them at risk. But when I decide to stay at home, my family will stay home with me. The scariest thing when I hear an airstrike is knowing that I might lose someone I love." Others described being left behind: "Everyone was just thinking of themselves and started running, and I was left alone. I could only walk very slowly to find a place to hide." This report and testimonies highlight the need for evacuation systems, contingency plans, and EORE/CPP programming to be adapted to address the unique needs of children with disabilities.[94]*

---

[92] HI, Lebanon Issue Brief on Persons with Disabilities, 2024, p. 1; HI, Out of Reach The Impact of Explosive Weapons in Ukraine – Focus on hard-to-reach areas, February 2024, pp. 2 and 17; ACAPS, Myanmar: Three Years Post-Coup: Recent Developments and Humanitarian Situation, February 2024, p. 5.

[93] Interview dated 18 April 2025.

[94] Human Rights Watch, "It was really hard to protect myself": Impact of the Armed Conflict in Syria on Children with Disabilities, September 2022, pp. 11–16.

Interviewees also identified some challenges in EORE/CPP information reaching certain marginalised groups, for example, the Roma community in Ukraine, or minority ethnic groups due to language or linguistic barriers or lack of recognised civil status and documents.[95]

Recommendations - Agenda for Action

Donor States, UN Agencies and EORE/CPP Operators:

- Undertake further research on intersecting factors of vulnerability in EWIPA contexts and ensure intersectional research and analysis informs approach and messaging design.

EORE/CPP Operators, UN Agencies and National Mine Action Authorities:

- Develop specific efforts to capture data and information on Disability, Gender, Age (DGA) and other diverse groups with intersecting vulnerabilities to better respond to their needs in the provision of EORE/CPP. Where possible, work with stakeholders with specific expertise and knowledge of DGA groups.

EORE/CPP Operators:

- Work with MHPSS and Child Protection sectors to ensure messaging remains credible and trauma-sensitive for Disability, Gender, Age and other Diversity Groups.

2.3 Adapting Approaches for EORE/CPP Delivery

EORE/CPP session in Gaza. ©HI

---

[95] See also; Ukraine Protection Cluster, Ukraine Protection Analysis Update: The Critical Need for Protection amongst Armed Conflict and Violence, July 2024, p.12.

2.3.1 Local Participation for Appropriate Messaging and Reach

"Community-based approaches where local actors co-develop and deliver messages have proven most effective in high-risk EWIPA settings." INGO, Gaza[96]

The involvement of people and communities impacted by EWIPA was cited by many respondents as key to ensuring that EORE/CPP messaging and approaches are relevant and appropriate to the context and to extending the reach of risk education activities.

Community involvement in the design of EORE and CPP content was reported to improve the relevance of messaging to the situation people are experiencing, ensuring that messages are better received. Local stakeholders are also able to advise on cultural, linguistic and political relevance, contextualising messages to community realities, relevant languages, and appropriate delivery formats such as local radio, house-to-house visits, or social media. The research revealed several examples of EWIPA-affected communities being involved in the design and delivery of EORE and CPP messages, expanding reach to remote areas and sustaining programming under severe access constraints. Interviews from Myanmar underscored that youth volunteers, religious figures, and traditional leaders were often instrumental in adapting messages to the local cultural and linguistic context. Enabling regular feedback from affected populations enables the testing, refinement, and adaptation of messaging to the local needs and emerging threats. In Ukraine, EORE/CPP providers regularly contact trusted local authorities to help facilitate their work with communities and generate greater acceptance. In Ukraine, work has also taken place to integrate messaging within school curricula and teacher training.

There were some examples of specialised national and local civil society organisations, such as women's organisations, youth networks, and organisations of persons with disabilities being able to reach specific groups and address some of the intersecting vulnerabilities, for example, advising on the development of inclusive messaging, appropriate communication channels, or by enabling access to specific groups. As one Ukrainian women's organisation explained: *"Our approach is to embed CPP and EORE into youth-led activities, making them more relatable and engaging. One of our challenges is ensuring the accessibility of risk education for women and girls with disabilities, especially in rural areas."*[97] Organisations of persons with disabilities, such as Fight for Right in Ukraine, have developed detailed research, and tailored guidance and advocacy tools to support the safe evacuation of persons with disabilities during conflict. While not directly engaged in EORE or CPP delivery, these organisations offer valuable insights that could inform more inclusive messaging and preparedness strategies. Their expertise remains underutilised and could be more systematically consulted to ensure EORE/CPP remains accessible and relevant for all.[98]

> **Women in EORE/CPP: Local participation and Gender-sensitive approaches.**
>
> *Across the case studies, women's participation has proven central to developing trusted, relevant, and effective EORE and CPP messaging. Interviews in Lebanon and Myanmar highlighted how women-led organisations, mother's groups, and female community volunteers play pivotal roles in co-developing content, selecting delivery formats, and reaching overlooked or hard-to-reach high-risk groups, including adolescent boys and caregivers. "We've made efforts to involve women and youth groups in risk education activities, as they are trusted messengers within their communities."*

---

[96] Interview dated 8 April 2025.
[97] Local NGO, Ukraine. Interview dated 23 April 2025.
[98] See, Fight for Right, Evacuation of People with Disabilities: International Standards and Ukrainian realities, December 2022 and Disability and War: Analytical report on the results of research, 2022. See also Fight for Right website: https://ffr.org.ua/en/.

– Local NGO, Myanmar.[99] Complementing these efforts, the UNICEF-supported Laaha platform, active in seven countries, offers a safe online space for women and girls to access sexual and reproductive health information and gender-based violence services. It now includes one EORE and three CPP modules developed with direct input from women and girls, including practical guidance on staying safe during bombing and shelling.[100]

In Myanmar and Ukraine, organisations have also partnered with independent national and local media organisations to amplify EORE/CPP content. Training and mentoring in sensitive journalism and risk education content helped to build the capacity of the journalists, and the content produced through different media outlets widened the audience reach.

Recommendations - Agenda for Action

EORE/CPP Operators:

- Enable community-driven EORE/CPP by leveraging local networks to co-develop and adapt messages, test messages and materials, establish feedback loops for continued relevance, and ensure sustainability through low-tech, low-input and low-profile methods suited to volatile and high-risk environments.

EORE/CPP Operators, UN Agencies and Donors:

- Partner with and/or fund national and local organisations, networks and groups that can reach specific high-risk or marginalised groups, including working-age men, displaced women, youth, persons with disabilities, and frontline workers.

2.3.2 Adapting Delivery to Evolving Risks and Minimising Trauma

"One of the positive aspects of CPP was that it had a big mental health component to it, because when you give power to vulnerable people to be able to find solutions for their problems, it focuses their minds and reduces some of the stress that they are understandably feeling." UN Agency, Gaza and the West Bank, Palestine.[101]

Providing EORE/CPP in EWIPA settings is particularly challenging. Traditional EORE approaches are sometimes not responsive enough to meet the needs of communities impacted by EWIPA, or rely on development, piloting and dissemination methods that take too long to get messages out to people. A lack of material resources for printing, and challenges in communication and access during active conflict phases, often limits the capacity to produce and adapt messaging in real time.[102] Field testing is rarely possible due to safety concerns and frequent population movements make it difficult to monitor message retention.

Many EORE/CPP actors have trialled and adopted low-tech, flexible, and mobile solutions to maintain outreach. In Gaza, teams relied on improvised low-tech methods such as mobile loudspeakers and house-to-house visits to sustain messaging during blackouts and intense

---

[99] Interview dated 18 April 2025.

