



**Landmine Monitor
Myanmar/Burma Country Report
December 2022**

LANDMINE & CLUSTER MUNITION MONITOR

2022 Landmine Monitor
Myanmar/Burma Country Report

Landmine & Cluster Munition Monitor provides research for the International Campaign to Ban Landmines. The International Campaign to Ban Landmines (ICBL) formed in 1992 to rid the world of the scourge of the anti-personnel landmine. The ICBL is a network of over 1,300 non-governmental organizations in 70 countries, and received the Nobel Peace Award in 1997.

Landmine Monitor documents the implementation of the 1997 Ottawa Convention, or the Mine Ban Treaty. Landmine Monitor assesses the efforts of the international community to resolve the crisis caused by these weapons.

As of 1 November 2022, 164 countries, over 80% of the world's governments, have ratified, or acceded to, the Mine Ban Treaty, however, despite being highly affected by antipersonnel landmine contamination, Myanmar/Burma has not yet joined the convention.

Landmine Monitor is not a technical treaty verification system or a formal inspection regime. It is an effort by ordinary people to hold governments accountable to non-use of antipersonnel landmines. It complements the reporting requirements of countries which have ratified the treaty. Our report seeks to make transparent the state of the landmine crisis, and government policies or practices, in non-signatory states.

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

Landmine 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 Monitor Myanmar/Burma researcher for 2022 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 danger sign in Nam San Yang village, Waingmaw township, Kachin State. Kachin News Group (used with permission)

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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 who had been elected in November 2020 formed an oppositional National Unity Government (NUG) from exile.³ Myanmar did not take any steps during 2021 or the first half of 2022 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 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, it 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 army-led government, the State Administration Council (SAC), attended the Nineteenth Meeting of States Parties held virtually in November 2021, and the intersessional meetings held in Geneva in June 2022.

The NUG continues to hold Myanmar’s seat at the United Nations (UN) in New York. In December 2021, Myanmar abstained from voting on United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) Resolution 76/26, which promoted the universalization of the Mine Ban Treaty. Myanmar has abstained from voting on the annual UNGA resolution supporting the treaty since 1997.⁸

In December 2021, Mine-Free Myanmar held a press conference in Bangkok to launch Landmine Monitor 2021.⁹ For the first time since 2010, a military censorship decree prevented the campaign from publishing

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 Myanmar Armed Forces refer to themselves as the Tatmadaw.
3. 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.
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, United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) First Committee, 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/rev.1, 73rd Session, UNGA First Committee, Audio Record of 31st Meeting (at 19 mins.), New York, 8 November 2018. See also, Myanmar Explanation of Vote on Resolution L.40, 72nd Session, 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.
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 76/26, 6 December 2021. In 1996, Myanmar voted in favor of a UNGA resolution calling on governments to pursue an international agreement banning antipersonnel landmines, but abstained once the Mine Ban Treaty opened for signature in 1997.
9. The Mine-Free Myanmar initiative was initially known as “Halt Mine Use in Burma/Myanmar.” See, Mine-Free Myanmar website.

within the country the Monitor's annual country report on Myanmar.¹⁰ During 2021, the UN's Myanmar Information Management Unit (MIMU) produced an updated map of the country's mine-affected areas and infographics showing the impact of landmines.¹¹

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 MM6.¹²

Non-state armed groups (NSAGs) in Myanmar often publish photographs showing antipersonnel landmines produced by the state and held by frontline Myanmar Armed Forces units for use. For example, 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 military base in Kayin state.¹³ 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 eastern Muse township.¹⁴ In November 2019, a NSAG in northern Shan state published photographs showing MM2 antipersonnel mines made by Myanmar Defense Products Industries with markings indicating that the mines were manufactured in 2018.¹⁵

Myanmar is not known to have exported antipersonnel landmines.¹⁶ 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).¹⁷

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

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

Various NSAGs in Myanmar have produced improvised blast and fragmentation antipersonnel mines, including the Kachin Independence Army (KIA), the KNLA, and the Democratic Karen Benevolent Army (DKBA). Victim-activated explosive devices are comprehensively 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 and anti-vehicle mines equipped with antihandling devices.

10. From 2010, when previous censorship laws were repealed, until 2020, the Monitor's annual country profile on Myanmar/Burma was printed and distributed, in the Burmese language, in the country every year. The 2021 profile in Burmese is available online.

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.

12. 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 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.

13. Mine-Free Myanmar, "Antipersonnel landmines found at Tatmadaw frontline military outpost," 9 May 2021.

14. "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.

15. 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.

16. 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 [HRW], August 2000), p. 469.

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.

NSAGs in Myanmar continued to produce improvised antipersonnel mines in 2021–2022.¹⁸ These groups have also acquired landmines by removing them from mined areas and obtaining them on the clandestine arms market.¹⁹

In 2022, NSAGs also seized or captured antipersonnel mines from the Myanmar Armed Forces. The Monitor has seen photographs of mines captured in 2022 by the Arakan Army, the KIA, the Karenni Army, the KNLA, the Karenni Nationalities Defense Force (KNDF), and several People's Defense Force (PDF) groups in Shan, Kayin, and Kayah states, and in the Sagaing and Tanintharyi regions.²⁰

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 Myanmar Armed Forces

Myanmar's Armed Forces have extensively used antipersonnel mines since the military coup in February 2021. This activity marks a significant increase in new use, including use around infrastructure such as mobile phone towers, extractive enterprises, and energy pipelines.

Photographs reviewed by the Monitor indicate that antipersonnel landmines manufactured by Myanmar were captured from the Myanmar Armed Forces by NSAGs every month from January to September 2022, in virtually every part of the country. In August 2022, antipersonnel mines manufactured by and in the possession of the Myanmar Army were captured in both the northwest and southwest of the country, indicating extensive mine use by the armed forces.²¹

An investigation by Amnesty International documented civilian casualties from MM2 and MM6 antipersonnel landmines laid by the Myanmar Armed Forces in the townships of Demoso, Hpruso, and Loikaw, in Kayah state, between February and June 2022.²²

Examples of specific reports and allegations of new antipersonnel landmine use by the Myanmar Armed Forces since February 2021 are detailed below.

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.²³

18. Photographs in June 2022 showed improvised antipersonnel landmines, among other weapons, reportedly made by the Launglon People's Defense Force (LLPDF) in the Tanintharyi region. See, "Junta troops raid Launglon PDF camp," Burma News International (BNI)/Mizzima, 6 July 2022.

19. 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.

20. The Monitor found from January–September 2022, in a non-exhaustive survey of media photographs, over 25 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 Ethnic Armed Organizations (EAOs) or NUG-affiliated PDFs in those areas after overrunning Myanmar Armed Forces outposts, or after capturing or ambushing a military patrol.

21. On 31 August, the Arakan Army displayed captured MM2 and MM5 antipersonnel landmines, 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, KIA rebels and PDF fighters captured 11 MM6 antipersonnel mines from captured Myanmar Armed Forces soldiers in Pinlaebu township, Sagaing region, according to the BBC Burmese Facebook post. On 15 August, the Arakan Army captured seven MM6 (M14) antipersonnel landmines, among other weapons from captured Myanmar Armed Forces soldiers in Paletwa township, Chin state. On 25 August, the Kantbalu PDF captured five MM6 (M14) antipersonnel landmines among other weapons from captured Myanmar Armed Forces soldiers in Kantbalu township, Sagaing region. See, Lungekhit News Facebook post.

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

23. The Moby PDF warned returning local people they should avoid the grounds of the church as it had been mined. "Junta weapons seized from Catholic church in Shan State's Moby Township," Mizzima, 15 September 2022.

In August 2022, a local militia discovered MM6 antipersonnel landmines laid around the perimeter of Letpadaung Copper Mine in Salingyi township, Sagaing region. The copper mine is a joint venture by the Myanmar military's Myanmar Economic Holdings Ltd. and China's state-owned Norinco Industries.²⁴

In July 2022:

- Two civilians returning after fleeing their village in Kawlin township, Sagaing region, were injured by a landmine allegedly emplaced by the Myanmar Armed Forces.²⁵
- There were multiple incidents of people being injured by landmines near the perimeter of Myanmar Armed Forces camps in Mrauk-U township, Rakhine state.²⁶
- Two Myanmar Armed Forces soldiers accompanied a villager to recover the body of his son, who had stepped on a mine in Zu Kaing village, in Ann township, Rakhine state. They removed two mines on the way which they said had been laid by a unit of the Myanmar Armed Forces.²⁷
- The Myanmar Armed Forces allegedly closed a ferry service in Kyaukkyi township, Bago region, and laid mines around it to prevent KNLA fighters from using it.²⁸

In June 2022, three mines were found in a church compound in Daw Nye Ku, in Demoso township, Kayah state that Myanmar Armed Forces had left earlier that day, while a fourth mine injured a boy.²⁹ Landmine use attributed to the Myanmar Armed Forces the previous month in Kayah state caused casualties among KNDF fighters.³⁰

In May 2022, in Puangde township, Bago Region, the Myanmar Armed Forces allegedly laid mines at a Buddhist monastery that they had occupied.³¹

In April 2022:

- A police officer who had defected to PDF resistance groups stated that the Myanmar Army had ordered the laying directional and other antipersonnel mines at police posts.³²
- A mine allegedly laid by the Myanmar Armed Forces at the base of a mobile phone tower in Mahlaing township, Mandalay region, injured a civilian.³³

24. 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 to North Yamar PDF." 19 August 2022, 09:09 UTC. Tweet.

25. Aung Aung, "Villagers stepped on Junta's planted landmines in Sagaing," Tha Din News and Radio, 1 August 2022.

26. Aung Aung, "Mine exploded near junta's station in Mrauk U, 4 children injured, 2 in critical condition," Tha Din News and Radio, 18 July 2022.

27. The man's 14-year-old son had been killed the day before and he wished to retrieve the body. After removing two mines, which the soldiers said had been laid by the 66th Division of the Myanmar Armed Forces, they prevented the man from traveling further. See, "Six killed, 11 injured by landmines amid renewed tensions in Myanmar's Rakhine state," Radio Free Asia, 12 July 2022.

28. "Locals worry about junta's landmines in Kyaukgyi," Than Lwin Times, 27 July 2022. On different dates, one child was killed, and another person injured by these landmines.

29. Monitor interview with David Eubank, Founder, Free Burma Rangers, 15 July 2022. According to Eubank, when the Myanmar Armed Forces left an area after armed conflict with the KNDF, the Free Burma Rangers discovered three mines in the compound of a church, and another four mines, including one that a 16-year-old boy had stepped on. He noted that bags or baskets left by departing soldiers each had between one and six landmines in them. These mines were reported to still be in their factory packaging.

30. David Boi, "Two KNDF comrades had their legs amputated because of the junta's landmines," Tha Din News and Radio, 23 May 2022; Aung Aung, "A comrade from KNDF B-10 killed after stepping on a mine," Tha Din News and Radio, 15 May 2022; and Aung Aung, "One comrade stepped on mine during clearance operation, lost both legs," Tha Din News and Radio, 24 April 2022.

31. Allegation made by Paungde PDF who said they had found the mines after the Myanmar Armed Forces departed. Aung Aung, "The junta soldiers stationed at the monastery planted mines after they retreated," Tha Din News and Radio, 10 May 2022.

