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# KOSOVO MINE ACTION STRATEGY

2025-2030





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# GLOSSARY OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

<b>BAC</b>	Battle Area Clearance
<b>CMR</b>	Cluster Munition Remnants
<b>EO</b>	Explosive Ordnance
<b>EOD</b>	Explosive Ordnance Disposal
<b>EORE</b>	Explosive Ordnance Risk Education
<b>ERW</b>	Explosive Remnants of War
<b>FRY</b>	Federal Republic of Yugoslavia
<b>GICHD</b>	Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining
<b>IM</b>	Information Management
<b>IMAS</b>	International Mine Action Standards
<b>IMSMA</b>	Information Management System for Mine Action
<b>KMAC</b>	Kosovo Mine Action Centre
<b>KPIs</b>	Key Performance Indicators
<b>KSF</b>	Kosovo Security Forces
<b>NATO</b>	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
<b>NMAS</b>	National Mine Action Standards
<b>NPA</b>	Norwegian People's Aid
<b>NTS</b>	Non-Technical Survey
<b>SADD</b>	Sex and Age Disaggregated Data
<b>SDGs</b>	Sustainable Development Goals
<b>SOPs</b>	Standard Operating Procedures
<b>UN</b>	United Nations

# INTRODUCTION

Kosovo still bears the scars of the conflict 25 years after the end of the war. Sticks and warning signs marking the presence of landmines and cluster munitions serve as a reminder that Kosovo remains contaminated by explosive ordnance (EO). However, in 2024, at a time when security in Europe and beyond is challenged by various threats, completion of clearance activities for known EO contamination is in sight.

Since 1999, more than 64 square kilometres of land contaminated by explosive devices have been cleared.<sup>1</sup> The tireless efforts of national and international mine action organisations, under the leadership of the Kosovo Mine Action Centre (KMAC), have allowed for land to be safely returned to communities. Mine action has enabled communities to return to their homes, rebuild their lives and resume economic activities. Despite these achievements, some levels of contamination remain.

This mine action strategy outlines the strategic orientation of the Kosovo Mine Action Centre from 2025 to 2030. The strategy draws on international good practice and builds upon successes and insights from Kosovo’s previous two mine action strategies, namely *Kosovo’s Medium Term Strategic Plan for the Mine Action Programme 2015-2018* and the *Kosovo Mine Action Strategy 2019-2024*. Moreover, it integrates lessons gathered from the mid-term review of the 2019-2024 strategy conducted in 2022, which underscored the need for sustained mine action efforts beyond 2024 due to challenges encountered such as COVID, lack of funds for planned capacities and the discovery of some previously unknown areas and substantial contextual changes.

The strategy stems from a collaborative effort led by the Kosovo Mine Action Centre, with participation from the Kosovo Security Forces (KSF), Norwegian People’s Aid (NPA) and The HALO Trust. The Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD) facilitated the process.



Beneficiary of mine action in Arllat, 2023 ©The HALO Trust

# STRATEGY BACKGROUND

## Explosive ordnance contamination and its impacts in Kosovo

Kosovo is contaminated by EO as a result of the 1998-1999 Kosovo War between the then-Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY) and the Kosovo Liberation Army. Aerial bombardments from the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) on FRY's military and infrastructure installations in 1999 resulted in significant cluster munition contamination. During NATO's campaign, 1,392 cluster bombs containing 289,536 bomblets were deployed across 333 strike sites inside Kosovo.<sup>2</sup> NATO estimates that about 10 to 15 per cent of cluster bombs failed to detonate upon impact.<sup>3</sup> The war also resulted in mines being laid, with high concentrations along Kosovo's borders with Albania and North Macedonia, but also in the area of Dulie Pass in south-central Kosovo.

More than 20 years of mine action operations have made large proportions of Kosovo's territory safe again. Mine action has enabled communities to rebuild livelihoods and has fostered a sense of safety. While EO incidents led to several casualties in the immediate aftermath of the conflict, the number of EO-related casualties has shown a noticeable decline over the years. The most recent landmine accident occurred in 2017, resulting in two injuries, while 2019 saw five people injured in two separate hand grenade incidents. Between 1999-2023, a total of 585 victims were recorded, including 117 fatalities.<sup>4</sup>

Despite significant progress, Kosovo's territory is still contaminated by EO, spread across 17 municipalities located in the seven regions of the country. As of December 2023, it is estimated that Kosovo's hazardous areas include 9,237,928 square metres of cluster munition remnants (CMR) contamination, 581,697 square meters of landmine contamination, and 425,000 square metres of mixed contamination, totalling 10.2 square kilometres, the size of approximately 1,463 football fields.<sup>5</sup> The threat of EO still prevents communities from accessing agricultural and grazing land, natural resources or land for the development of infrastructure projects, hindering economic development.

