

Landmine Monitor



Myanmar/Burma Country Report, November 2018

Includes Cluster Munition Monitor 2018 Country Report for Myanmar/Burma

LANDMINE & CLUSTER MUNITION MONITOR

About this report

Landmine & Cluster Munition Monitor provides research for the *International Campaign to Ban Landmines* and the *Cluster Munition Coalition*. 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. The Cluster Munition Coalition is an international civil society campaign working to eradicate cluster munitions, prevent further casualties from these weapons and put an end for all time to the suffering they cause.

Landmine Monitor documents the implementation of the 1997 Ottawa Convention, or the Mine Ban Treaty. **Cluster Munition Monitor** documents the implementation of the 2008 Convention on Cluster Munitions. Both Landmine Monitor and Cluster Munition Monitor assess the efforts of the international community to resolve the crisis caused by these weapons.

As of 1 November 2018, 164 countries, over 80% of the world's governments, have ratified, or acceded to, the Mine Ban Treaty. 120 countries have signed, ratified, or acceded to, the Convention on Cluster Munitions. Myanmar/Burma has not yet joined either convention.

Landmine & Cluster Munition Monitor is not a technical treaty verifications system or a formal inspection regime. It is an effort by ordinary people to hold governments accountable to non-use of antipersonnel landmines and cluster munitions. It is meant to compliment the reporting requirements of countries which have ratified the treaties. Our reports seek to make transparent the state of the landmine and cluster munition crisis, and government policies or practices, in non-signatory states.

Landmine & Cluster Munition Monitor aims to promote and facilitate discussion within human society in order to reach the goal of a landmine and cluster munition free world.

Landmine & Cluster Munition Monitor works in good faith to provide factual information about the issue it is monitoring in order to benefit the world as a whole. It is critical, but constructive in its documentation and analysis.

Landmine & Cluster Munition Monitor Myanmar/Burma researcher for 2018 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

We acknowledge the generous financial support of Norwegian Peoples Aid for the printing of the Myanmar/Burma country report.

Cover Photo: Ms. San San Maw stepped on a landmine while foraging for bamboo in the mountains of Karen (Kayin) State. She now volunteers at the Victim Assistance Centre (VAC) in Kawkaik, supporting her fellow landmine survivors and other people living with disability in that township. She is trained to complete minor repairs for prosthetic limbs, she provides peer to peer counseling and she supports the rehabilitation team to provide community based functional rehabilitation.

Photo ©Mi Mi Khaing/HI (Humanity & Inclusion, the new name for Handicap International)

Landmine & Cluster Munition Monitor Myanmar/Burma

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1997 Nobel Peace Co-Laureate

Policy

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

Myanmar continued to express its support for the Mine Ban Treaty in the reporting period, but did not take any steps to accede to it. Myanmar continued to deny reports that government forces used antipersonnel landmines in 2017 and into 2018, despite evidence from the United Nations (UN) and others. (See *Use section below*)

In June 2018, a Myanmar Ministry of Defense official told the International Campaign to Ban Landmines (ICBL) that key stakeholders, particularly the military, are reviewing the possibility of Myanmar's accession to the Mine Ban Treaty.²

In late May 2018, Myanmar's Minister for International Cooperation, U Kyaw Tin, told the treaty's special envoy, Prince Mired Raad Zeid Al-Hussein of Jordan, that Myanmar would consider joining the treaty after the successful implementation of a nationwide ceasefire agreement by all parties.³ Prince Mired promoted the treaty with government officials and NGOs during his three-day visit to Myanmar.

In December 2017, Myanmar told Mine Ban Treaty States Parties that, "Myanmar supports the norms of the Convention." It called the treaty "the cornerstone of the effort to end the suffering and casualties caused by anti-personnel mines."⁴ Its representative, Ambassador U San Lwin, said Myanmar's participation as an observer in the Mine Ban Treaty's Sixteenth Meeting of States Parties in Vienna, Austria in December 2017, reflected "our keen interest in the work of the Convention." He claimed the "Myanmar Armed Forces is [sic] no longer using the landmines while safeguarding the life and property of its people in internal conflicts."⁵

At the UN General Assembly (UNGA) in October 2017, Myanmar said that the relevant officials were reviewing the Mine Ban Treaty to gain a better understanding of it with a view to the country joining in future.⁶ It said the Mine Ban Treaty prevents the "indiscriminate use of landmines...which can lead to vulnerability and serious humanitarian impact."⁷ However, the treaty prohibits any use of antipersonnel landmines by any actor in any circumstance.

Previously, in June 2017, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ministry of Defense officials told the ICBL that the government was actively considering acceding to the Mine Ban Treaty, but could not provide an estimated timeline for when Myanmar might join.⁸

¹The military junta ruling the country changed the name from Burma to Myanmar. Many ethnic groups in the country, and a number of states, still refer to the country as Burma. Internal state and division names are given in their common form, or with the ruling Union Solidarity Development Party (USDP) designation in parentheses, for example, Karenni (Kayah) state. Since 2009, the Monitor has used township names according to the UN Myanmar Information Management Unit (MIMU). For more information see the [MINU website](#).

²ICBL Landmine Monitor meeting with Col. Min Htike Hein, Deputy Permanent Secretary for the Minister of Defense, Ministry of Defense, Naypyitaw, 29 June 2018.

³"[Union Minister for International Cooperation U Kyaw Tin receives Prince Mired Ra'ad Al-Hussein, Special Envoy of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction \(Ottawa Convention\)](#)," *Global New Light of Myanmar*, 30 May 2018; and Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention, "[Mine Ban Convention Special Envoy to visit Myanmar](#)," Press Release, 24 May 2018.

⁴[Statement of Myanmar](#), Mine Ban Treaty Sixteenth Meeting of States Parties, Vienna, 21 December 2017.

⁵Ibid.

⁶Myanmar, 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. 18–19/29.

⁷Ibid.

⁸Landmine Monitor meetings with Kyaw Moe Tun, Director of International Organizations, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Naypyitaw, 26 June 2017; and with Lt. Col. Myo Win Aung, Judge Advocate General's office, Ministry of Defense, Naypyitaw, 26 June 2017. In July 2012, then Minister of Foreign Affairs, U Wunna Maung Lwin, stated that Myanmar

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On 4 April 2018, the International Day for Mine Action, the European Union's representative to Myanmar, Ambassador Kristian Schmidt, called on "all sides—the government, the Tatmadaw and the ethnic groups alike—to do the right thing for the country, for unity, for peace and justice for the next generations: stop laying mines, ban them and let's start the clean-up for a peaceful and prosperous future."⁹

Ambassador Schmidt made the call at an event in Myanmar's capital Naypyitaw organized by UNICEF, the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement and members of the national Mine Risk Working Group. During the event, UNICEF also called on the government of Myanmar to join the Mine Ban Treaty.¹⁰ Myanmar abstained from voting on UNGA Resolution 72/53 on 4 December 2017, which promotes universalization of the Mine Ban Treaty. Since 1997, Myanmar has abstained from voting on this annual UNGA resolution supporting the Mine Ban Treaty.¹¹

Myanmar has participated as an observer in several Meetings of States Parties to the Mine Ban Treaty, most recently in December 2017, but it has never attended a Mine Ban Treaty Review Conference.¹² Myanmar participated in intersessional meetings of Mine Ban Treaty in Geneva in 2013, 2014, and 2016.

In January 2018, Mine-Free Myanmar,¹³ (an initiative launched by the ICBL in 2003 to promote the landmine ban in Myanmar, including by calling for a halt to use of antipersonnel mines) held a press conference in Yangon to launch *Landmine Monitor 2017's* country report on Myanmar and distributed 1,500 Burmese-language translations of the report.¹⁴ In June 2018, Landmine Monitor worked with the UN to produce and disseminate an infographic outlining the impact of landmines in Myanmar.¹⁵

Production, stockpiling, and transfer

Myanmar Defense Products Industries known as "Ka Pa Sa" is a state enterprise located at Ngyaung Chay Dauk in western Pegu (Bago) division that produces fragmentation and blast antipersonnel mines, including mines with low metal content.¹⁶ In September 2016, government authorities in Myanmar confirmed that landmines were still being produced.¹⁷

was considering acceding to the Mine Ban Treaty. Press Release, "[Myanmar seriously considering landmine treaty as part of its state reforms](#)," Mine Ban Treaty Implementation Support Unit (ISU), 12 July 2012.

⁹"[EU ambassador calls on Myanmar to take action against anti-personnel use](#)," *EFE*, 4 April 2018.

¹⁰UNICEF, "[Landmines and explosive remnants of war threaten children and communities across Myanmar](#)," Press Release, 4 April 2018.

¹¹In 1996, Myanmar voted in favour of a UNGA resolution calling on governments to pursue an international agreement banning antipersonnel landmines.

¹²Myanmar previously attended Mine Ban Treaty Meetings of States Parties in 2003, 2006, and 2011–2013. It did not participate in the Mine Ban Treaty Review Conference held 2004, 2009, or 2014.

¹³The ICBL initiative was initially known as "Halt Mine Use in Burma/Myanmar." See, [Mine-Free Myanmar](#) website.

¹⁴"[2017 Myanmar/Burma Country Report released at Yangon Press Conference](#)," 11 January 2018. Audio recording of the press conference.

¹⁵"[Townships with Known Landmine Contamination \(2017\) and Casualties in Myanmar \(as of Dec 2016\)](#)," United Nations Myanmar Information Management Unit (MIMU), 30 May 2018. Infographic provides a 11-year overview of data from the Landmine Monitor (2007–2017). In 2018, the infographic was also available in [Burmese language](#) for the first time. MIMU reported to the Landmine Monitor that the landmine infographic has been one of their most requested products.

¹⁶Myanmar produces the MM1, which is modeled on the Chinese Type-59 stake-mounted fragmentation mine; the MM2, which is similar to the Chinese Type-58 blast mine; a Claymore-type directional fragmentation mine; and a copy of the US M14 plastic mine.

¹⁷Htoo Thant, "[Tatmadaw insists landmine use kept within reasonable minimum](#)," *Myanmar Times*, 13 September 2016.

