

Section IV, Annex 3, Appendix C: Case Study Guidelines for UNMAS Contractors and Grantees

Peace and Security Cluster | 2019



Children receive risk education © UNMAS

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1. About Us

1.1 UNMAS

As a specialized service of the United Nations (UN), located within the Department of Peace Operations, the United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS) operates under UN legislative mandates of both the General Assembly and the Security Council, which has established UNMAS as an integral component of UN peace operations, including peacekeeping operations and special political missions. Through its unique coordination, operational and normative mandate, UNMAS works across the humanitarian-development-peace nexus to protect people from the threat of explosive ordnance, prevent resurgence of violence, strengthen national capacities and enable sustainable solutions to mine action until UN assistance is no longer requested. Mine action serves as a catalyst towards the reduction of humanitarian need, advancement of peace sustainment and achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

1.2 UNOPS

The United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) is the operational arm of the UN. UNOPS helps the UN and its partners provide peace and security, humanitarian and development solutions through providing services that cover project management, human resources, procurement and contract management services, as well as planning, implementation, risk management and oversight support. Over the past 20 years, UNOPS' Peace and Security Cluster (PSC), as the main implementation partner to UNMAS, has provided these services in the support and implementation of UNMAS programmes and projects around the world, in areas of mine action and broader explosive threat management.

2. About Case Studies

2.1 What is a case study?

A case study is a story about a person, group, or situation. The story provides an easily accessible overview of changes that have resulted from project activities, immediately or over a period of time.

Case studies enable UNMAS and UNOPS to monitor, learn from and communicate the results of our work. This includes gaining more insight into intended and unintended consequences and benefits delivered. By describing the value of mine action in terms other than metres squared or the number of items destroyed, these stories can illustrate the continued relevance and importance of mine action as a critical enabler of peace and security, and an accelerator of the SDGs.

These guidelines have been developed for contractors and grantees who submit case studies at regular intervals as part of their reporting obligations, throughout the lifespan of their contract or grant. This is different from a case study developed for evaluation purposes, which is a more in-depth piece of qualitative research.

2.2 Why do we need case studies?

UNMAS and UNOPS achieve their mandates by working in partnership with organizations that deliver activities that have been prioritized by UNMAS field programmes. Front-line delivery often gives your organization unique access to a rich pool of information, derived through community interactions and contextual observations, or learned through technical innovations. UNMAS and UNOPS use the information shared in your case studies to communicate successes and to capture lessons that feed into improving how we design and implement projects.

The stories told in your case studies feed into a number of important communications, which serve to highlight the progress made towards strategic commitments, including those outlined in [The United Nations Mine Action Strategy, 2019-2023](#), endorsed by Principals of the Inter-Agency Coordination Group on Mine Action (IACG-MA), as well as those found in the [UNMAS Strategic Plan 2019-2023](#).

Case studies put a human face to mine action, and highlight the importance of mine action as a vital precursor to humanitarian, development and peace operations. They provide compelling accounts of mine action operations in helping to meet the needs of conflict-affected populations, which further helps to maintain the engagement of the international community.

2.3 What sort of information do case studies capture?

The case study is divided into the following sections:



Situation: This section provides contextual and background information, which may include a brief history of the conflict and the resultant contamination. Here, we also look at the ‘need’ for action, what problems were being faced, by whom and why?

Action: Here, we explain which activities were completed to address the problems identified above (Situation) and the immediate achievements that were realized. This can include: the number of metres squared that were cleared; devices destroyed; and people trained. This section also documents the efforts made to ensure that a diverse group of people, including women, youth, and vulnerable populations, were consulted and involved in these activities.

Outcome: The purpose of this section is to describe what happened as a result of your actions, the consequences or benefits that arose, and the important lessons that were learned.

2.4 Examples

Situation	Action	Outcome
Explosive Risk Reduction		
“I was feeling nervous when herding my animals, as I was unsure which areas were safe.”	Risk education	“I feel confident about identifying potential hazards and informing others about it. I am now able to continue with my livelihood activities.”
Women were vulnerable to explosive risk when collecting water but it was difficult for risk education teams to reach the female audience due to cultural restrictions.	Risk education	Having teams with female and male educators, helped to reach all target groups in the community.
Community unable to cultivate land and produce food due to the presence of explosive hazards.	Clearance	Land released was used productively which boosted farmer family’s income. Family is now able to feed their children three meals a day.
Explosive hazards close to a medical facility prevented an NGO from establishing health care services for local population.	Explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) spot task	Medical facility is now accessible and the NGO is providing life-saving assistance to the sick and injured.
Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) feel insecure and are afraid of	Explosive detection dog (EDD) search	Weapons were located and removed from the IDP camp. Additional entry point

