



LANDMINE & CLUSTER MUNITION MONITOR

**Myanmar/Burma
Country Report
December 2023**

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Landmine & Cluster Munition Monitor is the civil society initiative providing research for the ICBL-CMC. It has reported on the global landmine and cluster munition problems and solutions since 1999 and 2010 respectively.

It has become the monitoring regime for the Mine Ban Treaty and the Convention on Cluster Munitions and is a shining example of the concept of civil society-based verification that is now employed in many similar contexts.

A broad-based network of individuals, campaigns, and organizations from around the world contribute to the Monitor's global research work. The Monitor works in good faith to provide factual information about the issue it is monitoring in order to benefit the world as a whole. It is critical, but constructive in its documentation and analysis.

Landmine & Cluster Munition Monitor is not a technical treaty verification system or a formal inspection regime. It complements the reporting requirements of countries which have ratified the treaty. Our reports seek to make transparent the state of the landmine crisis, and government policies or practices, in non-signatory states.

The Monitor also aims to promote and facilitate discussion within human society in order to reach the goal of ending the suffering caused by antipersonnel landmines and cluster munitions, and establishing a landmine and cluster munition free world.

Landmine & Cluster Munition Monitor Myanmar/Burma researcher for 2023 was Yeshua Moser-Puangsuwan. The Monitor is grateful to all the organizations and individuals who provide information for this report each year, and acknowledge their contribution within the report.

We encourage contributions which provide accurate documentation on these issues. Please contact us at: burma@icblcmc.org. If you have corrections regarding the contents of this report please write: monitor@icblcmc.org

Cover Photo: Landmine victims receive prosthetic legs at the Karen Department of Health and Welfare Prosthetic Clinic, Hpapun Township, Karen State, September 2022 Credit: Free Burma Rangers (used with permission).

Landmine Monitor

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Landmine Monitor Myanmar/Burma Country Report December 2023

(includes Cluster Munition Monitor Myanmar/Burma Country Report December 2023)

Myanmar continues to produce and use antipersonnel landmines, despite its previous expressions of interest in joining the Mine Ban Treaty and its vote in favor of an annual United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) resolution promoting the treaty in 2022. Non-state armed groups (NSAGs) in Myanmar also produce and use antipersonnel mines, including improvised blast and fragmentation mines that are victim-activated.

New mine use in Myanmar increased significantly in 2022–2023, including around infrastructure such as mobile phone towers, extractive enterprises, and energy pipelines.

Policy

The Republic of the Union of Myanmar has not acceded to the Mine Ban Treaty.¹

Following the military coup on 1 February 2021, the Myanmar Armed Forces created a provisional government, which has since struggled for recognition.² In April 2021, parliamentarians that had been elected in November 2020 formed an oppositional National Unity Government (NUG) from exile.³ Myanmar did not take any steps during 2022 or the first half of 2023 to accede to the treaty.

Prior to the coup, Myanmar officials had expressed interest in the Mine Ban Treaty and welcomed its humanitarian provisions.⁴ Myanmar often stated that it was studying the treaty with a view to joining in the future.⁵ In November 2020, Myanmar had stated that it “attentively” follows the work of the treaty, which it said plays “an important role in ending the human suffering and casualties caused by anti-personnel land mines.”⁶

Myanmar did not participate in the 1996–1997 Ottawa Process that created the Mine Ban Treaty.

Since then, Myanmar has participated as an observer at several meetings of the treaty, including the Fourth Review Conference in Oslo in November 2019.⁷ Most recently, representatives from Myanmar’s military-led government, the State Administration Council (SAC), attended the Nineteenth Meeting of States Parties held virtually in November 2021. The SAC also sent Geneva-based embassy staff to observe at the

1. The military junta that previously ruled the country changed its name from Burma to Myanmar. Many ethnic groups in Myanmar, and a number of other countries, still refer to the country as Burma. Internal state and region names are given in their various forms as per local usage, for example, Karenni (Kayah) state. Since 2009, the Monitor has used township names according to those used by the United Nations (UN) Myanmar Information Management Unit (MIMU). For more information, see the MIMU website.
2. The Provisional Government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar was formed on 1 August 2021 by the State Administration Council (SAC), with the Commander-in-Chief of the Myanmar Armed Forces, Gen. Min Aung Hlaing, as its chair.
3. The NUG is composed of members of the Committee Representing Pyidaungsu Hluttaw, parliamentarians who were elected in November 2020 but prevented from taking office on 1 February 2021 by the military coup. The NUG also has representatives from some of Myanmar’s many ethnic minority groups. The NUG sanctioned the formation of anti-military militias within the country in May 2021, which are known as People’s Defence Forces (PDFs). Many anti-military militias are self-organized and their connections to the NUG may be tenuous.
4. In November 2019, Myanmar’s former Union Minister for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement, Win Myat Aye, stated, “Myanmar recognizes the importance of the Anti-personnel Mine Ban Convention in putting an end to the suffering and human casualties caused by anti-personnel mines, in saving lives and in returning hope and human dignity. We also believe that universalization of the convention is vital in reducing humanitarian harms. Building lasting peace is the most fundamental and important task in the process of stopping future use of anti-personnel mines.” Statement of Myanmar, Mine Ban Treaty Fourth Review Conference, Oslo, 26 November 2019.
5. Myanmar Explanation of Vote on Resolution L.45, UNGA First Committee on Disarmament and International Security, New York, 6 November 2019. UNGA, Official Records, A/C.1/74/PV25, p. 1. This is virtually the same as its statement the previous year. Myanmar Explanation of Vote on Resolution L.53, UNGA First Committee, New York, 8 November 2018. See also, Myanmar Explanation of Vote on Resolution L.40, UNGA First Committee, New York, 31 October 2017. UNGA, Official Records, A/C.1/72/PV26, pp. 18–19 and 29.
6. Statement of Myanmar, Mine Ban Treaty Eighteenth Meeting of States Parties, held virtually, 16 November 2020.
7. Myanmar previously attended Meetings of States Parties in 2003, 2006, and 2011–2013. It did not participate in the Review Conferences held in 2004, 2009, or 2014. Myanmar participated in intersessional meetings in Geneva in 2013–2014, 2016, 2019, and 2021.

intersessional meetings held in Geneva in June 2023.

The NUG continues to hold Myanmar's seat at the United Nations (UN) in New York. In December 2022, for the first time, Myanmar voted in favor of the key annual UNGA resolution promoting universalization of the Mine Ban Treaty. Myanmar has previously abstained from voting on the annual UNGA resolution promoting the treaty since it was first introduced in 1997.⁸ Myanmar did not offer any explanation for its vote.

In January 2023, Mine-Free Myanmar held a press conference in Mae Sot, Thailand, on the border with Myanmar, to launch Landmine Monitor 2022.⁹ A 2021 military censorship decree prevented the campaign from publishing within the country the Monitor's annual country profile on Myanmar.¹⁰ In 2022, the UN's Myanmar Information Management Unit (MIMU) produced an updated map of Myanmar's mine-affected areas and infographics detailing the impact of mines.¹¹

In November 2022, at the Twentieth Meeting of States Parties to the Mine Ban Treaty, the International Campaign to Ban Landmines (ICBL) condemned new use of antipersonnel mines in Myanmar and called on all governments to strongly condemn this use.¹²

Production, transfer, and stockpiling

State-owned enterprise Myanmar Defense Products Industries, known as Ka Pa Sa, produces at least five types of antipersonnel landmine: MM1, MM2, MM3, MM5, and MM6.¹³

NSAGs in Myanmar often publish photographs showing antipersonnel mines produced by the state and held by frontline Myanmar Armed Forces units for use. For example, in August 2023, the Kachin Independence Army (KIA) and a local People's Defence Force (PDF) displayed MM2 and MM6 antipersonnel mines, after their forces seized a Myanmar Armed Forces outpost in Maebin township, Shan state.¹⁴ Previously, in August 2021, the Myanmar National Democratic Alliance Army (MNDAA) displayed MM5 and MM6 antipersonnel mines captured after fighting with the Myanmar Armed Forces in Muse township, Shan state.¹⁵ In May 2021, the Karen National Liberation Army (KNLA) and Arakan National Council (ANC) displayed MM2 antipersonnel mines obtained after their forces seized a Myanmar Armed Forces

8. "Implementation of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction," UNGA Resolution, 77/63, 7 December 2022. In 1996, Myanmar voted in favor of a UNGA resolution calling on governments to pursue an international agreement banning antipersonnel landmines. 11. MIMU, "Townships with Suspected Landmine/ERW Contamination (1999–2021) and Landmine/ERW Casualties in Myanmar (2020)," 3 November 2021. MIMU reports that the infographic is one of their most requested products.

9. The Mine-Free Myanmar initiative was initially known as "Halt Mine Use in Burma/Myanmar." See, Mine-Free Myanmar website.

10. From 2010, when previous censorship laws were repealed, until 2020, the Monitor's annual Mine Ban Policy country profile on Myanmar/Burma was printed and distributed, in the Burmese language, in the country every year. A total of 1,200 copies of the 2022 country profile, in Burmese, were printed outside Myanmar, but distributed both inside and along the border areas of the country. An additional 600 copies of the online version were downloaded.

11. MIMU, "Townships with Suspected Landmine/ERW Contamination (1999–2022) and Landmine/ERW Casualties in Myanmar (2021)," November 2022. MIMU reports that the infographic is one of their most requested products.

12. Statement of the ICBL, Mine Ban Treaty Nineteenth Meeting of States Parties, 24 November 2022.

13. The MM1 is modeled on the Chinese Type-59 stake-mounted fragmentation mine; the MM2 is similar to the Chinese Type-58 blast mine; the MM3 is a bounding fragmentation mine; the MM5 is a Claymore-type directional fragmentation mine; and the MM6 is a copy of the United States (US) M14 low metal content antipersonnel mine. Myanmar also produces the MM4 antivehicle mine. 17. ICBL, Landmine Monitor Report 2004: Toward a Mine-Free World (New York: HRW, October 2004), p. 938. The mines include Chinese Types -58, -59, -69, and -72A; Soviet POMZ-2, POMZ-2M, PMN-1, and PMD-6; US M14, M16A1, and M18; and Indian/British LTM-73 and LTM-76.

14. Facebook post by People's Spring, 26 August 2023. The NUG sanctioned the formation of anti-military militias in May 2021, known as PDFs. Many such groups are self-organized and their connections to the NUG may be limited.

15. "15 Myanmar Junta Soldiers Reported Killed in Shan State," The Irrawaddy, 31 August 2021. While these mines were captured before use, they were reportedly stored in a lightly-armed frontline military base. This is the type of situation where the Myanmar Armed Forces has stated to the Monitor that it uses landmines.

base in Kayin state.¹⁶ In November 2019, an NSAG in Shan state published photographs showing MM2 antipersonnel mines made by Myanmar Defense Products Industries, with markings indicating that the mines were manufactured in 2018.¹⁷

Myanmar is not known to have exported antipersonnel landmines.¹⁸ Myanmar previously imported or otherwise acquired and used antipersonnel mines manufactured in China, India, Italy, Russia or the former Soviet Union, and the United States (US).¹⁹

There is no publicly available information on the types or quantities of antipersonnel mines stockpiled by the Myanmar Armed Forces.

Production, transfer, and stockpiling by non-state armed groups

NSAGs in Myanmar have produced improvised blast and fragmentation antipersonnel mines that are victim-activated. Such devices are prohibited by the Mine Ban Treaty, regardless of whether they were manufactured in a factory or improvised from locally available materials. Some NSAGs in Myanmar have also produced Claymore-type directional fragmentation mines, antivehicle mines, and antipersonnel mines equipped with antihandling devices.