[100] See Laaha: A Virtual Safe Space for Women and Girls.

[101] Interview dated 14 May 2025.

[102] Nick Vovk, "Emergency Explosive Ordnance Risk Education: Lessons Learned from Ukraine," in *The Journal of Conventional Weapons Destruction*, Vol.21, Issue 1, Article 5, 27 March 2024.

bombardment. In Ukraine, sessions are held in shelters for schoolchildren where schools have been destroyed or damaged.

Interviewees highlighted that pre-designed CPP/EORE materials often become outdated quickly in volatile, conflict environments. Emerging new threats such as the use of drones or white phosphorus and changing attack patterns require real-time adaptation of messages and methods. Actors emphasised the importance of maintaining flexible, iterative messaging strategies that allow for regular content review, community feedback, and the quick updating of safety guidance based on evolving risks.

> *Adapting EORE delivery in Myanmar, Gaza, and Ukraine: Rapid responses in conflict and emergencies.*
>
> *Since the intensification of violence in Myanmar after the 2021 coup, international mine action operators have had to rethink delivery of EORE to respond to the many challenges of access constraints, widespread communications blackouts, massive population displacements, and a continually evolving conflict. Organisations have developed a range of delivery methods, both low-tech and high-tech, to ensure that messages can reach affected populations effectively, be easily adapted and updated to reflect the changing situation, and help facilitators keep a low profile. "Because of the conflict, we've developed quite a wide range of alternatives to disseminate information." – INGO, Myanmar[103] EORE is often provided by local volunteers and partners in their locality to minimise travel, and flip charts or chalk boards are used for messaging to avoid carrying EORE materials through checkpoints. There is increased use of digital media, social media, text messaging, phone sessions, and distributing messages via independent media companies. The use of digital methods has also enabled a quick response in other emergencies. In Gaza, MAG was able to use its in-house resources on digital EORE to set up a rapid response for delivery of messages following the initial outbreak of conflict. In Ukraine, a digital economy was already well established before the Russian invasion. A national Alert App was quickly set up and widely used by the population, and EORE/CPP content is widely disseminated through Ukrainian state TV channels, public display systems, and public transport networks.[104] Following the destruction of the Kakhovka dam in Ukraine on 6 June 2023, and fears about contamination being moved, MAG was able to set up a quick digital response through Facebook ads, only a few hours after the disaster and with minimal budget.[105]*

To maintain trust and credibility, messaging has to be realistic to the actual context and people must be able to act on messages. Interviewees noted that some recommended safety behaviours, such as sheltering in bathrooms or basements, were not viable either due to types of building construction, or severe building damage. In some EWIPA contexts, the reality has surpassed what many EORE or CPP materials were ever designed to anticipate. In Gaza, widespread attacks on shelters, schools, hospitals and humanitarian responders have rendered even basic protection messages questionable. The notion of "safe spaces" has collapsed under the weight of systematic IHL violations, forcing practitioners to rethink how to communicate safe behaviour when no location can be reliably considered safe.

Trauma-sensitive delivery approaches are often critical in EWIPA settings. Sensitivities may be particularly acute in CPP where messages relate to ongoing threats, sheltering practices, or active bombardments. However, interviewees also reported that CPP messages were often found to be empowering for conflict-affected people, giving them practical advice that they could act on during

---

[103] Interview dated 27 March 2025.
[104] INGO, Global. Interview dated 28 March 2025.
[105] GICHD, Explosive Ordnance Risk Education Sector Mapping and Needs Analysis, 2024, p.54.

bombing and shelling, and at a time when they may otherwise feel particularly helpless. The integration of EORE and CPP messages into session formats was found to be helpful, both to reduce audience fatigue in hearing the same messages, and to respond to the reality that civilians often experience both contamination and active attacks simultaneously, or in quick succession.

Drawing on the advice of child protection specialists or MHPSS specialists to integrate mental health and psychosocial awareness into the design and delivery of EORE and CPP activities can help minimise potential harm. Where feasible, linking sessions to available MHPSS referral pathways, or providing psychological first aid training to facilitators, can further enhance the safety and relevance of risk education efforts. In Myanmar, community child protection groups have been instrumental in enabling child-friendly risk education sessions and referrals to medical and psychosocial services. Other actors noted that providing practical skills, such as ensuring knowledge of "grab-bag" contents, recovery positions and breath work, gave practical tools for people to act on in difficult situations. For children in Ukraine, participatory, game-based activities were found to be a good way to provide messages to children to help retention and without amplifying trauma.[106]

Recommendations - Agenda for Action

EORE Advisory Group:

- Map-out existing CPP tools and practices and develop needs-driven, adaptable CPP modules and monitoring and learning frameworks and practical tools for CPP, building on best practices and experiences of EORE, Disaster Risk Reduction, and other sectors.

EORE/CPP Operators and NMAAs:

- Develop and promote integrated EORE/CPP session models and training packages tailored to different conflict phases and audience profiles, ensuring messages are realistic, actionable, and do not exacerbate trauma or message fatigue.

---

[106] UNICEF has recently developed an MHPSS-EORE training module which was piloted globally during the 2024 Annual Course for EORE practitioners in Spiez. See, UNICEF, Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) - EORE training module, 2024.

III. Bridging Data, Programming and Capacity Gaps

3.1 Addressing Data Gaps and Advancing Evidence-Based Action

3.1.1 Gaps in Data and Conflict Analysis

"We gather data from multiple sources including INSO, local organisations and local authorities. But there's no centralised repository – it's fragmented." INGO, Ukraine.[107]

Across EWIPA-affected contexts, humanitarian and mine action actors consistently highlight the urgent need to strengthen the quality, availability and use of data to inform EORE/CPP programming. Yet persistent challenges continue to constrain the collection and use of timely, context-specific, and inclusive data needed to capture both the direct and reverberating effects of EWIPA.[108]

Reliable data on civilian harm, threats and risk-taking behaviours remains limited or inaccessible to EORE/CPP operators in many conflict-affected settings. In highly politicised environments, access to neutral, verified information is frequently restricted, and data sources may be incomplete, biased or manipulated. Baseline information is often unavailable in newly affected areas, making it difficult to assess emerging risk patterns, such as the return of displaced populations to contaminated areas. These challenges extend beyond the EORE/CPP sector. As one interviewee in Ukraine noted: *"We lack good baseline data on protection needs, which makes it difficult to identify behaviour-driven vulnerabilities early on."*[109]

Disaggregated data remains a critical gap. The lack of reliable sex, age and disability disaggregated data continues to undermine efforts to tailor risk education and preparedness messaging to different DGA groups.[110] Follow-up to understand coping mechanisms and adapt interventions post-incident is rarely conducted or shared as part of documented learning or success stories. Real-time data collection systems are limited or non-existent depending on the context, hampering the ability to adapt EORE/CPP content to evolving threats, population movements, and protection needs.

Ukraine – Strengthening EORE/CPP through Evidence-Based Risk Analysis.

To address key information gaps in a fast-changing conflict environment, HI and DRC conducted a large-scale Knowledge, Attitudes, Beliefs and Practices (KABP) survey across six oblasts in

---

[107] Interview dated 19 March 2025.

[108] UNIDIR, Understanding Civilian Harm from the Indirect or Reverberating Effects of the Use of Explosive Weapons in Populated Areas: Strengthening Data Collection to Implement the Political Declaration, October 2024, p. 13.