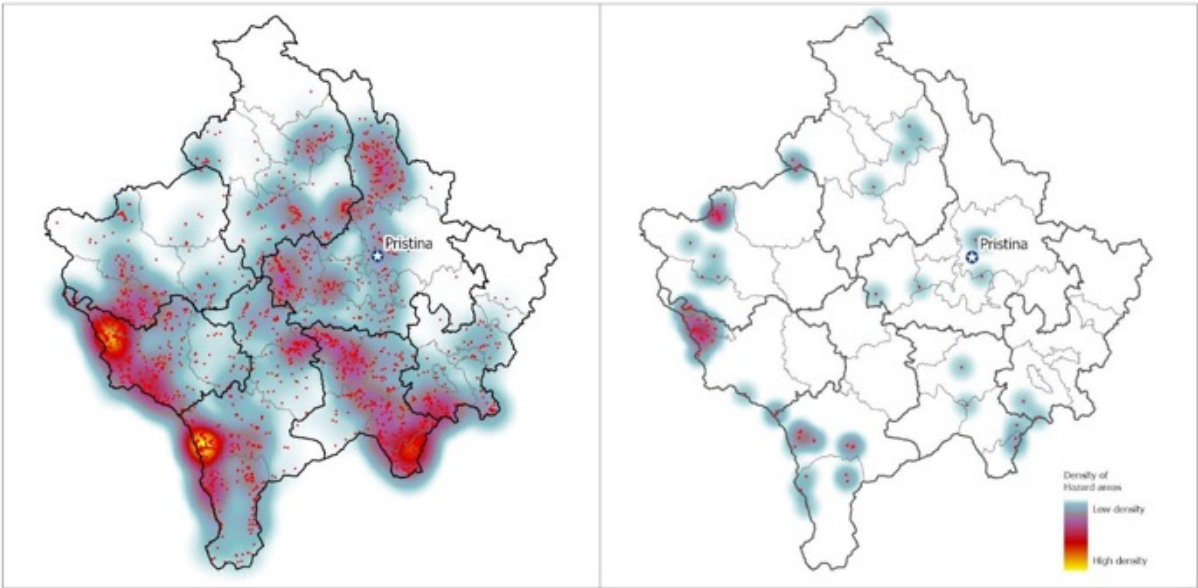


Figure 1. Maps of Kosovo in 1999 (left) and 2023 (right) illustrating the evolution of hazardous areas<sup>6</sup>





*KSF Operator conducting BAC in forested area ©KSF*

## Overview of the Kosovo mine action programme

The legal framework underpinning mine action in Kosovo was established in 2012 and amended in 2022.<sup>7</sup> Law no. 04/L-089 on Humanitarian Demining stipulates that the Kosovo mine action programme is coordinated by **KMAC**, which is housed in the Ministry of Defence of the Government of the Republic of Kosovo. The mine action programme is fully nationally owned, with oversight from KMAC, which acts as the coordination body for mine action, including functions of accreditation, quality assurance and control.

The Demining Company of the **KSF** is a subordinate unit of the Civilian Protection Regiment of the National Guard. Tasked with demining, explosive ordnance disposal (EOD), and providing awareness training, the KSF conducted more than 4,600 EOD callouts and found more than 13,100 unexploded ordnance devices between 2010 and 2023.<sup>8</sup> The Demining Company is composed of four platoons, three of which are equipped to conduct demining and battle area clearance (BAC). The fourth platoon consists of six teams dedicated to EOD callouts, which remain on standby at all times.

Funding for national capacities within the Kosovo mine action programme is primarily provided by the Government of the Republic of Kosovo, covering operational expenses for KMAC staff positions and KSF's Demining Company, with an annual budget of approximately 1.1 million EUR. Continued support from international donors has also been instrumental, enabling international organisations to conduct land release operations over the past two decades.

Presently, two international mine action organisations are active throughout all regions of Kosovo, **NPA** and **The HALO Trust**. As of early 2024, NPA is active in four municipalities located in the northern part and two municipalities in the central part of Kosovo. NPA's teams are multi-ethnic, speaking both Albanian and Serbian, to better respond to the needs of communities of the region. The HALO Trust is active in eight municipalities, located in the west, centre and south of Kosovo.

During the strategic period 2019-2024, KMAC has undertaken several **improvements** to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of mine action operations. Initiatives include the mine action programme's upgrade from the former version of the Information Management System for Mine Action (IMSMA) New Generation (NG) to IMSMA Core, to improve the accuracy of information, transparency, and coordination. KMAC also led the development and revision of some National Mine Action Standards (NMAS), such as Environmental Management in Mine Action, Land Release, and BAC.

## Challenges and opportunities in the mine action programme

To develop this strategy, a comprehensive context analysis of Kosovo's mine action programme was conducted between November 2023 and March 2024, resulting in the following main conclusions.

Due to its **international status**, Kosovo is not a signatory to the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention or the Convention on Cluster Munitions. Nonetheless, the mine action programme upholds international good practice and adheres to the International Mine Action Standards (IMAS), which are reflected in Kosovo's NMAS. Kosovo's status exempts it from treaty obligations concerning the completion of clearance of all known EO contamination.

The **security situation** in northern Kosovo has worsened in recent years due to the activity of Serbian extremist criminal groups and the terrorist attack in Banjska. This has led to NPA's operations being halted on an occasional basis. NPA's diverse workforce, composed of 54 per cent ethnic Albanians and 46 per cent ethnic Serbs, coupled with strong engagement with communities, has successfully contributed to high levels of acceptance in the region. Trust with populations has allowed NPA to access task areas with minimal disruptions, despite the volatile security context.

The lack of economic opportunities in Kosovo has driven many to seek better prospects abroad over the past decades. Women and youth, which constitute the bulk of Kosovo's population, with 55 per cent of the population below the age of 30<sup>9</sup>, have particularly been affected by scarce employment opportunities.<sup>10</sup> The EU visa liberalisation, which entered into force in January 2024, will likely exacerbate this trend.<sup>11</sup> As of December 2023, both NPA and The HALO Trust collectively employed 258 national staff, of which 28 per cent were women. For both organisations, **staff migration** presents both a challenge and an opportunity: it poses a threat of losing valuable talent and human capital, yet it also provides an opportunity to recruit new talent within Kosovo. By hiring both women and men from diverse ethnic groups and providing appealing salary packages and benefits, NPA and The HALO Trust actively contribute to advancing gender equality and fostering economic empowerment within local communities, aligning with the principles outlined in their respective Gender and Diversity Policies. This approach also builds upon the longstanding presence of women in the Kosovo mine action programme, where all-female demining teams were first established in 1999.<sup>12</sup> Additionally, both organisations recognise the importance of carefully planning and managing the demobilisation and transition of national staff employed in the mine action programme. This is especially important, as both entities are scheduled to conclude their operations by 2030.

Taking into account that the demining operations are conducted only in suitable weather conditions from the months of April-November, Kosovo, like all countries worldwide, is experiencing the tangible effects of **climate change**. Increasingly frequent extreme weather events and unpredictable weather patterns, stemming from climate change, already impact the conduct of mine action operations. The first Law on Climate Change was promulgated by Kosovo's parliament in December 2023, and aims at improving environmental protection through the prevention and control of greenhouse gas emissions, spearheaded by the Ministry of Environment, Spatial Planning and Infrastructure. As climate-related challenges become increasingly prevalent, the mine action programme will adapt accordingly. Moreover, as tasks expand into forested and natural heritage areas, it will become imperative to address issues related to environmental degradation caused by clearance operations, in line with national regulations.