NSAGs in Myanmar continued to produce improvised antipersonnel landmines in 2022–2023.²⁰ Previously, NSAGs also acquired landmines from the clandestine arms market, or by removing them from mined areas for re-use.²¹

In 2023, NSAGs also seized or captured antipersonnel mines from the Myanmar Armed Forces. The Monitor has seen photographs of mines captured in 2023 by the KIA, the Karenni Army, the KNLA, the Karenni Nationalities Defense Force (KNDF), and several PDF groups in Shan, Kayin, and Kayah states, and in the Sagaing region.²²

16. Mine-Free Myanmar, “Antipersonnel landmines found at Tatmadaw frontline military outpost,” 9 May 2021.

17. The allegation and photographs were published on a Facebook page associated with the Restoration Council of Shan State (RCSS), 3 December 2019. Photographs since that time rarely show production markings, but when they do, they are all prior to 2018 so it is unclear how much production is ongoing.

18. In 1999, Myanmar’s representative to the UN stated that the country supported banning exports of antipersonnel mines. Yet no formal moratorium or export ban has been proclaimed. See, ICBL, *Landmine Monitor Report 2000: Toward a Mine-Free World* (New York: Human Rights Watch, August 2000), p. 469.19. In 1999, Myanmar’s representative to the UN stated that the country supported banning exports of antipersonnel mines. Yet no formal moratorium or export ban has been proclaimed. See, ICBL, *Landmine Monitor Report 2000: Toward a Mine-Free World* (New York: Human Rights Watch, August 2000), p. 469.

19. ICBL, *Landmine Monitor Report 2004: Toward a Mine-Free World* (New York: Human Rights Watch, October 2004), p. 938. The mines include Chinese Types-58, -59, -69, and -72A; Soviet POMZ-2, POMZ-2M, PMN-1, and PMD-6; US M14, M16A1, and M18; and Indian/British LTM-73 and LTM-76.

20. The Monitor was provided with photographs of an improvised antipersonnel mine factory in Demoso township, Kayah state, set up by the Karenni Nationalities Defense Force (KNDF) in February 2023. The source requested anonymity. Photographs from June 2022 showed improvised antipersonnel landmines, among other weapons, reportedly made by the Launglon PDF in the Tanintharyi region. See, “Junta troops raid Launglon PDF camp,” *Burma News International/Mizzima*, 6 July 2022.

21. *Landmine Monitor 2009* identified the presence of US-made M26 bounding antipersonnel mines in Myanmar but could not identify the source or the user. In 2010, a confidential source indicated that the KNLA had received many M26 mines from the Royal Thai Army in the past, before Thailand joined the Mine Ban Treaty. See, *Landmine Monitor Report 2009: Toward a Mine-Free World* (Ottawa: Mines Action Canada, October 2009), p. 1,013.

22. The Monitor found from January 2022–September 2023, in a non-exhaustive survey of media photographs, over 45 instances of mines being captured from the Myanmar Armed Forces, amounting to hundreds of antipersonnel mines of types MM1, MM2, MM5, and MM6, in Chin, Kayah, Kayin, Rakhine, and Shan states, and in the Sagaing and Tanintharyi regions. The mines were captured by NSAGs associated with one of Myanmar’s many ethnic groups or NUG-affiliated PDFs after overrunning Myanmar Armed Forces outposts, or after capturing or ambushing a military patrol. See, Mine-Free Myanmar, “Myanmar Armed Forces consistently using antipersonnel landmines over the past 18 months,” 9 June 2023.

Use

The Monitor has documented extensive use of antipersonnel landmines by the Myanmar Armed Forces, and by various NSAGs operating in Myanmar, since the first annual Landmine Monitor report was published in 1999.

New use by the Myanmar Armed Forces

Myanmar's Armed Forces have repeatedly used antipersonnel mines since seizing power in a coup in February 2021. This use represents a significant increase on use in previous years, including use around infrastructure such as mobile phone towers, extractive enterprises, and energy pipelines.

Photographs reviewed by the Monitor indicate that antipersonnel mines manufactured by Myanmar were captured from the Myanmar Armed Forces by NSAGs every month from January 2022 to September 2023, in virtually every part of the country, indicating extensive mine use by the armed forces.²³ In August 2023, the Myanmar Armed Forces were reported to have increased the destructive power of antipersonnel landmines by placing a mortar shell underneath them.²⁴

Examples of specific reports of new antipersonnel mine use by the Myanmar Armed Forces since mid-2022 are detailed below. In some instances, the Myanmar Armed Forces acknowledged mine use, while in other cases use was attributed by villagers due to the proximity of a military outpost.

On 25 July 2023, four children were killed by a landmine outside In Pin Thar village in Phyu township, Bago region. Villagers claimed the mine was emplaced by Myanmar Army troops from a camp in Hpa Yar La Har village.²⁵

After attacks by the Myanmar Armed Forces from 5–10 April 2023 on Si Maw village in Shwegu township, Kachin state, two children were injured when their oxcart triggered a mine. A local PDF subsequently found another landmine in the area.²⁶

On 1 March 2023, near Cedipyin village in Rathedaung township, Rakhine state, a man was seriously injured after stepping on a landmine in the May mountains, where a Myanmar Army contingent is stationed.²⁷

23. For example, on 1 September 2023 a PDF in Kyaukgyi village in Shwegu township, Kachin state, seized a large quantity of MM1, MM2, MM5, and MM6 antipersonnel mines after capturing a Myanmar Army outpost. See, Facebook post by Khit Thit Media, 1 September 2023. On 25 August 2023 near Sipain village in Mabein township, Shan state, a joint KIA/PDF force seized a large quantity of MM2 and MM6 antipersonnel mines after capturing a Myanmar Army outpost. See, Facebook post by People's Spring, 26 August 2023. On 19 February 2023, boxes of MM5 and MM6 mines were seized in a PDF a raid on a Myanmar Army outpost on the border of Yinmarbin and Salingyi townships, Sagaing region. See, Facebook post by New Ambassador, 20 February 2023. On 31 August 2022, the Arakan Army displayed captured MM2 and MM5 antipersonnel mines, among other weapons, from the remaining arsenal in a camp it overran at Border Post 40 in Maungdaw township, Rakhine state. See, "Arakan Army says it has captured Myanmar military camp near Bangladesh border," Development Media Group, 31 August 2022. On 16 August 2022, KIA rebels and PDF fighters captured 11 MM6 antipersonnel mines from Myanmar Armed Forces soldiers in Pinlaebu township, Sagaing region. On 15 August 2022, the Arakan Army seized seven MM6 (M14) antipersonnel mines, among other weapons, from captured Myanmar Armed Forces soldiers in Paletwa township, Chin state. See, Facebook post by BBC Burmese, 16 August 2022. On 15 August 2022, the Kantbalu PDF seized five MM6 (M14) antipersonnel mines, among other weapons, from captured Myanmar Armed Forces soldiers in Kantbalu township, Sagaing region. See, Facebook post by Lungekhit News, 15 August 2022. 25. Aung Aung, "Villagers stepped on Junta's planted landmines in Sagaing," Tha Din News and Radio, 1 August 2022.

24. As the Myanmar Armed Forces withdrew from Thaung Salone village, Shan state, an MM6 mine, placed on top of the fuze and body of a mortar projectile, on a path behind the village medical clinic, was reportedly emplaced by departing troops. It was later found by returnees. See, photograph in Free Burma Rangers, "Doctors as Targets: Many Killed In Burma Army's Attacks On Medical Facilities," 21 June 2023. Additional details provided via email from David Eubanks, Free Burma Rangers founder, 5 September 2023.

25. "Landmine kills 4 children in Myanmar's Bago region," Radio Free Asia, 27 July 2023.

26. Free Burma Rangers, "Burma Army Offensive Levels 12 Kachin Villages, Displacing Thousands," 27 July 2023.

27. "Rathedaung Twsp man loses leg in landmine explosion," Development Media Group, 1 March 2023.

On 26 February 2023, three boys were wounded after stepping on a mine suspected to have been placed by Myanmar Armed Forces troops between the villages of Numli Hka and Nwan Hka Zup in Waingmaw township, Kachin state.²⁸

On 16 February 2023, during a change of units at the Yae Kin military camp, two Myanmar Army soldiers stepped on mines that were previously planted by the departing unit near the fence of the camp. The camp is located in Tima village in Kyauktaw township, Rakhine state.²⁹

On 14 February 2023, a man stepped on a mine allegedly planted by the Myanmar Armed Forces while searching for food in Momauk township, Kachin state.³⁰ On the same day, a member of the KIA was killed after stepping on a landmine alleged to have been planted by the Myanmar Armed Forces in Sai Wan Kawng in Kutkai township, Shan state.³¹

On 27 January 2023, a man was killed by a landmine outside a Myanmar Army base near Pharpyo village in Minbya township, Rakhine state.³²

On 18 January 2023, a man was seriously injured by a landmine near Panphetan village in Mrauk-U township, Rakhine state, after walking past an area where the Myanmar Army's 378th Battalion is stationed. The military had previously warned residents not to travel in the area.³³

On 13 January 2023, a woman stepped on a landmine planted by the roadside in Than Moe Taung village tract in Taungoo township, Bago region. Local residents heard the explosion but could not enter the area due to restrictions imposed by the Myanmar Armed Forces, and the victim bled to death. Myanmar Armed Forces troops told villagers that they had planted the mine after clashes in the area with a PDF in November 2022. The military previously notified villagers that mines were laid on the Than Moe Taung road and restricted access to it.³⁴

On 16 December 2022, a villager was seriously injured after stepping on a landmine emplaced by Myanmar Armed Forces soldiers based at the Hplah Hkoh army camp. The incident took place in Saw Muh Plaw village tract in Hpapun township, Kayin state.³⁵

On 21 November 2022, a man living in Hkaw Poo village tract in Hpapun township, Kayin state, was seriously injured by an MM6 mine emplaced by the Myanmar Armed Forces.³⁶

On 20 October 2022, a resident of Aung May K'Lar village in Kawkareik township, Kayin state, activated a tripwire landmine while making charcoal. The mine was believed to have been planted by Myanmar Armed Forces troops based at Aung May K'Lar military camp, due to its proximity to the site of the incident.³⁷

On 13 October 2022, a Rohingya woman and her infant son were injured by a tripwire mine near the exterior fence of a Myanmar Armed Forces camp in Pa Laung village in Kyauktaw township, Rakhine state. The victims were at their dwelling, within three meters of the camp boundary, when the explosion occurred. It is uncertain what caused the mine to explode.³⁸

On 1 October 2022, a man was injured by a mine planted by the Myanmar Army next to a military camp

28. Free Burma Rangers, "Burma Army attacks and shifting power in Northern Burma, February 2023," 11 May 2023.³⁵ Kyaw Thu, "The residents of Mhan Taw village, Khin Oo Township were killed by the junta and mines were planted near the bodies," Tha Din News and Radio, 8 March 2022.

29. "Two soldiers killed after stepping on their own landmine in Kyauktaw Rakhine state," Narinjara News, 22 February 2023.

30. Free Burma Rangers, "Burma Army attacks and shifting power in Northern Burma, February 2023," 11 May 2023.

31. Ibid.

32. "Minbya Twsp man killed in landmine encounter," Development Media Group, 27 January 2023.

33. "Mrauk-U Twsp man severely injured in landmine blast," Development Media Group, 18 January 2023.