weapons being carried into Protection of Civilians sites.		control measures have increased sense of security.
Route suspected to be contaminated, inhibiting movement of peacekeeping patrols.	Route verification	Patrol was able to reach a remote location where human rights violations were recorded and protection services established.
Ammunition storage site was located in direct sunlight, next to a market, threatening the safety of civilians (predominantly female).	Weapons ammunition management (WAM)	Relocated and refurbished store ensures community is safe from the risk of an uncontrolled explosion.

3. Themes of Interest

Case studies may cover one or more of the themes below, all of which are of interest to UNMAS and UNOPS. The themes are not an exhaustive list; contractors and grantees may write stories about a wider variety of subjects and should consult with their focal points in the field to determine subjects that may be of specific interest.

3.1 Gender

Our operations are most effective when they take into account the different needs of women, girls, men and boys. We are interested to hear about the efforts that you made to ensure that women and girls participate in, and benefit equally from interventions.

Women, girls, men and boys often have distinct gender roles and responsibilities within a community. Consequently, they hold different decision-making power, mobility patterns, information and control over resources. These factors can influence a person's exposure to explosive hazards and the likelihood of them being included in risk education. For example: If it is the role of women to gather water, an explosive hazard in proximity to the nearest borehole may force women to walk further in search of a safer source, often putting them at increased risk of violence. In such contexts, prioritizing mine action activities to facilitate access to boreholes or water sources has a clear and tangible outcome for women and girls. Use your case studies to highlight the efforts that you made to consult women and girls during community liaison and risk education, and how the female perspective influenced the way in which work was prioritised. Tell us about any innovations or approaches that worked well, or generated lessons-learned.

UNMAS and UNOPS have set ambitious targets to increase the employment of women in mine action, especially in operational and leadership positions. We would like to learn about initiatives that your organisation has undertaken to increase gender diversity in your workforce. Collecting and sharing this data can improve wider visibility and understanding of the transformative impact of mine action activities. For more information and guidance about gender and mine action programmes please see https://unmas.org/sites/default/files/documents/mine_action_gender_guidelines_web.pdf

3.2 Youth

Security Council resolution (2250) defines youth as individuals aged 18-29 years. If your activities work to reduce the impact of explosive hazards on young people in this age bracket, or if you are targeting youth in another way, UNMAS and UNOPS would like to

hear about it. For example, in Mali and Somalia, UNMAS employs young women and men in UNMAS community-based teams, thus providing both livelihoods for young people in post-conflict contexts and enabling them to contribute to peacebuilding and improving community safety.

3.3 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

The SDGs are a set of global priorities and plans to build a better world for people and our planet by 2030. Adopted by all United Nations Member States in 2015, the SDGs are a call for action by all countries to promote prosperity, for all people, while protecting the environment. The SDGs are part of Resolution 70/1 of the United Nations General Assembly, "*Transforming our World: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*," also known as the "2030 Agenda." Mine action plays a critical role in the achievement of SDG targets and in building resilience in mine-affected countries. Of the 17 SDGs, twelve SDGs are of direct relevance to mine action, such as the contribution to 'promoting peaceful, just, and inclusive societies' (SDG 16). However, our work is also an accelerator of a large number of SDGs, enabling access to food, water, education, supporting the development of infrastructure and creating the conditions for economic growth. A comprehensive explanation on the link between mine action and Agenda 2030 can be found [here](#)¹, while a more specific outline on the link between mine action and individual SDGs can be found in [Annex 4](#). We are interested to hear how you believe your work has contributed to the the 2030 agenda.



¹Ursign Hofmann and Olaf Juergensen, *Leaving No One Behind: Mine Action and the Sustainable Development Goals*, (Geneva, UNDP, 2017).

3.4 Facilitating Humanitarian Response and Protection

In conflict or post-conflict settings, mine action activities are often central to establishing and maintaining access to people in need, whether in a natural disaster or a complex emergency. Refugees and IDPs fleeing war or persecution are particularly vulnerable and face heightened risks when moving through locations where they are unaware of the patterns of conflict and resultant contamination. Mine action activities can support safe freedom of movement for people in need, while also enabling them to access basic services and areas for relocation. We work in a number of contexts where life-saving assistance cannot reach people in need because of threats posed by explosive hazards on roads or in aerial food drop zones. In such circumstances mine action is a vital precursor for the delivery of humanitarian action, for example, when conducting survey or clearance activities to enable the delivery of food aid or the construction of health facilities. Consider developing a case study that illustrates how activities, such as risk education or land release, enabled humanitarian partners to deliver assistance, or ensured that affected communities could travel to safely access assistance or basic services.