[109] INGO, Ukraine. Interview dated 11 April 2025.

[110] Fight for Right, Evacuation of People with Disabilities: international standards and Ukrainian realities, December 2022, p. 31; and ICRC, Childhood in Rubbles: The Humanitarian Consequences of Urban Warfare for Children, May 2023, pp. 45–46.

Ukraine.[111] The study combined 2,294 survey responses with 24 focus group discussions, 11 key informant interviews, and analysis of casualty data from IMSMA and OHCHR. This mixed-methods approach helped identify at-risk groups, explore why people take risks, and assess how communities interact with EORE and CPP messages. By combining different types of data, the study built a stronger understanding of behaviours and protection needs across regions. While CPP remains under-recognised in formal mine action frameworks, this KABP study sets an example for integrating disaggregated risk data, behavioural insights, and community perspectives into joint EORE/CPP programming. It demonstrates how targeted data collection can support more adaptive, accountable and evidence-based EORE/CPP in high-threat environments. "By understanding the roots of behaviours for the various at-risk audiences, and tailoring EORE/CPP interventions accordingly, we can turn data into powerful safety messaging for populations affected by conflict." – INGO, Ukraine [112]

Moreover, systematic conflict analysis is not routinely embedded into EORE/CPP programming. Many EORE/CPP interventions are implemented without proper conflict sensitivity assessments or meaningful integration of political, historical and social dynamics.[113] Several interviewees acknowledged that this type of analysis falls outside their expertise or existing tools, highlighting a wider capacity gap in the sector. Furthermore, sector-specific data systems, across mine action, health, protection and humanitarian coordination, are rarely interoperable, hindering holistic analysis and coordinated response planning. As one UN agency in Palestine noted: *"Data sharing remains a siloed process. UNDSS, UNMAS, OCHA, OHCHR, everyone holds pieces, but there's no coordinated analysis for EWIPA settings."*[114]

The programmatic consequences are tangible. Weak or outdated data reduces ability to accurately target at-risk populations. Monitoring systems often fail to capture risk-taking behaviours or exposure patterns, resulting in misaligned programming. Quality assurance and adaptive programming are further challenged by high population mobility, limited community engagement and operational constraints in hard-to-reach areas.

Recommendations - Agenda for Action

EORE/CPP Operators, MA AOR/GPC and UN Agencies:

- Prioritise and resource systematic conflict sensitivity analysis as part of EORE/CPP programme design and adaptation. Use findings to guide decision-making, strengthen accountability, and adapt programming to avoid unintended harm.

EORE/CPP Operators and MA AoR/GPC:

- Take the lead on streamlining data sources and data products to ensure the accuracy, quality and reliability of data, and facilitate accessibility of data to other operators and actors for informed decision making and programming. Map out existing data sources relevant to EORE/CPP and develop shared data-sharing protocols to improve interoperability and ensure timely access to context-specific information for programming.

---

[111] HI, Danish Refugee Council (DRC), KABP Survey Report 2023, January 2024.

[112] Interview dated 2 April and 20 June 2025.

[113] See also, Gemma Davies, Veronique Barbelet and Leigh Mayhew (Humanitarian Policy Group), Reducing violence and strengthening the protection of civilians: Debunking Assumptions, November 2024, pp. 9–10.

[114] Interview dated 14 May 2025.

"We rely on projections to help with prioritisation and to anticipate possible risks – using available data, for example. It helps us identify trends, but getting exact information is extremely difficult." INGO, Myanmar.[115]

Efforts are ongoing to build more systematic, responsive and inclusive data collection and analysis mechanisms to strengthen programming in high-risk EWIPA environments. In line with commitments under the Political Declaration, civil society organisations, such as PAX, have put forward recommendations for States, military actors and security institutions to establish accessible civilian harm reporting systems, developed in consultation with civil society, and to share open-access data on weapons use, disaggregated by location, platform, and munition type.[116]

Several interviewees cited the Humanitarian Data Exchange (managed by OCHA) and the Armed Conflict Location & Event Data (ACLED) as key sources of open-access data on civilian casualties from explosive weapons, types of weapons used and strike locations, as well as broader conflict and context-related trends.[117] While useful, these platforms do not provide timely data on active incidents, safe evacuation or sheltering areas, or other types of critical data, such as civilian coping mechanisms and risk-taking behaviours, needed by EORE/CPP operators to adapt messages and delivery strategies in a timely way. During the EORE/CPP Workshop, Action on Armed Violence (AOAV) emphasised the potential to strengthen cooperation on data sharing and analysis with EORE/CPP actors, drawing on their extensive database on the civilian impact of explosive weapons, including on vulnerable groups such as children and refugees.[118]

Several actors are strengthening systems to better monitor civilian harm, assess needs and identify exposure patterns using mixed methods, such as incident reports, open-source data, social media community feedback, and AI.[119] As an interviewee explained: *"There is of course some uncertainty around the information shared on social media, but it's important to rely on these sources rather than wait for EOD personnel to reach the ground and verify the threat. By the time that happens, the emergency has already passed."*[120] These efforts aim to build rapid threat assessments and support adaptive planning, especially where direct access is restricted. However, without coordinated, multi-sectoral data-sharing across mine action, protection, health and shelter, these systems risk offering only a partial view of the situation. Stronger data collaboration is essential to improve the relevance, timeliness and reach of EORE/CPP, reduce duplication, and ensure programming reflects intersecting vulnerabilities.

Incident and weapons-use monitoring can directly inform programme decisions. In Gaza, localised reporting and mobile risk mapping enabled HI and its partners to detect shifts in targeting patterns, such as increased drone strikes on shelters, and adjust safety messaging accordingly. Community volunteers and members also contributed by sharing videos and images via social media, which helped identify emerging risks and behavioural changes following the events of 7 October. EOD teams further supported EORE/CPP efforts by remotely identifying explosive weapons and contributing to the development of threat-specific materials. These examples highlight the value of

---

[115] Interview dated 2 April 2025.

[116] PAX Protection of Civilian, Civilian harm reporting mechanisms A useful means to support monitoring and accountability?, April 2022, pp. 9–10; and Airwars, Center for Civilians in Conflict, PAX, et. alii, Looking back to look forward, Recommendations to improve the protection of civilians in Dutch military operations,28 May 2024, pp. 4–6.

[117] See, OCHA, The Humanitarian Data Exchange; and ACLED, Conflict Data.

[118] See, Action on Armed Violence, Impact of Explosive Violence on Civilians.

[119] UNIDIR, Understanding Civilian Harm from the Indirect or Reverberating Effects of the Use of Explosive Weapons in Populated Areas: Strengthening Data Collection to Implement the Political Declaration, October 2024, pp. 18–45.

[120] INGO, Middle East. Interview dated 19 March 2025.

incorporating incident-driven feedback mechanisms into EORE/CPP programming, particularly in fast-changing environments. The Open Source Munitions Portal led by Airwars and the Armament Research Service, provides detailed information and 3D models of weapons used in conflict, including their components, origin and physical characteristics that may persist after detonation, including "diagnostic remnants" that can help identify munition types used in strikes.[121] This resource can help inform EORE/CPP messaging, support survey/clearance planning for when conditions permit safe access and contribute to evidence-based advocacy efforts related to the implementation of the Political Declaration.[122]

Despite progress, localised incident mapping and community-based monitoring remain underdeveloped. These approaches offer potential, not only to strengthen adaptive messaging, but also to improve staff safety by identifying hotspots and informing operational movement for staff and partner safety. Community-driven data collection can also enhance local ownership and trust in programming. However, such mechanisms require sustained support, training and protection for those involved in data gathering.