34. Karen Human Rights Group (KHRG), "KHRG Submission to the ICBL: August 2022–August 2023," undated.

35. Ibid.

36. Ibid.

37. Ibid.

38. Mine-Free Myanmar, "UPDATE: More landmine victims, Bangladesh-Myanmar/Burma border and in Maungdaw township from late 2022 new mine use on border," updated on 6 April 2023.

between Leh Hkee and Baw Lay Der villages in Hkay Poo village tract, in Hpapun township, Kayin state. He was serving as a village guard at the time of the incident.³⁹

In October 2022, a villager stepped on a landmine in Htee Moh Pgha in Tanintharyi township, Tanintharyi region. The mine was believed to have been planted by the Myanmar Armed Forces.⁴⁰

Villagers in Hpapun township, Kayin state, reported that in September–November 2022, Myanmar Armed Forces soldiers planted around 100 landmines on the Lu Thaw road.⁴¹

On 1 September 2022, a villager in Meh T’Raw Hta village tract in Dooplaya district, Kayin state, claimed that a landmine had been planted by the Myanmar Armed Forces near his plantation.⁴²

On 1 September 2022, an eight-year-old boy was killed by a landmine laid by retreating Myanmar Armed Forces troops outside his school in Krok Khu village in Demoso township, Kayah state.

In September 2022, livestock near Noh T’Kaw village tract in Kyainseikgyi township, Kayin state, activated landmines laid near a Myanmar Army camp. Villagers stated that the Myanmar Armed Forces had previously informed them that troops had laid mines in the area. In February 2023, the military again informed villagers that there were mines planted in the area.⁴³

In September 2022, a local NSAG claimed that the Myanmar Armed Forces had laid antipersonnel mines around a church in Moybe, in Pekon township, Shan state.⁴⁴

On 31 August 2022, a KNDF soldier was seriously injured after stepping on a landmine allegedly laid by the Myanmar Armed Forces in Tay Sule village, in Demoso township, Kayah state.⁴⁵

In August 2022, a local militia discovered MM6 antipersonnel landmines laid around the perimeter of Letpadaung Copper Mine in Salingyi township, in the Sagaing region. The copper mine is a joint venture by Myanmar Armed Forces-owned Myanmar Economic Holdings Ltd. and China’s state-owned Norinco Industries.⁴⁶

In July 2022, local residents claimed that the Myanmar Army had emplaced mines near ferry docks controlled by the KNLA in Kyaukkyi township, Bago region. Incidents attributed to these mines subsequently resulted in victims.⁴⁷

In June 2022, antipersonnel mines allegedly laid by Myanmar Army troops in Daw Nye Ku village, Kayah state, seriously injured a KNDF child soldier.⁴⁸

Previously, in July 2019, an official at the Union Minister Office for Defense told the Monitor that mines were still used by the Myanmar Armed Forces in border areas and around infrastructure.⁴⁹ In September

39. Karen Human Rights Group, “KHRG Submission to the ICBL: August 2022–August 2023,” undated.

40. KHRG, “KHRG Submission to the International Campaign to Ban Landmines (ICBL), August 2022 - August 2023.”

41. Ibid.

42. Ibid.

43. KHRG, “KHRG Submission to the ICBL: August 2022–August 2023,” undated.

44. The Moby PDF warned returning local people that they should avoid the grounds of the church as it had been mined. See, “Junta weapons seized from Catholic church in Shan State’s Moby Township,” Mizzima, 15 September 2022. The Moby PDF warned returning local people that they should avoid the grounds of the church as it had been mined. See, “Junta weapons seized from Catholic church in Shan State’s Moby Township,” Mizzima, 15 September 2022.

45. Free Burma Rangers, “Karenni Report: Burma Army Attacks Continue to Kill, Villages are Abandoned, But the People Have Not Given Up,” 7 December 2022.

46. North Yamar PDF lifted 78 MM6 antipersonnel landmines which it stated had been planted by the Myanmar Armed Forces around the copper mine. See, The Irrawaddy (Irrawaddy News), “North Yamar People’s Defense Force defused 78 landmines planted by the regime to protect the China-backed Letpadaung copper mine in Salingyi Township, Sagaing Region. Photo- North Yamar PDF.” 19 August 2022, 09:09 UTC. Tweet.

47. “Locals worry about junta’s landmines in Kyaukgyi” Than Lwin Times, 27 July 2022.

48. Free Burma Rangers, “16-year-old Boy Loses Foot to Landmine Placed in Front of Burning Karenni Church,” 15 June 2022.

49. The official said: “In border areas, if the number of Tatmadaw is small, they will lay mines around where they reside, but only if their numbers are small. Mines are also laid around infrastructure such as microwave towers. If these are near villages, we warn them. If there is a Tatmadaw camp in an area controlled by an ethnic armed group where they are sniped at and harassed, they will lay mines around the camp.” Monitor meeting with U Min Htike Hein, Assistant Secretary, Union Minister Office for Defense, Ministry of Defense, Naypyitaw, 5 July 2019.

2016, the Deputy Minister of Defense, Major General Myint Nwe, told the Myanmar parliament that the army continued to use landmines in internal armed conflicts.⁵⁰

Previously, an investigation by Amnesty International documented civilian casualties from MM2 and MM6 antipersonnel mines laid by the Myanmar Armed Forces in the townships of Demoso, Hpruso, and Loikaw, in Kayah state, between February and June 2022.⁵¹

The Myanmar Armed Forces have reportedly threatened that farmers must pay for antipersonnel mines detonated by their livestock. On 16 May 2023, livestock owned by farmers in Pyint Taw village in Rathedaung township, Rakhine state, were killed by landmines planted by the Myanmar Army near their camp in Ma Nyin Taung village. Subsequently, Myanmar Army officials from the camp summoned villagers and warned that they would have to pay compensation if cattle stepped on mines and caused them to explode.⁵²

Similar incidents were reported previously. In January 2023, livestock stepped on mines in Htee Wah Blaw village tract in Hpaan township, Kayin state. The Myanmar Armed Forces later warned villagers not to release their livestock for grazing, as if they detonated landmines again, the owners would have to pay a fine.⁵³ On 8 September 2022, livestock was killed by a mine in Paung Toke village tract in Mrauk U township, Rakhine state, near a Myanmar Army camp. Soldiers demanded that the farmer give them US\$95 and provide 3kg of meat to cover the cost of landmine.⁵⁴

Unattributed new mine use

It is often difficult to assign responsibility for specific incidents in Myanmar to either the Myanmar Armed Forces, or to a particular NSAG. Villagers have reported mine casualties in areas that were previously considered safe, but where armed conflict had recently occurred.

Renewed armed conflict in July 2023 between the Arakan Army and the Myanmar Armed Forces in Maungdaw township, Rakhine state, caused ethnic Mro residents in the villages of Gyitchaung, Khontaing, Laungdon, and Wetkyein to stop farming and foraging. Villagers cited that locals had two years previously become victims of mines laid in the area.⁵⁵

In April 2023, an adult and child stepped on a mine while collecting medicinal herbs in a forested area where both the KNLA and the Myanmar Army had conducted military activities. It was not clear which party was responsible for planting the mine.⁵⁶

On 18 April 2023, near Nampartet village in Mawksmai township, Shan state, two women and a child stepped on a landmine while foraging in a forested area, where fighting between the Pa-O National Liberation Army (PNLA) and the Restoration Council of Shan State (RCSS) was ongoing. It is unknown which party was responsible for planting the mine.⁵⁷

On 10 February 2023, a laborer was injured by a landmine laid on the Myanmar-India border in Tengnoupal district, in India's Manipur state. The worker had been hired to install border fencing posts. Indian

50. "Pyithu Hluttaw hears answers to questions by relevant ministries," Global New Light of Myanmar, 13 September 2016. The deputy minister stated that the Tatmadaw used landmines to protect state-owned factories, bridges and power towers, and its outposts in military operations. The deputy minister also stated that mines were removed when the military abandoned outposts, or warning signs placed where mines were planted and soldiers were not present.

55. "Teenage boy steps on landmine, loses leg in Ponnagyun Township," Myanmar Now, 22 July 2021.

51. Amnesty International, "Myanmar: Military's use of banned landmines in Kayah State amounts to war crimes," 20 July 2022.

52. "Army warns that owners must pay if planted landmines are exploded by cattle," Narinjara News, 7 June 2023.

53. KHRG, "Hpa-an District Short Update: Landmine explosions in T'Nay Hsah Township, January to June 2023," 29 August 2023.

54. Information provided to the Monitor by a source requesting anonymity.

55. "Landmine fears halt farming among ethnic Mro in northern Maungdaw Twsp," Development Media Group, 20 July 2023.

56. KHRG, "KHRG Submission to the ICBL: August 2022–August 2023," undated.

57. "Child and Two Women Injured by Landmine in Mawksmai Township," Burma News International, 21 April 2023.

authorities attributed the mine use to an NSAG, but did not identify it.⁵⁸

On 27 January 2023, in Tha Le Bar village in Ayadaw township, Sagaing region, seven villagers were killed in a minefield as they fled fighting between a combined force of the Myanmar Army and the pro-military Pyu Saw Htee militia, and a local PDF. The PDF claimed that the mines were laid by Myanmar Army troops and Pyu Saw Htee forces. The military claimed that nine civilians were killed in the area by PDF-emplaced mines.⁵⁹

In August–September 2022 and again in March 2023, several villagers in Kyikto township, Mon state, became victims of landmines. It is unclear which group laid the mines as the KNLA, Myanmar Armed Forces, and PDFs were all active in the area.⁶⁰

On 20 June 2022, two women from a camp for internally displaced persons (IDPs) were injured after stepping on a landmine while searching for vegetables near the site of fighting between the Myanmar Armed Forces and the Arakan Army, between the villages of Abaung Thar and Takarchaung in Paletwa township, Chin state. It is unclear which side emplaced the mine.⁶¹

On 17 June 2022, two farmers were injured by a landmine near the site of armed conflict between the Myanmar Armed Forces and the Arakan Army near Thazigon village in Rathedaung township, Rakhine state. Villagers could not say which side left the landmine.⁶²

On 14 June 2022, a man was killed and another injured by a landmine at the site of a battle between Myanmar Armed Forces troops and Arakan Army rebels near Sanyin village in Myebon township, Rakhine state. Villagers could not say which side planted the mine.⁶³

On 10 February 2022, a man was killed by a landmine at the site of clashes between the Myanmar Armed Forces and the Arakan Army near Thalu Changu village in Minbya township, Rakhine state. It is unclear which party emplaced the mine.⁶⁴

Atrocity/forced labor mine clearance

The Monitor has found evidence that the Myanmar Armed Forces has continued the practice of using civilians as ‘guides’ to walk in front of its units in mine-affected areas, effectively to detonate landmines. This is a grave violation of international humanitarian and human rights law.⁶⁵

On 21 March 2023, a porter was killed in a landmine blast near a military camp in Kinmonchaung village in Kyaikto township, Mon state.⁶⁶

On 14 October 2022, several residents of Heinzine and Mualben villages in Tedim township, Chin state, were seized by Myanmar Army troops to use as human shields. Some became mine victims.⁶⁷

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) reported in August 2023 that there are a total of 1.9 million IDPs in Myanmar due to internal armed conflict.⁶⁸ The Myanmar Armed Forces has

58. “BRTF labourer injured in blast at Indo-Myanmar border,” Ukhul Times, 10 February 2023.

59. Online database of the Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project (ACLED). See, ACLED website.

60. “Man killed by landmine in Kyaik Htee Yoe Wisa Mountain,” Independent Mon News Agency, 25 March 2023.

61. “Landmine blast injures two displaced women in Chin State,” Development Media Group, 20 June 2022.

62. “Rathedaung couple injured in landmine blast,” Development Media Group, 17 June 2022.

63. “IDP killed, another injured in Myebon Twsp landmine blast,” Development Media Group, 14 June 2022.