## Linking mine action with global agendas

In the past decade, the mine action community has increasingly highlighted its role in advancing global agendas, particularly through alignment with the United Nations' **2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development**.<sup>13</sup> This agenda, comprising 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), 169 associated targets and respective indicators, provides a valuable framework for documenting and assessing the sector's contributions to sustainable development.

The Kosovo mine action programme is committed to supporting the implementation of the SDGs, in line with the Government of the Republic of Kosovo's efforts to advance national development goals. The *2019-2024 Kosovo Mine Action Strategy* underlined the linkages between mine action and sustainable development, drawing on strategic orientations from the *2016-2021 National Development Strategy*<sup>14</sup> of the Government of the Republic of Kosovo.

The Kosovo mine action programme reaffirms this commitment in the present strategy, building on the *Kosovo National Development Strategy 2030* released in 2022, which is thematically centred on "sustainable economic development, equitable human development, safety and the rule of law, and good governance".<sup>15</sup> This strategic alignment offers an opportunity to emphasise the positive impact that clearance efforts will have on fulfilling sustainable economic development and equitable human development goals.

In the coming years, the release of land previously contaminated by EO will facilitate communities' access to and safe use of agricultural land, grazing land for livestock, land used for infrastructure or housing projects, forests used by communities for foraging or hunting, as well as natural parks of ecological importance utilised by tourists. These mine action outcomes contribute to several SDGs. Specifically, they contribute to SDG 1 (No Poverty), as enhanced access to agricultural and grazing lands can uplift communities from poverty. Additionally, they contribute to SDG 9 (Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure), as released land can be used for the construction of sustainable infrastructure, thereby stimulating economic progress and innovation. Finally, they contribute to SDG 15 (Life on Land), as released land can be used to foster biodiversity conservation and promote sustainable land use practices.

Beyond these contributions, the mine action programme itself participates in the promotion of decent work (SDG 7), support to gender equality (SDG 5), and peaceful societies (SDG 16), by providing inclusive employment opportunities and ensuring ethnic representation amongst its teams across all regions of Kosovo.



The Kosovo mine action programme aligns with the Government of the Republic of Kosovo’s approach to gender equality, formalised in the *Kosovo Program for Gender Equality 2020-2024* seeking to guarantee gender equality in the spirit of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and the UN Security Council Resolutions 1325 and 1820 on Women, Peace and Security and Sexual Violence against Women.<sup>16</sup>

The Kosovo mine action programme also aligns with other global agendas, such as the **New Agenda for Peace**<sup>17</sup> published by the UN Secretary-General in 2023. Central to this agenda are objectives focused on conflict and violence prevention, and sustaining peace. Mine action directly contributes to these objectives by reducing the human cost of weapons (action 7) and accelerating the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in addressing underlying drivers of violence and insecurity (action 4). Moreover, the mine action programme aligns with the principles outlined in the **Political Declaration on the Humanitarian Consequences of the Use of Explosive Weapons in Populated Areas (EWIPA)**, which Kosovo officially endorsed in April 2024.<sup>18</sup> The declaration underscores the need to address the devastating and long-lasting humanitarian impact of the use of explosive weapons in populated areas.

Through this strategy, the Government of the Republic of Kosovo reaffirms its determination to remove all threats posed by EO across its territory. This commitment stands as a testament to eliminate remnants of war and advance towards a future defined by peace and sustainable development.



BAC in Arllat, 2023 ©The HALO Trust

## STRATEGIC ORIENTATION 2025-2030

This strategy presents the strategic orientation of Kosovo’s mine action programme from January 2025 to December 2030, encompassing programmatic priorities over a span of six years. Beginning with an overview of the strategy timeline rationale, this chapter then presents the Theory of Change guiding Kosovo’s mine action strategy, which revolves around a vision, mission, and three strategic objectives. Each objective is supported by a series of outcomes and accompanied by a strategic monitoring framework featuring corresponding indicators, baselines, and targets.

### Strategy Timeline

Over the last 25 years, significant resources have been invested to address Kosovo’s EO contamination problem. International donor support has been instrumental in ensuring that contaminated land could be released for the benefit of communities. Recognising the importance of utilising international donor support effectively, KMAC conducted an assessment to determine the most strategic timing for phasing out internationally supported mine action operations after 2030.

This assessment involved an analysis of remaining contamination and associated risks to Kosovo’s population. Drawing on historical data and current operational projections, estimates suggest that surveying and clearing the remaining 10.2 square kilometres of contaminated land by international mine action organisations should be achievable within a timeframe of six to ten years, subject to validation of underlying assumptions.

Based on this assessment, and in line with the application of the principles of *Residual Risk Management*<sup>19</sup> and *All Reasonable Effort*<sup>20</sup> as outlined in the IMAS, it was determined that **in Kosovo, the risk of EO contamination is considered tolerable once all high and medium-priority tasks are completed, and provided that there are no accidents for five consecutive years.** The general expectation is that any remaining contamination after 2030 would be considered as residual and is likely to require fewer resources. The residual threat will be addressed by KMAC with the support of KSF units.

It was therefore decided that 2030 would mark the conclusion of the strategic period. This is a pivotal stage in the life cycle of Kosovo’s mine action programme, signalling the phasing out of international mine action organisations and the transition from proactive clearance to reactive risk management beyond 2030 (see Figure 2).