Myanmar has also imported or otherwise received, obtained, and used antipersonnel mines manufactured in China, India, Italy, Russia (and the former Soviet Union), and the United States (US), as well as mines of unknown origin.¹⁸

There is no publicly available information on the types or quantities of antipersonnel mines in government possession, however Myanmar is believed to possess a significant stockpile.

Myanmar is not known to have exported or antipersonnel mines.¹⁹

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

Various non-state armed groups (NSAGs) in Myanmar have produced antipersonnel mines, including the Kachin Independence Army (KIA), Karen National Liberation Army (KNLA), Democratic Karen Benevolence Army (DKBA), Karenni Army, and United Wa State Army.

NSAGs have manufactured blast and fragmentation mines from locally available materials, sometimes referred to as improvised explosive devices or “IEDs.” Victim-activated explosive devices are considered improvised antipersonnel mines prohibited by the Mine Ban Treaty.

KNLA forces have reportedly received training to manufacture and use bounding antipersonnel mines.²⁰ Some NSAGs have also made Claymore-type directional fragmentation mines and antivehicle mines with antihandling devices.

Armed groups in Myanmar have also acquired mines by removing mines laid by others, seizing government (Tatmadaw) stocks, and by obtaining them from the clandestine arms market.²¹

Use

Since the publication of its first annual report in 1999, Landmine Monitor has consistently documented new use of antipersonnel mines by government armed forces known as “Tatmadaw” and by various NSAGs. This mine use continued during this reporting period, which covers calendar year 2017 and the first three-quarters of 2018.

New use by government forces

Landmine Monitor 2017 documented Tatmadaw use of antipersonnel mines along the country’s border with Bangladesh in 2017, particularly during August and September. Since then, additional reports from various sources provide evidence of further government mine use along the border, but the full extent of mine use is unknown as most border areas are inaccessible to media, NGOs and others from civil society.

In June 2018, Landmine Monitor reviewed photographs shared by the KIA and provided to a humanitarian group working in Myanmar. The photographs show mines that KIA forces reported

¹⁸See, [Landmine Monitor Report 2004](#), p. 938. The mines include: Chinese Types-58, -59, -69, -72A; Soviet POMZ-2, POMZ-2M, PMN-1, PMD-6; US M14, M16A1, M18; and Indian/British LTM-73, LTM-76.

¹⁹In 1999, Myanmar’s representative to the UN stated that the country was supportive of banning exports of antipersonnel mines, however, no formal moratorium or export ban has been proclaimed. See, [Landmine Monitor Report 2000](#), p. 469.

²⁰According to a US cable released by Wikileaks in August 2011, in December 2006 during an interview with US Embassy officials a Karen politician indicated that “in 2005 a foreign expert trained the KNLA on how to manufacture ‘Bouncing Betty’ anti-personnel mines, packed with ball bearings. The KNLA claims all of its brigades now know how to produce this ‘new’ landmine. KNLA officers claim they use them only in forward areas to slow the Burmese Army’s advance into traditional KNU territory. The source said the new mines are much more lethal than earlier KNLA mines that tended to maim rather than kill.” “[06RANGOON1767, BURMA REGIME AND KAREN MISTRUST CONTINUES](#),” US Department of State cable dated 4 December 2006, released by Wikileaks on 30 August 2011.

²¹*Landmine Monitor Report 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](#), p. 1013.

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they had cleared from the villages of Gauri Bum, Man Htu Bum, and Uloi Bai in Danai township, Kachin state. One photograph shows approximately 80 M14 and MM2 antipersonnel mines with markings indicating they were manufactured by the government of Myanmar. The KIA claimed that the Tatmadaw laid the mines in April and May 2018, when its forces left the villages they previously occupied. It said that two of its soldiers were injured while clearing the mines. It said that the KIA also cleared 20 landmines in Injang Yang township that it alleged were laid by Tatmadaw's Light Infantry Division 33 before its withdrawal from the area.²²

Landmine Monitor showed the KIA photographs to a Myanmar Ministry of Defense official in June 2018 and requested comment. The official denied government responsibility for using the antipersonnel mines and said the ones photographed could be copies of government-made mines made and planted by NSAGs.²³ He also said the photographs showed some antivehicle mines and commented that government forces do not use antivehicle mines against NSAGs because NSAG do not use vehicles.²⁴

Previous Use by Government Forces

In September 2017, Landmine Monitor reported that several organizations independently published evidence that showed Myanmar government forces were using antipersonnel landmines along the country's border with Bangladesh. The mine use began in late August, when Myanmar government forces began a campaign of ethnic cleansing against the Rohingya population, causing more than 700,000 people to flee to neighboring Bangladesh. Landmine Monitor reported the newly mined areas were located between Maungdaw township in Myanmar and Bandarban district in Bangladesh, two major land crossing routes between the countries.²⁵

An October 2017 report by the UN Office of the High Commissioner on Human Rights found that "mines were deliberately planted by the Myanmar security forces after 23 August 2017 along the border in an attempt to prevent the Rohingya refugees from returning to Myanmar. Information received by the Team referred to the use of landmines and to incidents of people stepping on mines whilst fleeing, or attempting to return to Myanmar to check on other missing family members from 25 August onwards. They were either killed instantly, or suffered serious injuries. The Cox's Bazar District Hospital and other medical facilities confirmed the treatment of mine injuries."²⁶

A report issued by the Independent International Fact-Finding Mission on Myanmar—established by the Human Rights Council in March 2017—found the Mission had "reasonable grounds to conclude that landmines were planted by the Tatmadaw, both in the border regions as well as within northern

²²The Free Burma Rangers published the photographs. See, Free Burma Rangers, "[Burma Army Laying Landmines in Civilian Areas](#)," 23 June 2018.

²³Landmine Monitor meeting with Col. (rtd) Min Htike Hein, Deputy Permanent Secretary for the Minister of Defense, Ministry of Defense, Naypyitaw, 29 June 2018.

²⁴Of the six photographs, one photograph showed a single VS 1.6 Italian-made antivehicle mine. The rest show Ka Pa Sa-manufactured antipersonnel mines.

²⁵According to Landmine Monitor, local researchers interviewing and assisting displaced Rohingya civilians as they crossed into Bangladesh on 28 August 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 these researchers, the mines were emplaced within Taung Pyo Let Yar village tract of Maungdaw township, adjacent to border pillar No. 31 in Bangladesh, an area that demarcates the beginning of the land border between Bangladesh and Myanmar. Email and phone interviews with researchers working with an NGO who wished to remain anonymous, 17 September 2017.

²⁶According to the report, "The Team was informed that until 23 August 2017, the Myanmar and Bangladesh border guards conducted joint patrols along the international border between Bangladesh and Myanmar and that it was therefore highly unlikely that mines were planted before 23 August due to the likelihood of real danger for army personnel of both sides that they would step onto such an explosive device." OHCHR, "Mission report of OHCHR rapid response mission to Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh, 13–24 September 2017," 11 October 2017, pp. 9–10.

Rakhine state, as part of the “clearance operations” with the intended or foreseeable effect of injuring or killing Rohingya civilians fleeing to Bangladesh. Further, it seems likely that new anti-personnel mines were placed in border areas as part of a deliberate and planned strategy of dissuading Rohingya refugees from attempting to return to Myanmar.”²⁷

On 21 November 2017, a wild elephant died in Bangladesh’s Bandarban district and Bangladeshi authorities attributed the cause of death to a landmine emplaced along the border.²⁸ Myanmar military forces used landmines along the Bangladesh border earlier in 2017. In July 2017, three farmers were killed and one injured by a mine allegedly laid by the Myanmar military at Pyanug Paik village in Maungdaw township.²⁹ In May, Amnesty International reported on Myanmar military forces use of antipersonnel landmines in areas of Kachin and northern Shan states.³⁰ In April 2017, the Border Guard Forces under the command of the Myanmar Army warned locals from using the road from Meh Th’Waw to Myaing Gyi Ngu because the edges of the road had been mined.³¹ In April 2016, four Rohingya from Maungdaw township were injured and one killed by a landmine after they were hired by the Myanmar Army to work on the border fence near border pillar 61. The injured were treated Buthidang Hospital.³²

Past use of antipersonnel mines along this border has been documented in previous Landmine Monitor reports.³³

There allegations of new mine use by Myanmar military forces in other parts of the country during 2018, but Landmine Monitor was not able to independently verify these claims and determine the forces responsible.

In February 2018, the Indian Army reportedly cleared landmines laid along its border with Chin state of Myanmar that it claimed were laid sometime between late 2017 and early 2018 by either the Myanmar Army or NSAG the Arakan Army. The mines claimed casualties in 2017 and 2018.³⁴

²⁷Human 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.

²⁸Anwar Hussain, “[Myanmar army’s landmines put elephants at risk](#),” *Dhaka Tribune*, 26 November 2017.

²⁹“[Rohingya farmers victims of fatal injury in land mine explosion in Northern Maungdaw](#),” *Arakan TV*, 15 July 2017. Photographic evidence included with reports, however independent verification was not possible. See also, Thar Shwe Oo, “[Landmine kills three in Maungdaw](#),” *Eleven Myanmar*, 16 July 2017; and Moe Myint, “[Landmine Explosion Kills Teenager, Two Men in Rakhine](#),” *The Irrawaddy*, 16 July 2017.

³⁰Amnesty International, “[All the Civilians Suffer: Conflict, Displacement and abuse in Northern Myanmar](#),” 14 June 2017, p. 32.

³¹Unpublished information provided to the Landmine Monitor by the Karen Human Rights Group, 6 September 2017.

³²“[Border Landmine Kills and Injures Rohingyas](#),” *Kaladan Press*, 19 April 2016.