Emerging technologies offer additional opportunities. The use of AI and open-source platforms has gained traction among some EORE/CPP operators enabling near real-time analysis of conflict trends, strike locations and civilian impact. These tools can complement field-based data and support anticipatory planning, although they must be accompanied by strong safeguards to prevent the generation of false or misleading information, ensure contextual interpretation, and avoid misuse. AI-assisted analysis of open-source data allows for ongoing monitoring as conflict emerges and evolves, particularly when access is restricted and direct assessments are not possible. Notably, the ACLED Conflict Alert System was presented during an Emergency Risk Education Task Team Meeting as a useful predictive tool that can support preparedness efforts and anticipate potential conflicts and EORE/CPP needs.[123]

Norwegian's People's Aid (NPA) – Leveraging AI and Open-Source Data for Adaptive EORE/CPP and Early Warning.

In response to persistent challenges in tailoring EORE/CPP to fast-evolving conflict settings, NPA has developed an advanced, AI-driven approach to conflict monitoring and data analysis. Their system integrates automated retrieval of ACLED data and other sources, analysis of explosive ordnance incidents, and targeted dashboards that identify high-risk areas, at-risk groups, and optimal timeframes for EORE/CPP. Crucially, NPA shares these dashboards and analyses directly with its partners, using AI-powered translation to produce them in local languages, strengthening collective situational awareness, improving accessibility, and enabling more coordinated, adaptive decision-making with national actors. In Mozambique, NPA has also piloted an early warning system that scans media reports, classifies them by relevance and severity, and sends alerts to staff and community partners via secure messaging platforms. Though still under refinement, this approach shows promising potential for replication in EWIPA contexts. By investing in data management and transparent sharing, NPA enhances its strategic programming and resource allocation, enabling

---

[121] See, Airwars and Armament Research Service, Open Source Munitions Portal and GBU-39 Bomb, 3D model explaining Israel's weapon of choice in Gaza. While this platform is a valuable public resource, it has certain limitations on the number and type of weapons displayed and recorded. As a result, some mine action operators also rely on commercial services – such as Fenix Insight – for complementary technical data.

[122] This refers to the commitment in the Political Declaration (Part B, Section 3.3) for armed forces to adopt and apply policies that help prevent civilian harm – including by restricting or refraining from using explosive weapons in populated areas when they are expected to cause civilian damage.

[123] Emergency Risk Education Task Team Meeting, 21 January 2025. ACLED Conflict Alert System (CAST) is a global forecasting tool that predicts political violence up to six months ahead. See, ACLED, Conflict Alert System.

frontline teams to better anticipate and respond to evolving threats. "We use AI and open-source tools to anticipate risks and tailor programming to the actual situation on the ground. It's not perfect, but it's a game-changer." – NPA, Global.[124]

Recommendations - Agenda for Action

EORE/CPP operators:

- Strengthen anticipatory capacity by integrating predictive tools and early warning systems with practical community-based preparedness measures to enable timely EORE/CPP responses to EWIPA.

3.2 Building the EORE/CPP Workforce

3.2.1 Strengthening Field Capacity and Quality Management

"EORE and CPP are often seen as easy to deliver, but they're actually highly technical. It takes time to properly train staff, not just to deliver messages, but to meet the expectations of communities. That's much more effective when strong technical support is in place. For example, we have a remote QA person who follows up with the field teams, joining sessions via Zoom or reviewing recordings. It's more of a capacity-building approach to QA than a controlling one" INGO, Myanmar.[125]

Delivering effective and adaptive EORE/CPP programmes in EWIPA settings requires a skilled and well-supported workforce. However, gaps in technical capacity, quality assurance, and institutional support may undermine operational continuity and the consistency of delivery across actors and contexts.

In many contexts, formal accreditation systems exist for EORE but not for CPP, due to the absence of CPP standardisation within the mine action sector. Training quality and delivery standards vary across organisations, especially where CPP is integrated without dedicated external or internal technical guidance. However, some EORE/CPP operators have noted that formal accreditation/certification processes for EORE can create barriers for local organisations, particularly in remote areas, due to liability concerns and administrative bottlenecks. In Ukraine, some non-mine action CSOs have reported that the EORE/CPP certification process is too complex and incurs a cost which some cannot afford, highlighting the need for simplified, cost-free certification for local actors.[126] Some organisations have used CPP as an operational entry point in areas where EORE accreditation is either unavailable or too restrictive, allowing them to provide life-saving preparedness messaging without delay.

Specialised EORE/CPP skills remain in short supply across many settings. While many frontline staff are experienced in basic EORE delivery, critical competencies for preparedness and protection in EWIPA contexts, such as first aid, psychological first aid (PFA) and trauma-sensitive communication, are often lacking. These gaps are often exacerbated by high staff turnover due to short-term contracts, emergency redeployments, burnout, and unsafe working conditions. Given

---

[124] Interview dated 21 May 2025.
[125] Interview dated 21 March 2025.
[126] GICHD, Mapping of the Explosive Ordnance Risk Education Sector in Ukraine, 9 September 2024, pp. 9 and 14.

the risks that many staff face in EWIPA settings, internal psychosocial support systems such as access to MHPSS services and safe debriefing spaces are essential to maintaining staff wellbeing.

Sustainable capacity building requires more than one-off training. Organisations that invest in career pathways, peer learning, refresher training and mentorship help retain and motivate their teams. In challenging environments, even modest opportunities for learning and recognition can have significant impact. Several local interviewees shared that actively working in their organisation gave them a sense of normality and purpose amidst chaos. Structured, standardised training systems with clear professional development tracks can reinforce this stability, helping staff navigate uncertainty while building confidence and long-term skills. The forthcoming Test and Evaluation Protocols (T&EP) on EORE competencies could help further standardise capacity development and support broader recognition of skills across the sector.[127]

Workshop participants proposed the creation of a collaborative technical support cell in order to reinforce field-level capacities in a timely and coordinated manner. Such a mechanism could provide rapid technical assistance, ranging from message validation to remote support, particularly in fast-changing or resource-limited environments.[128]

Ensuring consistent quality assurance (QA) remains a critical yet often under-addressed component of EORE/CPP programming in volatile and access-constrained settings. Several organisations have adapted their QA systems to function remotely, using virtual mentoring, video reviews of sessions, and remote coaching for facilitators. By positioning QA as a learning-oriented process, organisations can uphold delivery standards while also developing local quality assurance capacities.

Scaling up community-based capacity is essential, ensuring that existing structures are developed, not replaced. Community volunteers, teachers, camp leaders and health workers can serve as effective EORE/CPP facilitators, given the right support and training.