32. The officer stated that the military council ordered the installation of landmines at police station entrances and exits to prevent PDFs from easily raiding them. "Claymore and anti-personal mines planted at police stations," Than Lwin Times, 23 April 2022.

33. The Myanmar Armed Forces were reported to be fencing and mining the base of mobile phone towers. See, Aung Aung, "15-year-old girl's leg amputated due to a mine planted by Junta troops in Mahlaing," Tha Din News and Radio, 3 May 2022.

- Civilians were injured by landmines upon returning to their village in Loikaw township, Kayah state after the departure of Myanmar Armed Forces troops.³⁴

In March 2022:

- Civilians in Mhan Taw village, Khin U township, Sagaing region, reported that the Myanmar Armed Forces had left mines around the bodies of people killed during a raid.³⁵
- Locals alleged that the Myanmar Armed Forces had emplaced landmines at a checkpoint at the entrance to a bridge in Dawei township, Tanintharyi region.³⁶

In February 2022:

- A civilian returning to Kinsanpya village, Kani township, Sagaing region was killed by a mine allegedly laid by the Myanmar Armed Forces during a raid.³⁷
- A youth was injured by a mine laid by Myanmar Armed Forces Infantry Brigade 284 in Kyat Ka Chaung village tract, in Kyainseikgyi township, Kayin state.³⁸

In January 2022, a man was severely injured after stepping on a landmine near Nang Khing village, in Demoso township, Kayah State. KNDF alleged that the Myanmar Armed Forces had laid the mine, as well as other mines in the area which had claimed ten victims.³⁹

In December 2021, two villagers were injured by a mine when they returned home after their village in Mingin township, Sagaing region was occupied by the military.⁴⁰

In November 2021:

- Local media reported that the Myanmar Armed Forces had laid antipersonnel mines near the base of mobile phone towers in at least 48 townships across the country, causing casualties among mobile phone company engineers.⁴¹
- Residents of Hsipaw township, Shan state, were warned of mines being laid by the Myanmar Armed Forces around a pumping station for an energy pipeline.⁴²

In September 2021:

- A civilian was killed and two were injured in Kayah state after they returned to a village following a raid by the Myanmar Armed Forces. A local militia group said it had found 30 landmines left by the military.⁴³
- An employee from a military-owned telecommunications company was seriously injured after stepping on a mine placed outside a cell phone tower near Nant Hwe village, Muse township. It was alleged that the Myanmar Armed Forces had mined the bases of mobile phone towers in response to attacks by local

34. Karenni Human Rights Group (KHRG), "Quarterly Briefing," Vol. 1, Issue 2, 13 July 2022, p. 3. The KHRG alleges that the casualties were the result of antipersonnel mines recently laid by the Myanmar Armed Forces.

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.

36. David Boi, "The Junta's forces planted landmines in front of Ka Myaw Kin Bridge in Dawei," Tha Din News and Radio, 2 April 2022.

37. David Boi, "A junta's mine exploded in Kani Township, killing one civilian," Tha Din News and Radio, 6 February 2022.

38. KHRG, "KHRG Submission to Landmine Monitor," September 2022. The Myanmar Armed Forces had issued verbal warnings to villagers not to enter the area, but the youth had just come to the area as his school elsewhere had been closed. It is uncertain when this minefield was first laid.

39. "Near Nang Khing Village citizen loses leg after stepping on a mine," Kantarawaddy Times, 16 January 2022.

40. "Myanmar Civilian Forces Claim Dozens of Junta Troops Killed in Mine Attacks, Ambushes," The Irrawaddy, 15 December 2021.

41. New antipersonnel mines were laid near mobile phone towers across 48 townships in Chin, Kayin, Mon, and Shan states, and in the Ayawaddy, Bago, Magway, Mandalay, Sagaing, Tanintharyi, and Yangon regions. Some of these areas, such as Ayawaddy and Yangon, had never previously been found to have antipersonnel mine contamination. See, "Telecoms tower sites mined by Myanmar military," Myanmar Now, 5 November 2021.

42. "Villagers' security threatened by Burma Army landmines along Chinese pipelines in Hsipaw, northern Shan State," Shan Human Rights Foundation, 18 January 2022.

43. "Myanmar Junta Accused of Targeting Civilians with Landmines," The Irrawaddy, 29 September 2021.

militia groups.⁴⁴

In August 2021:

- A farmer was injured by a landmine outside a Myanmar Armed Forces base in Usoungtaung village, Kyauktaw township, Rakhine state. According to locals, the area was commonly used by farmers and there had been no previous mine incidents.⁴⁵
- A child tending cows was killed by a mine laid near the perimeter of a Myanmar Armed Forces base in Myi Tung Mare village, Bhamo township, Kachin state.⁴⁶

During 2021, residents of Ruktha village, in Kyauktaw township, Rakhine state were given warnings by the Myanmar Armed Forces not to come near their base as it was mined.⁴⁷

It is often difficult to assign responsibility for specific incidents in Myanmar to either the Myanmar Armed Forces, or a particular NSAG. Yet villagers often report landmine casualties in areas where armed conflict had recently occurred.

On 29–30 April 2022, armed conflict between a Border Guard Force and the KNLA left at least one landmine, which injured a person the following week.⁴⁸

In March 2022, three children were killed after playing with a landmine they found in Hko Kham village, in Lashio township, Shan state. It was allegedly left during conflict between the Myanmar Armed Forces and NSAGs affiliated to the Northern Alliance.⁴⁹

In February 2022, in Minbya township, Rakhine state, a man was killed by a landmine at the site of recent clashes between the Myanmar Armed Forces and the Arakan Army.⁵⁰

In January 2022:

- A villager was killed by a mine in Li Hseng village, Mongkaing township, Shan state, which was blamed on recent fighting between two local NSAGs, the Shan State Progress Party (SSPP) and the Restoration Council of Shan State (RCSS).⁵¹
- A villager was killed by a mine that had been recently laid near a mobile phone tower in Pauk Pin village, in Monywa township, Sagaing region.⁵²

Prior to January 2022, the KNLA and the Myanmar Armed Forces had warned villagers in Meh Klaw village tract, Hpapun township, Kayin state, of landmines in the area which had caused the death of one villager.⁵³

In August 2021, the Shan State Army-South (SSA-S) under the RCSS, and the Myanmar Armed Forces engaged in armed conflict in Shan state with three members of the Northern Alliance: the Arakan Army, MNDAA, and the Ta'ang National Liberation Army (TNLA). New civilian landmine casualties were re-

44. "A staff who came to fix Mytel phone tower at Muse Township lost his feet after stepping on a landmine," Eleven Myanmar, 29 September 2021; and "Security forces today laid mines by a Mytel tower in Mogok, Mandalay Region, according to local residents who had been ordered by the military troops involved to evacuate their homes," Democratic Voice of Burma, 15 September 2021.

45. "In Kyauktaw, a villager stepped on a landmine and lost one of his legs," Myanmar Now, 18 August 2021.

46. "A teenager was killed when he stepped on a landmine planted by the military council," BNI, 9 August 2021.

47. The date the mines were placed is unclear, yet the villagers lost livestock to the mines in early 2022 and still could not access the adjacent cemetery as of May 2022. See, Myint Zaw, "A 75-year-old woman was killed when she stepped on a landmine in Kyauk Taw Township," Tha Din News and Radio, 3 June 2022.

48. David Boi, "A citizen accidentally stepped on a landmine," Tha Din News and Radio, 6 May 2022.

49. "Landmine Kills Children In Northern Shan State Village," Shan Herald Agency for News, 8 March 2022.

50. "Minbya Twsp man found dead three days after landmine blast," BNI, 11 February 2022.

51. "Landmine Victim Left To Rot In Mong Kung Township," Shan Herald Agency for News, 10 January 2022.

52. The Myanmar Armed Forces began laying mines around mobile phone towers after November 2021. See, David Boi, "A farmer dies after stepping on a landmine in Monywa," Tha Din News and Radio, 14 January 2022.

53. KHRG, "KHRG Submission to Landmine Monitor," September 2022. Although both parties had issued verbal warnings, it is unclear which actor laid the mines in the area. The villagers stated that there was no marking to make known precisely which areas were dangerous. Other villagers interviewed said the mines were laid by the KNLA.

ported near the conflict areas after this fighting.⁵⁴

In July 2021, a child was injured by a landmine in Ponnagyun township, Rakhine state, in an area where the Myanmar Armed Forces and the Arakan Army had recently clashed.⁵⁵

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.⁵⁶ There were several examples of this heinous practice during the second half of 2021.

In November 2021, Myanmar Army soldiers reportedly arrested a 16-year-old Chin boy and two adults, and forced them to walk in front of soldiers to detect landmines.⁵⁷

In September 2021:

- Two farmers were reportedly forced to walk in front of a Myanmar Army column in Pekon, Shan state, in an area is known to be contaminated by mines.⁵⁸
- Myanmar Armed Forces soldiers seized a woman in Paing Kalan Done village tract, in Kawkareik township, Kayin state, and forced her to walk in front of them as they entered KNLA territory.⁵⁹

In August 2021, Myanmar Armed Forces Light Infantry Battalions 341 and 410, from Ler Toh camp in Hkaw Poo village tract, in Hpapun township, Kayin State, seized three women and forced them to carry materials and equipment, using them as human shields.⁶⁰

In May 2021, the Mindat People’s Administrative Council told the UN Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights in Myanmar that “The military...arrested ten Mindat youth and they forced them to walk in front of them as a human shield...the ten were walking ahead with the soldiers behind them.”⁶¹ The area, in Mindat township, Chin state, was previously documented by the Monitor as being contaminated by landmines.

54. For example, in August 2021, two internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Kyaukme township stepped on a mine after leaving an IDP camp to forage for food. RCSS, TNLA, and SSPP forces had all previously fought in the area. See, “IDPs Wounded By Landmine In Kyaukme Township,” BNI, 18 August 2021.

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

56. 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, Tenth 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.

57. Human Rights Council, “Losing a generation: how the military junta is devastating Myanmar’s children and undermining Myanmar’s future: Conference room paper of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Myanmar,” A/HRC/50/CRP.1, 14 June 2022, p. 18, para. 63.

58. “Burma Army Uses Farmers as Human Shields In Pekon Township,” Shan Herald Agency for News, 7 September 2021. “The soldiers used the farming couple as human shields. People try to flee their villages as soon as the soldiers arrive, because this kind of thing is common in our area,” a villager told the news agency.

59. Karen Women’s Organization (KWO) and KHRG press release, “The Karen Women’s Organization and the Karen Human Rights Group Condemn the Burmese Junta’s Use of Women as Human Shields,” 3 September 2021.

60. Ibid. The women were forced to march until they reached Kyaw Hta Loh river, where they were released after sustaining injuries.

61. Human Rights Council, “Losing a generation: how the military junta is devastating Myanmar’s children and undermining Myanmar’s future: Conference room paper of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Myanmar,” A/HRC/50/CRP.1, 14 June 2022, p. 18, para. 63.

Bangladesh border

New mine casualties continued to occur on Myanmar's border with Bangladesh in 2022.⁶² In 2017, the Monitor published evidence of Myanmar government forces using antipersonnel mines along the border.⁶³ A 2018 report by the Human Rights Council said there was "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."⁶⁴

Bangladesh condemned this landmine use and urged Myanmar to "impose [a] moratorium on the use, production and transfer of anti-personnel mines."⁶⁵ In February 2021, two workers hired to repair the border fence between Bangladesh and Myanmar were injured by landmines.⁶⁶

The Myanmar government denied using mines on the border with Bangladesh in a November 2018 statement, describing the evidence as "without merit."⁶⁷ Myanmar again denied its involvement in mine use on the Bangladesh border in October 2020.⁶⁸

Use by non-state armed groups

With at least 20 NSAGs fighting in Myanmar, it can be difficult to assign responsibility for use to a specific NSAG, but many have used landmines since the Monitor started reporting in 1999.