³³A massive outflow of Rohingya people, nearly a quarter of a million, from Northern Rakhine State (NRS) occurred in 1991 and 1992. Following widespread condemnation of Burma at that time by the Muslim world, Myanmar’s armed forces emplaced a significant minefield along the entire length of its border with Bangladesh. Bangladesh officials and humanitarian workers stated at the time that Burma’s boundary minefield was laid for the purpose of deterring further flight out of the country by the Rohingya, and also to harass cross border movement by several Rohingya and Rakhine armed groups active at that time. See, *Landmine Monitor 2000*, “[Burma Country Report](#).” In the early 1990s, several armed groups existed in that border area, including the Rohingya Solidarity Organization, the Arakan Rohingya National Organization, the Arakan Army, and the Arakan Liberation Army. Further mine laying occurred in later years. See, Landmine Monitor, “Country Profile: Myanmar/Burma: Ban Policy profiles,” for [2013](#), [2014](#), and [2015](#).

³⁴Guwahati Nyooz, “[Bomb experts defuse mines along Myanmar border in Mizoram](#),” *Times of India*, 16 February 2018. See also, “[Land Mines in Mizoram-Myanmar border cause rising casualties](#),” *The Northeast Today*, 25 January 2018; and Lun Min Mang, “[Villager killed by landmine in Paletwa, refugees flee to India](#),” *Myanmar Times*, 30 November 2017.

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Atrocity/forced labour mine clearance

Landmine Monitor has found evidence that military forces in Myanmar have continued the practice of using humans to detonate landmines in 2018 in grave violation of international humanitarian and human rights law.³⁵

A September 2018 report by the Independent International Fact-Finding Mission on Myanmar received multiple, detailed accounts of forced laborers being made to walk at the front of the Tatmadaw columns when travelling through the forest in areas of active conflict. Several victims of forced labor said they witnessed other civilians being injured or killed by landmines and told the Mission that they were put at the front to act as “human mine sweepers.”³⁶

In May 2018, the Kachin Women’s Association Thailand reported that villagers from Lai Nawng Khu Kachin state’s Hpakant township fled their homes on 11 April 2018 after a rumor of armed confrontations between Tatmadaw and KIA forces. After spending two nights in the forest, Tatmadaw forces from Light Infantry Battalion 424 found and questioned them. Then the Tatmadaw troops ordered the villagers to walk in front of them in single file. A villager at the front of the column named Po Shan was subsequently wounded by a landmine and villagers saw him carried away, but is not known if he survived.³⁷

In May 2018, Sai Htun Nyan, a Shan state Member of Parliament for Kyaukme Township claimed that villagers from Taw Sang in his township of Kyaukme were forced to walk ahead of a Myanmar Army infantry column on 3 May 2018, resulting in landmine casualties. He reportedly stated that people from in his constituency had provided him with accounts detailing how they were forced to walk in front of military units through minefields. He said the Myanmar Army employs this practice the most but NSAG have also done so.³⁸ In November 2017, according to testimony collected by the Karen Human Rights Group, a resident of T’Kwee Klah village in Karen state’s Hlaingbwe township served as a porter for the Border Guard Forces (BGF) for almost two months and was made to walk in front of BGF soldiers through mined areas.³⁹ In October 2017, according to testimonies collected by the Karen Human Rights Group, BGF Battalions 1013 and 1014 forced residents of Kwee Law Ploh, Meh Th’Moo, Kler Day, Yaw Poh, and Kloo Htaw villages in Hlaingbwe township to work as porters in mined areas.⁴⁰

Use by non-state armed groups

Many non-state armed groups (NSAGs) have used antipersonnel mines in Myanmar since 1999. Some previously known mine users no longer exist or no longer use mines. However, there were

³⁵Over the past two decades, Landmine Monitor has reported disturbing evidence that Myanmar military have forced civilians to clear antipersonnel mines without training or protective equipment or forced civilians to guide or carry equipment for the military 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.

³⁶Human Rights Council, “[Report of the detailed findings of the Independent International Fact-Finding Mission on Myanmar](#),” A/HRC/39/CRP.2, 17 September 2018.

³⁷Kachin Women’s Association Thailand, “[Burma Army commits war crimes against Kachin IDPs: blocking access to refuge, using as human shields and minesweepers, indiscriminate shelling, looting](#),” 14 May 2018; and subsequent clarification emails from San Htoi, Kachin Women’s Association Thailand, 2 July 2018.

³⁸Lawi Weng, “[Shan State Parliament Refuses to Let Lawmaker Raise ‘Human Shield’ Allegations](#),” *The Irrawaddy*, 1 June 2018.

³⁹Karen Human Rights Group, “[Interview #17-131-A4-I1](#),” published 8 June 2018. There is no official governmental document that defines a Border Guard Force (BGF), however they have a military structure parallel to the Myanmar Army. The BGF commander is from an ethnic armed group, as are many of the rank and file. BGF are supposedly under the command of the Myanmar army, however they sometimes appear to carry out independent activities.

⁴⁰Karen Human Rights Group, “[Ongoing fighting, displacement, landmines, porter demands, and child recruitment in Hlaingbwe Township, Hpa-an District, October and November 2017](#),” 13 December 2017.

several reports that the four NSAG comprising the Northern Alliance group—KIA, Kokang Army, Arakan Army and the Ta'ang National Liberation Army (TNLA)—used antipersonnel landmines in their operation against Myanmar armed forces during the reporting period. Mine use by the Democratic Karen Benevolent Army (DKBA) and Karen National Liberation Army (KNLA) was also recorded.

Most new use was reported in Kachin, Kayin, Rakhine, and Shan states:

- In June 2018, residents of Kyaukme township in Shan state claimed that TNLA forces had warned them not to travel in a certain area due to the danger posed by newly emplaced landmines.⁴¹
- In March-April 2018, KNLA forces laid mines in Kay Pu and Ler Mu Plaw after increased Tatmadaw activity in the area and villagers lost several livestock as a result, according to a local NGO.⁴²
- In April 2018, the KIA announced that it was laying landmines in Kachin state's Hukawng valley in Tanai township.⁴³
- In December 2017, Myanmar's Ministry of Defense claimed that the KIA had laid mines in the townships of Bhamo, Hpakant, Mohnyin and Tanai in Kachin state.⁴⁴
- In November 2017, the Karen Human Rights Group (KHRG) received information that a village leader was killed by a landmine in Hlaingbwe Township in mid-2016 after a DKBA splinter group laid mines in the path to a meeting it had scheduled with the village leader.⁴⁵
- In June 2017, a local administrator in Tarlaw in Myitkyina township in Kachin state said the KIA had laid landmines near the town, causing civilian casualties as well as the loss of livestock.⁴⁶
- In 2011, the government of Myanmar announced its intent to conclude peace agreements with NSAGs operating in the country. On 15 October 2015, eight ethnic armed groups signed a nationwide ceasefire accord with the government, committing to "end planting of mines" and "cooperate on the process of clearing all landmines." All the groups—two factions of the Karen National Union, the Restoration Council for Shan State, the Arakan Liberation Party, the Pao National Liberation Organization, the All Burma Students Democratic Front, the Chin National Front, and the Democratic Karen Benevolent Army—had previously used landmines.⁴⁷ In February 2018, the New Mon State Party and the Lahu Democratic Union joined the nationwide ceasefire accord, bringing the number of ethnic armed groups in the agreement to ten.⁴⁸
- In the past, some armed groups and former armed groups unilaterally renounced antipersonnel mine use by signing the Deed of Commitment administered by the Swiss NGO Geneva Call.⁴⁹ The Palaung State Liberation Front (PSLF) signed the Deed of Commitment in 2007 and its

⁴¹Lawi Weng, "3 Civilians Reportedly Killed by Landmines in Shan State in June," *The Irrawaddy*, 8 July 2018.

⁴²"KHRG Submission to Landmine Monitor," September 2018, unpublished.

⁴³Lawi Weng, "[KIA Raids Tatmadaw Base, Claims to Detain More than a Dozen Troops](#)," *The Irrawaddy*, 9 April 2018.

⁴⁴Lawi Weng, "[Army Shelling Seen Signaling Start of New Offensive in Kachin, Shan States](#)," *The Irrawaddy*, 14 December 2017.

⁴⁵"KHRG Submission to Landmine Monitor," September 2018, unpublished.

⁴⁶Tun Lin Aung, "[Landmines scare Myitkyina farmers](#)," *Eleven Myanmar*, 2 June 2017.

⁴⁷"[Peace Deal Signed](#)," *Global New Light of Myanmar*, 16 October 2015, p. 1. Each of the political organizations that signed the ceasefire agreement has an armed wing. The armed wing of the KNU factions is the KNLA, the RCSS is the political organization of the Shan State Army South, the ALP has its Arakan Liberation Army, the PNLO has its Pao National Liberation Army, and the CNF has the Chin National Army. The other two groups have the same name for their armed organizations.

⁴⁸"[Two ethnic armed groups sign ceasefire agreement in Nay Pyi Taw](#)," *Global New Light of Myanmar*, 14 February 2018.

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armed wing, the TNLA, has previously promised to refrain from mine use.⁵⁰ In June 2017, the TNLA denied allegations of new mine use and affirmed that the TNLA has not used landmines since signing the Deed of Commitment.⁵¹

• Responses to new landmine use

In the reporting period, various Myanmar government officials either admitted or denied that government forces are using antipersonnel landmines. At the treaty's Sixteenth Meeting of States Parties in December 2017 the Myanmar government representative stated that "the "Myanmar Armed Forces is no longer using the landmines while safeguarding the life and property of its people in internal conflicts."⁵² However, in June 2018, a Ministry of Defense official told Landmine Monitor that the Myanmar armed forces are still using antipersonnel landmines, but said the use is strictly for "self-defense" purposes and always "well-mapped."⁵³

Myanmar's NSAGs tend to blame government forces army or each other for using antipersonnel mines.⁵⁴ However, the KIA defended its production and use of improvised landmines in the past year. Information Chief Colonel Naw Bu said in a January 2018 media interview that the KIA use antipersonnel mines "on paths approaching our frontline camps and around our headquarters." He justified the use, stating, "We only plant mines in the conflict area and do not plant mines in places where civilians move."⁵⁵

The use of landmines in Myanmar has been widely condemned.