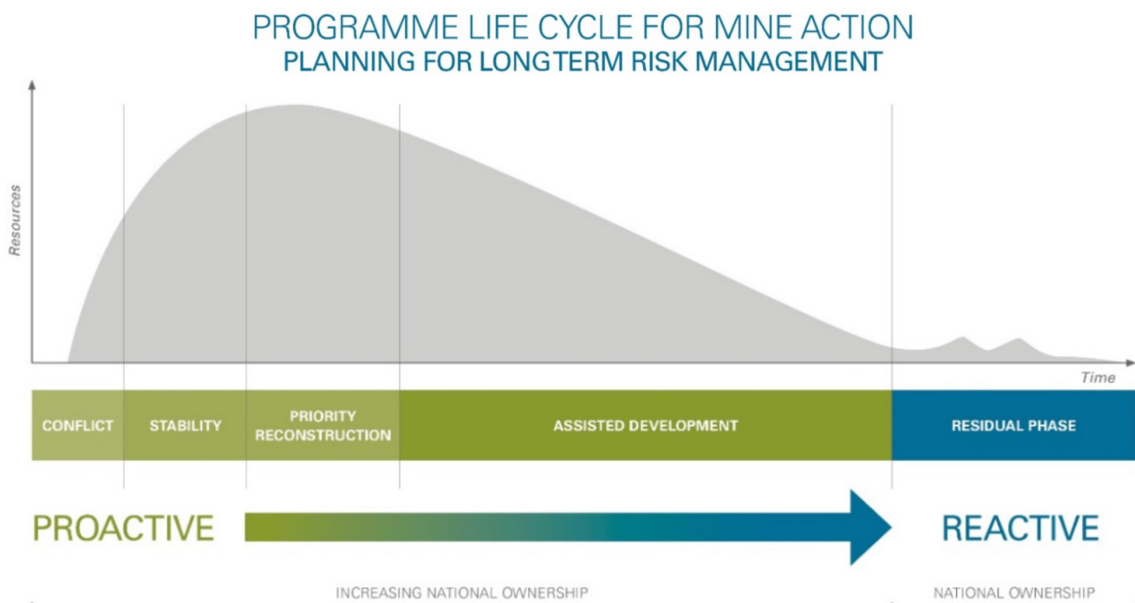


Figure 2. Evolution of the Risk Management Response<sup>21</sup>



# KOSOVO MINE ACTION STRATEGY 2025-2030

## THEORY OF CHANGE

### VISION



Kosovo free from mines and cluster munitions, enabling sustainable livelihoods and fostering lasting peace, stability and development.

### MISSION



To strengthen and equip the mine action programme to implement land release activities effectively and efficiently in line with the Kosovo mine action standards and international good practice.

### STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES



1

Land Release

2

National Capacities

3

Awareness and Engagement

### OUTCOMES



**1.1.** Survey activities lead to increased clarity on the remaining contamination

**1.2.** Clearance activities result in the release of safe land for communities

**1.3.** Strengthened efficiency and effectiveness facilitate safe and sustainable land release activities

**1.4.** Staff transition is managed to safeguard retention and morale and facilitate access to alternative livelihoods

**2.1.** KMAC and KSF's capacities are enhanced to fully administrate Kosovo's IM system

**2.2.** KMAC and KSF are appropriately equipped, staffed and resourced to ensure effective management of residual contamination

**2.3.** National explosive ordnance risk education is strengthened and promotes community safety

**3.1.** Mine action programme's impact is documented to raise awareness about achievements

**3.2.** Visibility is enhanced to broaden the programme's audience

**3.3.** Donor engagement is strengthened and expanded to sustain mine action activities

### ASSUMPTIONS



- Stakeholder commitment
- Political stability and favourable regulatory environment
- Workforce continuity
- Stable clearance rates

### RISKS



- Political and economic instability
- Climate change-induced weather events
- Discovery of previously unknown contamination

### GUIDING PRINCIPLES



- National ownership and capacities
- Gender and diversity mainstreaming
- Do no harm and conflict sensitivity
- Multi-stakeholder collaboration and partnerships
- Adherence to national and international standards
- Sound information management
- Robust quality management systems

## Strategic Objective 1: Land Release

Addressing remaining contamination is the priority of the Kosovo mine action programme. KMAC will continue working closely with its national and international partners to identify and clear EO in line with the principle of Land Release, described as the “process of applying all reasonable effort (ARE) to identify, define, and remove all presence and suspicion of mines/ERW through non-technical survey, technical survey and/or clearance” (IMAS 07.11, Land Release)<sup>22</sup>. Survey and clearance work will draw on funding from the Government of the Republic of Kosovo and other donors.

The strategic objective 1 on land release is supported by four strategic outcomes. Firstly, to achieve this objective, **greater clarity on the remaining contamination in Northern municipalities** will be established. Recognising that such clarity is a fundamental prerequisite for effective planning, KMAC will work closely with its partners to ensure that the resurvey improves the quality of information on the location of hazardous areas and is conducted following national standards.

Secondly, mine action organisations will continue clearance operations to fulfil **task completion**, prioritising high and medium-priority tasks initially and concluding with low-priority tasks according to KMAC’s prioritisation system. Each completed task will be handed over following national regulations in the presence of communities and local authorities, to foster community confidence in the work completed. The primary aim of this outcome is to clear land to be returned to communities and sustain the positive trend of zero casualties since 2019. Should any new casualty be recorded, the mine action programme will uphold the practice of disaggregating data by sex and age (SADD), per Kosovo’s NMAS.

Thirdly, in light of current efficiency challenges and anticipated obstacles posed by difficult terrain such as dense vegetation and steep slopes, KMAC will reassess clearance requirements to **enhance efficiency and effectiveness**. These adjustments will be discussed during annual workshops focusing on Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and other pertinent topics arising from the evolving operational landscape. KMAC will also remain abreast of developments and innovations in the global mine action sector, which could support the efficiency and effectiveness of mine action operations in Kosovo. Relevant IMAS updates will subsequently be captured in Kosovo’s NMAS and Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs). Considering that some remaining contamination is located in forested areas or sites of natural heritage, KMAC and its partners will also explore collaboration with relevant authorities and organisations engaged in environmental protection and restoration.