> *Gaza – Building Local Capacity and Supporting Frontline Teams in EORE/CPP Delivery.*
>
> *In Gaza, HI built a strong local network of around 80 Community-Based Agents (CBAs) and EORE/CPP staff to deliver preparedness and protection messaging in high-risk areas. About 300 CBAs were trained prior to 7 October 2023 and enabled HI to resume EORE/CPP activities just days after the conflict began, while other actors remained on hold. Where possible, HI transitions volunteers into formal staff roles, to recognise their contributions and provide stability. To maintain quality and adapt to evolving needs, HI combines basic and refresher training with real-time coaching. CBAs and social workers also receive training in Psychological First Aid (PFA), Gender-based Violence (GBV), and referral pathways, enabling them to address other protection needs in their communities. Crucially, HI also invests in the wellbeing of its own teams, offering psychosocial support, debriefing sessions, and flexible arrangements that allow staff to better cope with personal hardships and operate safely within an unpredictable and high-risk environment. This approach highlights the value of local delivery models, flexible training, and integrated support systems for*

---

[127] If approved by the International Mine Action Standards Review Board, this "Test and Evaluation" protocol (T&EP) will establish minimum standards and qualifications for EORE personnel, ensuring they acquire essential knowledge, skills and attitudes for their roles. The T&EP includes First Aid skills, but does not cover CPP as such. See GICHD, EORE Sector Mapping and Needs Analysis, October 2024, p. 61.

[128] At the onset of the Russian invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, the EORE Advisory Group members pooled expertise to develop a Q&A on EORE for Ukraine to help support the provision of emergency EORE and other explosive weapons related risk education, providing an example of how remote advisory support can be provided. See EORE Advisory Group, Questions and Answers on EORE for Ukraine, 22 March 2022.

sustaining EORE/CPP programming in EWIPA contexts. "We gave team members the flexibility to say no, whether they weren't feeling well or the situation was too risky. My goal wasn't to enforce routine delivery of sessions, but to empower them to deliver in their own way. We focused on equipping them with accurate information and skills, and prioritising their safety and willingness to engage." – HI, Gaza, Palestine.[129]

Recommendations - Agenda for Action

EORE Advisory Group, IMAS Review Board and EORE/CPP operators:

- Advance the finalisation, adoption and dissemination of the forthcoming T&EP on EORE competencies to standardise skills and promote professionalisation across the sector.

EORE/CPP Operators and MA AOR/GPC:

- Prioritise sustained capacity-development for national and local CSOs, especially in high-risk or access-constrained settings. Document and share practical approaches that have improved local delivery, training or quality assurance in challenging contexts to facilitate broader uptake.

EORE AG and its members, and MA AoR/GPC:

- Set-up and seek funding for an emergency response EORE/CPP technical support cell to develop practical tools, messaging and technical advice. The cell can be activated to support a response to an EWIPA crisis or on request.

3.2.2 Institutional Capacity and Coordination with Authorities

"The Ministry of Defence, the Ministry of Economy, the Ministry of Reintegration, the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the Ministry of Education are all now involved in explosive ordnance risk education. It's very much being institutionalised." INGO, Ukraine.[130]

National Mine Action Authorities (NMAAs) and relevant local institutions play a pivotal role in the coordination, standardisation and sustainability of EORE and CPP programming. Their responsibilities span coordination, strategic planning, validation of messages, quality assurance, training oversight and alignment with international standards. However, many authorities, especially in EWIPA contexts affected by ongoing conflict or recurring emergencies, face chronic technical expertise, institutional capacity and resourcing constraints.

In countries such as Ukraine and Lebanon, national authorities have actively led the validation of risk education materials and supported local delivery. Their engagement has ensured greater coherence between national frameworks and operational practice, and has helped secure buy-in from other state actors. Strengthening coordination between mine action and broader protection, health and civil defence programmes is essential to sustainably integrate EORE/CPP within national preparedness plans, emergency response plans, or disaster risk reduction strategies.

International NGOs and donor States have a key role in supporting national EORE/CPP initiatives through technical assistance, institutional capacity-development, and international cooperation. This includes the development of capacity assessments, standardised QA systems, and Training of

---

[129] Interview dated 20 March 2023.
[130] Interview dated 3 April 2025.

Trainers models that can be sustainably resourced, including through national funding. Regular technical updates and streamlined accreditation processes remain essential to ensure consistent and quality delivery.[131]

> **NMAA-led CPP Capacity Building through Technical Partnerships.**
>
> *In response to escalating risks and displacement, the Lebanon Mine Action Centre (LMAC) played a central role in developing national capacities. Recognising the value of CPP alongside traditional EORE, LMAC led efforts to co-develop CPP approaches with INGOs, including NPA and HAMAP, and their local partners, Beeatoona and Sheild. Through structured capacity assessments, joint planning, and targeted training at the Regional School for Humanitarian Demining in Lebanon (RSHDL), LMAC helped equip Community Liaison Officers and community focal points with the skills to deliver context-sensitive CPP interventions. Many were already trained in EORE, and the tailored training allowed them to shift between EORE and CPP based on community needs and conflict dynamics. The Lebanese experience highlights how national authorities can lead technical cooperation, standardise delivery, and prepare both institutions and communities for rapidly changing protection environments. "During the escalation, we coordinated with LMAC to deliver a joint Training of Trainers for CPP with all implementing partners in Lebanon. We provided the materials, adapted the sessions to the emergency context, and aligned on one unified presentation. Even the Regional School requested a version for their curriculum."– INGO, Lebanon.[132]*

National emergency services and state-led protection providers are increasingly relevant actors in EORE/CPP delivery. With appropriate training and equipment and national authority support and oversight, their reach and local legitimacy can support the scale-up of preparedness interventions, especially in areas affected by repeated displacement or infrastructure targeting.

National institutions may at times present operational challenges or lack legitimacy in contexts affected by internal conflict. Building local CSO capacity is essential in these sorts of environments.

Recommendations - Agenda for Action

NMAAs, non-MA national authorities, EORE/CPP Operators and UN Agencies:

- Reinforce national coordination and technical leadership by supporting NMAAs to align EORE/CPP delivery with emergency preparedness and protection systems. Promote joint training, shared quality standards and collaboration with key ministries (e.g. health, education, civil defence) to ensure consistent, context-sensitive interventions at scale.

---

[131] See GICHD, National ownership and localization: progress, challenges, and future directions under the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention, November 2024, pp. 4–5.
[132] Interview dated 9 April 2025.

IV. Strengthening Coordination, Integration and Localisation in EORE/CPP

4.1 Improving Coordination and Integrated Approaches

EORE/CPP flyers produced by HI. ©HI

4.1.1 Coordination Platforms and Cross-Sector Mechanisms

> *"When emergencies break out, sectors like health and food security are prioritised, but mine action rarely is. This makes it difficult for us to advocate or coordinate effectively. We're often not invited to key coordination meetings, and our activities are deprioritised in terms of funding. Yet risk education is one of the quickest interventions to set up and scale – and it deserves a place in those initial conversations."* INGO, Gaza and the West Bank, Palestine. [133]

Strong intra-sectoral coordination among mine action actors is key to ensuring that EORE and CPP messaging is consistent, contextually appropriate, and responsive to evolving threats. Systematic information sharing can help prevent duplication, reduce confusion for communities, and support

---

[133] Interview dated 18 March 2025.

greater coherence across programmes. In Gaza, for example, the Mine Action AoR compiled SMS content from multiple organisations into a shared library and developed harmonised messages adapted to different phases of the conflict. Similar harmonised messaging efforts have also taken place in Myanmar and Ukraine.[134] In Ukraine, coordination was also initially strengthened through a simple planning tool introduced by the MA AoR, which enabled EORE/CPP operators to share their intended areas of intervention, target groups, or session schedules.[135] Such coordination mechanisms can help to ensure timely planning, reduce duplication, and strengthen the overall coherence of EORE/CPP efforts. Establishing technical EORE sub-working groups within the MA AoR has been identified as a useful way to support planning, facilitate the exchange of learning, and to jointly develop operational tools.[136]

Although coordination platforms and cross-sector mechanisms offer an entry point for integrating EORE and CPP during the acute phases of conflict, this potential is rarely realised. The lack of clarity around CPP and its place within mine action, and the perception, particularly outside of the mine action sector, that EORE is primarily a post-conflict activity, hinder uptake, with priority typically given to other life-saving interventions. There is often a lack of cross-sectoral collaboration and joint planning which omits the inclusion of EORE/CPP in the emergency response. This exclusion is particularly acute for national and local providers, who face barriers to joining humanitarian planning or protection cluster meetings. As one local interviewee highlighted, *"effective coordination depends on engaging local organisations early and consistently, not just as implementers but as equal partners in strategy."*[137] As a result, EORE and CPP are frequently absent from emergency strategies and appeals, limiting their visibility and funding.