Since the military coup in February 2021, several local militia groups have been established, some of which identify as PDFs. PDF groups often declare allegiance to the NUG. Local media often report the use of "landmines" by such groups. Most of these are command-detonated roadside bombs, yet some are victim-activated landmines.⁶⁹ Pro-military militias, such as Pyusawhti, also operate in parts of the country. The Monitor has reviewed the following incidents attributed to NSAGs since July 2021.

In August 2022:

- The PDF in Tabayin township, Sagaing region, stated that landmines laid around its camp had caused several Myanmar Armed Forces casualties.⁷⁰

62. "Bangladeshi injured in mine blast along Myanmar border," New Age, 17 September 2022.

63. According to the Monitor, 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 government 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 non-governmental organization (NGO) researchers, who asked to remain anonymous, 17 September 2017.

64. 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.

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

66. Kyaw Myo Aung, "Workers at border fence repair site in Maungdaw severely injured in landmine encounter," Development Media Group (DMG), 23 February 2021.

67. 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."

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

69. 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.

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

- In Hpakant township, Kachin State, the KIA allegedly laid mines which caused two Myanmar Armed Forces casualties.⁷¹

In June 2022:

- The Phaung Pyin PDF stated that it had laid landmines which caused several Myanmar Armed Forces casualties in Paungbyin township, Sagaing region.⁷²
- An anti-military militia said that a Myanmar Armed Forces soldier they had captured was killed by mines laid around the group's camp in Bago region as he attempted to escape.⁷³
- The Jahtu Zup People's Militia Force in Hpakant township, Kachin State, allegedly laid mines to block access to a gold mine.⁷⁴
- Landmines laid around a Yaw PDF camp in Gangaw township, in Magway region, reportedly caused several Myanmar Armed Forces casualties during a raid.⁷⁵

In May 2022, landmines laid on a path by a PDF reportedly caused casualties to a Myanmar Armed Forces patrol in Mingin township, Sagaing region.⁷⁶

In March 2022, mines laid by the KNLA killed one person and injured another in Meh Klaw village tract, in Hpapun township, Kayin state.⁷⁷

In January 2022:

- A villager was killed by a mine planted by the KNLA in Kyaukkyi, Bago region.⁷⁸
- Armed conflict between the RCSS, SSPP, and members of the Northern Alliance in Kyaukme township, Shan state, allegedly involved the laying of mines which caused civilian injuries in February–March 2022.⁷⁹

In December 2021, locals blamed the Border Guard Force for laying a mine which caused civilian injuries near Kyaw Kayt Kee village, in Hpaan township, Kayin state.⁸⁰

In August 2021, a PDF group claimed that its use of landmines in Pekon township, Shan state had caused several Myanmar Armed Forces casualties.⁸¹

In July 2021:

- Villagers claimed the TNLA was responsible for laying mines in Lwe Kwe village tract, in Namhsan township, Shan state which denied access to agricultural lands.⁸²
- A mine reportedly laid by KNLA Battalion 102 killed one person in Hpapun township, Kayin state.⁸³
- A combined Katha PDF and KIA force claimed that its use of landmines had caused Myanmar Armed Forces casualties.⁸⁴

71. "KIA Landmine Injuries Burma Army In Hpakant," BNI/Kachin News Group, 16 August 2022.

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.

73. Aung Aung, "Landmine killed a junta soldier who ran away," Tha Din News and Radio, 12 June 2022.

74. "Landmines Injures Civilians Near Hpakant Goldmine," BNI/Kachin News Group, 29 June 2022. The Jahtu Zup People's Militia Force are a pro-military militia.

75. Kyaw Thu, "8 junta troops who invaded Yaw PDF camp killed by mine blasts; 1 Phyu Saw Htee killed by mines in Pauk Township," Tha Din News and Radio, 8 June 2022.

76. Myint Zaw, "Mines cut off 4 junta soldiers' legs near Taegy Village, MinKin Township," Tha Din News and Radio, 25 May 2022.

77. KHRG, "KHRG Submission to Landmine Monitor," September 2022. It is uncertain when the KNLA laid these landmines.

78. KHRG, "KHRG Submission to Landmine Monitor," September 2022. Villagers stated that the mine was laid by Karen National Union (KNU) fighters, but did not indicate when.

79. "Father Of Six Injured By Landmine In Northern Shan State," Shan Herald Agency for News, 18 March 2022.

80. David Boi, "Villager injured in landmine explosion in Hpa An Township," Tha Din News and Radio, 11 December 2021.

81. "Myanmar Resistance Landmines Kill Junta Troops After Attack on Power Line," The Irrawaddy, 18 August 2021.

82. "Two buffaloes from Lwe Khet village were trampled on by landmine and one died," Shwe Phee Myay News Agency, 18 July 2021.

83. KHRG, "KHRG Submission to Landmine Monitor," August 2021. KHRG researchers were told that no warning by the KNLA was issued. Nearby, another landmine caused minor injuries to two other people on the same day.

84. "People's Defence Force in Sagaing says it killed 180 junta troops with help of Kachin Independence Army," Myanmar Now, 12 July 2021.

The use of antivehicle landmines by groups opposed to the military also caused civilian casualties in 2021.⁸⁵

The SAC claims to have recovered a variety of improvised mines during operations against armed groups opposed to the military coup.⁸⁶

There were several incidents between May and 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.⁸⁷

Previously, in 2011, Myanmar's government announced its intent to conclude peace agreements with NSAGs. 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.

In past years, some NSAGs and former 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).⁸⁸ The Palaung State Liberation Front (PSLF) signed it in 2007 and its armed wing, the TNLA, has previously promised to refrain from mine use.⁸⁹ In June 2017, the TNLA denied allegations of new use and affirmed that it had not used landmines since signing the Deed of Commitment.⁹⁰ In July 2022, the Arakan Army stated that it used solely command-detonated landmines, but gave no indication as to the status of large numbers of antipersonnel mines that it has captured from the Myanmar Armed Forces.⁹¹

Responses to new landmine use

Previously, various Myanmar government officials have admitted or denied that government forces use antipersonnel landmines.⁹²

In June 2022, an officer of the Myanmar Armed Forces told the Monitor that Myanmar does not lay antipersonnel mines.⁹³ In October 2020, Myanmar denied reports that the Myanmar Armed Forces had laid mines on the border with Bangladesh.⁹⁴

85. "Mines exploded on the Monywa - Naunggyi Ai - Shwebo road and 2 cars were damaged and there were injuries," Voice of Myanmar News, 30 November 2021; "Rescue vehicle runs over mines, hurting crew member," BNI/Than Lwin Times, 12 September 2022; and David Boi, "POV overtook junta convoy, blasted by landmine, 6 killed," Tha Din News and Radio, 10 April 2022.

86. "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.

87. 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.

88. In the past, a few armed groups and former armed groups operating 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 July 2006. The Arakan Rohingya National Organization (ARNO) and the National United Party of Arakan (NUPA), both now militarily defunct, renounced use in October 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 April 2007. In June 2010, Geneva Call noted that the LDF and the PPLA had disbanded.

89. 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.

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

91. "Military-planted landmines causing civilian casualties in Arakan State: AA spokesman," DMG, 11 July 2022.

92. For example, in 2018, Myanmar stated that "the Myanmar Armed Forces is no longer using the landmines while safeguarding the life and property of its people in internal conflicts." Statement of Myanmar, Mine Ban Treaty Sixteenth Meeting of States Parties, Vienna, 21 December 2017.

93. The officer requested anonymity as he had no permission to speak on the issue.

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

In July 2019, an official at the Union Minister Office for Defence told the Monitor that landmines were still used by the Myanmar Armed Forces in border areas and around infrastructure.⁹⁵ In September 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.⁹⁶

NSAGs active in Myanmar often blame government forces, or each other, for using antipersonnel mines.⁹⁷ In July 2022, Amnesty International condemned antipersonnel mine use by the Myanmar Armed Forces as a war crime, and documented use occurring in early 2022 in Karenni (Kayah) state.⁹⁸

In June 2022, the UN Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights in Myanmar documented casualties due to antipersonnel mines, focusing in particular on the impact on children and recommending that a future civilian government accede to the Mine Ban Treaty.⁹⁹

In November 2021, at the Nineteenth Meeting of States Parties to the Mine Ban Treaty, the ICBL condemned new use of antipersonnel mines in Myanmar, and called on all governments to strongly condemn this use.¹⁰⁰

Impact

Summary

Mined areas are located adjacent to the borders with Bangladesh, China, India, and Thailand. New mines continue to be laid by both the Myanmar Armed Forces and NSAGs. The full extent of contamination in Myanmar is unknown but it includes improvised mines, and mines produced in state-owned factories. Contamination impedes the return of refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs). A trend of increasing mine casualties in recent years has been reported.

In December 2021, the Mine Action Area of Responsibility (MA AoR) was activated to support coordination of the mine action sector. The military has undertaken some mine clearance, but operations are not systematic or recorded. Humanitarian mine action operators began arriving in Myanmar from 2012, but are not permitted to clear mines. In January 2020, the mine action sector gained permission to deploy technical teams to commence marking and fencing in accordance with the International Mine Action Standards (IMAS), but progress has stalled due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the military coup.¹⁰¹

Myanmar has seen a decrease in the number of operators undertaking humanitarian mine action projects. In August 2019, a total of 16 organizations reported 21 mine action projects across 85 townships. As of August 2022, this had decreased to nine organizations, although activities were reported across 100 townships.¹⁰² International staff have not been able to enter Myanmar since the coup due to visa constraints, while demining organizations have been unable to seek registration.

95. 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.

96. "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 were placed where landmines were planted and soldiers were not present.

97. For example, see Lawi Weng, "3 Civilians Reportedly Killed by Landmines in Shan State in June," The Irrawaddy, 4 July 2018.

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

99. Human Rights Council, "Losing a generation: how the military junta is devastating Myanmar's children and undermining Myanmar's future: Conference room paper of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Myanmar," A/HRC/50/CRP.1, 14 June 2022.

100. ICBL, Statement on Universalization, Mine Ban Treaty Nineteenth Meeting of States Parties, 15 November 2021.

101. Responses to Monitor questionnaire by Bekim Shala, Country Programme Manager, Mines Advisory Group (MAG) Myanmar, 25 May 2020; and by Michael Horita, Field Coordinator, Humanity & Inclusion (HI) Myanmar, 16 March 2021.

102. The organizations included the Myanmar Red Cross, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), six international organizations, and one national organization. See, Myanmar Information Management Unit (MIMU), "MIMU 5W Overview," updated 26 August 2022.