3.5 Support to UN Peace Operations

Addressing risks posed by explosive hazards through mine action interventions is frequently integrated into a peacekeeping or special political mission mandate. Interventions may include identifying and removing explosive hazards, risk education, and enabling governments to develop appropriate structures and mechanisms to support communities affected. Additional mine action services provided within a peacekeeping context might include educating military and civilian components of the mission about explosive risks to ensure safe behavior and prevent casualties, support long- and short-duration patrols, security enhancement and entry point controls. Case studies, which describe how mine action enabled a UN Mission to deliver its mandate, help UNMAS to evidence its continued importance in this critical sphere of operations.

3.6 Capacity Building

For mine action efforts to be sustainable and inclusive, there must be an effective national capacity in-country. In most countries, and certainly those emerging from conflict, that capacity has to be built, sometimes from scratch. That process is called capacity building. Capacity building in this context has two major threads: (1) the creation of a national operational mine action capacity such as (but not limited to) mine clearance teams; and, (2) the creation of an institutional capacity to manage the mine action activities taking place in the country. When writing about capacity building, remember to incorporate other themes, including the inclusion of women in visible training roles and as participants, or promoting gender mainstreaming among national stakeholders.

3.7 Environmental Sustainability

What efforts did you make to advance sustainability in contract implementation? What were the challenges you encountered, if any, and how did you address them? For example, efforts to mitigate negative environmental impact which might include Air, Land, Water, Biodiversity, Energy, Materials, Waste, Global Climate or Disaster Risk Reduction. In your response to a UNOPS solicitation, you may have made certain commitments in relation to sustainability and you can use your case study to document the implementation of these planned interventions. Learn more on [UNOPS Sustainability Page](#).

4. Building your Case Study in Three Steps

4.1 Preparation

Once an idea for a case study has been identified and agreed with your UNMAS focal point in-country, the person or team appointed to gather information should begin by gathering some basic information about the area of operation. Some key points to consider are:

- **Know the background** that is relevant to the case study.
- **Identify who** you want to talk to and gather quotes from. UNMAS and UNOPS are interested in listening to a variety of voices. When planning to visit the targeted location, consider the times at which women and children may be available.
- **Make a list of questions.** You may change the questions when conducting the interview, as sometimes the conversation will evolve and go in a different direction.

4.2 Interview/conversation

When collecting and recording information for case studies, consider the following points:

Spend time with the person you are interviewing before the interview. Explain to them:

- The reasons for conducting the interview;
- the process and how long it will take; and,
- how the information will be used.

When interviewing, or taking a photo, always:

- Ask permission of a parent or guardian before interviewing or taking a photo of a child. Always interview a child in the presence of another adult. In line with the *Convention on the Rights of the Child*, all individuals below the age of 18 are classified as children regardless of the local age of majority.
- Obtain consent to use an individual's story, quotes, and any photographs.

Use open-ended questions that require more than a yes/no answer to encourage a person to describe their story. For example:

- Can you tell me about your situation?
- How has the presence of explosive hazards affected your life?

As opposed to:

- Do you think mines around the village are dangerous?

Additional considerations:

- Be curious and ask follow-up questions to get better quality information: e.g. “But why?”, “Can you give me more details?”
- Actively listen. You are there to hear their story. Try not to interrupt.
- Take several photos that illustrate the content of the interview (e.g. herding animals, going to school, pumping water from a well, etc.).
- Be sensitive and don’t push people for too much information. Stop the interview if the person feels uncomfortable.
- At the end, thank the interviewee for his/her time and information. Have an informal chat without taking notes. The interviewee may provide you with some interesting thoughts and insights when s/he is more relaxed.

4.3 Writing

Most importantly, use the golden rule of **Situation > Action > Outcome**

Before submission to the UNMAS field programme focal point in-country, the case study (including photographs) should be thoroughly reviewed to ensure the requisite content and quality is provided.

Do NOT:

- Use the whole interview in your case study. Use small parts of the interview to highlight important points.
- Use unusual vocabulary and technical jargon which may confuse readers.
- Exaggerate.