At the Human Rights Council on 11 September 2017, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein stated that he was "appalled by reports that the Myanmar authorities have now begun to lay landmines along the border with Bangladesh." In March 2017, the UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Myanmar called on all parties to "immediately cease using landmines." In August 2018, the UN Human Rights Council reported on how the presence of landmines has impeded the safe return of displaced persons in Kachin and Shan states.⁵⁶

In September 2017, the President of Mine Ban Treaty's Sixteenth Meeting of States Parties, Ambassador Thomas Hajnoczi of Austria, expressed grave concern at the new use of landmines in Myanmar and said he had asked the government of Myanmar to "clarify the situation and consider an independent fact-finding mission." In December 2017, the final report of the Mine Ban Treaty Sixteenth Meeting of States Parties states that it "condemned the use of anti-personnel mines by any actor."⁵⁷

⁴⁹In the past, a few armed groups and former-armed groups, unilaterally renounced the use of antipersonnel mines by signing the Deed of Commitment administered by the Swiss NGO, Geneva Call. The Chin National Front/Chin National Army renounced use in July 2006. The Arakan Rohingya National Organization and the National United Party of Arakan, both now militarily defunct, renounced use in October 2003. The Lahu Democratic Front (LDF), Palaung State Liberation Army, and PPLO/Pa'O Peoples Liberation Army (PPLA) renounced use in April 2007. In a June 2010 report, Geneva Call noted that LDF and the PPLA had disbanded.

⁵⁰Since 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.

⁵¹Amnesty International, "[All the Civilians Suffer: Conflict, Displacement and abuse in Northern Myanmar](#)," 14 June 2017, p. 44.

⁵²[Statement of Myanmar](#), Mine Ban Treaty Sixteenth Meeting of States Parties, Vienna, 21 December 2017.

⁵³Landmine Monitor meeting with Col. (rtd) Min Htike Hein, Ministry of Defense, Naypyitaw, 29 June 2018.

⁵⁴Lawi Weng, "[3 Civilians Reportedly Killed by Landmines in Shan State in June](#)," *The Irrawaddy*, 8 July 2018.

⁵⁵Nang Lwin Hnin Pwint, "[Mined areas increase to 11 Townships-original in Burmese language](#)," *The Irrawaddy*, 13 January 2018.

⁵⁶Human Rights Council, "[Report of the Independent International Fact-Finding Mission on Myanmar](#)," 28 August 2018.

⁵⁷"[Final report: Mine Ban Treaty Sixteenth Meeting of States Parties](#)," APLC/MSP.16/2017/11, 22 December 2017.

Bangladesh, a State Party to the Mine Ban Treaty, has condemned the use of antipersonnel landmines by Myanmar.⁵⁸ At the UN on 21 September 2017, the Prime Minister of Bangladesh, Sheikh Hasina, stated, “We are horrified to see that the Myanmar authorities are laying landmines along their stretch of the border to prevent the Rohingya from returning to Myanmar.”⁵⁹ There is no evidence to indicate that Bangladesh has laid antipersonnel mines on its side of the border. During a 2 October 2017 high-level meeting between Bangladesh and Myanmar authorities, Bangladesh’s Home Minister, Asaduzzaman Khan Kamal, reportedly asked Myanmar’s military to stop laying landmines along the border with Bangladesh. She told media that, “I raised the issue of planting land mines along the zero line. I clearly told the honorable minister that, according to international law, Myanmar cannot plant land mines along the border. This is illegal.”⁶⁰

The ICBL has strongly condemned the new use of landmines in Myanmar, stating, “There can be no justification for using such indiscriminate weapons, which are harming and killing civilians fleeing their homes.”

Calls to end mine use and clear landmines have become more common from within Myanmar in recent years. In April 2018, Shan state MP, Daw Nan Khin Htar Yee, said she was saddened that Myanmar has not signed the Mine Ban Treaty and pledged to encourage the government to sign.⁶¹ At the Second Union Peace Conference in May 2017, the head of the Union-level Joint Ceasefire Monitoring Committee urged the public to call on local officials to clear landmines and unexploded ordnance.⁶² In January 2017, the Lower House Member of Parliament for Manton township issued a statement condemning the use of landmines in armed conflict between the Myanmar Army and NSAGs in Shan state and called on all parties to stop using landmines.⁶³

⁵⁸Bangladesh, “[Statement under Thematic Discussion on "Conventional Weapons" in the First Committee of the 72nd session of the UN General Assembly on Wednesday, 18 October 2017](#),” New York, 18 October 2017.

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⁶⁰“[Stop Landmines, Airspace Violations, Bangladesh Minister told Myanmar Delegation](#),” *Radio Free Asia*, 5 October 2017.

⁶¹Pyae Thet Phyoe, “[Government to go slow on EU landmine aid offer](#),” *Myanmar Times*, 6 April 2018.

⁶²Saw Nyunt Thang, “[Panglong fails to address need for landmine clearance agreements](#),” *Karen News*, 30 May 2017.

⁶³Nyein Zaw Lin, “[MP denounces collateral damage and landmine danger](#),” *Myanmar Times*, 25 January 2017.

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Casualties		
All known casualties by end 2017	4,193 (537 killed; 3,538 injured; 118 unknown) mine/ explosive remnants of war (ERW) casualties since 1999	
Casualties in 2017 ⁶⁴		
Annual total	202	Decrease from 298 in 2016
Survival outcome	48 killed; 154 injured	
Device type causing casualties	161 antipersonnel mines/improvised antipersonnel mine (victim-activated improvised explosive devices, IEDs); 1 antivehicle mine; 3 ERW; 37 undifferentiated mines/ERW	
Civilian status	At least 11 military	
Age and gender	At least 110 male; including 45 boys	At least 20 female: including 7 girls

In 2017, there were at least 202 mine/ERW casualties in the Republic of the Union of Myanmar based on information provided by NGOs, United Nations (UN) agencies, the ICRC, and other organizations, as well as by state and independent media reports. The vast majority of casualties were civilian, with just 11 casualties recorded as having been involved in military activities in 2017. Of the total casualties for 2017, at least 54 occurred in Kachin state, 37 in Rakhine state, and 67 in Shan state.

The 2017 casualty total for Myanmar is a decrease from the 298 mine/ERW casualties recorded for Myanmar in 2016. , The 2017 total was however similar to the 159 casualties recorded for 2015 which was again a significant decrease from the 251 mine/ERW casualties recorded for 2014. It is slightly higher number than the 176 recorded by UNICEF for 2017.⁶⁵

The actual total number of casualties is expected to be much higher. Although the presence of a number of mine action actors and coverage of victim assistance programs increased, no national systematic collection of casualty data occurred. Due to the lack of an official data collection mechanism, the absence of any basic reporting format or means of sharing data, and the varying sources of annual data available to the Monitor, reporting is believed not to reflect the full extent of mine/ERW incidents and casualties in the country.⁶⁶

The numbers of military and other combatant casualties remain unknown, but is believed to be substantial. A Ministry of Defense official stated to Landmine Monitor that landmines were the chief cause of death and injury for the Tatmadaw (government military forces) over any other cause, however he said that if he revealed the figure “it would give a psychological weapon to our enemies.”⁶⁷ Past reporting by the Monitor has indicated that there are a significant number of military casualties, but such military records remain unavailable to the public.⁶⁸

⁶⁴Unless noted otherwise, Monitor casualty data for 2016 is from a combined dataset of published and unpublished sources. For 110 casualties the age group and sex was not reported.

⁶⁵Nyein Nyein, “[Landmine Campaigners Urge Action as Casualties Continue to Rise](#),” *The Irrawaddy*, 4 April 2018. Of the 176 casualties reported by UNICEF, 52 died and 124 were injured. UNICEF stated that women and children accounted for 43% of the casualties. Landmine Monitor includes UNICEF and UNHCR data and has been crosschecked for duplicate reporting.

⁶⁶See also, Roger Fasth and Pascal Simon (Danish Demining Group), “[Mine Action in Myanmar](#),” *The Journal of Mine and ERW Action*, Issue 19.2, July 2015.

⁶⁷Landmine Monitor meeting with Col. (rtd) Min Htike Hein, Deputy Permanent Secretary for the Minister of Defence, Ministry of Defence, Naypyitaw, 29 June 2018.

⁶⁸See the 2009 edition of the Monitor report for Myanmar available on the [Monitor website](#). Unprecedented levels of information on military casualties were received in 2008 from the State Peace and Development Council; 508 military casualties were identified. Information from this source has not been made available any other year.

In 2018, some government officials began to release some limited information on landmine casualties, but it was not reported how the data was compiled, and the figures were not comprehensive. For example, in August 2018, Kachin state's police were reported to have recorded eight deaths and 74 injuries from landmines since January 2018.⁶⁹ In June 2018, Shan state Minister of Bamar Affairs Dr. Aung Than Maung said 604 people were injured and 95 killed by landmines in Myanmar from 2014 to April 2018, stating he received the statistic from the Myanmar Red Cross Society.⁷⁰ According to the Kachin Independence Organization, from January to May 2018, 13 civilians were killed and 39 were injured by landmines.⁷¹

Furthermore, previously it was reported that the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief, and Resettlement had stated that landmines had injured or killed 298 people in Myanmar in 2015 and 2016, and that there was one landmine casualty "every three days." The report also cited the ministry as saying, "One in three landmine victims is a child, and one in every four is killed."⁷² In August 2016, the Ministry of Health and Sports released data on landmine fatalities for the first time. The ministry reported that 101 people had died as a result of antipersonnel landmine incidents in Myanmar during the 18-month period from January 2015 to June 2016. Of that total, 74 deaths due to landmines occurred in Kachin state, 14 in Shan state, 11 in Chin state, and one each in Kayah and Rakhine states. It appears that this number includes only civilian fatalities and not military and other combatants killed. The Ministry of Health and Sports did not provide data on the number of people injured.⁷³

As in all previous years, the available data contained insufficient detail to distinguish trends or to ensure that the data for all casualties was correctly recorded by the source. The actual number of casualties is likely to be much higher.

The total number of casualties in Myanmar is unknown. The Monitor reported annual casualty figures of 4,193 (537 killed; 3,538 injured; 118 unknown) between 1999 and the end of 2017.