Finally, recognising that 2030 marks the conclusion of the international mine action organisations’ presence in Kosovo, the mine action programme will implement **staff transition plans**. This concerns the 258 national staff currently employed by NPA and The HALO Trust. Plans aim at safeguarding motivation amongst the current workforce and retaining staff while preparing for demobilisation. Mine action organisations will facilitate staff’s access to training opportunities, enabling individuals to acquire new competencies and be better equipped to find alternative employment after redundancy.<sup>23</sup>



Strategic Objective 1: Land Release			
INDICATOR		BASELINE	TARGET
<b>Outcome 1.1.</b> Survey activities lead to increased clarity on the remaining contamination			
1.1.1	# of hazardous areas resurveyed through NTS	0 (2023)	9 hazardous areas resurveyed in northern regions by the beginning of 2025
1.1.2	# of square meters surveyed (through TS and NTS), disaggregated by BAC and landmines	<u>2023 outputs:</u> BAC cancellation: 0 m <sup>2</sup> BAC reduction: 351'245 m <sup>2</sup> Landmines cancellation: 0m <sup>2</sup> Landmines reduction: 1'896 m <sup>2</sup>	About 7,000,000 m <sup>2</sup> surveyed by the beginning of 2025
<b>Outcome 1.2.</b> Clearance activities result in the release of safe land for communities			
1.2.1	# of square metres cleared (BAC and landmines)	<u>2023 outputs:</u> BAC clearance: 1'109'864 m <sup>2</sup> Landmines clearance: 27'410 m <sup>2</sup>	1,800,000 m <sup>2</sup> annual BAC clearance; 45,000 m <sup>2</sup> annual landmine clearance
1.2.2	# of tasks remaining (disaggregated by high, medium and low priority)	66 remaining open tasks as of 2023, including: High: 11 Medium: 36 Low: 19	0 high and medium-priority tasks remaining by 2030 As few low-priority tasks as possible remaining by 2030
1.2.3	# of municipalities declared free from risks of CMR or landmines	21 out of 38 municipalities are free from risks of CMR and landmines in 2023	35 municipalities declared free from risks of CMR or landmines by 2030
1.2.4	# of EO casualties (SADD)	The last 2 incidents happened in 2019, causing 5 casualties including 2 women, 1 girl and 2 boys	0 casualties from 2025 onwards
<b>Outcome 1.3.</b> Strengthened efficiency and effectiveness facilitate safe and sustainable land release activities			
1.3.1	# of yearly operational workshops organised	0 (2023)	1 operational workshop organised per year
1.3.2	# of NMAS updates	2 (2023)	At least 2 new NMAS updates between 2025-2030, based on the latest updates of the IMAS
1.3.3	# of initiatives explored on the topic of environmental protection or restoration	0 (2023)	At least 2 initiatives explored
<b>Outcome 1.4.</b> Staff transition is managed to safeguard retention and morale and facilitate access to alternative livelihoods			
1.4.1	National staff turnover rate (disaggregated by gender and position)	10% turnover rate in 2023 for national staff (22% team leaders, 78% operators; 26% female, 74% male)	Retention levels maintained 2025-2029 Reduction of teams planned in the last year of the strategic period
1.4.2	# of information-sharing meetings organised ahead of demobilisation in 2030	0 (2023)	At least 2 staff meetings per organisation per year during the period 2026-2030 to boost staff morale and promote transparent information sharing
1.4.3	# of staff participating in one or more trainings facilitated by mine action organisations (disaggregated by gender and position)	0 (2023)	At least 75% of mine action programme's staff complete one or more training

## Strategic Objective 2: National Capacities

The Kosovo mine action programme demonstrates high levels of national ownership, and both KMAC and KSF have accumulated significant experience in effectively managing and executing mine action activities over the past decades. In alignment with the decision of the Government of the Republic of Kosovo, international mine action organisations will cease to operate after 2030. Recognising that “no post-conflict environment is risk-free”<sup>24</sup>, it is likely that presently unknown EO contamination will be discovered once mine action operations cease after 2030. The second strategic objective focuses on national capacities, intending to bolster KMAC and KSF’s capacities to effectively manage various aspects of mine action, ensuring preparedness beyond 2030. It is underpinned by three strategic outcomes.

Firstly, recognising the importance of managing information effectively, there will be a concerted effort to bolster **national information management (IM) capacities**. The complete upgrade of the IM system to IMSMA Core will greatly contribute to facilitating information sharing and accessibility. Continuous improvements will also be implemented throughout the strategic period. KMAC will hire a dedicated IM staff in 2024, which will greatly contribute to enhancing national capacities for gradually assuming all aspects of IM from 2025 onwards.

The second strategic outcome focuses on the **management of residual contamination**. Once clearance operations are terminated in 2030, Kosovo will transition from proactive clearance to reactive management of residual threats. Recognising the distinct approach required for reactive risk management compared to proactive survey and clearance phases, KMAC will lead efforts to ensure that both KMAC and KSF are appropriately equipped, staffed and resourced to ensure the effective management of residual contamination. This includes considerations related to national explosive ordnance risk education (EORE) capacities and structures to address EO risks in a residual contamination management context.

Finally, KSF will conduct **EORE sessions** in schools, as part of its mandate to raise awareness about the risks of EO amongst Kosovo’s younger population. EORE sessions will continue to be implemented in schools during KSF’s winter stand-down periods. Under the lead of KMAC and supported by its partners, KSF will enhance EORE planning, reporting and analysis, in line with IMAS 05.10.<sup>25</sup> Data collected from such reporting and analysis will provide invaluable insights to inform residual risk management efforts beyond 2030.



## Strategic Objective 2: National Capacities

INDICATOR		BASELINE	TARGET
<b>Outcome 2.1.</b> KMAC and KSF's capacities are enhanced to fully administrate Kosovo's IM system			
2.1.1	% of advancement of the upgrade process from IMSMA NG to IMSMA Core	EOD Response Task reporting testing and developing in IMSMA Core system (March 2024)	Upgrade to IMSMA Core completed by beginning of 2025
2.1.2	# of dedicated IM staff in KMAC and KSF that are trained in IMSMA Core as administrators	2 (2023): 1 KMAC staff; 1 HALO Trust staff supporting KMAC	At least 2 more IM staff in KMAC and KSF will be trained as IMSMA Core administrators by mid-2025
2.1.3	% of IM staff in the mine action programme participating in IMSMA Core user workshop / training	50 % of IM staff trained in IMSMA Core users as of 2023	100% of IM staff, including KMAC, KSF, NPA and The HALO Trust, will participate in the IMSMA Core user training by the end of 2025
<b>Outcome 2.2.</b> KMAC and KSF are appropriately equipped, staffed and resourced to ensure effective management of residual contamination			
2.2.1	Existence of a residual contamination strategy	0 (2023)	1 strategy developed and submitted to the Government of the Republic of Kosovo by 2029
<b>Outcome 2.3.</b> National explosive ordnance risk education is strengthened and promotes community safety			
2.3.1	# of interpersonal EORE sessions conducted and delivered by KSF staff	43 sessions (2023)	Decrease in number of sessions per year in accordance with completion of municipalities
2.3.2	% of EORE forms completed by KSF and integrated into IMSMA Core (SADD)	0 (2023)	100% of forms completed and integrated into IMSMA Core by the end of 2025
2.3.3	# of EO casualties (SADD)	The last 2 incidents happened in 2019, causing 5 casualties including 2 women, 1 girl and 2 boys	0 casualties from 2025 onwards