Students in South Sudan celebrate the International Day for Mine Awareness and Assistance in Mine Action.
© UN Photo / JC McIlwaine

Annex 1 - Case Study Template

Case Study			
Organization:		Task start/completion dates:	
Team:		Task Number:	
Location:			
Written by:	<i>Name, phone number, email address</i>		
Contact person		Submission date:	
Photo credit:			

Title: Consider the *activity*, *outcome* and *location*. For example: Route clearance facilitates the delivery of food aid in Jonglei, South Sudan.

Introduction:

- **Start with an eye-catching fact:** Explosive hazards are blocking deliveries of food aid needed to stave off severe hunger in some areas of South Sudan, where more than 7 million people need assistance.
- **Include quote:** “We had to halt the convoy carrying food aid to Pibor when there was a report of a landmine on the road ahead. We knew that communities needed the food we were carrying urgently,” (Bob Smith, WFP Programme Officer, South Sudan).

Situation:

- Describe the target location, why was this area prioritized for action, a brief history of conflict in the vicinity and the resultant contamination.
- Give information about the people your story focuses on; are they, agriculturalists, IDPs or host communities, aid workers, employees?
- What problem has the presence of explosive hazards presented to the person you are interviewing and the community they are from?

Action:

- Describe the activities that were carried out, being careful to explain technical terms.
- State the achievements that were made, using numbers (square metres, items destroyed, people trained, etc.), where relevant?
- What efforts did you make to involve women, girls and youth?

Outcome:

- What happened or is expected to occur after your activities? Describe the benefits to the target community or others (UN Mission or humanitarian staff)? Include quotes: “We were relieved that mine action teams were able to respond quickly to survey the road ahead and to facilitate safe passage so that we could deliver the food to people in need,” (Bob Smith, WFP Programme Officer, South Sudan). Describe any key lessons learned.

Annex 2 - Guidelines for Case Studies: Example Interview Questions

The below is provided as an example only and is developed with traditional mine action activities in mind. This will need to be tailored depending on the type of activities and subject under review.

1. Interviewee information			
Name:		Age:	
Gender:		Occupation:	
If interviewing child, was consent obtained from parent or guardian?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Was consent obtained to take and use photographs?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
2. Example of key questions to help guide the interview:			
Situation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have you always lived in this location? • Was there fighting here or in the location that you have come from and can you tell me about it? • Did you know that there were explosive hazards in this area; if so, how? • What is it like to live near or around explosive hazards? • What have you done to keep safe? • How has the presence of explosive hazards affected your life, your community or your family's life? • What do explosive hazards stop you and your family from doing? • Did you perceive any major obstacle/limitation/risk in relation to explosive hazards with regard to your gender? 		
Action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tell me about the mine activities that have happened in this area? • Who participated in the activities? • What did you learn, what did you observe? • How did you feel about the activities that were happening? 		
Outcome	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What has happened since the mine action activity? • How has the mine action activity affected your life, your community or your family's life? • What can you or your family do now that was more difficult before the mine action activities? • Have you discussed the mine action activities with anyone else, what did you say? 		
End	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do you have any suggestions for the improvement of the activities? • Do you have any questions? 		

Annex 3 - Guidelines for Case Studies: Photographs

Photographs are an important storytelling tool. They help convey key messages, impact and relevance.

A3.1 General Guidelines

To take good photographs you have to learn how to compose a picture, how to use natural light and how to work with the people you are photographing to get natural photos. Below are some helpful points to consider when taking photos.

- We cannot use photographs that are copied into a Word document. You must send your photographs as a JPEG file; the file name should link the photo to the case study document.
- Take and submit several photos for each case study.
- High-resolution photos are preferred: 1 MB and above.
- Take colour photos.
- It is important to represent diverse groups including women, girls, boys, and men. Stereotypical representations of women and men should also be avoided (e.g. only men demining, women cooking).
- No explicit content, such as nudity.

When taking photographs, please be explicitly mindful of the below considerations and consent requirements:

- **Always seek permission from parents or guardians of children before taking their photo.**
- **If you are working in a culturally sensitive or traditional environment, please secure permission from women before taking their photo.**
- **Avoid risks associated with taking pictures of sensitive sites such as military installations.**

A3.2 Context

- Make sure the photograph shows a sense of place and provides context. For example, take an image which shows how the beneficiary has benefitted from your work, by photographing the subject at work or play, with family, etc.
- Make sure you take several shots of each picture, as often the only way to find whether it is any good or not is once you can view them on a computer, rather than the camera's viewfinder.

Example: Which of the below shows that land has been cleared and released for productive use?