64. “Minbya Twsp man found dead three days after landmine blast,” Development Media Group, 10 February 2022.

65. Over the past two decades, the Monitor has reported disturbing evidence that the Myanmar military has forced civilians to clear antipersonnel mines without training or protective equipment, or forced civilians to guide or carry equipment for the Tatmadaw in mined areas. Such activities constitute a threat to the right to life, liberty, and security of person. During Myanmar’s first Universal Periodic Review of its human rights record, in 2011, the ICBL provided a submission detailing the use of human minesweepers. See Human Rights Council, Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review, 10th Session, “Summary prepared by the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights in accordance with paragraph 15(c) of the annex to Human Rights Council resolution 5/1,” 18 October 2010.

66. “A porter killed after hitting landmine in Kyaiktiyo area,” Than Lwin Times, 24 March 2023.

67. Information provided to the Monitor by a source requesting anonymity.

been ordering IDPs to return to their place of origin prior to any mine clearance taking place.⁶⁹ Forced return to contaminated areas, with unmarked minefields, essentially makes returnees in Myanmar potential human mine sweepers.

Use on the Bangladesh border

In October–November 2022, antipersonnel mines were newly laid along the Bangladesh–Myanmar border by the Myanmar Armed Forces, and in Maungdaw township, Rakhine state, by the Arakan Army. New mines were laid on the Myanmar side of the border fence between border pillars 35 to 52, resulting in a significant increase in mine victims in the area in late 2022 and early 2023.⁷⁰

The border fence, constructed by Myanmar, is regularly cut by smugglers, while NSAGs have also cut the fence for transit. When gaps in the fence are discovered by Myanmar Armed Forces troops, more mines may be laid. Mines have also allegedly been laid in northern Rakhine state during the inter-NSAG conflict between the Arakan Army and the Bangladesh-based Rohingya Solidarity Organization (RSO).⁷¹

Several mine incidents in the border area were reported between September 2022 and April 2023, causing injuries. Most of these incidents involved people crossing the border to trade, or to tend to or smuggle livestock.⁷²

Previously, in 2017, the Monitor published evidence of Myanmar government forces using antipersonnel mines along the border with Bangladesh.⁷³ A 2018 report by the Human Rights Council stated that there were “reasonable grounds to conclude that landmines were planted by the Myanmar Armed Forces, both in the border regions as well as in northern Rakhine state, as part of the ‘clearance operations’ with the intended or foreseeable effect of injuring or killing Rohingya civilians fleeing to Bangladesh.”⁷⁴

Bangladesh condemned this landmine use and urged Myanmar to “impose [a] moratorium on the use, production and transfer of anti-personnel mines.”⁷⁵ In February 2021, two workers hired to repair the

68. UNHCR, “Myanmar Emergency Update (as of 31 July 2023),” 9 August 2023.⁷² Aung Aung, “At least 10 Junta soldiers killed in Phaungpyin during a landmine attack by the PDF,” *Tha Din News and Radio*, 24 June 2022.

69. See, for example, “1,500 IDPs in Chin State town reportedly pushed to return home,” *Development Media Group*, 29 March 2023; “Rakhine Chief Minister ignores IDP safety demand over landmines, while offering two months rice rations – if they return home,” *Narinjara News*, 17 February 2023; “Over 500 refugees sent back by the military council without clearing landmines,” *Narinjara News*, 3 March 2023; and “Over 600 refugees from three IDP camps in Kyauktaw forced to return home,” *Myanmar Peace Monitor*, 23 March 2023.

70. Mine-Free Myanmar, “UPDATE: More landmine victims, Bangladesh–Myanmar/Burma border and in Maungdaw township from late 2022 new mine use on border,” updated on 6 April 2023.

71. *Ibid.*

72. *Ibid.* For example, on 4 April 2023, a Bangladeshi man from Chakdala, Naikongchari stepped on a mine in the vicinity of border pillar 42 which is also near Myanmar Border Guard Police camp 6. The victim was taken to Cox’s Bazar hospital where his left leg was amputated. On 25 February 2023, a 25-year-old Bangladeshi national was trafficking stolen cattle across the border near border pillar no. 44/45 in Bauk Shu Hpweit village tract in Maungdaw township, Rakhine state, into the Naikhongchhari region of Bangladesh, when he stepped on a landmine and was subsequently treated at Cox’s Bazar hospital. On 21 February 2023, a man trading cattle across the border in the same area was also injured by a landmine and underwent treatment at Cox’s Bazar hospital. Further incidents in the first two months of 2023 and the last four months of 2022 were also recorded by Mine-Free Myanmar.

73. The Monitor reported that local researchers interviewing and assisting displaced Rohingya civilians as they crossed into Bangladesh on 28 August 2017 saw an army truck arrive on the Myanmar side of the border, from which they witnessed Myanmar Army soldiers unloading three crates. They said the soldiers removed antipersonnel landmines from the crates and placed them in the ground, later returning at night to place more mines. According to the researchers, mines were emplaced in Taung Pyo Let Yar village tract in Maungdaw township, adjacent to border pillar no. 31 in Bangladesh, an area that demarcates the start of the land border between Bangladesh and Myanmar. Monitor email and phone interviews with local non-governmental organization (NGO) researchers, who requested anonymity, 17 September 2017.

74. Human Rights Council, “Report of the detailed findings of the Independent International Fact-Finding Mission on Myanmar,” A/HRC/39/CRP.2, 17 September 2018, p. 288.

border fence between Bangladesh and Myanmar were injured by landmines.⁷⁶

The Myanmar government denied using mines on the border with Bangladesh in a November 2018 statement, describing the evidence as “without merit.”⁷⁷ Myanmar again denied its involvement in mine use on the Bangladesh border in October 2020.⁷⁸

NSAGs also appear to have laid mines near the border with Bangladesh. In January 2023, a child died and three others were injured after stepping on a mine in a mountainous area near the border. The injured children were taken to a clinic run by the Arakan Army for treatment. The Myanmar Army and the Arakan Army have previously clashed in the area and both maintain a presence.⁷⁹

Use by non-state armed groups

Ethnic armed groups have engaged in conflict with the central authorities in Myanmar for decades. Over the same time period, the Myanmar Armed Forces has sanctioned several militias, including Pyusawhti, the People’s Militia Forces (PMF), and the Border Guard Forces (BGF). These groups act primarily under the military’s direction but may also act independently. Since the military coup in February 2021, many local anti-military resistance groups have been established, some of which identify as PDFs. PDF groups often declare allegiance to the NUG.⁸⁰ Local media often report the use of “landmines” by such groups. Most of these devices are command-detonated roadside bombs, yet some are victim-activated landmines.⁸¹

Given the number of NSAGs operating in Myanmar, it is often difficult to assign responsibility for use to a specific NSAG. Yet many have used mines since the Monitor started reporting in 1999.⁸²

The Monitor has reviewed the following incidents attributed to NSAGs since mid-2022.

On 13 March 2023, three people were injured by a mine laid by an anti-military militia group in Tedim township, Chin state, and were taken across the border to India for treatment. A PDF acknowledged responsibility for this use.⁸³

In March 2023, in Palaw township, Tanintharyi region, two villagers were killed and two more were in-

75. Statement of Bangladesh, Mine Ban Treaty Fourth Review Conference, Oslo, 27 November 2019.

76. Kyaw Myo Aung, “Workers at border fence repair site in Maungdaw severely injured in landmine encounter,” Development Media Group, 23 February 2021.

77. Statement of Myanmar, Mine Ban Treaty Seventeenth Meeting of States Parties, Geneva, 30 November 2018. The statement said “...the security forces of Myanmar and Bangladesh have been conducting coordinated patrol along the border in the west of Myanmar. Coordinated patrol has been made for 19 times so far since August of this year. No incidents of landmines casualty have been reported in the area. Such accusation without concrete evidence will not help facilitate countries to join the convention.”

78. Statement of Myanmar, UNGA First Committee on Disarmament and International Security, New York, 19 October 2020.

79. “Muslim child killed in Buthidaung landmine blast,” Narinjara News, 27 January 2023.

80. As of May 2023, the NUG claimed that there were over 300 PDF groups organized in 250 townships across Myanmar. The exact figure is difficult to verify. See, “The PDF has established 300 battalions and columns in 2 years,” People’s Spring, 5 May 2023.

81. For example, in Monywa township, Sagaing region, three local militias stated that they attacked junta soldiers coming to clear mines. See, Aung Aung, “Revolutionaries attack junta forces with mines in Monywa,” Tha Din News and Radio, 23 August 2022. In Ye-U township, Sagaing region, a coalition of local militias stated that when the Myanmar Armed Forces entered an area, they detonated the mines. See, Aung Aung, “Ten killed and many injured as junta troops mined in Ye-U,” Tha Din News and Radio, 14 August 2022. The Taze People’s Comrades in Taze township, Sagaing region, claimed that military vehicles triggered landmines they had laid near Doukgyi village. See, “More Than 40 Junta Troops Killed Across Myanmar,” The Irrawaddy, 16 August 2021. Mines laid by the Southern Pauk Guerrilla Force in Pauk township, Magway region, killed 17 Myanmar Army troops. See, “Armed resistance replaces anti-coup protests in Pauk township,” Frontier Myanmar, 31 August 2021.

82. On 15 October 2015, eight ethnic armed groups signed the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement (NCA) with the government, committing to “end planting of mines” and “cooperate on the process of clearing all landmines.” Since the February 2021 military coup, this commitment no longer appears to be operational.

83. “3 people seriously injured in Chin state land mine blast,” Radio Free Asia, 15 March 2023.

jured by tripwire landmines emplaced by a PDF group. The PDF stated that they had laid the mines to defend the area from the Myanmar Armed Forces.⁸⁴

On 12 February 2023, two Myanmar Armed Forces troops were injured after stepping on mines placed by an unknown group near the Paju crossroads in Kutkai township, Shan state.⁸⁵

On 2 February 2023, members of the Shanni Nationalities Army were injured after stepping on a landmine laid by an unknown group near Na Kata village in Indaw township, Sagaing region.⁸⁶ On the same day, a man was injured in Mone village tract in Kyaukkyi township, Bago region, after stepping on a mine planted by the KNLA as he traveled to his agricultural plantation⁸⁷.

In February 2023, a child was killed and an adult injured by a mine laid by the KNLA. The group had informed villagers that its forces planted landmines in the area.⁸⁸

In February 2023, the KNLA told residents of Pweh Pah village, in Ma Kah Heh village tract in Hpapun township, Kayin state, to inform other local villages that the KNLA was laying mines near a Myanmar Armed Forces camp. Despite this warning, two villagers became victims of mines.⁸⁹

On 14 and 15 January 2023, two villagers in Nyaunglebin township, Bago region, stepped on landmines planted by KNLA forces. Previously, Myanmar Armed Forces troops had occupied the area, and when they left, the KNLA planted mines to prevent government troops returning and issued a verbal warning to residents. Villagers reported that not all locals got the message.⁹⁰

On 12 January 2023, in Shar Du Zut village in Hpakant township, Kachin state, a woman was injured and her daughter killed by a landmine planted by the Ja Htu Zup PMF.⁹¹

In December 2022, a medic for the Kale PDF in Kale township, Sagaing region, laid mines around her house when she learned that it would be raided by the military. Government troops were subsequently injured by the mines.⁹²

On 12 October 2022, a PDF combatant was killed while maintaining a PDF-laid minefield in Khin-U township, Sagaing region.⁹³

On 7 October 2022, in Gudar Pyin village tract in Maungdaw township, Rakhine state, a Rohingya resident lost both legs to a landmine laid in his courtyard by the Arakan Army.⁹⁴

On 22 September 2022, a villager in Kone Nee village tract in Kyaukkyi township, Bago region, was injured by a landmine planted by an unknown group. Myanmar Armed Forces soldiers based in the area provided medical treatment, but the victim died from his wounds.⁹⁵

On 9 September 2022, Myanmar Army soldiers stepped on two landmines in Yung Ngaw village in Kutkai township, Shan state, where KIA soldiers were positioned.⁹⁶

In September 2022, villagers reported that the road between Kamarmaung and Ka Taing Tee in Hpapun

84. KHRG, "KHRG Submission to the ICBL: August 2022–August 2023," undated.

85. Free Burma Rangers, "Burma Army attacks and shifting power in Northern Burma, February 2023," 11 May 2023.

86. Ibid.

87. KHRG, "KHRG Submission to the ICBL: August 2022–August 2023," undated.

88. Ibid.

89. Ibid.

90. Ibid.

91. Online database of the Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project (ACLED). See, ACLED website.

92. "Scores of Myanmar Junta Troops Hit by Land Mines While Raiding Resistance Member's Home," The Irrawaddy, 8 December 2022.