## Strategic Objective 3: Awareness and Engagement

There is a general lack of awareness amongst the Kosovo society regarding the mine and cluster munition problem. A significant portion of the population may not realise that Kosovo remains contaminated by EO, with ongoing survey and clearance operations actively taking place. The completion of these efforts in the next decade may not be fully recognised or appreciated. Achieving the crucial milestone of completing proactive survey and clearance will mark a significant achievement for Kosovo. This milestone will align Kosovo with other countries in the Balkans and beyond that successfully have or will soon be crossing the finish line.

For the Kosovo mine action programme to effectively move towards completion, it needs to join forces with society at large as well as with national and international partners. Mobilising resources will be essential to sustain and advance mine action efforts. The programme aims to mobilise a diverse range of contributions, including financial assets as well as other forms of support, such as in-kind donations, technology and equipment, or training and expertise.

The third strategic objective of awareness and engagement is supported by three strategic outcomes. Firstly, recognising the pivotal role of **communication** in reaching out and mobilising both people and resources, the mine action programme will implement a more systematic and standardised approach to documenting its impact. This will entail gathering evidence and collecting success stories more strategically, ensuring a comprehensive representation of the programme's achievements. There will be a concerted effort to analyse and link mine action results with the SDGs and other relevant global agendas.

The second outcome centres around **engaging stakeholders and celebrating the milestones** achieved by the mine action programme. Acknowledging that awareness-raising efforts should be expanded and strategically tailored to various target audiences, the mine action programme will disseminate success stories both within the Kosovo society and internationally. Utilising diverse media channels, these stories will be shared to enhance visibility and attract a wider array of supporters.

Finally, the mine action programme will enhance and strengthen its **strategic partnerships** with national and international donors and organisations operating in Kosovo. Over the years, these partnerships have played an instrumental role in driving forward mine action efforts. The commitment of national and international partners to realising the goal of completion is paramount. The programme is committed to maintaining and strengthening existing partnerships by improving information-sharing, with a focus on strategy implementation and achievements. Mine action organisations will also actively seek out new opportunities to mobilise resources, ensuring continued progress towards a Kosovo free from explosive ordnance.

Strategic Objective 3: Awareness and Engagement			
INDICATOR		BASELINE	TARGET
<b>Outcome 3.1.</b> Mine action programme's impact is documented to raise awareness about achievements			
3.1.1	# of interviews conducted with direct or indirect beneficiaries of mine action to document the impact of mine action activities	10 (2023)	At least 2 interviews conducted per mine action organisation per year
3.1.2	# of reports providing evidence on post-clearance land use, based on standardised post-clearance impact assessment criteria	1 (2023)	1 report produced per task completed within 6 months after task completion
3.1.3	# of media products developed by NPA and The HALO Trust to document impact	4 (2023)	At least 3 media products developed per organisation per year
<b>Outcome 3.2.</b> Visibility is enhanced to broaden the programme's audience			
3.2.1	# of national or international media engaged by KMAC, KSF, NPA or The HALO Trust on successes and milestones of the mine action programme	1 (2023)	At least 2 media partners cover the mine action programme's successes and milestones per year
3.2.2	# of celebrations of international days (including Mine Awareness Day) by the mine action programme, which includes non-traditional mine action participants	1 yearly celebration around Mine Awareness Day, which includes typical mine action stakeholders (2023)	1 to 2 yearly celebrations per year
<b>Outcome 3.3.</b> Donor engagement is strengthened and expanded to sustain mine action activities			
3.3.1	# of programme-wide mine action donor coordination meetings organised	0 (2023)	2 meetings are organised per year to provide updates on strategy implementation
3.3.2	# of new partnerships established by KMAC, KSF, NPA or The HALO Trust	N/A	At least 5 new partnerships established by 2026, including with UN agencies, the private sector and/or philanthropic foundations



Presentation by NPA in the presence of international partners, 2024 ©European Union in Kosovo



# IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING

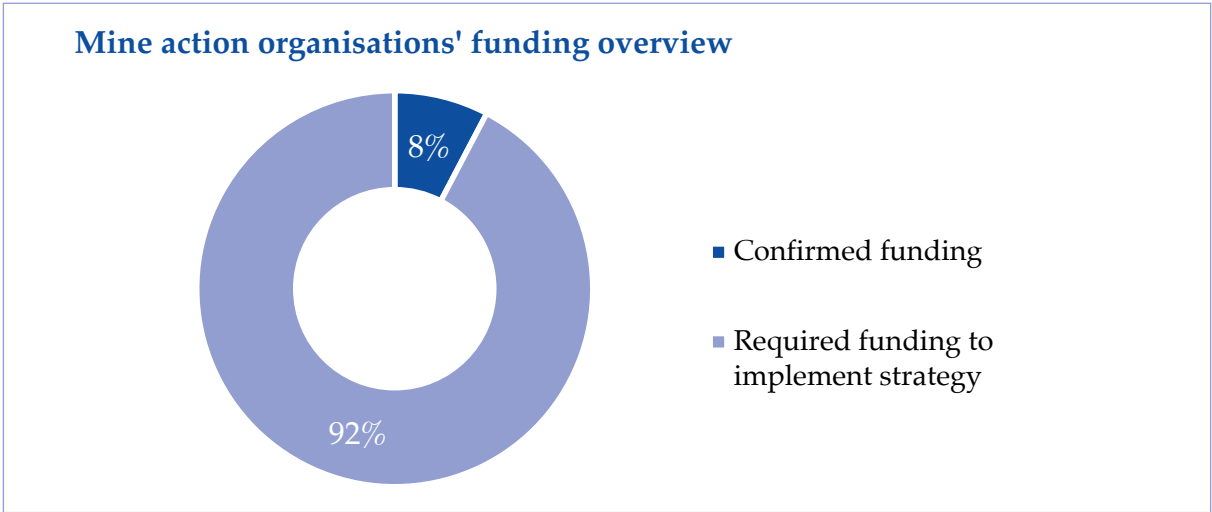
Under the lead of KMAC, the mine action programme will develop annual work plans outlining activities aimed at attaining the annual strategy targets. Progress in achieving strategic objectives will be monitored by KMAC at the strategic outcome level, utilising the monitoring framework presented in the strategy.