From 2014 to 2020, victim assistance services in Myanmar improved significantly, including the provision of prosthetics via mobile services. Local availability of community-based rehabilitation and vocational training also increased. Yet services remained scarce, particularly for people living in remote and rural areas. Since the coup, severe gaps were reported in victim assistance provision.¹⁰³

Impact

Contamination

Myanmar is contaminated with landmines—including improvised mines—and explosive remnants of war (ERW), as a legacy of decades of internal armed conflict between the Myanmar Armed Forces and NSAGs. Myanmar is not known to be contaminated with cluster munition remnants. Since the military coup in February 2021, fighting between ethnic armed organizations (EAOs), People’s Defense Forces (PDFs), other NSAGs, and the Myanmar Armed Forces has led to new contamination.¹⁰⁴

Landmine contamination

No formal estimate exists of the extent of mine contamination in Myanmar. In 2021, around 97 of Myanmar’s 325 townships, across 12 states and regions, were believed to suffer from some degree of contamination, primarily from antipersonnel mines.¹⁰⁵ Yet because of ongoing conflict since the coup, new areas are becoming contaminated with mines/ERW. In 2022, there was evidence that at least 147 townships are contaminated.

As of September 2022, landmine contamination was reported in the states of Chin, Kachin, Kayah, Kayin, Mon, Rakhine, and Shan;¹⁰⁶ and in the administrative regions of Ayawaddy, Bago, Magway, Mandalay, Sagaing, Tanintharyi, and Yangon.¹⁰⁷ The regions of Ayawaddy, Mandalay, and Yangon were not previously known to have contamination.

Kachin and Shan states are considered heavily contaminated. The Bago region is also among those with the heaviest mine contamination.¹⁰⁸

In 2021, new landmines were laid in Myanmar by the military and EAOs. Mines laid were reported to include MM-1, MM-2, MM-5, and MM-6, and improvised mines with pressure-plate or tripwire mechanisms. The military laid mines near its bases, and some contamination remains in areas that it has abandoned or retreated from.¹⁰⁹

103. HI, “Living in times of coup, conflicts, and COVID-19 in Myanmar: Impact on persons with disabilities, Case Study,” July 2021; and US Department of State, Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, “2021 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices: Burma,” 12 April 2022, p. 37.

104. Since the coup, several local militia groups have been established, some of which identify as PDFs. Local media often report use of ‘landmines’ by such groups. Most are command-detonated roadside bombs, but some are victim-activated landmines.

105. The Department of Rehabilitation reported that nine states and regions out of 15 were contaminated. Response to Monitor questionnaire by Sith Win, Deputy Director, Department of Rehabilitation, 11 March 2021.

106. Across Kayah and Kayin states, all 14 townships are contaminated. In the five other affected states, the contaminated townships were as follows: Chin (Falam, Hakka, Kanpetlet, Matupi, Mindat, Paletwa, Tedim, and Thantlang); Kachin (Bhamo, Chipwi, Hpakant, Injangyang, Mansi, Mogaung, Mohnyin, Momauk, Myitkyina, Shwegu, Sumprabum, Tanai, Tsawlaw, and Waingmaw); Mon (Bilin, Kyaikmaraw, Kyaikto, Mawlamyine, Thanbyuzayat, Thaton, and Ye); Rakhine (Ann, Buthidaung, Kyaukphyu, Kyauktaw, Maungdaw, Minbya, Mrauk-U, Myebon, Ponnagyun, Rathedaung, and Toungup); Shan (Hopang, Hopong, Hsenwi, Hsihseng, Hsipaw, Kengtung, Konkyan, Kunlong, Kutkai, Kyaukme, Kyethi, Langkho, Lashio, Laukkaing, Lawksaw, Loilen, Manton, Mawksai, Monghpyak, Mongkaing, Mongkhet, Mongmit, Mongpan, Mongshu, Mongton, Mongyai, Muse, Namhsan, Nanttu, Nanhkan, Nawngkhio, Pangsang, Pekon, Pinlaung, Tachileik, Tangyan, and Ywangan).

107. In the seven affected regions, contaminated townships are as follows: Ayawaddy (Patheingyi); Bago (Htantabin, Kyaukkyi, Kyauktaga, Letpadan, Minhla, Swedaung, Shwekyin, Taungoo, Thanatpin, Thayarwady, and Zigon); Magway (Gangaw, Minhla, Myaing, Pauk, Pwintbyu, Salin, Sinbaungwe, and Yesagyo); Mandalay (Amarapura, Mahlaing, Mogoke, Natogyi, Pyawbwe, Pyinoolwin, Thabeikkyin, and Yamethin); Sagaing (Ayadaw, Budalin, Chang U, Indaw, Kalewa, Kale, Kani, Kawlin, Khin U, Lay Shi Mingin, Monywa, Paungbyin, Sagaing, Salingyi, Taze, Wuntho, and Yinmarbin); Tanintharyi (Bokpyin, Dawei, Kawthoung, Launglon, Myiek, Palaw, Tanintharyi, Thayetchaung, and Yebyu); and Yangon (Taikkyi).

108. Evidence of contamination included casualties, mine warning signs and verbal warnings, reports by NGOs and other organizations of landmine use, and Monitor interviews with field staff and armed forces personnel.

109. ICBL-CMC, “Country Profile: Myanmar: Mine Ban Policy,” updated 15 November 2021; and Amnesty International, “Myanmar: Military’s use of banned landmines in Kayah State amounts to war crimes,” 20 July 2022.

Infrastructure has been mined amid the conflict since the coup, leading to an increase in townships with suspected hazardous areas (SHAs). Every state and region outside of the capital, Naypyidaw, had evidence of contamination in 2021. In late 2021, NSAGs attacked mobile phone towers owned by Mytel; a company jointly owned by the Myanmar Armed Forces. In response, the military laid mines around mobile phone towers.¹¹⁰ Mines have also been laid to protect infrastructure projects under China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). (See Myanmar Mine Ban Policy profile).

Landmine contamination posed a threat to internally displaced persons (IDPs) in 2021, particularly those newly-displaced due to fighting in Chin, Kachin, Kayin, and Shan states after the coup.¹¹¹

ERW contamination

Myanmar is also affected by ERW, including mortars, grenades, artillery, and air-dropped bombs. Periodic reports in Myanmar suggest the presence of ordnance dating from World War II.¹¹² ERW contamination has also been reported in relation to armed conflict in 2018–2019 in Kachin state,¹¹³ and due to conflict in 2020 in Rakhine state. ERW contamination increased significantly in 2022 nationwide, due to fighting between the Myanmar Armed Forces, PDFs, and EAOs.

Casualties

As of the end of 2021, the Monitor recorded a total of 5,629 mine/ERW casualties (1,008 killed; 4,500 injured; and 121 unknown survival outcome).

Casualties in 2021

Overview	
Total	368
Change from 2020	Increase from 280 casualties
Survival outcome	
Injured	257
Killed	108
Unknown survival outcome	3
Casualties by devices	
Antipersonnel mines	239
Improvised mines	13
ERW	81
Unspecified mines/ERW	35
Casualties by civilian status	
Civilian	344
Military	24
Casualties by age and gender	
Men	181
Women	60
Adult/Gender unknown	15

110. "Telecoms tower sites mined by Myanmar military," Myanmar Now, 5 November 2021.

111. MAG, "Conflicts at Risk of Being Forgotten: Myanmar," presentation at Mine Action Support Group meeting, 19 October 2021.

112. "Unexploded WWII bombs discovered at central Myanmar sports ground," Coconuts Yangon, 30 September 2015; and Nay Thwin, "World War II ordnance kills three," Democratic Voice of Burma (DVB), 20 March 2012.

113. See, for example, Free Burma Rangers, "Rangers Help Vulnerable Civilians in Kachin State," 8 December 2019.

Total Adult	256
Boys	46
Girls	21
Children/Gender un-known	8
Total children	75
Age and/or gender unknown	37

Note: ERW=explosive remnants of war.

Casualties in 2021

In 2021, there were at least 368 mine/ERW casualties in Myanmar, based on information provided by NGOs, UN agencies, and other organizations, as well as by state and independent media reports. This marked an increase from 280 recorded casualties in 2020. Injuries increased significantly to 257 in 2021, up from 85 in 2020. The majority of casualties (239) were due to antipersonnel mines.

Shan state saw the most recorded casualties in 2021 (121), followed by Rakhine (52), Kachin (48), and Kayin (45). The total number of casualties in Shan state represented an increase on 2020, when 72 casualties were recorded. In Rakhine state, casualties decreased from 147 recorded during 2020. In the states of Kachin and Kayin, annual casualties increased from 21 and 15 respectively.

The majority of civilians killed or injured by mines or ERW in Myanmar in 2021 were conducting agricultural activities or collecting forest products. Approximately 30 incidents documented by the Monitor occurred near infrastructure such as mobile phone towers, energy pipelines, or electricity lines.¹¹⁴ Several incidents in urban areas occurred when people were collecting garbage.

Due to under-reporting and the lack of any systematic national casualty data collection mechanism in Myanmar, the annual total reported by the Monitor does not reflect the true number of casualties due to mines/ERW. Data collection became more difficult after the coup in February 2021 due to operating constraints on NGOs, internet shutdowns, and increased armed conflict.¹¹⁵

Media reporting indicates a trend of increasing annual casualties in recent years. In August 2019, the Department of Rehabilitation stated that the number of mine casualties in Myanmar was rising each year.¹¹⁶ Differences in annual casualty totals provided by the Mine Risk Working Group and the Monitor are attributable to the fact that the working group seeks to have annual totals available in a shorter timeframe to inform its activities. The Monitor compiles its data over a longer period and serves as an amended annual estimate from public sources in light of the lack of official data.

A 2018 study found that many IDPs with disabilities living in NSAG-controlled areas appeared to have impairments due to mines. In government-run areas, “most” persons with disabilities reported that their disabilities were congenital or due to accidents. The study proposed that this may be due to “perceptions that stepping on a landmine can incur charges for ‘destruction of government property’, adding further problems for [persons with disabilities]. This acts as an incentive for landmine victims to blame traffic or other accidents for their disabilities, potentially distorting [casualty] numbers.”¹¹⁷

The number of casualties among Myanmar Armed Forces troops and NSAG fighters due to mines and ERW is unknown, but likely substantial. A Ministry of Defense official told the Monitor that mines were the primary cause of death and injury for Myanmar Armed Forces troops, yet added that if he revealed the

114. See, for example, “An employee who came to repair the MyTel tower in Muse city was hit by a mine,” Aung Myay, 25 September 2021; and “Some of the workers filling the military leaders MyTel tower with oil stepped on a mine and one lost his leg,” Mawkun, 8 October 2021.

115. Human Rights Council, “Losing a Generation: How the military junta is devastating Myanmar’s children and undermining Myanmar’s future,” 14 June 2022, A/HRC/50/CRP1, p. 15.

116. Myat Thura, “Official warns of rising landmine casualties,” Myanmar Times, 14 August 2019.

total figure, “it would give a psychological weapon to our enemies.”¹¹⁸ Past Monitor reporting indicates that there have been a significant number of military casualties; though military records remain unavailable to the public.¹¹⁹

The total number of casualties in Myanmar, for all time, is unknown. The Monitor recorded 5,629 mine/ERW casualties (1,008 killed; 4,500 injured; 121 unknown survival outcome) between 2000 and the end of 2021.