93. "Burma coup resistance notes October 13, 2022," Burma Coup Resistance Notes, 13 October 2022.

94. The Rohingya victim had fled their village at the start of armed conflict, but returned once the Myanmar Armed Forces pushed the Arakan Army out. Upon their return to check on their home, they stepped on the mine and were subsequently treated for the injury at a military field hospital in the northern part of the village tract. See, "Landmine explosion in Rohingya village; Rohingya man receives serious injury," Rohingya Korbtor, 8 October 2022.

95. KHRG, "KHRG Submission to the ICBL: August 2022–August 2023," undated.

96. Free Burma Rangers, "Burma Army Attacks And Human Rights Abuses Spread Across Northern Burma, September 2022," 5 January 2023.

township, Kayin state, had been mined by the KNLA, the BGF, and the Myanmar Armed Forces. Some armed groups stated that they had removed mines from the area, yet civilian casualties still occurred.⁹⁷

On 29 August 2022, Myanmar Army soldiers were injured by mines laid by a PDF in Taungjah village in Sagaing township, Sagaing region.⁹⁸

In August 2022, a PDF in Depayin township, Sagaing region, stated that landmines laid around its camp had caused several Myanmar Armed Forces casualties.⁹⁹ In Hpakant township, Kachin state, the KIA allegedly emplaced mines that caused two Myanmar Armed Forces casualties.¹⁰⁰

On 13 July 2022, Myanmar Armed Forces soldiers stepped on landmines at Nang Zaw Yang road junction in Waingmaw township, Kachin state, which were reportedly planted by the KIA.¹⁰¹

Mines placed by the KNLA and the Karen National Defence Organisation (KNDO) in Meh Klaw village tract in Hpapun township, Kayin state, were responsible for previously unreported mine casualties in early 2022, despite verbal warnings of contamination provided by the KNLA. On 18 April, a woman stepped on a mine planted by KNLA soldiers.¹⁰² In March, two villagers stepped on mines planted by the KNLA.¹⁰³

On 9 January, a villager was killed after stepping on a mine.¹⁰⁴

On 10 March 2022, four Myanmar Army soldiers were wounded by a mine laid by an unknown NSAG in Waingmaw township, Kachin state.¹⁰⁵

The use of antivehicle landmines by groups opposed to the military has also resulted in civilian casualties in 2022–2023. NSAGs have also used command-detonated antivehicle bombs.¹⁰⁶ The SAC claims to have recovered improvised mines during operations against NSAGs.¹⁰⁷

Several incidents from May to December 2021 involved the use of bombs or booby-traps in urban areas. In most cases, the victims were engaged in the removal of rubbish, and the explosive device was contained in a black plastic bag.¹⁰⁸

In past years, some NSAGs in Myanmar unilaterally renounced antipersonnel mine use by signing the Deed of Commitment, administered by Geneva Call, a Switzerland-based non-governmental organization (NGO).¹⁰⁹ The Palaung State Liberation Front (PSLF) signed it in 2007 and its armed wing, the Ta'ang

97. KHRG, “KHRG Submission to the ICBL: August 2022–August 2023,” undated.

98. “Burma coup resistance notes August 29–31, 2022,” Burma Coup Resistance Notes, 31 August 2022.

99. Aung Aung, “Ten junta soldiers mined and killed at a PDF camp,” Tha Din News and Radio, 13 August 2022.

100. “KIA Landmine Injuries Burma Army In Hpakant,” Burma News International, 16 August 2022.

101. Free Burma Rangers, “No Relief As The Burma Army Rains Down Attacks Through Monsoon Season In Northern Burma,” 29 August 2022.

102. KHRG, “SAC indiscriminate mortar shelling, an attack of a villager by an SAC soldier, People’s Defence Force (PDF) activity and a landmine incident, February to April 2022,” 20 December 2022.

103. KHRG, “SAC shelling, displacement of villagers, livelihood challenges, healthcare and education situation, and landmine incidents, April to May 2022,” 21 July 2022.

104. KHRG, “Arrests, threats and physical assault of villagers, mortar shelling, air strikes and a landmine incident in Bu Tho and Dwe Lo townships, December 2021 to March 2022,” 14 July 2022.

105. Free Burma Rangers, “Burma Army Attacks in Northern Burma: An In-depth Report of March 2022,” 10 May 2022.

106. See, for example, Ministry of Defense, “Unarmed Civilians Killed and Injured in Blast of Improvised Anti-Vehicle Mine Laid by A Group of KNLA Members who Support Terrorism,” 24 March 2023; “4 killed, 2 seriously injured after a car hitting land mine in Loikaw,” Burma News International, 7 February 2023; Ministry of Home Affairs, “Explosions of a Landmine Planted by PDF Terrorists Left Non-Profit Organization’s Vehicle which were taken Patient Discharged from Hospital Damaged in Demoso Township,” 10 February 2023; and “Rescue vehicle runs over mines, hurting crew member,” Burma News International, 12 September 2022.

107. “Information Team of State Administration Council holds press conference 4/2021,” Global New Light of Myanmar, 10 April 2021, p. 5. From the photographs, it was not possible to determine the technical characteristics of the mines.

108. The Monitor recorded at least 25 injuries or deaths among rubbish collectors in towns in Kayin and Shan states, and in the Magway, Sagaing, and Yangon regions between May and December 2021.

National Liberation Army (TNLA), has previously promised to refrain from mine use.¹¹⁰ In June 2017, the TNLA denied allegations of new use and affirmed that it had not used landmines since signing the Deed of Commitment.¹¹¹ In July 2022, the Arakan Army stated that it used solely command-detonated landmines, but gave no indication as to the status of antipersonnel mines that it had captured from the Myanmar Armed Forces.¹¹²

Summary : Non-signatory Myanmar has expressed interest in the Convention on Cluster Munitions, but has not taken any steps to join it. Myanmar last participated in a meeting of the convention in 2013. In December 2022, Myanmar for the first time voted in favor of an important annual United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) resolution promoting the convention.

In the past, Myanmar has stated that it has never used, produced, or transferred cluster munitions. However, evidence has emerged that indicates its armed forces used an apparently domestically produced cluster bomb in 2022 and the first half of 2023.

Policy

The Republic of the Union of Myanmar has not acceded to the Convention on Cluster Munitions.¹¹³

After Myanmar's armed forces, known as the Tatmadaw, took control of the country in a military coup on 1 February 2021, it formed a provisional government headed by the State Administration Council (SAC), chaired by Tatmadaw Commander-in-Chief Min Aung Hlaing. Parliamentarians elected prior to the coup in November 2020 formed a National Unity Government (NUG) in exile in April 2021, which holds Myanmar's seat at the UN.¹¹⁴

Myanmar has expressed interest in the convention, but has not taken any steps to accede to it. Previously, in November 2019, Myanmar reiterated that it could not join the convention until a nationwide peace agreement had been reached with non-state armed groups (NSAGs).¹¹⁵ Myanmar has expressed concern at the "indiscriminate use" of cluster munitions, which it says can lead to "vulnerability and serious humanitarian impact."¹¹⁶

Myanmar participated in a regional meeting of the Oslo Process that created the Convention on Cluster

109. In the past, a few NSAGs and former NSAGs in Myanmar unilaterally renounced use of antipersonnel mines by signing the Deed of Commitment. The Chin National Front/Chin National Army (CNF/CNA) renounced use in 2006. The Arakan Rohingya National Organization (ARNO) and the National United Party of Arakan (NUPA), both now militarily defunct, renounced use in 2003. The Lahu Democratic Front (LDF), the Palaung State Liberation Army (PSLA), and the Pa-O People's Liberation Organization/Pa-O People's Liberation Army (PPLO/PPLA) renounced use in 2007. In June 2010, Geneva Call noted that the LDF and the PPLA had disbanded.

110. Since 2014, Geneva Call has been pursuing inquiries about allegations of mine use made against the TNLA. See, Geneva Call, "Burma/Myanmar: Geneva Call urges an end to mine use in northern Shan State," 14 July 2016.

111. Amnesty International, "All the Civilians Suffer: Conflict, Displacement and abuse in Northern Myanmar," 14 June 2017, p. 44.

112. "Military-planted landmines causing civilian casualties in Arakan State: AA spokesman," Development Media Group, 11 July 2022.

113. The military regime changed the name of the country from Burma to Myanmar in 1989, but many ethnic groups in Myanmar's border areas and a number of countries still prefer to use the name Burma.

114. The Provisional Government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar was formed on 1 August 2021 by the SAC, with the Commander-in-Chief of the Myanmar Armed Forces, Gen. Min Aung Hlaing, as its chair.

115. Myanmar Explanation of Vote on Resolution A/C.1/L.46, UNGA First Committee on Disarmament and International Security, New York, 6 November 2019. Myanmar has previously indicated that it is considering joining the convention.

116. Myanmar Explanation of Vote on Resolution L.41, UNGA First Committee on Disarmament and International Security, New York, 31 October 2017. UNGA, Official Records, A/C.1/72/PV26, pp. 18–19 and 29. Myanmar has made similar statements on previous occasions. See, statement of Myanmar, UNGA First Committee on Disarmament and International Security, New York, 15 October 2015; statement of Myanmar, UNGA First Committee on Disarmament and International Security, New York, 30 October 2013; and statement of Myanmar, UNGA First Committee on Disarmament and International Security, New York, 24 October 2012.

Munitions in Vientiane, Lao PDR in October 2008. Myanmar attended another regional conference on the convention held in Bali, Indonesia in November 2009.

Myanmar has participated as an observer at several meetings of the convention, most recently the Tenth Meeting of States Parties in Geneva in August–September 2022, where it did not make a statement.¹¹⁷

Myanmar has attended regional workshops on the convention.¹¹⁸

In December 2022, Myanmar for the first time voted in favor of an important UNGA resolution urging states outside the Convention on Cluster Munitions to “join as soon as possible.”¹¹⁹ Myanmar had previously abstained from voting on the annual UNGA resolution promoting the convention since it was first introduced in 2015.

Myanmar is not party to the Mine Ban Treaty or the Convention on Conventional Weapons (CCW).

Production, transfer, and stockpiling

It is unclear if Myanmar has imported or otherwise acquired cluster munitions in the past and if it possesses cluster munition stocks.¹²⁰

Myanmar was not known to have produced cluster munitions, but evidence emerged in 2023 indicating that it may have manufactured a cluster bomb since 2021 that has been used in several attacks in the country.¹²¹ (See Use section below).

This cluster munition is an air-delivered bomb with a shell casing that contains 120mm mortar projectiles as submunitions. Each submunition has a plastic arming vane attached to an impact fuze that detonates on contact. The cluster bomb canister has space for 12 mortar projectile submunitions attached on an internal frame.