However, there is strong potential to coordinate EORE/CPP with other sectors like health, education, shelter and MHPSS, particularly during the initial phase of a crisis, and for strengthening the engagement of EORE/CPP within coordination platforms and cross-sector mechanisms. Some protection clusters have begun to acknowledge the importance of preparedness and self-protection, and to champion EORE/CPP in humanitarian response planning. The holding of regular cross-sector workshops at a country level can be a good way to enable discussion around how EORE/CPP can be coordinated with, or support the delivery of, other essential services during emergencies, including cash and non-food item distribution, and to clarify sectoral and organisational leadership roles.

Coordination through the Protection Cluster in response to the Myanmar earthquake.

On 28 March 2025, a powerful 7.7 magnitude earthquake hit central Myanmar, with the epicentre near Mandalay, the country's second-largest city. The quake caused widespread structural destruction, and tremors were felt in neighbouring countries. Many of the earthquake-affected regions were contaminated with landmines and EO, and mine action operators were concerned that ordnance may have shifted or become exposed due to the earthquake and subsequent tremors, posing a serious threat to rescue operations, displaced populations, and civilians.[138] In response to the emergency, the Protection Cluster, including the Mine Action AoR, the Child Protection AoR and the GBV sub-cluster, provided an earthquake update, providing all known and relevant information to organisations working in Myanmar, a list of key protection risks, and recommendations for

---

[134] For Ukraine, see HI, NPA, UDA (Ukrainian Deminers Association), Conflict Preparedness & Protection Messages in Ukraine, 12 December 2023.

[135] Nick Vovk, "Emergency Explosive Ordnance Risk Education: Lessons Learned from Ukraine," in The Journal of Conventional Weapons Destruction, Vol.21, Issue 1, Article 5, 27 March 2024.

[136] See also, GICHD, EORE Sector Mapping and Needs Analysis, October 2024, p. 49.

[137] INGO, Gaza and the West Bank. Interview dated 8 April 2025.

[138] See Myanmar Information Management Unit (MIMU), Myanmar Earthquake 2025, 2025.

prioritised protection responses. This included an assessment of landmine/EO threats in the affected areas and the provision of urgent EORE messages for affected populations and humanitarian responders. The MA AoR updated standardised EORE messages for non-mine action actors in Myanmar to address awareness of EO while clearing rubble and debris, keeping children safe from EO following the earthquake, and guidance for supporting people trapped in damaged buildings.[139] Mine action operators also provided training and safety briefings to humanitarian organisations responding to the earthquake.[140]This example illustrates how cross-sectoral coordination at a national level can ensure that the risks of EO contamination and conflict are highlighted to other sectors responding to an emergency, and that EORE is included within the protection response within an EWIPA setting.

The EORE/CPP Workshop participants pointed to the importance of joint assessments and planning, and sharing technical support between different EORE/CPP and humanitarian actors to inform a coordinated response. *"In Ukraine, we designed needs assessments together with livelihoods and protection teams, so we could gather all relevant data with minimal community fatigue."*[141]

Recommendations - Agenda for Action

OCHA, relevant UN Agencies and EORE/CPP Operators:

- Systematically embed EORE and CPP in initial response packages and inter-agency contingency planning to ensure preparedness messaging reaches at-risk communities from the outset of emergencies, particularly in EWIPA settings.

4.1.2 Integrated Approaches: Blending EORE/CPP Across Sectors

"We've seen that integrating CPP messaging with community-led protection initiatives increases local buy-in and relevance." INGO, Global.[142]

Where conditions allow, mine action operators are combining both EORE and CPP messaging into joint session formats. This approach reflects the reality that civilians often face of both contamination and active attacks simultaneously or in rapid succession. It also helps reduce message fatigue and desensitisation, avoiding repetitive briefings and enabling facilitators to adjust to evolving risks in real time. In Ukraine, facilitators reported combining EORE and CPP using a mix of IEC materials, videos, and scenario-based discussions. In Myanmar, modular toolkits enabled field teams to adjust messages based on whether communities faced active shelling or post-attack contamination.

In many contexts, EORE is funded and delivered as an integrated activity alongside other mine action pillars such as clearance, survey and victim assistance. This can be particularly beneficial, as affected populations receive safety messaging while also witnessing progress toward the removal of explosive ordnance or receiving support as victims, both of which can help reduce high-risk behaviours. The need for stronger integration with victim assistance was highlighted in Ukraine, Gaza and Myanmar, where organisations piloted multi-skilled teams combining risk education, victim identification and referral. This aligns with Paragraph 4.5 of the Political Declaration, which

---

[139] Myanmar AoR, Earthquakes: Key EORE Messages for General Dissemination, 22 April 2025.
[140] INGO, Myanmar, interviewed 21 March 2025.
[141] INGO, Ukraine, interviewed 19 March 2025.
[142] Interview dated 12 May 2025.

calls on States to *"provide, facilitate or support assistance to victims, including injured persons, survivors, the families of those killed or injured, and affected communities,"* mirroring obligations under the APMBC and CCM. Workshop participants emphasised the need to strengthen synergies between EORE/CPP and victim assistance, ensuring that victims of explosive weapons are systematically identified and referred for support. This would further contribute to the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD).

Integrating EORE/CPP with Other Mine Action Pillars.

In several EWIPA contexts, EORE and CPP have been successfully integrated with clearance, survey and victim assistance activities to reduce risks for affected communities. In Ukraine, EORE/CPP was delivered alongside agricultural land clearance through a joint WFP–FAO initiative, with facilitators also referring farmers to a national land compensation scheme. In Gaza, HI worked with IDP camp focal points and EOD teams to identify and secure safe alternative routes after contamination blocked access to a water source. This was complemented by targeted EORE sessions and referrals to essential services. "Prior to the breakdown of the ceasefire, our teams conducted risk education and EOD for a site where access to the water source was blocked by EO contamination. The EOD team cleared and verified a longer, safer route, and camp focal points actively promoted its use. They even called us back for additional EORE sessions whenever new people arrived. It was amazing to see how well that integration worked." – INGO, Gaza, Palestine.[143]

Integrating EORE and CPP into broader humanitarian sectors such as health, education, shelter and MHPSS can significantly expand reach and relevance, especially during the early stages of crisis response. While some protection actors have been hesitant to engage with EORE/CPP due to perceived technical barriers, collaboration with non-mine action actors is increasing.[144] If supported with proper tools, guidance and oversight, these partnerships enable messaging to reach underserved communities and strengthen cross-cutting protection outcomes. Embedding EORE/CPP into multi-sector initiatives or joint service delivery has proven effective in addressing the diverse risks faced by civilians affected by EWIPA.