## Funding requirements

The Kosovo mine action programme is currently supported by the Government of the Republic of Kosovo as well as international donors. The Government of the Republic of Kosovo supports KMAC and KSF with an annual budget of 1.1 million EUR. As of December 2023, a total of five international donors financially supported Kosovo’s mine action programme, namely the Department of State (Political and Military Affairs Bureau, Weapons Removal and Abatement), the European Union, the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs, as well as the United States Department of Defence (Humanitarian Demining Research and Development).

Mine action organisations estimate that 3.5 million EUR will be required on an annual basis to meet the strategy objectives, totalling 21 million EUR between 2025 to 2030. The programme currently has limited confirmed international funding beyond mid-2025. To address this gap, the mine action programme will actively seek to mobilise funds and other resources which will allow for the strategy to be implemented.

Figure 3. Funding overview (January 2025-December 2030)<sup>26</sup>



Visit of a delegation of the Swiss Embassy in Kosovo in Arllat, 2024 ©The HALO Trust

# Assumptions and risks

The successful implementation of this strategy relies on several assumptions. These assumptions are the foundations upon which key decisions were made and targets defined during the strategy development process. Regular monitoring will be crucial to verify and adapt these assumptions as necessary during the implementation of the strategy.

**Stakeholder commitment:** It is anticipated that KMAC will remain committed to overseeing the mine action programme and that KSF will continue supporting the mine action programme. It is assumed that both NPA and The HALO Trust will maintain their commitment to conducting mine action activities until their withdrawal in 2030. Additionally, it is assumed that international donors will continue to support these organisations, ensuring the financial sustainability of mine action activities. Other donors and partners are also expected to contribute financial support and resources to the programme, maintaining required funding levels throughout the strategic period.

**Political stability and favourable regulatory environment:** The strategy assumes that Kosovo will experience political stability and security, providing a conducive environment for uninterrupted mine action operations. Furthermore, it is anticipated that regulatory frameworks governing the mine action programme will remain supportive and conducive, facilitating smooth coordination, planning, and implementation of activities.

**Workforce continuity:** The mine action programme is expected to retain adequate staffing levels, benefiting from the experience of long-standing women and men working within KMAC, KSF, NPA, and The HALO Trust. It is expected that capacities will be sustained at similar levels, with 258 national staff for both mine action organisations, and 119 staff in KSF’s Demining Unit.

**Stable clearance rates:** Despite anticipated efficiency gains, which may be offset by challenging terrain characterised by high slopes and dense vegetation, clearance rates are projected to remain stable, ensuring progress towards the achievement of clearance targets. However, if funding and capacities experience an increase, clearance targets could potentially be achieved sooner than anticipated.

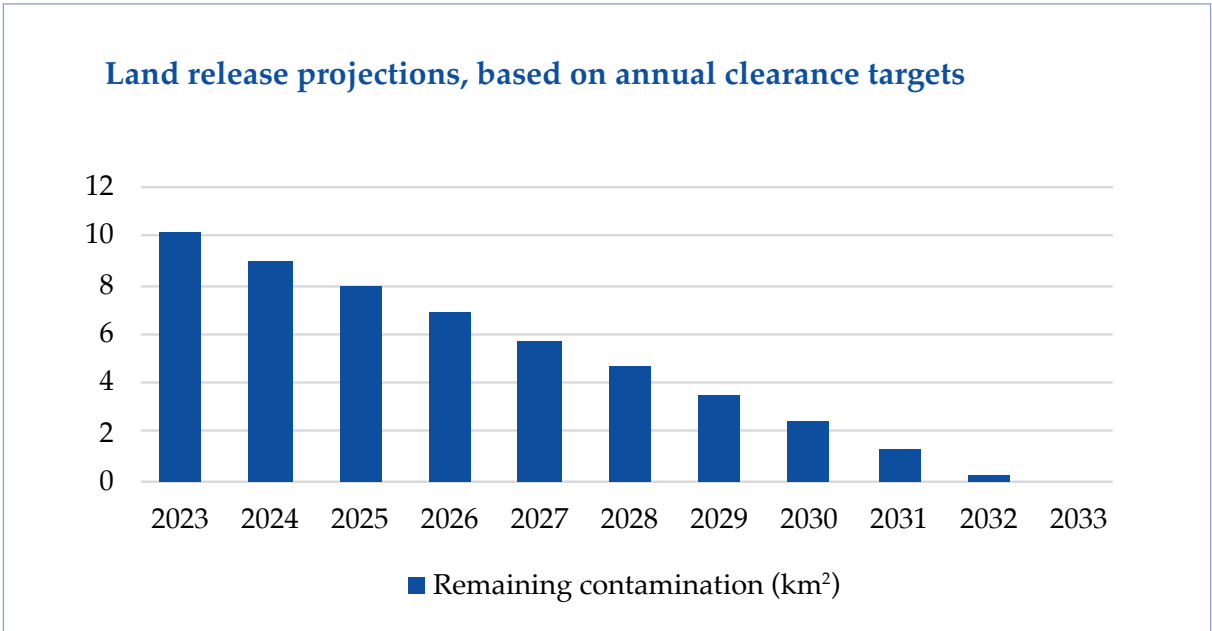


Figure 4. Survey and clearance projections<sup>27</sup>

The following risks could potentially hinder progress in the implementation of the strategy. Addressing these risks will require tailored mitigation measures, contingency planning, and adaptive management practices to ensure the smooth implementation of the strategy despite potential challenges.