Mine action management and coordination overview

National mine action management actors	Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement (MoSWRR)
International coordination	Mine Action Area of Responsibility (MA AoR)
United Nations agencies	United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF)
United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)	
Mine action legislation	None
Mine action strategic and operational plans	None
Mine action standards	National mine action standard for clearance (in development)

Coordination and management

Myanmar’s former military government created a mine action center under the former Myanmar Peace Center in 2013, but it was never fully staffed. Concluding a national ceasefire agreement with NSAGs was a government precondition for proceeding to survey and clearance.¹²⁰ After the National League for Democracy (NLD) gained power in the November 2015 election, the mine action center was dissolved. The NLD-led government made peace talks a priority, and several participants in the peace process emphasized the threat of mines and the need for clearance.¹²¹

Discussions had been ongoing in 2019–2020 to establish a national mine action authority under the MoSWRR.¹²² The establishment of state and regional level landmine clearance groups was also discussed with the Ministry of Defense.¹²³

After the coup in February 2021, coordination mechanisms with the Department of Rehabilitation were suspended. In December 2021, the MA AoR was activated to ensure that critical mine action activities were implemented. It was led by the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) and co-chaired by Mines

117. Dan Seng Lawn and Jana Naujoks, “Conflict Impacts on Gender and Masculinities Expectations on People with Disabilities in Kachin State: A Rapid Assessment,” International Alert Myanmar and Kachinland Research Center, December 2018, pp. 14–15.

118. Monitor meeting with Col. Min Htike Hein, Deputy Permanent Secretary for the Minister of Defense, Ministry of Defense, Nay pyidaw, 29 June 2018.

119. See, ICBL, Landmine Monitor Report 2009: Toward a Mine-Free World, (Ottawa: Mines Action Canada, October 2009). Unprecedented levels of information on Myanmar Armed Forces casualties were received for 2008 from the then-State Peace and Development Council (SPDC) military-led government, when 508 Myanmar Armed Forces casualties were identified. Information from this source has not been made available for any other year.

120. Roger Fasth and Pascal Simon, “Mine Action in Myanmar,” The Journal of Conventional Weapons Destruction, Vol. 19, Issue 2, July 2015.

121. “Union Peace Conference—21st Century Panglong continues,” Global New Light of Myanmar, 2 September 2016. At the Union Peace Conference in September 2016, Daw Wint Wah Tun of the NLD said of her Shardaw township, in Kayah state, that “local people do not feel secure as landmine fields pose a threat to their way of life.”

122. Statement of Myanmar, Mine Ban Treaty Fourth Review Conference, Oslo, 25–29 November 2019; and Khin Myat Myat Wai, “Myanmar begins talk on landmine clearing programme,” Myanmar Times, 3 February 2020. The Embassy of New Zealand in Myanmar had funded a mine action coordinator, whose primary role was to improve the effectiveness of the sector until a national mine action authority was established.

Advisory Group (MAG) for the first six months.¹²⁴ In 2022, MA AoR meetings were held at the national level, and at the subnational level in Kachin, Shan, and Rakhine states, and in the northwest.¹²⁵

Strategic planning

As of August 2020, the pre-coup government had not announced a clear strategy on mine action. 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.¹²⁶ In May 2017, Colonel Aung stated that the Myanmar Armed Forces would take the lead on clearance, but that international technological and material support would be accepted.¹²⁷ The MA AoR strategic plan for Myanmar for 2022–2023 aimed to improve MA AoR outreach to local organizations; to build their capacity on risk education and victim assistance; to improve communication and information sharing; and to mobilize funding for local and national partners.¹²⁸

Legislation and standards

In October 2019, Myanmar had stated that it was in the process of finalizing national mine action standards. Myanmar was working on developing these standards with members of the Association of South-east Asian Nations (ASEAN) Defence Ministers Meeting-Plus Expert Working Group on Humanitarian Mine Action, under the ASEAN Regional Mine Action Center (ARMAC).¹²⁹ International demining organizations working in Myanmar have adhered to IMAS.

Information management

Mine action operators in Myanmar retain data based on their own survey results, in the absence of a national database on hazardous areas.

Gender and diversity

The systematic collection of gender-inclusive data is a priority for the MA AoR in 2022–2023, to ensure that actions and strategies are gender inclusive.¹³⁰

123. Khin Myat Myat Wai, “Myanmar begins talk on landmine clearing programme,” Myanmar Times, 3 February 2020.

124. MA AoR, “Strategic Plan for Humanitarian Mine Action in Myanmar: 2022–2023,” 28 February 2022, p. 3.

125. Ibid.; and UNICEF, “Myanmar Country Office: Humanitarian Situation Report No. 7: 1 July–31 August 2022,” undated.

126. Ye Khaung Nyunt, “Standard operating procedures for commanders drafted at JMC-U,” Global New Light of Myanmar, 20 January 2018. Col. Wunna Aung said: “Both sides are still discussing conducting workshops on mines. The NCA [Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement] includes mine clearance work. But mutual trust needs to be created first so it is still under discussion and mine clearance cannot be implemented yet.”

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

128. MA AoR, “Strategic Plan for Humanitarian Mine Action in Myanmar: 2022–2023,” 28 February 2022, pp. 3–4.

129. Statement of Myanmar, UN General Assembly (UNGA) First Committee, Thematic Discussion on Conventional Weapons, New York, 25 October 2019. In 2013, a technical working group comprised of government representatives from the former Myanmar Peace Center, and humanitarian actors, had drafted a national mine action strategy and national mine action standards, but these were never approved by the government.

130. MA AoR, “Strategic Plan for Humanitarian Mine Action in Myanmar: 2022–2023,” 28 February 2022, p. 4.

Risk education management and coordination

Risk education management and coordination overview

Government focal points	Department of Rehabilitation, within the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement (MoSWRR)
United Nations focal point	United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)
Coordination mechanisms	Mine Risk Working Group Mine Action Area of Responsibility (MA AoR)
Risk education strategy	Mine Risk Working Group Strategic Workplan 2020–2021
Risk education standards	In development as of 2019, but progress halted in 2021

Coordination

Prior to the coup, the Department of Rehabilitation, under MoSWRR, led the Mine Risk Working Group as its co-chair alongside UNICEF.¹³¹ Formed in April 2012, the group was comprised of 10 government ministries, 41 international and national organizations, and four decentralized working groups in Kachin, Kayah, Kayin, and Shan states. In 2019, MoSWRR endorsed a decision to open a new state-level working group in Rakhine state, but as of the end of 2020 this was still pending.¹³² During 2021, no Mine Risk Working Group meetings were held.¹³³ The MA AoR meets monthly.¹³⁴

#3 Strategies

A Mine Risk Working Group Strategic Workplan for 2020–2021 was in place for risk education, which also included objectives for victim assistance.¹³⁵

The MA AoR strategy for 2022–2023 outlines several key actions to expand risk education to areas where little or none has been provided; and to train operators, community and religious leaders, and women's and youth groups to enable more beneficiaries to be reached. It also includes actions to improve risk education delivery through new materials, the dissemination of messages via mass and digital media, and the creation of community focal points and safety committees.¹³⁶

National standards and guidelines

In 2019, operators in the mine action sector in Myanmar were invited to help the government draft national risk education standards.¹³⁷ As of August 2022, these standards had still not been finalized.

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

132. Responses to Monitor questionnaire by Sithu Win, Deputy Director, Department of Rehabilitation, 11 March 2021; and by Fabrice Vandeputte, Regional Programme Director, HI, 14 May 2020.

133. Response to Monitor questionnaire by Jane Strangeways, Programme Manager, HALO Trust, 5 April 2022.

134. MA AoR, "Strategic Plan for Humanitarian Mine Action in Myanmar: 2022–2023," 28 February 2022, p. 2.

135. Response to Monitor questionnaire by Sithu Win, Deputy Director, Department of Rehabilitation, 11 March 2021.

136. MA AoR, "Strategic Plan for Humanitarian Mine Action in Myanmar: 2022–2023," 28 February 2022, p. 5.

137. Responses to Monitor questionnaire by Bekim Shala, Country Programme Manager, MAG Myanmar, 25 May 2020; and by Kyaw Kyaw Oo, Operations Coordinator, NPA Myanmar, 18 March 2021.

Victim assistance (VA) management and coordination

Victim assistance management and coordination overview¹³⁸

Focal points	Department of Social Welfare and Persons with Disabilities, within the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement (MoSWRR)
Coordination mechanisms	Victim Assistance Sub-Technical Group, led by Humanity & Inclusion (HI), gathers all victim assistance operators under the umbrella of the Mine Risk Working Group
Mine Action Area of Responsibility (MA AoR)	
Coordination regularity and outcomes	No coordination meetings reported in 2021
Plans/strategies	Victim assistance objectives included in the Mine Risk Working Group Strategic Workplan 2020–2021 and the MA AoR Strategic Plan 2022–2023
Disability sector integration	
	Activities reported to be in line with the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) and national disability laws
Survivor inclusion and participation	No direct representation, but some survivors belong to DPOs that participate in coordination activities

Note: DPO=disabled persons' organization.

VA Coordination

Prior to the coup, Humanity & Inclusion (HI) facilitated Victim Assistance Sub-Technical Group meetings, held at national and state level.¹³⁹ Disabled persons' organizations (DPOs) that took part in the meetings included the Myanmar Physically Handicapped Association (MPHA) and the Myanmar Federation of Persons with Disabilities (MFPD).

In 2022, the MA AoR took responsibility for coordinating victim assistance. It meets monthly to enable information sharing and to support the development of referral mechanisms and services.¹⁴⁰

138. Responses to Monitor questionnaire by Sith Win, Deputy Director, Department of Rehabilitation, 11 March 2021; by Michelle Yesudas, Humanitarian Policy and Advocacy Adviser, and Nyo Nyo Thaw and Aye Thoun, Project Managers, HI, 18 May 2021; and by Fabrice Vandeputte, Regional Programme Director, HI, 14 May 2020. See also, "Myanmar drafts national strategy for disabled," Xinhua, 4 April 2019; Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD), "Myanmar: Victim Assistance & Mine Risk Education," presentation by Dr. San San Aye, Deputy Director General, Department of Social Welfare, at the Meeting of National Mine Action Program Directors, Geneva, 17 February 2015; and Dan Seng Lawn and Jana Naujoks, "Conflict Impacts on Gender and Masculinities Expectations on People with Disabilities in Kachin State: A Rapid Assessment," International Alert Myanmar and Kachinland Research Center, December 2018.

139. Responses to Monitor questionnaire by Sith Win, Deputy Director, Department of Rehabilitation, 11 March 2021; and by Michelle Yesudas, Humanitarian Policy and Advocacy Adviser, and Nyo Nyo Thaw and Aye Thoun, Project Managers, HI, 18 May 2021.

140. MA AoR, "Strategic Plan for Humanitarian Mine Action in Myanmar: 2022–2023," 28 February 2022, p. 2.

VA Laws and policies

In 2015, Myanmar enacted the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Law.¹⁴¹ It requires job protection and equal access to education and public transport, but has not been fully enforced.¹⁴²

Myanmar's Child Rights Law covers protection against mine incidents, and victim assistance.¹⁴³

In 2014, Myanmar launched a National Social Protection Strategic Plan, to provide an allowance to all certified persons with disabilities.¹⁴⁴ In February 2020, it was reported that MoSWRR would provide MMK200,000 (US\$110) and prosthetic limbs, if needed, for each mine victim.¹⁴⁵ Between September 2019 and August 2020, the MoSWRR fund was budgeted for 600 victims.¹⁴⁶ In 2020, the Department of Rehabilitation reported that since the 2017–2018 financial year, a total of 648 mine victims had received payments, amounting to MMK129,600,000 (US\$70,000) combined.¹⁴⁷

However, while this support was accessible to people living in government-controlled areas, it was unclear how accessible it was in areas controlled by NSAGs.