Integrating EORE/CPP with other sectors.

Integrating EORE/CPP into broader sectoral responses can ensure that EORE/CPP reaches those who might otherwise be excluded, while also aligning messaging with critical services:

* Health: In multiple settings, EORE/CPP has been delivered alongside mobile health clinics or during humanitarian distributions of food and hygiene kits, ensuring access for communities receiving essential aid.

* Education: In Ukraine, EORE has been integrated into school programming through youth-led and art-based formats. In Myanmar, sessions are delivered in child protection networks and child-friendly spaces, helping children understand threats and adopt safe behaviours. In Lebanon, the local organisation SHEILD developed EORE/CPP materials adapted to the national school curriculum to reinforce preparedness and protection behaviours among children: "We worked with the Ministry of Education to introduce EORE messages into civic education modules. Teachers are trained to present the content in a way that connects to students' daily realities, especially those living near the borders or in affected areas." – Local NGO, Lebanon.[145]

---

[143] Interview dated 19 March 2025.
[144] GICHD, EORE Sector Mapping and Needs Analysis, October 2024, pp. 49–53.
[145] Interview dated 7 April 2023.

* MHPSS and Protection: In Ukraine, the Ukrainian Deminers Association (UDA) partnered with an MHPSS organisation to strengthen their capacity to support civilians dealing with trauma and stress, expanding the team's ability to safely engage at-risk populations. In Gaza and Lebanon, actors embedded EORE/CPP into psychosocial support sessions, helping ensure messages reached those most exposed to EO and ongoing attacks.

* Site Management: In Gaza, DRC integrated EORE into its site management activities by coordinating services, infrastructure and community engagement in displacement settings. By working with local committees responsible for maintaining water, sanitation and shelter infrastructure, EORE providers reached those at heightened risk of encountering EO during daily tasks. This integration improved awareness, reduced exposure and ensured safer delivery of essential services in a highly volatile context.[146]

* Integrated approaches support the advancement of Global and National Agendas towards Sustainable Development Goals, the Women, Peace and Security Agenda, and the New Agenda for Peace.

Recommendations - Agenda for Action

States, MA AoR/GPC:

- Mainstream EORE/CPP across protection and other coordination platforms, including via joint planning and funding opportunities. Align efforts with global agendas such as the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Women, Peace and Security Agenda, and the New Agenda for Peace, and promote EORE/CPP in relevant EWIPA and APMBC/CCM fora.

EORE/CPP Operators, UN Agencies and National Mine Action Authorities:

- Enhance synergies between EORE/CPP and Victim Assistance so that explosive weapons survivors benefit from the same support and services as EO survivors, and strengthen progress towards the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

EORE/CPP Operators, UN agencies and MA AoR/GPC:

- Train other humanitarian stakeholders, including local organisations, in EORE/CPP delivery to integrate EORE/CPP into broader aid or protection delivery (e.g., food distributions, MHPSS, mobile clinics)

4.2 Promoting Localised and Sustainable Leadership

4.2.1 National Ownership and Sustainable Localisation

The Political Declaration welcomes efforts to empower, amplify and integrate the voice of all those affected by EWIPA (paragraph 1.10), and it is the responsibility of States to ensure that this is advanced, particularly in the current context of global funding cuts and growing opposition in some settings to initiatives promoting gender equality and diversity. Paragraph 4.6 calls on States to facilitate cooperation and assistance between relevant stakeholders, ensuring that local partners

---

[146] Danish Refugee Council (DRC), Gaza: One response, shared impact: integrating explosive ordnance risk education in site management, June 2025.

are meaningfully supported rather than left to shoulder responsibilities alone. These commitments reflect the importance of national ownership, as emphasised in the APMBC and CCM. States are expected to lead inclusive, locally-driven efforts, while international partners support them through practical cooperation and sustained assistance.[147] To uphold these principles, it is essential to reflect on how EORE/CPP can be better positioned, resourced and adapted to EWIPA settings.

National and local authorities are critical enablers of localisation and policy ownership. Their leadership can foster sustainable EORE/CPP systems through the integration of EORE/CPP into national strategies and policies. However, many national stakeholders, including NMAAs, face structural barriers to leadership, including insufficient budget allocations and limited policy engagement experience, which hinder their ability to scale up or influence strategy.[148] The GICHD 2024 EORE Sector Mapping highlighted that national and regional stakeholders often have limited exposure to advocacy and policy work, and that NMAAs in particular need support to develop clear fundraising and resource mobilisation strategies.[149]

To address these gaps, interviewees called for long-term, institutional partnership models based on shared assessments and joint capacity development, not limited to technical training, but including HR, finance, procurement, safeguarding and monitoring. NMAAs and relevant national authorities should be empowered to facilitate the integration of EORE/CPP into national systems and policies, encourage knowledge transfer from INGOs to national actors, and share successful local initiatives in global forums to shape and influence localisation processes.

Lebanon – Advancing National Ownership in Adapting Mine Action to EWIPA Realities.

In response to escalating conflict and displacement since late 2023, the Lebanon Mine Action Centre (LMAC) demonstrated institutional leadership by working with international and local partners to adapt mine action programming to EWIPA contexts. Based on rapid assessments, LMAC coordinated the integration of CPP into existing EORE activities, recognising the need for broader protective measures in high-risk areas. Through this nationally-led process, and partnership with INGOs and local NGOs, LMAC accredited tailored training, standardised messaging, and equipped field teams, previously trained in EORE, to deliver combined EORE/CPP interventions responsive to evolving threats. Although CPP is not yet formally included in Lebanon's mine action strategy, LMAC's actions illustrate how national authorities can champion the implementation of EORE/CPP through collaborative approaches. "Together, we're strengthening resilience and saving lives when it matters most." – Lebanon Mine Action Centre (LMAC).[150] LMAC's experience shows the feasibility of adapting mine action programming to meet new protection needs in EWIPA settings and demonstrates the role that national leadership can play in ensuring timely, relevant and community-focused responses.

---

[147] See for example, Action 1 of the APMBC Siem Reap-Angkor Action Plan 2025-2029: "Demonstrate high levels of national ownership, partnership and coordination, by integrating Convention implementation activities into national development plans, strategies and budgets including on poverty reduction, humanitarian response, health and mental health, gender equality, inclusion of persons with disabilities, peacebuilding, Human Rights, climate change adaptation, environmental protection and improvement and/or disaster risk reduction, as appropriate." Draft Siem Reap-Angkor Action Plan 2025-2029, Fifth Review Conference of the APMBC States Parties, November 2024, p. 3.
[148] See GICHD, National ownership and localization: progress, challenges, and future directions under the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention, November 2024, pp. 2–3.
[149] GICHD, EORE Sector Mapping and Needs Analysis, October 2024, pp. 13 and 15.
[150] Interview dated 27 March 2025, and presentation made by the Lebanon National Mine Action Authority (LMAC) during the EORE/CPP EWIPA Workshop, 11-12 June 2025.

States should also institutionalise EORE/CPP within national DRR and humanitarian preparedness systems, ensuring sufficient public resources are allocated to sustain this integration. Providing longer-term support to develop institutional leadership can help ensure the sustainability of EORE/CPP and allow national authorities to become leaders in protection in EWIPA contexts. Interviewees also stressed the need to strengthen local representation in coordination platforms, with national NGOs or NMAAs co-chairing MA AoR meetings seen as a practical step toward more institutional leadership.