The origin of this cluster bomb is unknown, but it appears similar to other products manufactured by Myanmar’s state-owned weapons production facility “KaPaSa” or Defence Products Industries of Myanmar. However, there are no markings on the bomb remnants that indicate where they were manufactured or assembled. Lettering in English and Thai that is visible under the green paint on some remnants indicates that the steel sheeting was made in Thailand.¹²²

Photographic evidence and witness descriptions of this weapon indicate that it meets the definition of a cluster munition under the Convention on Cluster Munitions, which prohibits a “conventional munition that is designed to disperse or release explosive submunitions each weighing less than 20 kilograms each.” Myanmar is not known to have produced or used cluster munitions before, though a rudimentary cluster munition was documented in the country a decade ago. The Kachin Independence Army (KIA), an NSAG operating in northeast Myanmar, alleged in January 2013 that the Tatmadaw had used an old weapon that is similar in design to a modern cluster munition near the town of Laiza, in Kachin state.¹²³ The Monitor

117. Myanmar participated as an observer at the convention’s Meetings of States Parties in 2010 and 2012, as well as the Second Review Conference held in November 2020 and September 2021.

118. Permanent Mission of the Philippines to the United Nations (UN) in Geneva press release, “Philippines hosts webi-nar to promote Convention on Cluster Munitions among ASEAN Member States,” 29 July 2020.

119. “Implementation of the Convention on Cluster Munitions,” UNGA Resolution 77/79, 7 December 2022.

120. Myanmar possesses 122mm Type-81, Type-90B, and M1985 240mm surface-to-surface rocket launchers, but it is not known whether these include versions with submunition payloads. See, Myanmar Defense Weapons, “Some modern military weapons of Myanmar Army,” 20 March 2014; and Hla Oo’s Blog, “Burma Army’s MRLS or Multi Rocket Launcher Systems,” 23 March 2014.

121. Landmine and Cluster Munition Monitor, “Briefing Paper: Cluster Munition Production and Use in Myanmar/Burma,” 31 August 2023.

122. Photographs for analysis sent to the Monitor by an officer of the Karen National Liberation Army (KNLA) who re-requested anonymity. Two photographs of the same weapon were published by Khit Thit Media but misidentify the weapon as of Thai origin due to the lettering, while not identifying it as a cluster munition. See, Facebook post by Khit Thit Media, 23 April 2023.

found that an “adapter” and 20-pound fragmentation bombs, shown in photographs reviewed by Human Rights Watch (HRW), may meet the definition of a cluster munition under the Convention on Cluster Munitions.¹²⁴

Previously, in 2009, Myanmar told a regional meeting on the convention that, “we do not use cluster munitions, develop, produce, otherwise acquire, retain or transfer to anyone, directly or indirectly, nor assist, encourage or induce anyone to engage in any activity prohibited under this Convention.”¹²⁵

Use

In the past, Myanmar has denied using cluster munitions. In 2015, at the UNGA, Myanmar said that “cluster munitions were never used in...operations” by the Tatmadaw.¹²⁶

Evidence has emerged indicating that Myanmar’s armed forces used an apparently domestically produced cluster bomb in attacks in several parts of the country in 2022, with use also reported as recently as June 2023.

The Monitor has reviewed photographs of cluster bomb remnants from attacks by the Myanmar Air Force in Chin, Kayah, Kayin, and Shan states during 2022–2023.

Most recently, on 6 June 2023, photographs of the aftermath of an airstrike in Kedong village tract in Kawkaik township, Kayin state, showed cluster bomb remnants among the debris at a damaged school.¹²⁷

On 25 April 2023, cluster bomb remnants were found after an attack by the Myanmar Air Force on a hospital—which injured five people, including two doctors—in Saung Pwe village in Pekhon township, Shan state. However, the casualties could have been caused by other weapons used in the same attack.¹²⁸ On the same day, the Myanmar Air Force dropped a cluster bomb near the village of Mae Ka Neh in Myawaddy township, Kayin state, wounding four civilians.¹²⁹

Another attack that resulted in casualties in April 2023 in Mindat township, Chin state, also involved cluster bomb use. Cluster bomb remnants were previously found in the same township after a July 2022 aerial attack that wounded 13 civilians, according to Amnesty International.¹³⁰

Between 17 February and 7 March 2023, witnesses to Myanmar Air Force attacks near the villages of Kon

123. “Burma army allegedly uses cluster bombs to take KIO position,” Burma News International, 28 January 2013. On 19 April 2013, the deputy secretary of the Kachin National Council (KNC) provided photographs to the CMC showing an unknown type of air-dropped bomb that it said, “confirmed that the World War-Two era 20-pound fragmentation bombs were used during the airstrikes in the KIA’s strategic outposts between 14 December 2012 and 8 January 2013 by the Myanmar Air Force.” According to the KNC, “this type has never been used in Burma’s civil war before.” The photographs were contained in an email sent to the CMC by Hkun Htoi, Deputy Secretary, KNC, 19 April 2013.

124. There is evidence that Myanmar government forces mounted six fragmentation bombs to the adapter, which then separated from the rack when dropped from the air. Photographs show a metal tubular rack that appears to be similar in design to the United States (US)-produced M1 cluster adapter. The small fragmentation bombs are of a more modern design and marking than World War II-era munitions. A military officer who requested anonymity confirmed that the weapon was manufactured in Myanmar. Additionally, a former military ordnance officer confirmed that the markings on the weapons were those used by Myanmar’s armed forces.

125. Statement of Ye Minn Thein, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Regional Conference on the Promotion and Universalization of the Convention on Cluster Munitions, Bali, 16 November 2009.

126. Statement of Myanmar, UNGA First Committee on Disarmament and International Security, New York, 15 October 2015.

127. Facebook post by Karen National Union (KNU), 7 June 2023. Subsequent correspondence on Signal with a KNLA officer, 20 June 2023. The KNLA officer requested anonymity.

128. Facebook post by Karenni Human Rights Group, 25 April 2023; and email exchange between Karenni Human Rights Group and the Monitor, 2023.

129. Photographic evidence provided to the Monitor by a KNLA officer via correspondence on Signal, 8–11 May 2023. The KNLA officer requested anonymity.

130. Amnesty International, “Deadly Cargo: Exposing the Supply Chain that Fuels War Crimes in Myanmar,” 3 November 2022, pp. 28–29. An impact ‘splatter’ pattern documented after an aerial attack in Karenni state was identified by the Monitor as typical of a mortar strike. This was attributed in the report to a submunition from an air-dropped cluster bomb.

Tha, Nam Mae Kon, and Warisuplia, in Demoso township, Kayah state, reported hearing multiple explosions indicating the use of cluster bombs, and later found cluster bomb remnants. A humanitarian worker at the site told the Monitor that, “the aircraft were Yak 130. There were over 20 wounded and 7 killed by these strikes. Others were killed by conventional bombs and rockets.”¹³¹

In December 2022, Karen Human Rights Group (KHRG) published photographs of remnants from an apparent domestically-produced cluster bomb used in an attack in April 2022 in P’Loo village tract in Myawaddy township, Kayin state, adjacent to the border with Thailand.¹³²

Impact

Myanmar is heavily contaminated with landmines as a result of conflicts between the Myanmar Armed Forces (known as the Tatmadaw) and various non-state armed groups (NSAGs).

Mined areas are located along Myanmar’s borders with Bangladesh, China, India, and Thailand, while new mines continue to be laid by both the Myanmar Armed Forces and NSAGs. The full extent of contamination is unknown, but includes both factory-made and improvised mines.¹³³

Myanmar has no national mine action authority, while international demining operators are not authorized to conduct clearance.¹³⁴ The Mine Action Area of Responsibility in Myanmar, led by the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), supports the coordination of risk education and victim assistance efforts.¹³⁵ Recorded casualties due to mines and explosive remnants of war (ERW) in Myanmar increased significantly in 2021 and 2022. Risk education efforts prioritized camps for internally displaced persons (IDP), villages with reports of widespread contamination, and active conflict zones.¹³⁶

Contamination

Landmine contamination

Myanmar lacks an accurate estimate of the extent of mine contamination. In 2022, for the first time, mine/ERW casualties occurred in every state and region of the country, except Naypyitaw. This is based on an annually-updated map of townships with credible reports of antipersonnel mine/ERW contamination and casualties, produced by the Myanmar Information Management Unit (MIMU) in collaboration with the Monitor. In 2022, a total of 168 townships in Myanmar were reported to be contaminated, up from 147 in 2021 and 100 in 2020. This marked the first time that over half of all townships (330) were reported to have mine/ERW contamination.¹³⁷

Mines have been laid on a large scale throughout Myanmar. Reports indicate that the Myanmar Armed Forces have frequently emplaced landmines in villages, near homes, and around public buildings such as churches.¹³⁸ During 2022, reports indicated that antipersonnel mines were laid by the Tatmadaw to protect

131. Email correspondence with David Eubanks, Founder, Free Burma Rangers (FBR), 21–23 May 2023.

132. KHRG, “Bombs and Bullets Like Rain: Air strikes in the ‘peace town’ and places of refuge in Dooplaya District, December 2021 to May 2022,” 23 December 2022. See, photographs of cluster bomb tail, nose, and framing bent from impact, p. 10. KHRG did not identify the bomb type.

133. Amnesty International, “Myanmar: Military’s use of banned landmines in Kayah State amounts to war crimes,” 20 July 2022.

134. United Nations (UN) Mine Action Strategy 2019–2023, Inter-Agency Coordination Group on Mine Action Monitoring and Evaluation Mechanism, “Thematic Study on Gender and Diversity Mainstreaming in UN Mine Action – the Cases of Colombia and Myanmar,” undated, p. 8.

135. UNICEF, “Myanmar Country Office: Humanitarian Situation Report No. 4,” 31 May 2022, p. 4.

136. United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA), “Humanitarian Response Plan: Myanmar: End-Year Report 2022,” 11 April 2023.

137. MIMU, “Townships with Suspected Landmine/ERW Contamination (1999–2023) and Landmine/ERW Casualties in Myanmar (2022),” November 2023; and Mine-Free Myanmar, “Over half of townships in Myanmar now reported as contaminated by mines/ERW,” 15 September 2023.

mobile phone towers, copper mines, and oil and gas pipelines.¹³⁹

Cluster munition remnants contamination

The Myanmar Armed Forces are reported by the Monitor to have used a domestically-produced cluster munition in attacks in several parts of the country during 2021–2023. The presence or extent of any cluster munition remnants contamination in Myanmar is not known.¹⁴⁰

Other types of contamination

ERW from past conflicts, including ordnance dating back to WWII, are reported to have caused casualties in Myanmar.¹⁴¹ However, the extent of ERW contamination is not known.

Casualties

Myanmar has no official mechanism to collect data on mine/ERW casualties. Reports gathered from available sources are unlikely to reflect the full extent of incidents and casualties.

The total number of mine/ERW casualties in Myanmar, for all time, is unknown. The Monitor has recorded a total of 6,174 casualties (1,059 killed, 4,994 injured, and 121 with an unknown survival outcome) between 2000 and the end of 2022.¹⁴²

5-year casualties total: 2018–2022

Year	Injured	Killed	Unknown	Total
2022	161	384	0	545
2021	257	108	3	368
2020	195	85	0	280
2019	269	89	0	358
2018	351	79	0	430

Casualties in 2022

Injured	Killed	Unknown	Total	Change from previous year
161	384	0	545	Increase from 368 in 2021

Casualty demographics in 2022*

Adult	Men	Women	Unknown
384	312	60	12
Children	Boys	Girls	Unknown
124	73	26	25

*For another 37 casualties recorded in 2022, both the age and sex was unknown.