VA Strategies

Under Myanmar's pre-coup NLD-led government, a national strategic plan on the rights of persons with disabilities was being developed with the participation of DPOs and other non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

In 2019, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and the World Health Organization (WHO) worked with the Ministry of Health to develop a strategic plan to strengthen the national rehabilitation sector.¹⁴⁸ This was delayed in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic, as were efforts to establish a national referral system through a steering committee.¹⁴⁹

In May 2021, the SAC Minister of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement announced the drafting of a five-year national strategic plan on the rights of persons with disabilities.¹⁵⁰

The MA AoR strategic plan for 2022–2023 contains several actions on victim assistance, including on the provision of emergency mental health and psychosocial services; first-aid training; medical response; and the strengthening of physical rehabilitation, through mobile repairs and the training of technicians. The plan also aimed to map available services and healthcare providers, update the referral directory, facilitate multisector engagement, and promote the wellbeing of victims.¹⁵¹

141. Myanmar Law Library, "Pyidaungsu Hluttaw Law No. 30/2015 - Law on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities," June 2015.

142. US Department of State, Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, "2021 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices: Burma," 12 April 2022, p. 37.

143. UNICEF Myanmar press release, "The enactment of the new Child Rights Law by the Government of Myanmar a landmark step," 24 July 2019.

144. The allowance will not be available until the 2015 disability rights law is enacted and a certification process is established by the government. Government of Myanmar, "Myanmar National Social Protection Strategic Plan," December 2014, p.53.

145. Khin Myat Myat Wai, "Myanmar begins talk on landmine-clearing programme," Myanmar Times, 3 February 2020.

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

147. Response to Monitor questionnaire by Sithu Win, Deputy Director, Department of Rehabilitation, 11 March 2021. Exchange rate for 2 October 2021: MMK1,852.99=US\$1. Oanda.com.

148. ICRC, "Annual Report 2019," 29 June 2020, p. 350.

149. ICRC, "Annual Report 2020," 1 July 2021, p. 363.

150. "Plan to draft five-year national strategic plan for the rights of persons with disabilities," Global New Light of Myanmar, 27 May 2021; and HI, "Living in times of coup, conflicts and COVID-19 in Myanmar: Impact on persons with disabilities," July 2022.

151. MA AoR, "Strategic Plan for Humanitarian Mine Action in Myanmar: 2022–2023," 28 February 2022, pp. 5–6.

152. Response to Monitor questionnaire by Michelle Yesudas, Humanitarian Policy and Advocacy Adviser, and Nyo Nyo Thaw and Aye Thoun, Project Managers, HI, 18 May 2021.

VA National standards and guidelines

In 2020, the IMAS on victim assistance was introduced in national level Mine Risk Working Group and Victim Assistance Sub-Technical Group meetings, and was translated into Burmese.¹⁵²

Addressing the Impact**Mine action***Operators and service providers***Clearance operators**

National	Myanmar Armed Forces Field Engineering Corps
International	DanChurchAid (DCA) Danish Refugee Council (DRC) The HALO Trust Humanity & Inclusion (HI) Mines Advisory Group (MAG) Norwegian People's Aid (NPA)

International demining organizations started arriving in Myanmar in 2012, but were not authorized to conduct non-technical survey until around 2015. Before the coup in early 2021, six international operators had offices in Yangon and some in regional locations: DanChurchAid (DCA), the Danish Refugee Council (DRC), the HALO Trust, HI, MAG, and NPA. Following the coup, the majority of international staff were based in Thailand. Ongoing armed conflict in Myanmar prevented safe movement of national staff and personnel from local partner organizations. The armed conflict has also led to mines being laid in areas where international operators were not previously working.

Survey

In November 2021, the Monitor, alongside the Myanmar Information Management Unit (MIMU), produced an updated country map showing townships with SHA, and an infographic on the impact of landmine use in Myanmar.¹⁵³

From 2016, several international operators working in Myanmar were authorized to conduct non-technical survey in specific locations. Non-technical survey by DCA, the DRC, the HALO Trust, and MAG took place in 2018 and 2019, although operators were unable to carry out survey across an entire state, leaving them unable to determine a baseline level of contamination.

In January 2020, mine action operators had gained permission to commence marking and fencing operations, in accordance with IMAS.¹⁵⁴ At the time, the Department of Rehabilitation had asked the mine action sector to prioritize technical survey, marking, and fencing of areas identified for the return and resettlement of IDPs in Kachin state.¹⁵⁵ Yet later in 2020, restrictions on travel and gatherings amid the

153. MIMU, "Townships with Suspected Landmine Contamination (1999–2021) and Casualties in Myanmar (2020)," November 2021. The infographic provides a 14-year overview of data from the Monitor (2007–2021), and is also available in Burmese. MIMU reported to the Monitor that the infographic was one of its most requested products. An updated country map infographic is due to be released towards the end of 2022.

154. Response to Monitor questionnaire by Bekim Shala, Country Programme Manager, MAG Myanmar, 25 May 2020.

155. Durable Peace Programme, "Mine Risks in IDP Return and Resettlement Sites in Kachin State: Baseline Survey Results from DPP-MAG Joint Deployments," June 2020.

156. Responses to Monitor questionnaire by Liam Harvey, Head of Programme, DRC Myanmar, 26 August 2021; and by Stephen Hall, Programme Manager, HALO Trust Myanmar, 31 August 2021.

COVID-19 pandemic prevented non-technical survey from taking place.¹⁵⁶

In 2021–2022, armed conflict, and travel restrictions imposed by the SAC, have severely restricted all activities.

Previously, the DRC had planned to commence non-technical survey in Kachin state and northern Shan state, with operations due to commence in early 2022. Mapping was conducted in 31 villages in 2020 and 2021 to identify non-technical survey tasks in potentially contaminated villages. The HALO Trust undertook non-technical survey in early 2020 in Kayah state and northern Shan state, but activities were suspended due to COVID-19 restrictions.¹⁵⁷

MAG conducted non-technical survey in the Tanintharyi region from January–March 2020 and in September 2020. No marking was conducted in 2020 due to COVID-19 restrictions. As of the end of August 2021, MAG had been unable to conduct further non-technical survey in Myanmar.¹⁵⁸

Farmers in the Bago region have marked landmine contaminated areas discovered while farming, to warn of the risks and prevent people from entering.¹⁵⁹

Clearance

Humanitarian mine action operators have never been permitted to conduct clearance; by either the government or authorities in ethnic minority areas. This remained the case in 2021 and early 2022. The Myanmar Armed Forces have conducted some mine clearance, but to unknown standards. The amount of land cleared, and the number of antipersonnel mines destroyed, has not been reported.

Clearance by the Myanmar Armed Forces was reported in February 2021 in townships of Rakhine state where IDPs were expected to return home. After one month of work, a military officer stated that had no mines were found along the Ann-Sittwe highway, where clearance was taking place.¹⁶⁰

On 31 March 2021, the Minister for Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement, Dr Thet Thet Khine, said that emphasis was being placed on clearing landmines to resettle IDPs to their native villages in Rakhine state.¹⁶¹ However, clearance was not systematic and not all townships were included in the plan.¹⁶² In March 2021, it was reported that the military and the Arakan Army, an NSAG, were negotiating to clear mines from mountains and forests where conflict had previously occurred.¹⁶³

The ICRC's plans to train authorities in clearance and engage them in the development of standard procedures for demining were halted following the military coup.¹⁶⁴

In January 2022, the Free Burma Rangers—a humanitarian group—trained its new recruits in mine identification and emergency clearance procedures.¹⁶⁵ Landmines encountered during missions are either removed by Free Burma Rangers personnel and handed over to EAOs, or removed directly by EAO forces. In June 2022, Free Burma Rangers personnel in Daw Nye Ku, Demoso township, Kayah state, encountered 157. Ibid.

158. Response to Monitor questionnaire by Sofia Raineri, Programme Officer, MAG Myanmar, 3 September 2021.

159. Karen Human Rights Group (KHRG), "Karen Human Rights Group Submission to Landmine Monitor," August 2021. In August 2020, in Htatabin township, Bago region, farmers informed KHRG that they sometimes discovered mines when clearing land for new plantations, after which they placed a warning or danger sign indicating that there should be no entry due to contamination.

160. "Ann Twsp residents urge Tatmadaw to clear landmines from forested hills rather than along roads and walkways," Development Media Group (DMG), 9 March 2021; and "Landmine clearance said to make way for IDPs in some Arakan townships," DMG, 25 February 2021.

161. "Quick win projects intended to narrow development gap between Rakhine State and other states," Global New Light of Myanmar, 31 March 2021, p. 12.

162. "Mine clearance ineffective in Arakan state," Burma News International (BNI), 25 May 2021.

163. "Military, AA negotiate to clear landmines from Arakan's forests," DMG, 10 March 2021.

164. ICRC, "Annual Report 2021," 27 July 2022, p. 332.

165. Free Burma Rangers, "Historic FBR Graduation: First Burman Teams Trained and Largest Graduating Class," 3 January 2022.

166. Monitor interview with David Eubank, Founder, Free Burma Rangers, 15 July 2022. He stated that the Myanmar Armed Forces had left after armed conflict with the Karenni Nationalities Defence Force (KNDF), after which the Free Burma Rangers found three mines in the compound of a church that was burning. The KNDF found another four mines and one that was stepped on by a 16-year-old boy. He noted that bags or baskets dropped by departing soldiers all had at least one mine inside, with some containing up to six mines, new and still in factory packaging.

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

tered and removed mines immediately after an attack by the military.¹⁶⁶

In Kayah state, it was reported that landmine removal was being undertaken in 2022 by members of NSAGs, using rudimentary equipment and without professional training.¹⁶⁷

Deminer safety

Mine action has been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, and by the changing political situation and civil unrest in Myanmar since the coup in 2021. Mine action activities were impacted by local COVID-19 lockdowns, restricted communications, a shutdown of essential services such as banks, and travel restrictions. Increased safety and security measures have been put in place by operators.

Risk education

Operators and service providers

Risk education operators¹⁶⁸

Type of organization	Name of organization	Type of activity
	Department of Rehabilitation	Coordination as chair of the Mine Risk Working Group
	Department of Education	Risk education in Kayah state
National	Committee of Internally Displaced Karen People and the Karen Teachers Working Group	Risk education alongside humanitarian assistance and advocacy; Norwegian People's Aid (NPA) partner
	Karen Development Network	Community-based risk education
	Karenni Social Welfare and Development Center	Established the Karenni Mine Risk Education Group in 2006 to provide risk education and collect victim data
	Local Development Network	Community-based risk education
	Ta'ang Students and Youth Union	Risk education in Shan state; DanChurchAid (DCA) partner
	Nyein (Shalom) Foundation	Risk-education alongside peace-building and peace education
	Rahmonya Peace Foundation	Community-based risk education. NPA partner
	Wunpawng Ninghtoi	Risk education alongside activities and projects to assist IDPs, including livelihood support

168. Responses to Monitor questionnaire by Sithu Win, Deputy Director, Department of Rehabilitation, 11 March 2021; by Fabrice Vandeputte, Regional Programme Director, HI, 14 May 2020; by Bishu Mahat, Weapon Contamination Coordinator, ICRC Myanmar, 31 August 2021; by Geoff Moyan, Programme Manager, HALO Trust Myanmar, 4 March 2021; by Michael Horita, Field Coordinator, HI Myanmar, 16 March 2021; and by Matthew Walsh, Head of Humanitarian Response and Mine Action, DCA/Norwegian Church Aid (NCA) Myanmar, 13 September 2021; MIMU, "The MIMU 5W: Who is doing What, Where, When, and for Whom," undated; Land Portal, "Committee for Internally Displaced Karen People," undated; Durable Peace Programme, "Ta-ang Student Youth Union (TSYU)," undated; United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA), "Mine Risk Education in Myanmar: When Knowledge is Power," 6 March 2019; Durable Peace Programme, "Nyein (Shalom Foundation)," undated; Durable Peace Programme, "Wunpawng Ninghtoi (WPN)," undated; DCA, "DCA and NCA in Myanmar," undated; and Johanniter International Assistance (JOIN), "International Assistance in Myanmar," undated.