While localisation commitments have gained visibility in humanitarian narratives, they remain poorly resourced. According to the Landmine Monitor, less than 1% of total international mine action assistance went directly to national and local organisations in 2023, compared with 46% for INGOs.[151] Similar trends persist across the broader humanitarian sector, where direct funding to national and local stakeholders remains at a low level (4.3% of total contributions) compared with the Grand Bargain objectives (25%).[152] There is a need to ensure that local organisations are both included and resourced. States should provide an enabling environment for CSOs and commit to practical steps that recognise local civil society leadership, not only as implementing partners, but as co-strategists in protecting civilians in EWIPA settings.

Recommendations - Agenda for Action

States and National Mine Action Authorities:

- Establish mechanisms to monitor and report on progress in facilitating cooperation and assistance for EORE/CPP, in line with obligations under the APMBC and CCM, and commitments under Paragraph 4.6 and 4.7 of the Political Declaration. This includes enabling roles for local actors, promoting inclusive partnerships, and documenting efforts to support national ownership and sustainability.

EORE/CPP Operators, GICHD, UN and National Mine Action Authorities:

- Strengthen advocacy for EORE-CPP in EWIPA settings by showcasing NMAA EORE/CPP leadership, success stories, and by using collaborative and innovative data initiatives to inform global discussions and engage with relevant stakeholders.

Donor States:

- Establish mechanisms to directly fund national organisations on EORE/CPP, including to support preparedness/anticipatory action efforts in EWIPA contexts, and technical cooperation.

4.2.2 Civil Society Leadership and DGA Representation

"The potential of local organisations is considerable. It requires ongoing sustainable funding. You can't just do one training course and then stop and move on." INGO, Myanmar.[153]

---

[151] ICBL-CMC (2024), Landmine Monitor 2024, pp. 109-110.

[152] Development Initiatives, Falling short? Humanitarian funding and reform, October 2024, pp. 21–23. The Grand Bargain, agreed in 2016 in Istanbul, aimed to reform the delivery of humanitarian aid, including ensuring more support and funding for local and national responders. See Inter-Agency Standing Committee, The Grand Bargain, May 2016.

[153] Interview dated 21 March 2025.

Local civil society, including women's rights organisations, women-led organisations, youth networks, disability organisations and community groups, can and does play a central role in the delivery of both EORE and CPP, and there is the potential for greater civil society leadership within country contexts.

National and local CSOs bring valuable expertise to the mine action sector. Interviewees noted that in many contexts, community-led EORE and CPP initiatives are involved in shaping strategies, identifying priorities and adapting content to local realities. INGOs are increasingly working with CSOs in recognition of their greater societal reach. As one interviewee explained, *"in Ukraine, we're looking into partnerships with umbrella organisations to reach diverse groups, including persons with disabilities and Roma communities."*[154]

Ukraine: Women Leading EORE/CPP.

In Ukraine, Women's Rights Organisations (WROs) have been active since the 1990s and are well-established actors within civil society. Their strong community presence, including among persons with disabilities, veterans, survivors, youth and the elderly, positions them as key partners in ensuring inclusive risk education. Many also provide specialised services such as MHPSS, Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) and GBV support, making them natural allies in linking mine action with broader protection efforts, including the Women, Peace and Security agenda. Following the full-scale Russian invasion in February 2022, many of these organisations had to scale up their activities to respond to the new needs of affected populations. Civil society organisations, including Women's Rights and Women-Led Organisations, are now contributing to more inclusive EORE/CPP approaches. For example, the feminist organisation NGO Girls, certified by the Ukrainian Mine Action Centre, integrates EORE into education and child protection initiatives, particularly in newly accessible areas. They reach communities through kindergartens, schools and humanitarian distributions. In collaboration with the Fédération Suisse de Déminage (FSD), NGO Girls also recently published a research study on the barriers and opportunities for women in humanitarian demining.[155] "We work mostly with women and girls and vulnerable categories of people. We decided that we can do our share to engage women more in mine action... We know there aren't many women in operational work, and they also aren't able to see the opportunities within this sector if they don't have the knowledge" – Local NGO Girls, Ukraine.[156]

However, barriers to CSO engagement must be addressed. Interviewees, including local representatives, noted limited entry points for non-mine action organisations to engage meaningfully in EORE and CPP. This is often due to the perception of mine action as overly technical and governed by rigid protocols, and echoes challenges previously identified in Section 3.2.1, where certification and liability concerns limited local engagement. In some cases, CSOs struggle to participate in sector meetings due to language, travel costs or lack of recognition. One INGO interviewee noted, *"bringing CSOs into mine action coordination spaces remains a challenge. They are often absent from strategy meetings, which limits inclusive perspectives."*[157] Some efforts are being made to address this, for example, the Myanmar MA AoR now uses simultaneous translation and holds sub-regional meetings to facilitate local input.[158]

---

[154] INGO, Ukraine. Interview dated 25 April 2025.
[155] NGO Girls also produced a podcast interviewing women working with the HALO Trust.
[156] Presentation made by Girls during the EORE/CPP EWIPA Workshop, 11-12 June 2025. See also Girls website, https://divchata.org/en/.
[157] INGO, Gaza and the West Bank, Palestine. Interviewed 11 April 2025.
[158] Myanmar Protection Cluster, Myanmar Protection Analysis update: Update on Protections, Trends, Risks and Protection Situation, January-December 2024, January-December 2024, p.12.

Many local and national CSOs lack institutional recognition, accreditation pathways or stable funding, a structural issue also covered in Section 4.2.1 for national stakeholders. In settings with restricted civil society space, local organisations also face threats beyond explosive weapons and contamination, including harassment, detention and violence.

Funding remains a key concern. Small CSOs often struggle with donor compliance, reporting and safeguarding. Workshop participants called for simplified sub-grant mechanisms and direct funding streams for local organisations, especially for preparedness and anticipatory action. In EWIPA settings, flexibility and sustained support are essential. Locally-led humanitarian funds, such as the NEAR Change Fund, provide flexible, context-driven financing that empowers local and national CSOs to respond rapidly to emerging needs and allocate resources where they are most needed.[159]

A survey conducted as part of the Humanitarian Reset process concluded that local and national actors should drive and shape the Reset based on their own priorities, because they best understand their communities and how to centre them in humanitarian responses.[160] As one survey respondent wrote, *"Local actors no longer want to be simple guests at the decision-making table – they want to be co-architects."*[161]

Recommendations - Agenda for Action

Donor States and UN Agencies:

- Encourage localisation by requiring funding streams that allocate resources to community-based actors, including through simplified sub-grant mechanisms. Prioritise flexible, multi-year funding for community-led EORE/CPP initiatives in EWIPA settings.

Donor States, Mine Action AoRs and other coordination platforms:

- Prioritise funding for DGA-led and survivor-led organisations and ensure their inclusion in strategy design, monitoring frameworks and coordination mechanisms.

---

[159] NEAR (Network for Empowered Aid Response), https://www.near.ngo/solutions. For more examples of locally-led humanitarian pooled funds, see Development Initiatives, Falling short? Humanitarian funding and reform, October 2024, p.25. See, https://www.near.ngo/.
[160] 2% of respondents to the survey were from the Mine Action AoR.
[161] UN OCHA, Local and National Actors Speak Out on the Future of the Humanitarian System, May 2025.

Norway

Funded by the European Union

Cover Photo: Risk education sessions in North Gaza organised by HI. © K. Nateel / HI