Another elephant landmine casualty was reported in November 2017. Bangladeshi authorities believed the an elephant died due to stepping on landmines laid by Myanmar forces on the shared border. Bangladesh Forest Department authorities stated that the elephant herd depended on cross-border migration, and that the recently laid mines could threaten their continued existence.⁷⁴

⁶⁹Tun Lin Aung, "[Kachin state is in danger of landmine](#)," *Myanmar Eleven*, 6 August 2018.

⁷⁰Ying Tai, "[Shan State, Kachin State record highest number of landmine fatalities](#)," *Shan Herald Agency for News*, 29 June 2018.

⁷¹"[The 7th Anniversary of the Renewed Kachin War: An Update](#)," *Kachinland News*, 9 June 2018.

⁷²"[On Mine Awareness Day, Myanmar govt allocates \\$6m for landmine clearance](#)," *Coconuts Yangon*, 5 April 2017.

⁷³"[Over 100 landmine fatalities since January 2015](#)," *Global New Light of Myanmar*, 19 August 2016.

⁷⁴Anwar Hussain, "[Myanmar army's landmines put elephants at risk](#)," *Dhaka Tribune* (Chittagong), 26 November 2017.

Victim assistance planning and coordination

Government focal point	Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief, and Resettlement, department of social welfare and persons with disabilities
Coordination mechanisms	The National Victim Assistance Technical Group, coordinated by Humanity and Inclusion (HI) gathers national and international victim assistance actors under the umbrella of the National Mine Risk Working Group (MRWG) chaired by the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement.
Disability sector integration	A representative of the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief, and Resettlement reported that Myanmar was taking an integrated approach towards victim assistance, based on the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), in its national disability law and national social protection strategy. ⁷⁵
Survivor inclusion and participation	No direct representation of mine/ERW victims, but survivors belong to broader DPOs that participate in various coordination roles.

In June 2017, a national consultation on disability statistics and Incheon Strategy indicators was organized by the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) in cooperation with the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement. The consultation reviewed the national statistical system to assess progress, challenges, and gaps in disability policy and data collection.⁷⁶

In 2015, Danish Deming Group/Danish Refugee Council (DDG/DRC) conducted a “Landmine and Explosive Remnants of War Victims Survey” in Kachin and Kayah states that incorporated needs assessment and evaluation of opportunities for possible future activities. Survey results continued to be shared in 2018.⁷⁷

Laws and policies

In July 2018 the Ministry of Social Welfare, Rescue and Resettlement released the publication of the long-awaited rules regulations for the Disability Rights Law that was enacted in June 2015. The rules and regulations were adopted the ministry in December 2017 more than two years after the law was enacted.⁷⁸ Legislation prohibits discrimination against persons with physical, sensory, hearing, intellectual, and mental disabilities in employment, education, access to healthcare, the judicial system, or in the provision of other state services. It also directs the government to assure that persons with disabilities have easy access to public transportation.⁷⁹

In November 2017, the Myanmar government began disbursing a monthly allowance to people with disabilities in nine townships in four states as a pilot program with a view to eventual nationwide coverage.⁸⁰ In December 2014 Myanmar launched a National Social Protection Strategic Plan

⁷⁵[Presentation by Dr San San Aye](#), Deputy Director General of the Department of Social Welfare, Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief, and Resettlement, Meeting of National Mine Action Programme Directors, Geneva, 17 February 2015.

⁷⁶“[National stakeholder consultation on disability data collection in Myanmar 27-29 June 2017](#),” Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar.

⁷⁷Roger Fasth and Pascal Simon, DDG, “[Mine Action in Myanmar](#),” *The Journal of Mine and ERW Action*, Issue 19.2, July 2015; DDG, “[DDG study aims to counter rise in victims from mines in Myanmar](#),” 16 January 2018; and DDG, “[Epidemiological Study of Landmine/ERW Victims in Kachin, Kayah and Shan States, Myanmar](#),” 31 July 2017

⁷⁸“[After delay, Disability Rights rules and regulations published](#),” *The Myanmar Times*, 13 July 2018.

⁷⁹US Department of State, “[2016 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices: Burma](#),” Washington, DC, March 2017.

⁸⁰ Monthly assistance payments of K16,000 to K30,000 depending on. A disabled child will get K16,000 per month and K30,000 for a disabled adult up to 64 years old. The project pilot areas are the East Dagon township of Yangon Region, Patheingyi and Kangyi Taung townships of Ayeyarwaddy Region, Monywa, Ayeyarwady and Chaung Oo townships of Sagaing Region and Thabon and Paung townships of Mon State. Htoo Thant, “[Government to start disability payments](#),”

through the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief, and Resettlement to provide an allowance to all persons certified with a disability.⁸¹

Military veterans with disabilities received benefits on a priority basis, usually a civil service job at equivalent pay. Official assistance to non-military persons with disabilities in principle included two-thirds of pay for up to one year for a temporary disability and a tax-free stipend for permanent disability. There are believed to be dozens of army-built community settlements where disabled veterans and their families receive free housing. However, ordinary soldiers with disabilities often located in remote areas lacked job opportunities and ways of finding extra income.⁸²

National Committee on Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the ministerial committee is mandated with promoting the rights of persons with disabilities, with responsibilities to protect and promote the lives of the people with disabilities, implement provisions included in the disability rights law, set national level policies and guidelines, conduct work with the approval of the national government, cooperate and coordinate with relevant ministries, state and regional governments and municipal committees.⁸³

Developments in 2017-2018

Medical care and rehabilitation

The Karen Department of Health and Welfare (KDHW), which is the health department of the Karen National Union (KNU), reported that a medic's training course was provided to health workers, but more trained medics were needed to provide healthcare service in KNU-controlled areas.⁸⁴ Since 2017, HI has been leading a partnership with KDHW and provides support both in government and non-government in controlled areas in Kachin in response to a component of conflict sensitivity in the South East and in Kachin.⁸⁵

In Kachin, Rakhine and Shan, the ICRC provided 25 health centres and satellite posts, including facilities in areas controlled by armed groups. The ICRC increased its financial support for the health ministry's emergency patient transport system and outpatient referral service in Rakhine state; this enabled the members of the various communities to have safe and ready access to the general hospital and other facilities.⁸⁶

Exceed Worldwide opened a new prosthetic-orthotic center at the Mandalay Orthopaedic Specialist Hospital in January 2017. Jointly established by the Ministry of Health and Sports, with support from Japan, the center planned to offer prosthetic services to people in need in Mandalay and nearby regions and states.⁸⁷

The Myitkyina Physical Rehabilitation Center in Kachin state opened in October 2016, through a partnership between the ICRC and the Ministry and Health and Sports was expected to serve up to

Myanmar Times, 16 November 2017.

⁸¹Government of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar, "[Myanmar National Social Protection Strategic Plan](#)," December 2014, p. 53. The allowance will not be available until the rights of the persons with disabilities law is enacted and a certification process is established by the government.

⁸²Htet Khaung Linn, "[On society's fringes, disabled Tatmadaw veterans languish in poverty](#)," *Myanmar Now*, 11 October 2016.

⁸³President's Office, Myanmar, "[Gov't to speed up work for rights for disabled](#)," 29 December 2017

⁸⁴"[Health workers are still needed in KNU areas, KDHW says](#)," *BNI*, 5 September 2018.

⁸⁵HI, "Federal Information – Country Card: Myanmar," September 2018.

⁸⁶ICRC, "Annual Report 2017," Geneva 2018, p. 327.

⁸⁷"[PO Center officially launched in Mandalay](#)," *Yadanabon News*, 18 January 2017.

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1,500 patients a year with prostheses and physiotherapy once it reached full operational capacity.⁸⁸ In Early 2017, the ICRC officially opened the first physical rehabilitation center in Shan State has in Kyaing Tong. At full operational capacity it was expected to serve up to 910 patients a year with prostheses, mobility devices and physiotherapy.⁸⁹ The Ministry of Health and Sports approved the construction of the two new physical rehabilitation centers proposed by the ICRC in 2016. The centers are needed to address the high demand for services in those conflict-affected regions, including for landmine survivors.⁹⁰ The referral system jointly operated by the National Society and the ICRC helped inform disabled people of the center or service provider nearest them ICRC mobile workshops stationed near their communities repaired assistive devices

Socio-economic and psychosocial inclusion

Most mine/ERW survivors have had to abandon their traditional professions, making vocational training and other alternative livelihood solutions necessary.⁹¹ DRC/DDG provided livelihoods interventions to assist conflict-affected and mine/ERW-impacted communities as well as mine/ERW victims with skills development training in business, and agriculture-oriented support.⁹² AAR Japan continued to provide vocational training center for persons with disabilities at its center in Yangon.⁹³ In August 2018, the Myanmar Centre for Responsible Business and AAR Japan, held a meeting with the support of Department of Rehabilitation, Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement to obtain feedback on a draft handbook on employment of persons with disabilities. Participants included high level representatives of the Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief and Resettlement, and the Ministries of Education, Ministry of Transport and Communication, and Defence as well as also the Ministries responsible for Social Welfare; Labour, Immigration and Population, Health and Sport, Education, Culture, Industry, the Union Attorney General's Office, the Myanmar National Committee for Women's Affairs, the War Veterans Association, and the Working Committee on Rights of Persons with Disabilities.⁹⁴

In partnership with the Myanmar Physically Handicapped Association (MPHA), HI ran the US-funded, Humanitarian Mine Action in Burma: Inclusive Socioeconomic Development and Human Security for All project in three townships in Kayin State and East Bago regions in South East Myanmar. In each township a Victim Assistance is in operation, run by two managers and supported by teams of volunteers for each thematic including mental health and psychosocial support, livelihoods, functional rehabilitation, and repair.⁹⁵

World Education supported the establishment 10 self-help groups across Bago Region and Kayah State, comprised of over 60 members. In 2017-2018 World Education compiled, translated, printed, and distributed 2,500 service provider directories in Kayah and Mon States. Directories were distributed to government, civil society organizations, and persons with disabilities. Since 2012, 157 mine/ERW survivors and other persons with disabilities received livelihood training.⁹⁶

⁸⁸“[Standing strong: New facility to help Myanmar landmine victims, amputees](#),” *Channel News Asia*, December 2016; and ICRC, “[New centre brings physical rehabilitation services to northern Myanmar](#),” 29 November 2016.