The picture on the left has no sense of 'place'. This could have been taken anywhere, and does not show the positive benefit of land being used for cultivation after clearance. The picture on the right shows farmers preparing the land for crop production.

A3.3 Framing

The key to taking a good photo is to make sure that your subject is clearly and evenly framed. Think about framing as a way of packaging information for your audience. It's important that you capture not only your subject, but his/her environment as well. But, make sure that he/she is clearly seen in the photo. You may be asked to take a close-up of your subject. This is OK, but make sure to accompany that image with others of him/her interacting with their environment, family, community, etc.

A3.4 Light

The best time to take photos is early in the morning (before 10.00) and later in the afternoon (after 16.00), when the light is not directly above you. If you must take a photo midday, make sure that the light is behind you as much as possible. Good lighting can be one of the most important factors in taking a great photo.

A3.5 Variety

You need different pictures to go with the different parts of the case study. Try and shoot as many aspects as possible, e.g. during the interview, while herding, travelling to work, etc. You can take staged shots, as well.

A3.6 Captions

Always write down information including **who, when, what, where and how**. This information should briefly explain the photo. With captions, readers can understand the situation people are in, while it also conveys a stronger message.

Include specific information such as: Names of the main people you photographed and interviewed; situations you have photographed; the name of the city, town or village; the country; the official name of any notable landmarks in the photo, such as a hospital or school; and any other qualifying information, such as geography or season, that you think would be relevant for the photo.

A3.7 Credits

It is important that all photographs are accompanied by credit information. Please provide the name of the organization and the photographer.

A3.8 Visibility

Make sure to include UNMAS visibility in pictures whenever possible. That means wearing UNMAS T-shirts and hats, and taking pictures where the UNMAS logo is visible.



A3.9 Safety

Photographs of mine action activities must be taken safely. Care must be taken not to contravene any technical Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs).

Annex 4 - Guidelines for Case Studies: Mine Action and the SDGs

Mine action and development initiatives contribute to the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goal (SDGs) in the following ways²:

Goal 1: End poverty in all its forms everywhere: Ensuring mine action contributes to sustainable jobs and livelihoods as well as enabling conditions for socio-economic development.

Goal 2: End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture: Prioritizing and linking mine action efforts to sustainable agricultural development, enabling previously contaminated land to be used for cultivation. Mine action can also open trading (and relief) routes and marketplaces, enabling better distribution and access to food.

Goal 3: Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages: Prioritizing mine action efforts that improve access to health services, as well as reducing landmine and ERW casualties, encourage better data collection and management regarding victims and survivors, and aiding survivor/victim assistance.

Goal 4: Ensure inclusive and quality education for all and promote lifelong learning: Prioritizing mine action programs that contribute to access to schools, and supporting mine risk education.

Goal 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls: Championing mainstreaming of gender considerations in mine action assessment, implementation, monitoring and evaluation.

Goal 6: Ensure access to water and sanitation for all: Prioritizing mine action efforts that improve access to water and sanitation services.

Goal 7: Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all: Prioritizing mine action efforts that contribute to sustainable energy and electrification access.

Goal 8: Promote inclusive and sustainable economic growth, employment and decent work for all: Prioritizing mine action efforts that catalyze and support economic growth and job creation, including for persons with disabilities, like landmine survivors/victims.

Goal 9: Build resilient infrastructure, promote sustainable industrialization and foster innovation: Prioritizing mine action efforts that open access to the development of crucial infrastructure.

Goal 10: Reduce inequality within and among countries: Designing mine action programmes that foster participation and inclusion of vulnerable and marginalized people, including survivors/victims.

Goal 11: Make cities inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable: Prioritizing urban mine action that make densely populated areas safer.

Goal 12: Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns: Developing mine action programmes that contribute to sustainable use of natural resources and effective waste management.

Goal 14: Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources: Prioritizing mine action projects that open access to ports and sustainable use of coastal regions.

Goal 15: Sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, halt and reverse land degradation, halt biodiversity loss: Prioritizing mine action programmes that aid in the management of forests and national parks; encouraging the use of demining techniques that limit damage to soil and biodiversity.

Goal 16: Promote just, peaceful and inclusive societies: Encouraging return of displaced people, opening freedom of movement in a post-conflict society, decreasing fear and threat of the “frozen violence” of landmines and other ERW. Mine action often plays the role of a confidence-building measure in post-conflict societies.

Goal 17: Revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development: Building linkages between stakeholders.

² UNDP, [Mine Action for Sustainable Development](#), (New York, UNDP, 2016), 47.