	Myanmar Heart Development Organization (MHDO)	Community-based risk education and livelihood support
	Myanmar Red Cross Society	Community-based risk education
	Kachin Baptist Convention	Trains teachers in IDP camps to deliver risk education; Humanity & Inclusion (HI) partner
	Kachin Development Group	Partners HI to deliver risk education
	South Shan Youth Capacity Building Centre	Risk education and first-aid in Shan state; HALO Trust partner
	Never End Tomorrow	Risk education and first-aid in Kachin state; HALO Trust partner
International	DanChurchAid (DCA); Norwegian Church Aid (NCA)	Risk education alongside a program to address the impacts of natural disasters and armed conflict in the Bago region, and also in Chin, Kayah, Kayin, Mon, and Shan states
	Danish Refugee Council (DRC)	Risk education; and plans to provide risk education alongside non-technical survey in Kayah and Shan states
	HALO Trust	Risk education and first-aid training for 750 community implementers in Kachin, Kayin, and Shan states
	Humanity & Inclusion (HI)	Training for implementing partners in Kachin and Kayin states, and in the Bago region
	International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)	Emergency risk education; community risk education through Myanmar Red Cross Society volunteers; risk education in schools; training of community volunteers; and risk awareness sessions for humanitarian groups
	Johanniter International Assistance (JOIN)	Risk education alongside broader humanitarian work on water access, sanitation, hygiene, nutrition, health, and disaster preparedness

	Mines Advisory Group (MAG)	Risk education alongside community liaison activities in villages and IDP camps in Kachin, Kayah, Kayin, and Shan states, and in the Tanintharyi region; contracted by the Durable Peace Programme to provide risk education capacity-building support to 14 local organizations
	Relief International	Risk education in northern Shan state
	People in Need	Training in risk education delivery for teachers in IDP camps; HI partner

Note: IDP=internally displaced person.

Beneficiary numbers

Risk education beneficiaries in 2021¹⁶⁹

Operator	Men	Boys	Women	Girls
HALO Trust	11,027	10,210	12,239	9,151
NPA	58	21	229	67

No risk education beneficiary data was received from the Department of Rehabilitation for 2021. In 2020, it had recorded 109,180 beneficiaries (21,082 boys; 24,891 girls; 26,705 men; and 36,502 women), although the data was not collected according to Standard Beneficiary Definitions.¹⁷⁰ The total represents a fall from 280,000 people reached in Myanmar in 2019.¹⁷¹ Beneficiary figures for 2021, shown in the table above, were provided by only two international operators in Myanmar.

The ICRC reported reaching 9,800 beneficiaries in Myanmar in 2021. However, the data was not disaggregated by sex or age.¹⁷²

MIMU reported only nine operators implementing risk education activities as of 26 August 2022.¹⁷³ Operators providing risk education in Myanmar are mostly concentrated in Kachin, Kayah, Kayin, Mon, Rakhine, and Shan states, and in the Bago region and Tanintharyi regions.¹⁷⁴

Implementation

Target groups

A prioritization mechanism for risk education, which was in place prior to the military coup, is no longer feasible due to restrictions on access and safety concerns. The HALO Trust identified target areas by cross-referencing information from communities and partner organizations with updates from teams in the field.¹⁷⁵

169. Data provided in emails from Jane Strangeways, Programme Manager, HALO Trust Myanmar, 5 April 2022; and from Kyaw Kyaw Oo, Operations Coordinator, NPA Myanmar, 31 March 2022.

170. Response to Monitor questionnaire by Sithu Win, Deputy Director, Department of Rehabilitation, 19 March 2021.

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

172. ICRC, “Annual Report 2021,” 27 July 2022, p. 332.

173. MIMU, “The MIMU 5W: Who is doing What, Where, When, and for Whom,” undated.

174. MIMU, “Countrywide Overview – MIMU 3W,” May 2021; and UNICEF, “Mine Action in Myanmar Fact Sheet (as of 31st March 2020),” April 2020.

175. Response to Monitor questionnaire by Jane Strangeways, Programme Manager, HALO Trust, 5 April 2022.

IDPs, returnees, and conflict-affected populations were a significant target group for risk education in Myanmar. While displaced in camps or host communities, they also returned to their villages of origin to check on livestock, property, and farmland; or sought income through livelihood activities outside of the camps. IDPs transiting through unfamiliar territory were often required to forage for food.¹⁷⁶ In many cases, there was a lack of information on safe and unsafe areas, due to an absence of warning signs and limited local knowledge of new contamination.¹⁷⁷

Children were at risk from mines/ERW, particularly in return and resettlement areas and conflict-affected areas. In some IDP camps, there were not enough schoolteachers to support the provision of risk education, particularly in remote areas. Most risk education for children took place outside of school.¹⁷⁸ Children with disabilities were particularly hard to reach, as they were often not visible in communities or had difficulty understanding materials.¹⁷⁹ After the coup in 2021, operators were unable to provide risk education in government-controlled schools due to a strict non-engagement policy, while many schools in conflict-affected areas remained closed amid rising instability.¹⁸⁰

Men were at risk due to livelihood activities, such as hunting and foraging for food in remote areas far from their homes, out of economic necessity. Reaching men was reported to be challenging, as they were often out of their villages during the scheduled working hours of risk education teams.¹⁸¹

Reaching remote areas and ethnic minorities remained difficult due to access restrictions in 2021, particularly in NSAG-controlled areas of Myanmar. Access was limited in some areas by ongoing insecurity and the COVID-19 pandemic. Operators faced difficulty in accessing certain IDP camps in non-government-controlled areas, or in areas where there was no defined control.

Delivery methods

Risk education is delivered as a standalone activity in Myanmar due to the lack of permission for operators to conduct clearance, although it is sometimes integrated with non-technical survey. In areas impacted by ongoing conflict, risk education is delivered through local partner organizations.

Face-to-face sessions remained the primary means of risk education delivery in Myanmar in 2021, along with the distribution of printed materials.¹⁸² Risk education materials were being developed by HI to be inclusive of persons with disabilities, including children, through the use of plain and simple language and accessible fonts. Messages were also delivered via radio broadcasts.¹⁸³

In 2021, the ICRC implemented risk education sessions and disseminated messages via billboards, radio spots, and social media. Messaging also covered COVID-19 safety measures.¹⁸⁴ The ICRC also organized risk awareness sessions for NGOs on the dangers posed by mines/ERW in 2021.¹⁸⁵

Schoolteachers received risk education training in some areas of Myanmar. The ICRC reported in 2021 that a process was underway to integrate risk education into the national curriculum.¹⁸⁶

In 2022, DCA and the Mine Risk Education Working Group developed a mobile app for delivery of risk education in Burmese, and in the Kachin, Karen, Shan, and T'ang ethnic languages.¹⁸⁷

176. Ibid.; and by Fabrice Vandeputte, Regional Programme Director, HI, 14 May 2020.

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

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

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

180. Response to Monitor questionnaire by Jane Strangeways, Programme Manager, HALO Trust, 5 April 2022; and UNICEF, "Myanmar Country Office: Humanitarian Situation Report No.7: 1 July–31 August 2022," undated.

181. Response to Monitor questionnaire by Kyaw Kyaw Oo, Operations Coordinator, NPA Myanmar, 18 March 2021.

182. 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 Horita, Field Coordinator, HI Myanmar, 16 March 2021; and by Bishnu Mahat, Weapon Contamination Coordinator, ICRC Myanmar, 31 August 2021.

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

184. ICRC, "Annual Report 2021," 27 July 2022, p. 332.

185. Ibid.

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

187. See, MRE Myanmar mobile app website.

HI trained community risk education volunteers and partner organizations in disability awareness and inclusive livelihoods. ICRC trained volunteers from communities in NSAG-controlled areas to provide risk education in IDP camps and conflict-affected villages.¹⁸⁸

In 2020, amid COVID-19 restrictions, risk education operators used television and social media, including Facebook, to disseminate messages.¹⁸⁹ NPA provided remote and digital risk education but planned to resume face-to-face sessions in 2021.¹⁹⁰ HI delivered risk education through three radio stations (Bhamo Diocese, Lashio Diocese, and Myitkyina Diocese) and three social media platforms (Facebook, Viber, and WeChat).¹⁹¹ The DRC developed online risk education sessions, available on platforms including Facebook, Messenger, Skype, and Viber.¹⁹² ICRC provided risk education in Myanmar through radio and television broadcasts, and via a news agency.¹⁹³

International NGOs worked with local partners to better reach remote communities. Risk education staff were required to be fluent in a number of local languages, while dialects and materials also reflected linguistic and cultural differences.¹⁹⁴ HI developed radio messages in the Kachin language to reach communities in Kachin state.¹⁹⁵

Major developments in 2021

Risk education programs did not reach many areas where mines were newly laid since the coup.¹⁹⁶ Emergency risk education was integrated with the broader response of humanitarian agencies and local civil society organizations to ongoing armed conflict. Risk education operators continued to face challenges in 2021 as a result of COVID-19 travel restrictions.¹⁹⁷

The HALO Trust initially delivered risk education at household level amid COVID-19 restrictions, but reverted to group sessions as the restrictions eased. In June 2021, the HALO Trust supported risk education in schools, IDP camps, and communities in Kachin state. Priority was given to IDPs fleeing contested areas, while risk education was also delivered to all-women groups and in safe spaces for children.¹⁹⁸ The HALO Trust deployed staff on unmarked motorbikes and conducted low-profile activities in 2021 due to challenges over access and security.¹⁹⁹

Due to access issues, training local community representatives to provide risk education messages became increasingly important. In 2021–2022, DCA and the HALO Trust trained 280 community implementers across eight townships in northern Shan state and four townships in Kachin state.²⁰⁰

NPA delivered training in conflict preparedness and protection in Kachin, Mon, and northern Shan states, and in the eastern Bago region. Risk education was a key component of this training.²⁰¹

188. Responses to Monitor questionnaire by Michael Horita, Field Coordinator, HI Myanmar, 16 March 2021; and by Bishnu Mahat, Weapon Contamination Coordinator, ICRC Myanmar, 31 August 2021.

189. Response to Monitor questionnaire by Sithu Win, Deputy Director, Department of Rehabilitation, 11 March 2021.

190. Response to Monitor questionnaire by Kyaw Kyaw Oo, Operations Coordinator, NPA Myanmar, 18 March 2021.

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

192. Danish Demining Group (DDG), “Virtual Mine Risk Education in Myanmar,” 10 June 2020.

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

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

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

196. Human Rights Council, “Losing a Generation: How the military junta is devastating Myanmar’s children and undermining Myanmar’s future,” A/HRC/50/CRP1, 14 June 2022, p. 15.