⁸⁹ICRC, “[Myanmar: New centre brings physical rehabilitation services to Shan State](#),” 9 March 2017.

⁹⁰ICRC PRP, “Annual Report 2014,” Geneva, 2015, p. 58.

⁹¹DDG, “[DDG Study Aims to Counter Rise in Victims from Mines in Myanmar](#),” 16 January 2018.

⁹²DRC/DDG, “[Factsheet Kayah State, 2018](#),” 2018.

⁹³Association for Aid and Relief, Japan (AAR Japan), [Annual Report 2017: April 2017-March 2018](#), (undated but 2018).

⁹⁴Myanmar Centre for Responsible Business, “[Workshop to Consult Government Departments on the Draft Handbook on Employment of Persons with Disabilities](#),” 23 August 2018.

⁹⁵HI, “[Federal Information – Country Card: Myanmar](#),” September 2018.

⁹⁶Email from Khin Mar Aung, Director, World Education Myanmar 25 October 2018.

Victim assistance providers and activities

Name of organization	Type of activity
Government	
Ministry of Social Welfare, Relief, and Resettlement	Socio-economic and rehabilitation services; vocational training school for adults with disabilities, including mine/ERW survivors
Ministry of Health and Sports	Prosthetic centers and two orthopedic hospitals
Ministry of Defense	Prosthetics provided through three centers
National	
Peace Myanmar Aid Foundation	Mobile prosthetic delivery
Committee for Internally Displaced Karen People	Prosthetic production at the Kho Kay Prosthetic Clinic, Mutraw, Karen (Kayin) state
Karen Health and Welfare Department (KDHW)	Medical first-aid assistance and amputative surgeries
Karenni Health Workers Organization	Prosthetics in Loikaw, Kayah (Karenni) state
Karuna Mission Social Solidarity (KMSS Network)	First aid and immediate assistance
Myanmar Physically Handicapped Association (MPHA)	Disability rights advocacy, production of assistive devices; encouraging economic inclusion through employment
International	
Association for Aid and Relief Japan (AAR Japan)	Vocational training; community-based rehabilitation; referral system; survivor rights/advocacy
Exceed Worldwide	Operates the prosthetic workshop at the National Rehabilitation Hospital (NRH) in Yangon; financially supports Myanmar School of Prosthetics & Orthotics; opened new prosthetic workshop in Mandalay
Leprosy Mission – Myanmar	Rehabilitation and prosthetics
DDG/DRC	Direct assistance in the form of medical and rehabilitative care and referrals for mine/ERW survivors in Kachin state
HI	Community-level data collection, mapping of services and barriers, assessment, referral, psychosocial support, socio-economic inclusion, repairs of mobility devices; coordination of assistance and advocacy on survivors/victims' needs; capacity-building of the MPHA, supporting

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	Victim Assistance Centers
World Education	Physical rehabilitation; economic inclusion; access to medical and vocational funds; coordination of assistance and advocacy on survivors/victims' needs
ICRC/Myanmar Red Cross Society	Support to four rehabilitation centers: one under the MRCS in Hpa-An and three centers under the Ministry of Health and Sports in Mandalay, Myitkyina and Kyaing Tong; prosthetic outreach for remote areas
UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)	Discretionary funds for financial assistance to cover medical costs of war victims/landmine survivors and rehabilitation, including transport; economic inclusion through livelihood program

Mine action management	
National mine action management actors	<p>No functioning mine action program</p> <p>A Mine Risks Working Group (MRWG), comprised of ministries, international, and national organizations and four state-level coordination agencies, takes the lead on risk education and victim assistance</p>
Mine action strategic plan	None
Mine Action Standards	None. Operators follow the International Mine Action Standards (IMAS)
Operators in 2017	<p>Tatmadaw engineers</p> <p>Non-technical survey: Danish Demining Group (DDG) Mines Advisory Group (MAG) The HALO Trust</p> <p><i>Risk education</i> National: The Committee of Internally Displaced Karen People and the Karen Teachers Working Group Myanmar Physically Handicapped Association Karen Development Network The Karenni Social Welfare and Development Center and the Local Development Network Karen Environmental and Social Action Network Myanmar Red Cross Society Shan State Youth Capacity Building Centre Never End Tomorrow Ta'ang Students and Youth Union Kachin Baptist Convention, Wunpawng Ninghtoi Karen Department of Health & Welfare</p> <p>International NGOs: DanChurchAid (DCA) DDG HALO Trust Humanity & Inclusion (HI, formerly Handicap International) Johanniter International Assistance (JOIN) MAG Norwegian People's Aid (NPA)</p>
Extent of contamination as of end 2017	
Landmines	<p>Extent unknown, includes improvised mines</p> <p>New mine contamination in 2017</p>
Cluster munition remnants	None
Other ERW contamination	Unknown
Land release in 2017	
Landmines	Tatmadaw engineers reported conducted some mine clearance but operations are not systematic or recorded

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	International NGOs identified 0.43km ² CHA and 0.28km ² SHA, as well as 90 spot tasks, through non-technical survey. They were not permitted to mark the areas with standard international marking
Progress	
Landmines	No mine clearance is permitted by NGOs. Limited non-technical survey has been permitted since 2016

Notes: ERW = explosive remnants of war; CHA = confirmed hazardous area; SHA = suspected hazardous area.

Contamination

The Union of the Republic of Myanmar is heavily mine-affected as a result of conflicts between the Tatmadaw (government forces) and numerous non-state armed groups (NSAGs) affiliated with ethnic minorities. The violence started after the country's independence in 1948. Mined areas are located in areas of Myanmar adjacent to borders with Bangladesh, China, and Thailand, and pose a particular threat in northern and eastern parts of the country.

Some 78 townships (out of a total of 325) in 10 states and regions are believed to suffer from some degree of mine contamination; primarily antipersonnel mines.⁹⁷ In the past few years, contamination has increased in the north. Shan state and Kachin state are considered heavily contaminated. Previously, Karen (Kayin) state and Pegu (Bago) division were among those with the heaviest mine contamination and the highest number of recorded victims. Townships on the Indian border of Chin state and in the Sagaing region are also believed to have SHAs.⁹⁸

A United Nations Fact Finding Mission reported in September 2018 that “despite the signing of the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement in October 2015, which committed all parties to end the use of landmines and cooperate on mine-clearance operations, new landmines continue to be laid.” It cited credible reports that the Tatmadaw and ethnic armed groups had laid landmines and observed that “Tatmadaw soldiers lay landmines in villages they have attacked or after civilians have fled, or on roads frequently used by civilians. Civilians have also laid landmines in order to protect their property.”⁹⁹ The new contamination occurred on the Myanmar side of the border with Bangladesh in northern Rakhine state. Other accounts of new contamination due to continuing use by Myanmar military forces and NSAGs in Myanmar were reported throughout 2017 and the first half of 2018. (See Myanmar's Mine Ban profile for further details.)

No estimate exists of the extent of contamination but SHAs have been reported in the following states and townships:

- Kayah state: all seven townships;
- Kayin state: all seven townships;
- Kachin state: Bhamo, Chipwi, Hpakant, Injangyang, Mansi, Mogaung, Mohnyin, Momauk, Myitkyina, Shwegu, Sumprabum, Tanai, Tsawlaw, and Waingmaw;

⁹⁷Myanmar is divided into states and regions. States are the “home area” of ethnic groups. Other areas, which are not identified with a specific ethnic group, are administrative regions. The former military junta changed the name from Burma to Myanmar in 1989 and also changed the names of some states. Many ethnic groups within the country still prefer to use the name Burma. Internal state and division names are given in their common form or with the name adopted by the ruling State Peace and Development Council (SPDC) in parentheses.

⁹⁸Research by Landmine Monitor. Data sources included casualty information, sightings of mine warnings, and reports by NGOs and other organizations of use, as well as interviews with field staff and armed forces personnel. The survey included casualty data from January 2007 through September 2015 and data from other informants from January 2008 through October 2017.

⁹⁹United Nations, “Report of the Detailed Findings of the Independent International Fact Finding Mission on Myanmar,” A/HRC/39/CRP.2, 17 September 2017, p. 95.

- Mon state: Bilin, Kyaikto, Mawlamyine, Thanbyuzayat, Thaton, and Ye;
- Bago region: Kyaukkyi, Shwekyin, Tantabin, and Taungoo;
- Rakhine state: Buthidaung, Maungdaw;
- Shan state: Hopong, Hsenwi, Hsihseng, Hsipaw, Konkyan, Kutkai, Kyethi, Kyaukme, Langkho, Lashio, Laukkaing, Lawksawk, Loilen, Manton, Mawksmai, Mongmit, Mongshu, Mongpan, Mongton, Monghpyak, Mongyai, Muse, Namhsan Tachileik, Namtu, Nanhkan, Nawngkhio, Pangsang, Tangyan, and Ywangan;
- Tanintharyi region: Bokpyin, Dawei, Myiek, Tanintharyi, Thayetchaung, and Yebyu;
- Chin state Paletwa; and
- Sagaing region: Indaw.

The Tatmadaw uses antipersonnel mines, most of which are produced in state-owned factories. These locally manufactured mines include copies of Russian PMNs (locally designated MM-2), POMZ fragmentation mines (designated MM-1), and United States' M14s. LTM-76 fragmentation mines based on British or Indian designs have been found around electrical pylons. Ethnic armed groups acknowledge use of improvised antipersonnel mines as well as a number of antivehicle mines, but unconfirmed reports have suggested groups in the north have also obtained Chinese factory-made Type-72 antivehicle mines.¹⁰⁰

Landmine contamination in Myanmar is frequently cited as a barrier to the return of refugees and internally displaced people. In September 2018, the Independent International Fact-Finding Mission on Myanmar considered landmine contamination in Rakhine state to be part of a deliberate and planned strategy to enforce displacement.¹⁰¹ In June 2018, UNICEF reported the presence of landmines has blocked return in some areas of Kachin state.¹⁰² In September 2016, a situation analysis for humanitarian response in Myanmar noted that, "Landmine contamination is a significant barrier to refugee return. It also continues to pose barriers to livelihoods, economic development, land ownership, and access to health and education services, all of which have gendered dimensions and implications."¹⁰³

In June 2018, Landmine Monitor and the UN produced an infographic on the impact of landmine use in Myanmar.¹⁰⁴

Explosive remnants of war

Myanmar is also affected by ERW, including mortars, grenades, artillery, and ordnance dating back to World War II, but the location or extent of contamination is not known.¹⁰⁵ New ERW

¹⁰⁰Information provided by mine action stakeholders on condition of anonymity, 2018.