138. Amnesty International, “Myanmar: Military’s use of banned landmines in Kayah State amounts to war crimes,” 20 July 2022.

139. Marwaan Macan-Markar, “Myanmar land mine danger grows as military rings Chinese assets,” Nikkei Asia, 3 July 2023.

140. Landmine and Cluster Munition Monitor, “Briefing Paper: Cluster Munition Production and Use in Myanmar/Burma,” August 2023.

141. Phadu Tun Aung, “One woman dead and nine others injured after bomb explodes in Minbya,” Myanmar Now, 12 January 2021; and “Unexploded WWII bombs discovered at central Myanmar sports ground,” Coconuts Yangon, 30 September 2015.

142. Monitor casualty dataset for Myanmar.

Casualties by civilian status in 2022

Civilian	Military	Deminer	Unknown
410	135	0	0

Casualties by device type in 2022

APM	AVM	Improvised mine	Unspecified mine type	CMR	ERW	Unknown mine/ERW
421	9	9	33	0	71	2

Note: APM=antipersonnel mines; AVM=antivehicle mines; CMR=cluster munition remnants; ERW=explosive remnants of war.

UNICEF reporting on mine and ERW incidents in Myanmar, which is included in Monitor data, indicates that casualties continued to rise markedly in the country in 2023. During just the first four months of the year, a total of 388 casualties were reported by UNICEF. In 2022, UNICEF recorded 390 casualties, up significantly from 284 in 2021.¹⁴³

Cluster munition casualties

During 2022, for the first time, casualties resulting directly from cluster munition attacks were recorded in Myanmar. The non-explosive remains of cluster bomb containers were found in Mindat township, Chin state, after an aerial attack by the Myanmar Armed Forces in July 2022 wounded 13 civilians.¹⁴⁴

Coordination

Despite movement restrictions and access constraints affecting much of Myanmar, Mine Action Area of Responsibility coordination activities continued in 2022, with partners delivering risk education to affected communities. In April 2023, the Area of Responsibility collaborated with REACH on developing indicators to strengthen mine action planning, through the 2023 Multi-Sector Needs Assessment.¹⁴⁵ Most mine action coordination mechanisms in Myanmar have been suspended since the February 2021 military coup.

Addressing the Impact**Clearance***Highlights from 2022*

No humanitarian mine clearance was undertaken in Myanmar during 2022. Localized clearance by the Tatmadaw was reported in Kayin state, while NSAGs have also conducted sporadic mine clearance in recent years.

Management and coordination

The Myanmar Armed Forces is responsible for mine clearance. Myanmar had explored options for establishing a national mine action authority from 2012 onward, but no such body had been created prior to the 2021 military coup.

In 2012, Myanmar's former military government established the Myanmar Mine Action Center (MMAC),

143. UNICEF, "Myanmar Landmine/ERW Incidents Information: Factsheet (January–October 2022)," November 2022; and UNICEF, "Myanmar Landmine/ERW Incidents Information: Infographic (January – April 2023)," 8 June 2023.

144. Landmine and Cluster Munition Monitor, "Briefing Paper: Cluster Munition Production and Use in Myanmar/Burma," August 2023.

145. UNICEF, "Myanmar Country Office: Humanitarian Situation Report No. 3," 30 April 2023, p. 4.

within the Myanmar Peace Center. In 2013, the MMAC drafted national mine action standards with the support of international mine action operators working in the country. Yet after the November 2015 election brought the NLD to power, the MMAC was dissolved.¹⁴⁶

In 2019, Myanmar reported that it was working closely with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Regional Mine Action Center (ARMAC) and that plans were made to initiate the national legislation required to develop a national mine action authority.¹⁴⁷

Legislation and standards

Myanmar does not have specific mine action legislation or national standards in place. National standards for clearance were reported to be in development as of October 2019,¹⁴⁸ but no update has been provided. International operators working in Myanmar have followed the International Mine Action Standards (IMAS), in addition to their own standard operating procedures for risk education and victim assistance.¹⁴⁹

Strategies and policies

As of the end of 2022, Myanmar had no clear humanitarian mine action strategy in place, while no international operators were authorized to conduct mine clearance in the country.

In January 2018, the secretary of the Union Joint Monitoring Committee, Colonel Wunna Aung, had stated that mine clearance could not begin prior to the building of mutual trust between the government and NSAGs.¹⁵⁰ In May 2017, Colonel Aung previously reported that the Tatmadaw would take the lead on landmine clearance, but that international technical and material support would be accepted.¹⁵¹

Information management

Myanmar does not have a national mine action database. Operators working in Myanmar retain their own survey results, in the absence of a neutral national entity to collate data on hazardous areas. The Mine Action Area of Responsibility has advocated for a centralized database on mine action. Amid the lack of clearance in Myanmar, improving information management in relation to risk education and victim assistance data collected by operators remains the priority.¹⁵²

Gender and diversity

The government in Myanmar prior to the 2021 coup had reportedly welcomed the incorporation of gender mainstreaming into mine action planning.¹⁵³

Clearance operators

International humanitarian mine action operators started arriving in Myanmar in 2012, but were not authorized to conduct non-technical survey until 2015. Operators have not been permitted to conduct technical survey or clearance, by either the government or local authorities in ethnic minority areas. Sporadic clearance by the Tatmadaw and NSAGs was reported in 2019–2021.¹⁵⁴ In 2022, government forces in Lay Kay

146. Roger Fasth and Pascal Simon, “Mine Action In Myanmar,” *The Journal of ERW and Mine Action*, Vol. 19, Issue 2, July 2015, p. 20.

147. Statement of Myanmar, Mine Ban Treaty Fourth Review Conference, Oslo, 25–29 October 2019.

148. Statement of Myanmar, United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) First Committee on Disarmament and International Security, 74th Session, New York, 25 October 2019.

149. ICBL-CMC, “Country Profile: Myanmar: Impact,” updated 16 November 2021.

150. Ye Khaung Nyunt, “Standard operating procedures for commanders drafted at JMC-U,” *Global New Light of Myanmar*, 20 January 2018, p. 7.

151. Ye Khaung Nyunt, “Second day of 10th Union Joint Monitoring Committee meeting in Yangon,” *Global New Light of Myanmar*, 5 May 2017, p. 2.

152. UNICEF, “Myanmar Country Office: Humanitarian Situation Report No. 4,” 31 May 2022, p. 4.

Kaw village in Myawaddy township, Kayin state, were reported to be conducting mine clearance.¹⁵⁵

Land release: antipersonnel landmine

No humanitarian mine clearance was undertaken in Myanmar during 2022.

In Kachin state, the Mine Action Area of Responsibility was working closely in early 2023 with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the Danish Refugee Council, the HALO Trust, and Mines Advisory Group (MAG) to assess landmine contamination in areas where IDPs were returning.¹⁵⁶

Land release: cluster munition remnants

No cluster munition remnants clearance was reported in Myanmar during 2022.

Land release: other ordnance

Release of land contaminated by ERW was not reported in Myanmar during 2022.

Risk education

Highlights from 2022

In response to the sharp rise in mine/ERW casualties during 2022, particularly in the southeast and northwest of Myanmar, the Inter-Cluster Coordination Group mainstreamed risk education activities across the entire cluster system.

Risk education sessions prioritized active conflict areas, as well as IDP camps and villages with reports of widespread contamination.¹⁵⁷ UNICEF developed emergency risk education tools for Myanmar in 2022, including a mobile application designed to teach users how to stay safe from mine/ERW contamination.

UNICEF also used social media to disseminate safety messages.¹⁵⁸

In May 2023, Cyclone Mocha and the associated flooding led to an increased risk from shifting mines and ERW. UNICEF reported that around 60% of mine incidents that it recorded in May–June 2023 occurred in areas that were affected by cyclone.¹⁵⁹

Management and coordination

Risk education is coordinated by the Mine Action Area of Responsibility, led by UNICEF. Risk education operators working in Myanmar liaised directly with local communities in 2022.

Ethnic minority groups living in remote border areas remained difficult to access amid ongoing restrictions on movement, particularly in NSAG-controlled areas. To better reach these groups, international non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have worked with local partners.¹⁶⁰

Risk education operators

During 2022, at the governmental level, the Department of Rehabilitation, within the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement, chaired the Mine Risk Education Working Group and was responsible

153. UN Mine Action Strategy 2019–2023, Inter-Agency Coordination Group on Mine Action Monitoring and Evaluation Mechanism, “Thematic Study on Gender and Diversity Mainstreaming in UN Mine Action – the Cases of Colombia and Myanmar,” undated, p. 10.

154. ICBL-CMC, “Country Profile: Myanmar/Burma: Impact,” updated 16 November 2021.

155. “Landmines, and fear of renewed clashes, keep Lay Kay Kaw residents from returning,” Myanmar Now, 19 December 2022.

156. UNICEF, “Myanmar Country Office: Humanitarian Situation Report No. 3,” 30 April 2023, p. 4.

157. UNOCHA, “Humanitarian Response Plan: Myanmar: End-Year Report 2022,” 11 April 2023.

158. Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD), “Explosive Ordnance Risk Education Advisory Group: Minutes of the EORE AG Meeting,” 8 March 2022.

159. UNICEF, “Myanmar Country Office: Humanitarian Situation Report No. 4,” 30 June 2023.

160. Response to Monitor questionnaire by Geoff Moynan, Programme Manager, HALO Trust Myanmar, 27 April 2020.

for coordinating risk education activities. Risk education was provided in Kayin state by the Ministry of Education.

National risk education operators include the Committee of Internally Displaced Karen People, the Kachin Baptist Convention, Kachin Development Group, the Karen Development Network, the Karenni Social Welfare and Development Center, the Karen Teachers' Working Group, the Local Development Network, the Myanmar Heart Development Organization (MHDO), the Myanmar Red Cross Society, Never End Tomorrow, the Nyein (Shalom) Foundation, the South Shan Youth Capacity Building Center, the Ta'ang Students and Youth Union, and Wunpawng Ninghtoi. It is not known if all of these groups implemented risk education activities in 2022.¹⁶¹

International risk education operators working in Myanmar include DanChurchAid (DCA), the Danish Refugee Council, the HALO Trust, Humanity & Inclusion (HI), the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), Johanniter International Assistance (JOIN), MAG, Norwegian Church Aid (NCA), People in Need, and Relief International.¹⁶²

Beneficiary data

Beneficiary data in 2022¹⁶³

Operator	Men	Boys	Women	Girls	Persons with disabilities
Danish Refugee Council	20,916	33,139	41,707	36,106	29
HI	3,182	318	3,948	345	92
MAG	18,999	25,228	26,406	27,726	N/R

Note: N/R=not reported.

In 2022, MAG reported delivering risk education to 98,359 individual beneficiaries. The Danish Refugee Council reached a total of 131,868 people in Myanmar, while HI reached 7,793 people. In addition, 57,302 beneficiaries received risk education at ICRC-run sessions in Myanmar.¹⁶⁴

According to the UNICEF-led Mine Action Area of Responsibility, in 2022, more than 420,000 people received risk education messages in Myanmar. This represents an increase from 194,530 recipients in 2021 and 106,875 in 2020, despite ongoing operational challenges. This significant increase was primarily due to new delivery methods, including the use of social media platforms to disseminate safety messages and the introduction of a risk education mobile application.¹⁶⁵

Target groups

In 2022, IDPs, returnees, and conflict-affected communities in Myanmar were significant target groups for risk education. IDPs, while often living in camps or host communities, were at risk when returning temporarily to their villages to check on livestock, farmland, and property. They were also at risk when engaging in livelihood activities in contaminated areas near IDP camps.¹⁶⁶

In many cases, locals lacked knowledge of unsafe areas due to an absence of warning signs and the recent nature of contamination.¹⁶⁷ In forested and mountainous areas, people engaging in livelihood activities

161. ICBL-CMC, "Country Profile: Myanmar/Burma: Impact," updated 16 November 2021.

162. Ibid.

163. Responses to Monitor questionnaire by Kyaw Wunna Oo, Humanitarian Mine Action Manager, Danish Refugee Council, 26 June 2023; by Alexandra Letcher, Regional Armed Violence Reduction Specialist, HI, 10 July 2023; and by Camille Marie Regnault, Country Director, Mines Advisory Group (MAG), 15 July 2023.