197. Response to Monitor questionnaire by Kyaw Kyaw Oo, Operations Coordinator, NPA, 31 March 2022.

198. Response to Monitor questionnaire by Jane Strangeways, Programme Manager, HALO Trust, 5 August 2022.

199. Ibid.

200. Ibid.

201. Response to Monitor questionnaire by Kyaw Kyaw Oo, Operations Coordinator, NPA, 31 March 2022.

Marking

The Myanmar Armed Forces has installed warning signs and fenced some known mined areas.²⁰² In May 2022, the military reportedly fenced mined areas around mobile phone towers.²⁰³

Victim assistance

*Victim assistance operators*²⁰⁴

Type of organization	Name of organization	Type of activity
	Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement (MoS-WRR)	Socio-economic support; rehabilitation; and vocational training
	Ministry of Health and Sports	Prosthetics centers and two orthopedic hospitals
	Ministry of Defense	Provision of prosthetic devices through three centers
National	Nu Daw Mya Yi Foundation	Prosthetics work camps in Yangon, in collaboration with Jaipur Foot of India
	Committee for Internally Displaced Karen People	Production of prosthetics at the Kho Kay Prosthetic Clinic in Hpapun township, Kayin state
	Karen Health and Welfare Department	First-aid assistance and amputation surgery
	Karenni Health Workers Organization	Prosthetics in Loikaw township, Kayah state
	Karuna Mission Social Solidarity	First-aid and immediate assistance to survivors
	Myanmar Physically Handicapped Association	Advocacy on disability rights; production of assistive devices; and economic inclusion
International	Association for Aid and Relief Japan (AAR-Japan)	Vocational training; referrals; and advocacy on survivors' rights

202. "More Than One Year After IDPs Return to Nam San Yang, Burma Army Removes Landmines From Their Farmland," Kachin News Group (KNG), 3 August 2020; and Monitor interview with photojournalist accompanying Myanmar Armed Forces clearance engineers in Kayin state, August 2018. Signs were placed near the site of armed conflict between a Democratic Karen Buddhist Army (DKBA) splinter group and the Myanmar Armed Forces in Hlaing-Bwe township during reported clearance. The photojournalist provided an image of the warning signs and said the truck in which he traveled with the Myanmar Armed Forces had many mine warning signs. In November 2018, in the eastern Bago region, after a mine incident near a school in Tha Pyay Nyunt village, Myanmar Armed Forces soldiers from Light Infantry Battalion 8/53 fenced the area to make it inaccessible. KHRG, "Karen Human Rights Group Submission to Landmine Monitor," September 2019.

203. The Myanmar Armed Forces began systematically laying mines around mobile phone towers in 2021 and early 2022. In at least some places, it built fences from locally available natural materials. In one case, in April 2022, in Mandalay township a person herding animals was injured by one of these mines prior to completion of the fence. See, Aung Aung, "15-year-old girl's leg amputated due to a mine planted by Junta troops in Mahlaing," Tha Din News and Radio, 3 May 2022.

204. Association for Aid and Relief-Japan (AAR-Japan), "Where We Work: Myanmar," undated; Exceed Worldwide, "The Myanmar School of Prosthetics and Orthotics: MSPO," undated; Leprosy Mission International, "Myanmar," undated; HI, "Country Card: Myanmar," updated September 2020; World Education Myanmar Facebook page; and ICRC, "Annual Report 2020," 1 July 2021, p. 363.

	Exceed Worldwide	Operates the prosthetics workshop at the National Rehabilitation Hospital in Yangon; and provides funding to the Myanmar School of Prosthetics and Orthotics, and a prosthetics workshop in Mandalay
	Leprosy Mission Myanmar	Rehabilitation and prosthetics
	Humanity & Inclusion (HI)	Data collection on victims; mapping of services and barriers to access; referrals; psychosocial support; socio-economic inclusion; repair of mobility devices; advocacy on victims' needs; and capacity-building of the Myanmar Physically Handicapped Association
	World Education Myanmar	Rehabilitation; economic inclusion; access to medical and vocational funds; and advocacy on victims' needs
	International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)	Supports rehabilitation centers in Hpa-An and Kyaing Tong (Shan state), Mandalay, and Myitkyina (Kachin state); and a prosthetics and orthotics workshop in Buthidaung, Rakhine state
	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)	Financial support for transportation, medical costs, and rehabilitation for victims; and socio-economic inclusion through livelihood programs

Note: ERW=explosive remnants of war.

Needs assessment

The coup in February 2021, along with the COVID-19 pandemic, has weakened the already fragile health-care system in Myanmar. Public hospitals were under-staffed and not fully functioning, and medical supplies were in short supply.²⁰⁵

A census conducted in 2019 reported that 12.8% of the population in Myanmar has a disability.²⁰⁶ In May 2020, HI conducted a survey on persons with disabilities and the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, which highlighted the need for continued access to safe rehabilitation services.²⁰⁷

205. HI, "Living in times of coup, conflicts and COVID-19 in Myanmar: Impact on persons with disabilities," July 2021.

206. Ministry of Labour, Immigration and Population, and United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), "The 2019 Inter-censal survey: key findings," December 2020.

207. Responses to Monitor questionnaire by Michelle Yesudas, Humanitarian Policy and Advocacy Adviser, and Nyo Nyo Thaw and Sye Thoun, Project Managers, HI, 18 May 2021.

#3 Medical care and rehabilitation

Myanmar has few physicians trained in emergency medicine, and they are generally not located in rural areas, which lack ambulance services to care for mine/ERW survivors on the way to hospital. Healthcare centers in Myanmar's three major cities lack adequate emergency response capacity—with Mandalay, Naypyidaw, and Yangon having only one emergency room each.²⁰⁸

Rehabilitation centers in Myanmar cover only 10% of total needs, and service provision is limited in rural areas. Most centers are in larger cities, and travel expenses are prohibitive.²⁰⁹

The COVID-19 pandemic continued to affect rehabilitation service provision in 2021. A HI study in June 2020 found that the pandemic undermined provision of essential health services: only 27% of persons with disabilities in Myanmar had access to assistive devices compared to 42% before the pandemic; while only 10% had access to physical therapy and 12% to psychosocial support.²¹⁰

Following the coup in 2021, Myanmar's healthcare system largely collapsed as health workers and teachers joined the country's civil disobedience movement and/or were persecuted by the military regime. At least 250 attacks on healthcare workers or facilities were documented in the six months after the coup.²¹¹ Public hospitals were reported to be either closed or not fully functioning.²¹³

In 2021, physical rehabilitation centers were supported by ICRC and HI, while a victim assistance center was supported by the Myanmar Physically Handicapped Association.

A total of 322 mine/ERW survivors received physical rehabilitation services during 2021.²¹⁴ One ICRC-supported rehabilitation center also offered mental health and psychosocial support.²¹⁵

In February 2020, the government approved the opening of a prosthetics and orthotics workshop in Buthidaung township, Rakhine state, along with a mobile workshop to repair assistive devices in remote areas.²¹⁶ In 2021, there were 43 technicians able to provide repairs.²¹⁷

All ICRC-supported facilities in Myanmar had to curtail their services for several months in 2021 after the military coup in February, while one rehabilitation center suspended its services.²¹⁸

In 2021, HI supported the delivery of rehabilitation services in Kachin, Kayin, and Rakhine states, and in the Bago region.²¹⁹

A World Education Myanmar community rehabilitation project was underway in Kachin state in 2021, piloting the Community-Based Inclusive Development Demonstration Model in Myanmar. The model was developed by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID)-funded Okard Project, and implemented by World Education Laos.

Socio-economic and psychosocial inclusion

Most mine/ERW survivors in Myanmar have had to abandon their traditional professions, making vocational training and alternative livelihood support necessary.²²⁰

The Association for Aid and Relief-Japan (AAR-Japan) provided vocational training for persons with disabilities at its center in Yangon.²²¹

208. Susan Becker, "Progress towards health systems strengthening in Myanmar," *Journal of Global Health Reports*, Vol. 2, 30 March 2018.

209. ICRC, "Physical Rehabilitation Programme: 2018 Annual Report," 15 June 2019, p. 45.

210. HI, "Living in times of coup, conflicts and COVID-19 in Myanmar: Impact on persons with disabilities," July 2021, p. 15.

211. Physicians for Human Rights, "At Least 252 Reported Attacks and Threats to Health Care in Myanmar During Six Months of Military's Crackdown," 10 August 2021.

212. HI, "Living in times of coup, conflicts and COVID-19 in Myanmar: Impact on persons with disabilities," July 2021, p. 12.

213. Response to Monitor questionnaire by Sithu Win, Deputy Director, Department of Rehabilitation, 11 March 2021.

214. ICRC, "Annual Report 2021," 27 July 2022, p. 336.

215. *Ibid.*, p. 332.

216. *Ibid.*, p. 334.

217. ICRC, "Physical Rehabilitation Programme: 2021 Annual Report," 20 September 2022, p. 34.

218. ICRC, "Annual Report 2021," 27 July 2022, p. 334.

219. HI, "Country Card: Myanmar," updated September 2021.

220. DDG, "DDG Study Aims to Counter Rise in Victims from Mines in Myanmar," 16 January 2018.

221. AAR-Japan, "Annual Report 2018: April 2018–March 2019," 2019, p. 17; and AAR-Japan, "Where We Work: Myanmar," undated.

Since 2018, HI has overseen a project in partnership with the Myanmar Physically Handicapped Association to improve socio-economic conditions for mine/ERW victims, via livelihood services in the Bago region and Kayin state, funded by the Luxembourg Ministry of Foreign Affairs.²²² In 2021, the project was extended to cover conflict-affected areas in Kachin and Rakhine states.²²³

In 2021, ICRC provided support to the Myanmar Paralympic Sports Federation, although activities were limited due to the coup and the pandemic. Staff at one ICRC-supported rehabilitation center received training to help patients gain employment. Eight athletes with disabilities developed job-acquisition skills in 2021. An online training on wheelchair basketball was organized for players, coaches, and referees.²²⁴

World Education Myanmar supported self-help groups in Kayah state for persons with disabilities and their family members, enabling activities such as income-generation, saving, and lending.²²⁵

Mine Action Support

In 2021, seven donors contributed US\$6.1 million to the Republic of the Union of Myanmar for mine action; a 49% increase compared to the annual level of funding received in 2020.²²⁶

Year	International contributions (US\$)
2021	6,100,000
2020	4,118,868
2019	6,275,838
2018	2,872,606
2017	6,725,763
2016	6,525,640
Total	32,618,715

Summary of international contributions: 2016–2021²²⁷

To read source notes, go to the online version where the citations are hyperlinked to original source. www.the-monitor.org or Burmese language version at https://bit.ly/MYN_2022

222. HI, “Country Card: Myanmar,” updated September 2021.

223. Ibid.

224. ICRC, “Annual Report 2021,” 27 July 2022, p. 334; and ICRC, “Physical Rehabilitation Programme: 2018 Annual Report,” 15 June 2019, p. 45.

225. See, World Education Myanmar Facebook page.

226. ICBL-CMC, Landmine Monitor 2022, 18 November 2022, see list of donors in online profile.

227. See previous Monitor reports.