¹⁰¹Human 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.

¹⁰²UNICEF, "[Myanmar Humanitarian Mid-Year Situation Report](#)," 30 June 2018, p. 2.

¹⁰³"[Situation Analysis of Southeastern Myanmar](#)," United Nations Myanmar Information Management Unit (MIMU), Peace Support Fund, September 2016. MIMU is a service to the UN Country Team and Humanitarian Country Team, under the management of the UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator.

¹⁰⁴"[Townships with Known Landmine Contamination \(2017\) and Casualties in Myanmar \(as of Dec 2016\)](#)," MIMU, 30 May 2018. Infographic provides a 11-year overview of data from the Landmine Monitor (2007–2017). In 2018, the infographic was also available in [Burmese language](#) for the first time. MIMU reported to the Landmine Monitor that the landmine infographic has been one of their most requested products.

¹⁰⁵See, for example, N. Thwin, "[World War II ordnance kills three](#)," *Democratic Voice of Burma*, 20 March 2012; "[WWII bomb kills 7 in Arakan](#)," *Irrawaddy*, 1 September 2011; and M. Thar Lay, "[Mandalay workers uncover WWII bomb](#)," *Myanmar Times*, Vol. 23, No. 455, 26 January–1 February 2009.

contamination has been reported related to armed conflict in late 2015 and early 2016 in Kachin state.¹⁰⁶

Program Management

The government had not, as of September 2018, formulated a clear direction for mine action or established a center to coordinate it.¹⁰⁷ In January 2018, Union Joint Monitoring Committee (JMU-C) Secretary, Colonel Wunna Aung, stated that mine clearance could not begin prior to the building of mutual trust between the government and ethnic armed groups.¹⁰⁸ In May 2017, Colonel Aung stated that the Tatmadaw would take the lead on landmine clearance and that international technological and material support would be accepted. He noted that clearance would begin in Kayin state as a joint activity with the Karen National Union.¹⁰⁹ In August 2017, Myanmar's Commander-in-Chief of Defence Services, Senior General Min Aung Hlaing, held talks with New Zealand's ambassador regarding assistance between the two countries militaries and mine clearance operations.¹¹⁰

Myanmar's previous administration had agreed to set up a Myanmar Mine Action Center (MMAC) under the Myanmar Peace Center (MPC) in 2013, but it was never fully staffed and the government said concluding a National Ceasefire Agreement with non-state actors was a precondition for proceeding to survey and clearance.¹¹¹

The new administration dissolved the MPC at the end of March 2016 and replaced it with the National Reconciliation and Peace Center (NRPC), which reports to the state counsellor, who said negotiations over the National Ceasefire Agreement would be her administration's priority. At its first meeting, several participants emphasized the threat of mines and the need for mine clearance.¹¹² Previously, in May 2016, a national youth conference held in the capital Naypyitaw called on the army and ethnic armed groups to remove landmines.¹¹³ Several civil society groups also called for mine clearance during the year (*see Myanmar's Mine Ban Policy profile*).

The Department of Social Work (DSW) leads the Mine Risks Working Group (MRWG), co-chaired with UNICEF, which comprises of 10 ministries, 41 international and national organizations, and four state-level coordination agencies (in Kachin, Kayah, Kayin, and Shahn states).¹¹⁴ The group meets quarterly in the capital, Naypyidaw, and focuses on risk education and victim assistance. In the process, it has overseen the first steps to systematic survey of mine contamination.

¹⁰⁶See, for example, unexploded aerial bomb allegedly from armed conflict in Kachin state in Waingmaw township in October 2016. Free Burma Rangers, "[UPDATE REPORT: Gidon Post Bombarded by Burma Airforce](#)," 7 October 2016.

¹⁰⁷Interview with Aksel Steen-Nilsen, Country Director, NPA, and Greg Crowther, Regional Director, South and South East Asia, MAG, in Phnom Penh, 1 May 2017; and email from Melissa Andersson, Programme Manager, NPA, Yangon, 27 September 2017.

¹⁰⁸"[Standard operating procedures for commanders drafted at JMC-U](#)," *Global New Light of Myanmar*, 20 January 2018. "Both sides are still discussing conducting workshops on mines. The NCA 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," said Col. Aung.

¹⁰⁹Ye Khaung Nyunt, "[Second day of 10th Union Joint Monitoring Committee meeting in Yangon](#)," *Global New Light of Myanmar*, 5 May 2017.

¹¹⁰MNA, "Senior General meets New Zealand Ambassador," *Global New Light of Myanmar*, 27 August 2017.

¹¹¹Roger Fasth and Pascal Simon, "Mine Action in Myanmar," *Journal of Mine Action*, Issue 19.2, July 2015.

¹¹²See, for example: At the Union Peace Conference 21st Century Panglong, Daw Wint Wah Tun of the National League for Democracy said of her Shadaw township, Kayah state, "local people do not feel secure as landmine fields pose a threat to their way of life." "[Union Peace Conference—21st Century Panglong continues](#)," *Global New Light of Myanmar*, 2 September 2016.

¹¹³"Youth Empowerment: Myanmar's young people want an active role in the running of their country," *Mizzima Weekly*, 9 June 2016, p. 22.

¹¹⁴UNICEF, "Landmines and explosive remnants of war threaten children and communities across Myanmar," 4 April 2018.

The Ministry of Social Welfare established a new Department of Rehabilitation in 2018, and operators were informed it would take the lead on mine action from the Department of Social Work, but as of August 2018, the Department of Rehabilitation had no presence in the capital and stakeholders had received no guidance on how the change would be conducted.¹¹⁵

Operators have conducted risk education and community liaison activities, which, in recent years, included limited community mapping of hazardous areas in some locations. In 2017, for the first time, operators were permitted to conduct non-technical survey in Kayin state and southern Shan state.

Legislation and standards

Myanmar does not have national mine action legislation or standards and therefore operators have followed IMAS and their own standard operating procedures.

Information management

Operators also retain their own survey results in the absence of a neutral national entity to store hazardous area data, which remains sensitive in view of continuing conflict.

Operators

Seven international demining organizations had offices in Yangon and some provincial locations: DCA, DDG, HALO Trust, HI, MAG, and NPA.

Tatmadaw engineers have reportedly conducted some mine clearance but operations are not systematic or recorded.

Land Release

No land release has occurred in Myanmar as humanitarian mine action operators are not permitted to conduct clearance by either the government or ethnic minority authorities.

Operators were authorized to conduct non-technical survey in some locations for the first time in 2016 and that activity continued in 2017, but they have not been permitted to mark SHAs or CHAs with standard international marking. They have so far been unable to carry out surveys across an entire state (province), which would enable them to determine a baseline level of contamination.

MAG, which worked with 18 community liaison teams, received authorization from the DSW in December 2016 to conduct non-technical survey in 74 villages across six townships of Kayah state, and in 2017 was allowed to start non-technical survey in southern areas of Shan state. In 2017, it mapped 114 hazardous areas, including 86 CHAs covering 214,276m². It also identified and recorded 23 spot EOD tasks.¹¹⁶

DDG conducted non-technical survey in Kayah state's Demoso township in 2017, finding 51 of its 169 villages affected by mines and ERW. It confirmed 95 hazardous areas covering 127,720m² and identified 33 SHAs covering 233,898m² as well as 67 EOD spot tasks. DDG passed on information about the location of UXO to military engineers who reportedly cleared some items. After completing non-technical survey in Demoso township in March 2018, DDG shifted its teams to survey Hpruso and Hpasawng townships.¹¹⁷

The HALO Trust also received authorization to carry out non-technical survey in 2017. Operating with a total of 47 staff, including three non-technical survey teams and seven risk education teams,

¹¹⁵Emails from mine action operators, July–August 2018.

¹¹⁶Email from Greg Crowther, Regional Director, South and South East Asia, MAG, 3 August 2018.

¹¹⁷Email from Pascal Simon, Programme Manager, DDG, 8 August 2018.

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HALO worked in northern Shan state and Kayin state, identifying CHAs covering 85,315m² and SHAs over an estimated total of 46,058m².¹¹⁸

NPA did not conduct survey in 2017 as it awaited amendment of its Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to allow non-technical survey but it collaborated with HALO Trust and MAG on a joint initiative discussed with authorities at national and state level for the survey and clearance of 37 villages, in the Kyone Htaw waterfalls area close to Hpa-An in Kayin state. The aim of the project is to facilitate tourism and the return of internally displaced persons. The project received support from the DSW in Naypyidaw but was put on hold by regional military authorities due to security considerations.¹¹⁹

¹¹⁸Email from Samuel Fricker, Programme Manager, HALO Trust, 9 July 2018.

¹¹⁹Email from Kyaw Lin Htut, Programme Manager, NPA, 17 August 2018.

Mine/ERW risk education

As of August 2018, at least nine organizations implemented 13 risk education projects, primarily in Kachin, Kayah, Kayin, and Shan states, and eastern Bago region, Mon state, and Tanintharyi region.