164. ICRC, "Annual Report 2022," 29 June 2023, p. 298.

165. UNICEF, "Myanmar: Humanitarian Situation Report No. 12," 13 February 2023.

were key target groups.¹⁶⁸ Men were at risk due to hunting and foraging for food in remote areas out of economic necessity. Risk education operators reported that reaching men was particularly challenging, as they were often absent from their villages during working hours.¹⁶⁹ Reaching ethnic minority groups in border regions remained difficult due to restrictions on access, particularly in NSAG-controlled territories.¹⁷⁰

Children were at high risk from mines/ERW in conflict-affected areas, and in areas where IDPs had resettled or returned. In some IDP camps, there were not enough schoolteachers to support risk education provision, with most safety messages provided outside of school.¹⁷¹ Children with disabilities were especially hard to reach due to isolation and lack of appropriate materials.¹⁷²

Delivery methods

Due to the lack of permission for operators to conduct clearance, risk education is delivered as a stand-alone activity in Myanmar, though it has sometimes been integrated with non-technical survey. In areas impacted by ongoing conflict, risk education is delivered through local partner organizations. Risk education staff were required to be fluent in a number of local languages, while dialects and materials also reflect linguistic and cultural differences.¹⁷³

Face-to-face sessions, and the distribution of printed materials, remained the primary means of risk education delivery in Myanmar in 2022.¹⁷⁴ Risk education materials were being developed by HI to be inclusive of children and persons with disabilities, through use of simple language and accessible fonts and colors. Messages were also disseminated via radio broadcasts.¹⁷⁵

HI has trained community risk education volunteers and partner organizations in Myanmar in disability awareness and inclusive livelihoods.¹⁷⁶ ICRC has trained risk education volunteers in NSAG-controlled areas to provide messages in conflict-affected villages and IDP camps.¹⁷⁷

In risk education sessions, villagers are often encouraged by operators to report the presence of suspected mines and ERW to local authorities.¹⁷⁸

Victim assistance

Highlights from 2022

In 2022, ongoing armed conflict in Myanmar increased the burden on healthcare services, while some health facilities were damaged or destroyed.¹⁷⁹ With mine/ERW casualties rising in 2022, capacity to meet the growing needs of survivors for medical care, rehabilitation services, socio-economic support, and psychological assistance remained inadequate, especially in rural areas.

166. Response to Monitor questionnaire by Fabrice Vandeputte, Regional Programme Director, HI, 14 May 2020.

167. Responses to Monitor questionnaire by Bishnu Mahat, Weapon Contamination Coordinator, ICRC Myanmar, 15 May 2020 and 31 August 2021.

168. Ibid.

169. Response to Monitor questionnaire by Kyaw Kyaw Oo, Operations Coordinator, Norwegian People's Aid (NPA) Myanmar, 18 March 2021.

170. Response to Monitor questionnaire by Geoff Moynan, Programme Manager, HALO Trust Myanmar, 27 April 2020.

171. Response to Monitor questionnaire by Fabrice Vandeputte, Regional Programme Director, HI, 14 May 2020.

172. Response to Monitor questionnaire by Michael Horita, Field Coordinator, HI Myanmar, 16 March 2021.

173. Response to Monitor questionnaire by Geoff Moynan, Programme Manager, HALO Trust Myanmar, 27 April 2020.

174. Responses to Monitor questionnaire by Geoff Moynan, Programme Manager, HALO Trust Myanmar, 27 April 2020; by Bekim Shala, Country Programme Manager, MAG, 25 May 2020; by Michael Hortia, Field Coordinator, HI Myanmar, 16 March 2021; and by Bishnu Mahat, Weapon Contamination Coordinator, ICRC Myanmar, 31 August 2021.

175. Response to Monitor questionnaire by Fabrice Vandeputte, Regional Programme Director, HI, 14 May 2020.

176. Response to Monitor questionnaire by Michael Horita, Field Coordinator, HI Myanmar, 16 March 2021.

177. Response to Monitor questionnaire by Bishnu Mahat, Weapon Contamination Coordinator, ICRC Myanmar, 31 August 2021.

178. Response to Monitor questionnaire by Liam Harvey, Head of Programme, Danish Refugee Council Myanmar, 26 August 2021.

Victim assistance providers

Governmental victim assistance operators in Myanmar include the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement, the Ministry of Health and Sports, and the Ministry of Defense.

National and local operators include the Nu Daw Mya Yi Foundation in conjunction with Jaipur Foot India, the Committee for Internally Displaced Karen People, the Karen Health and Welfare Department, the Karenni Health Workers Organization, Karuna Mission for Social Solidarity, and the Myanmar Physically Handicapped Association (MPHA).

International victim assistance operators in Myanmar include the Association for Aid and Relief Japan (AAR-Japan), Exceed Worldwide, HI, the ICRC in partnership with the Myanmar Red Cross Society, Leprosy Mission-Myanmar, World Education, and UNHCR.

Medical care and rehabilitation

Myanmar has few physicians trained in emergency medicine. Rural areas often lack emergency health workers and ambulance services, while healthcare centers in major cities lack adequate emergency response capacity. New legislation and arbitrary restrictions have impeded the work of voluntary aid groups, compromising support for mine/ERW victims in Myanmar.¹⁸⁰

Rehabilitation services are often not available, particularly in rural areas. Physical rehabilitation centers cover only 10% of needs. Most centers are located in larger cities, with travel expenses prohibitive for mine/ERW victims living in rural areas.¹⁸¹ Movement restrictions and the fear of violence have also prevented victims from seeking help in clinics and hospitals.

In 2022, the ICRC supported hospitals and health facilities, including those run by ethnic health organizations in Kachin, Rakhine, and Shan states.¹⁸² Rehabilitation services at ICRC-supported centers were scaled-back amid ongoing conflict and insecurity, although it continued to support five physical rehabilitation centers in 2022. Psychological counseling and mental health support was available at only one ICRC-supported center.¹⁸³

Assistive devices for mine/ERW victims were repaired in 2022 through mobile workshops, and by technicians working with local ICRC partner organizations.¹⁸⁴

HI has continued to provide rehabilitation services including physiotherapy, assistive devices, and mental health and psychosocial support since the 2021 military coup.¹⁸⁵

In 2023, it was reported that persons with disabilities, including mine/ERW survivors, living in IDP camps in Rakhine state lacked employment, food, and adequate healthcare services.¹⁸⁶

Socio-economic and psychosocial inclusion

ICRC provided accessible sports activities for mine/ERW victims in 2022.¹⁸⁷ World Education supported community-based inclusive development initiatives, to help people with disabilities in Myanmar “live independently and participate fully in society.”¹⁸⁸

179. Insecurity Insight and Safeguarding Health in Conflict, “Myanmar: Violence Against Health Care in Conflict: 2022,” 12 July 2023.

180. ‘No remedy’: A broken public health system fosters neglect and corruption,” Frontier Myanmar, 8 August 2023; and “Junta tightens its grip on charities helping the dead and dying,” Frontier Myanmar, 7 January 2023.

181. ICRC, “Physical Rehabilitation Programme: 2018 Annual Report,” 15 June 2020, p. 45.

182. ICRC, “Annual Report 2022,” 29 June 2023, pp. 296–298.

183. Ibid., p. 297.

184. Ibid., p. 300.

185. HI, “Myanmar has fallen in a deep humanitarian crisis,” 31 January 2022.

186. “Disabled people at Arakan State’s IDP camps in need of assistance,” Development Media Group, 23 March 2023.

187. ICRC, “Annual Report 2022,” 29 June 2023, p. 297.

Legal frameworks or policies on disability inclusion

Under the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Law (2015), persons with disabilities in Myanmar are entitled to formal equal rights and access to opportunities.¹⁸⁹ While this legislation prohibits discrimination against persons with disabilities, in practice there is no meaningful enforcement and many persons with disabilities, including mine/ERW victims, still face discrimination.¹⁹⁰

Mine Action Support

In 2022, eight donors contributed US\$5.1 million to Myanmar for mine action activities. This represents a 16% decrease from the total contribution of \$6.1 million provided in 2021.¹⁹¹

International contributions went toward clearance, non-technical survey, risk education, victim assistance, and capacity-building activities, via international non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC).

International contributions: 2022¹⁹²

Donor	Sector	Amount (national currency)	Amount (US\$)
Japan	Victim assistance	Yen 299,584,000	2,278,918
European Union	Survey, EOD	€750,000	790,050
United Kingdom	Risk education	£606,666	750,507
France	Capacity-building, risk education, victim assistance	€500,000	526,700
Switzerland	Advocacy, risk education, victim assistance	CHF 300,000	314,136
Germany	Victim assistance	€225,000	237,015
Norway	Various	NOK 1,676,537	174,389
Sweden	Clearance, survey	SEK 640,000	63,255
Total	-	N/A	5,134,970

Note: EOD=explosive ordnance disposal; N/A=not applicable.

188. World Education, “Annual Report 2022,” 18 April 2023, p. 5.

189. “People with disabilities call for more legal protections, employment opportunities,” Development Media Group, 3 December 2022.

190. United States (US) Department of State, Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, “2022 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices: Burma,” February 2023, p. 36.

191. Responses to Monitor questionnaire by Michal Adamowicz, Policy Officer, Conventional Arms Export Control, Disarmament, Non-Proliferation and Arms Export Control, European External Action Service (EEAS), 28 September 2023; by Yves Marek, Ambassador for Mine Clearance, France Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs, 21 September 2023; by Catarina Fabiansson, Senior Programme Manager, Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA), 29 August 2023; and by Akifumi Fukuoka, Deputy Director, Conventional Arms Division, Japan Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 7 September 2023; Germany Mine Ban Treaty Article 7 Report (for calendar year 2022), Form J; Norway Mine Ban Treaty Article 7 Report (for calendar year 2022), pp. 3–4; United Kingdom (UK) Mine Ban Treaty Article 7 Report (for calendar year 2022), Form J; and Switzerland Convention on Cluster Munitions Article 7 Report (for calendar year 2022), Form I. See, Mine Ban Treaty Article 7 Database; and Convention on Cluster Munitions Article 7 Database.

192. Average exchange rates for 2022: €1=US\$1.0534; NOK9.6138=US\$1; £1=US\$1.2371; SEK10.1177=US\$1; Yen 131.4589=US\$1; and CHF0.9550=US\$1. United States (US) Federal Reserve, “List of Exchange Rates (Annual),” 9 January 2023.

Five-year support for mine action

Since 2018, international mine action assistance to Myanmar has totaled more than \$24.5 million, representing an average of \$4.9 million per year.

Summary of international contributions: 2018–2022¹⁹³

Year	International contributions (US\$)
2022	5,134,970
2021	6,100,000
2020	4,118,868
2019	6,275,838
2018	2,872,606
Total	24,502,281

193. See previous Support for Mine Action country profiles. ICBL-CMC, “Country Profiles: Myanmar,” undated; and ICBL, Landmine Monitor 2022 (ICBL-CMC: Geneva, November 2022).