Mine/ERW Risk Education actors¹²⁰

Location	National actor	International actor
Eastern Bago region	The Committee of Internally Displaced Karen People and the Karen Teachers Working Group, Myanmar Physically Handicapped Association, Karen Development Network	DCA, HI, Johanniter International Assistance (JOIN)
Kachin state		DRC, MAG, DCA
Kayah state	The Karenni Social Welfare and Development Center and the Local Development Network	DCA-Norwegian Church Aid (NCA), Danish Refugee Council (DRC), and MAG
Kayin state	Committee of Internally Displaced Karen People, Karen Environmental and Social Action Network, Karen Teachers Working Group, Myanmar Physically Handicapped Association	DCA, DCA-NCA, HI, MAG, and HALO
Mon state	Committee of Internally Displaced Karen People, Karen Teachers Working Group, Myanmar Red Cross Society	DCA
Northern Shan state	Shan State Youth Capacity Building Center, Never End Tomorrow, Ta'ang Students and Youth Union, Kachin Baptist Convention, Wunpawng Ninghtoi	HALO, DRC, DCA-NCA, and MAG
Southern Shan state		MAG and DCA
Tanintharyi region	The Karen Teachers Working Group, Karen Department of Health & Welfare	DCA, DCA-NCA, and MAG

In addition, UNICEF and UNHCR supported risk education in Kachin, Kayah, Kayin, Mon & Shan states and Eastern Bago region¹²¹, and the National Society, trained by the ICRC, is also conducting risk education.¹²²

The Monitor acknowledges the contributions of the Mine Action Review (www.mineactionreview.org), which has conducted the primary mine action research in 2018 and shared all its country-level landmine reports (from “Clearing the Mines 2018”) and country-level cluster munition reports (from “Clearing Cluster Munition Remnants 2018”) with the Monitor. The Monitor is responsible for the findings presented online and in its print publications.

¹²⁰MIMU, “[Myanmar, Who/What/Where, Mine Action](#),” 27 August 2018.

¹²¹Ibid.

¹²²ICRC, “[Annual Report 2016](#),” p. 328.

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Mine Action Support

In 2017, seven donors contributed US\$6.2 million to the Republic of the Union of Myanmar for mine action; this is similar to the level of funding received in 2016.¹²³

Switzerland provided the largest contribution, with a total of \$3.1 million, representing half of all support.

All international contributions in 2017 went to non-technical survey, risk education, or victim assistance activities through the ICRC and other NGOs.

International contributions: 2017¹²⁴

Donor	Sector	Amount (national currency)	Amount (US\$)
Switzerland	Risk education and victim assistance	CHF3,199,880	3,145,875
United Kingdom	Risk education	£661,651	852,868
Germany	Victim assistance	€728,965	823,803
New Zealand	Victim assistance	NZ\$750,000	533,325
Norway	Clearance and risk education	NOK4,372,000	528,792
Denmark	Various	DKK1,578,947	239,390
Belgium	Clearance	€90,000	101,709
Total			6,225,762

Since 2013, international assistance to Myanmar nearly doubled, and totaled more than \$25 million.

Summary of international contributions: 2013–2017¹²⁵

Year	International contributions (US\$)
2017	6,225,762
2016	6,525,640
2015	6,240,315
2014	3,386,230
2013	3,243,976
Total	25,621,923

¹²³Belgium, Convention on Cluster Munitions Article 7 Report, Form I, 30 April 2018; Germany, Mine Ban Treaty Article 7 Report, Form J, 2 March 2018; New Zealand, Convention on Cluster Munitions Article 7 Report, Form I, 2 May 2018; Switzerland, Convention on Cluster Munitions Article 7 Report, Form I, 30 April 2018; United Kingdom, Convention on Cluster Munitions Article 7 Report, Form I, 30 April 2018; [Response to Monitor questionnaire by Trine Louise Magard Hansen](#), Head of Section, Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 30 October 2018; and email from Ingrid Schoyen, Senior Adviser, Section for Humanitarian Affairs, Norway Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 25 September 2018.

¹²⁴Average exchange rate for 2017: €1=US\$1.1301; DKK6.5957=US\$1; NZ\$1=0.7111; NOK8.2679=US\$1; £1=US\$1.2890; CHF0.9842=US\$1. US Federal Reserve, “[List of Exchange Rates \(Annual\)](#),” 11 January 2018.

¹²⁵See previous Monitor reports. Totals for support between 2013–2016 have been rectified as a result of revised European Union funding data.

Cluster Munitions

Summary: Non-signatory Myanmar has acknowledged the humanitarian impact of cluster munitions and said in October 2017 that it is reviewing the convention with a view to joining in the future. It last participated in a meeting of the convention in 2013. Myanmar abstained from voting on a key United Nations (UN) resolution on the convention in December 2017.

Myanmar previously stated that it has never used and does not produce or transfer cluster munitions. It allegedly used a weapon similar in design to a modern cluster munition in Kachin state in 2012–2013.

Policy

The Republic of the Union of Myanmar has not acceded to the Convention on Cluster Munitions.¹²⁶

At the UN General Assembly (UNGA) in October 2017, Myanmar stated that it is reviewing the convention with a view to joining in the future, stating “In principle, Myanmar supports the provisions of the...Convention on Cluster Munitions. We recognize the initiative taken under [it] to prevent the indiscriminate use of...cluster munitions, which can lead to vulnerability and serious humanitarian impact...”¹²⁷

Previously, in October 2015, Myanmar said it would consider acceding to the convention after “a nation-wide peace agreement.”¹²⁸

Myanmar attended one regional meeting of the Oslo Process that created the Convention on Cluster Munitions in Lao PDR in October 2008. It participated in a regional conference on cluster munitions in Bali, Indonesia in November 2009.

Myanmar participated as an observer in the convention’s annual Meetings of States Parties in 2010 and 2012 and then its intersessional meetings in 2013. Myanmar has not attended a meeting of the convention since 2013.

In December 2017, Myanmar abstained from voting on a key UNGA resolution that urges states outside the Convention on Cluster Munitions to “join as soon as possible.”¹²⁹ It abstained from voting on previous resolutions promoting the convention in 2015 and 2016.

Use, production, transfer, and stockpiling

In November 2009, Myanmar informed a regional meeting that, “we do not use cluster munitions, develop, produce, otherwise acquire, retain or transfer to anyone, directly or indirectly, nor assist, encourage or induce anyone to engage in any activity prohibited under this Convention.”¹³⁰ It

¹²⁶The military regime changed the name from Burma to Myanmar in 1989, but many ethnic groups in the country and a number of states still prefer to use the name Burma.

¹²⁷Myanmar, Explanation of Vote on Resolution L.41, 72nd Session, UNGA First Committee, New York, 31 October 2017, UNGA, Official Records, [A/C.1/72/PV26](#), pp. 18–19/29.

¹²⁸[Statement of Myanmar](#), UNGA First Committee on Disarmament and International Security, New York, 15 October 2015. In 2013, Myanmar expressed concern at the humanitarian impact of cluster munitions but did not elaborate its position on accession. [Statement of Myanmar](#), UNGA First Committee on Disarmament and International Security, New York, 30 October 2013; and [statement of Myanmar](#), UNGA First Committee on Disarmament and International Security, New York, 24 October 2012.

¹²⁹“[Implementation of the Convention on Cluster Munitions](#),” UNGA Resolution 72/54, 4 December 2017.

¹³⁰Statement by Ye Minn Thein, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Regional Conference on the Promotion and Universalization of the Convention on Cluster Munitions, Bali, 16 November 2009.

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criticized cluster munitions as “weapons with indiscriminate area effect...which can cause humanitarian consequences.”¹³¹

In October 2015, Myanmar stated that it follows the basic principles of the law of armed conflict and stated, “Our Armed Forces exercises restraint in its military operations. Cluster Munitions were never used in these operations.”¹³²

Myanmar possesses 122mm Type-81 and Type-90B and 240mm surface-to-surface rocket launchers, but it is not known if the ammunition for these weapons includes versions with submunition payloads.¹³³

Previous allegation of use

Myanmar acquired and reportedly used a weapon similar in design to a modern cluster munition in late 2012 and early 2013 during the conflict between government forces and the Kachin Independence Army (KIA) in Kachin state in the north of the country.¹³⁴ The KIA claimed that the Myanmar army units stationed at Gangdau Yang used cluster munitions against KIA forces in a 26 January 2013 attack at Hka Ya Bum, five miles west of the town of Laiza in southern Kachin state.¹³⁵

Human Rights Watch (HRW) confirmed airstrikes and shelling on Laiza by Myanmar forces in December 2012 and January 2013.¹³⁶ It reviewed a set of photos that showed what appear to be the same remnants in a vehicle at a location that appear to be the site of the attack, indicating they were moved.¹³⁷ The “cluster adapter” and 20-pound fragmentation bombs shown in the photographs appear to meet the definition of a cluster munition under the Convention on Cluster Munitions.¹³⁸

¹³¹ Ibid.

¹³² [Statement of Myanmar](#), UNGA First Committee on Disarmament and International Security, New York, 15 October 2015.

¹³³ “[Myanmar Defense Weapons](#),” 20 March 2014. English translation from Hla Oo’s Blog, “[Burma Army’s MRLS or Multi Rocket Launcher Systems](#),” 23 March 2014.

¹³⁴ There is evidence that Myanmar government forces mounted six fragmentation bombs to the adaptor, which then separated from the rack when dropped from the air.

¹³⁵ “[Burma army uses cluster bombs to take key KIO position near Laiza](#),” *Kachin News Group*, 26 January 2013. On 19 April 2013, the deputy secretary of the Kachin National Council provided photographs to the Cluster Munition Coalition (CMC) showing an unknown type of air-dropped bomb that it said, “confirmed that the World War-Two era 20 pound fragmentation bombs were used during the airstrikes in the KIA’s strategic outposts between 14 December 2012 and 8 January 2013 by the Myanmar Air Force.” According to the Kachin National Council, “this type has never been used in Burma’s civil war before.” The photographs were contained in an email sent to the CMC by Hkun Htoi, Deputy Secretary, Kachin National Council, 19 April 2013.

¹³⁶ HRW also documented the attacks on Laiza on 14 January 2013, which killed three civilians. See HRW, “[Burma: Halt Indiscriminate Attacks in Kachin State](#),” 17 January 2013.

¹³⁷ Email from Bertil Lintner, 25 March 2013.

¹³⁸ The photographs show a metal tubular rack that appears to be similar in design to the US-produced M1 cluster adapter. The small fragmentation bombs are of a more modern design and marking than World War II-era munitions. A military officer who requested anonymity confirmed that the weapon was manufactured in Myanmar; additionally, a former military ordnance officer confirmed that the markings on the weapons were those used by Myanmar’s armed forces.