**Political and economic instability:** Political unrest may lead to access issues, particularly in northern regions, or may necessitate operational stand-downs. An economic crisis could result in increased prices, thereby straining the financial resources of the mine action programme.

**Climate change-induced weather events:** Unpredictable weather patterns and extreme weather events attributed to climate change may lead to a reduction in the number of annual working days, disrupting operations and reducing productivity.

**Discovery of previously unknown contamination:** The discovery of previously unknown contamination could expand the scope of contamination, potentially altering priorities and affecting projected targets.

## Guiding principles

Stakeholders of the mine action programme are committed to implementing the strategy following the set of guiding principles:

- ▶ **National ownership and capacities:** Foster national ownership and capacity strengthening initiatives, enabling national capacities to thrive and retain full ownership of the mine action programme.
- ▶ **Gender and diversity mainstreaming:** Ensure that mine action activities are sensitive to gender and inclusive of ethnic and disability considerations. Integrate gender and diversity considerations in all phases of planning, implementation and follow-up.
- ▶ **Do no harm and conflict sensitivity:** Tailor activities according to the context, carefully analysing conflict dynamics and systematically mitigating potential harm.
- ▶ **Multi-stakeholder collaboration and partnerships:** Promote collaboration and coordination among all relevant stakeholders, including representatives from the Kosovo Government, national and international organisations, donor representatives, commercial companies, local authorities, and the direct beneficiaries of mine action.
- ▶ **Adherence to national and international standards:** Uphold the principles of international humanitarian law and adhere rigorously to the Kosovo NMAS and the IMAS.
- ▶ **Sound information management:** Ensure clear reporting and establish sound coordination and collaboration with relevant stakeholders, in line with Kosovo's information management requirements and processes.
- ▶ **Robust quality management systems:** Implement robust quality assurance and control of mine action activities, per NMAS and IMAS requirements, promoting effective and efficient mine action operations.



## Monitoring for continual improvement

KMAC is committed to implementing robust monitoring to assess the impact and effectiveness of mine action activities. The mine action programme is committed to continuous learning and adaptation, ensuring transparency and accountability to affected communities, the Government of the Republic of Kosovo and donors.

The strategy will be monitored using the strategic monitoring tables to be found at the end of each strategic objective. Progress will be discussed and reported on during programme coordination meetings involving all relevant stakeholders. Donors will be regularly informed of progress made and potential challenges experienced. In addition, the Government of the Republic of Kosovo will mandate a mid-term strategy review planned in 2027 to review progress made and take stock of the contextual changes in the programme.



*KSF Operator conducting BAC in forested area ©KSF*

## ENDNOTES

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- 2 International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), Explosive Remnants of War, Cluster Bombs and Landmines in Kosovo, June 2001, pp.6-8. [https://www.icrc.org/en/doc/assets/files/other/icrc\\_002\\_0780.pdf](https://www.icrc.org/en/doc/assets/files/other/icrc_002_0780.pdf)
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- 4 KMAC, December 2023.
- 5 KMAC, December 2023.
- 6 Maps produced by GICHD, based on KMAC EO data, April 2024.
- 7 Law no. 04/L-089 on Humanitarian Demining (OG no. 6/11.04.2012) <http://old.kuvendikosoves.org/common/docs/ligjet/Law%20on%20Humanitarian%20Demining.pdf> and Law no. 08/L-057 on amending and supplementing Law 04/L-089 on Humanitarian Demining (OG/No.6/9 February 2022) <https://gzk.rks-gov.net/ActDocumentDetail.aspx?ActID=53716>
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- 13 GICHD-UNDP, Leaving no one behind: Mine action and the Sustainable Development Goals, Geneva, June 2017. [https://www.gichd.org/fileadmin/uploads/gichd/Publications/Leaving\\_no\\_one\\_behind-Mine\\_Action\\_and\\_SDGs.pdf](https://www.gichd.org/fileadmin/uploads/gichd/Publications/Leaving_no_one_behind-Mine_Action_and_SDGs.pdf)
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- 18 EWIPA Dublin Conference 2022, list of endorsing states, as of 19 April 2024. <https://www.gov.ie/pdf/?file=https://assets.gov.ie/290914/4cffbb3f-07bf-4e54-bda1-89d9574bf4a3.pdf#page=null>
- 19 The TNMA on Residual Risk Management states that “non-state parties are [...] not obliged to clear all known contamination. The application of residual risk management requires a clear definition of what is nationally considered to be a tolerable level of risk, so that the transition from proactive to reactive EO response can be understood and defined in terms of policy and practice”. TNMA 07.14/01, Residual Risk Management, Version 1.0, January 2020, p.13. [https://www.mineactionstandards.org/fileadmin/uploads/imas/Standards/English/TNMA\\_07.14.01\\_Ed.1.pdf](https://www.mineactionstandards.org/fileadmin/uploads/imas/Standards/English/TNMA_07.14.01_Ed.1.pdf)



20 The concept of All Reasonable Effort “describes what is considered a minimum acceptable level of effort to identify and document contaminated areas or to remove the presence or suspicion of explosive ordnance. All reasonable effort has been applied when the commitment of **additional resources is considered to be unreasonable** in relation to the results expected”. TNMA 07.11/03, All Reasonable Effort (ARE), Version 1.0, March 2021, p.6.

[https://www.mineactionstandards.org/fileadmin/uploads/imas/Standards/English/TNMA\\_07.11.03\\_Ed.1.pdf](https://www.mineactionstandards.org/fileadmin/uploads/imas/Standards/English/TNMA_07.11.03_Ed.1.pdf)

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22 IMAS 07.11, Land Release, First Edition, Amendment 5, February 2019.

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23 Staff transition plans have been piloted and deployed within a select few mine action programmes globally. Sri Lanka stands out as a pioneer in effectively executing such plans. Comprehensive insights into this groundbreaking approach can be found in Sri Lanka’s National Mine Action Completion Strategy 2023-2027.

[https://www.gichd.org/fileadmin/uploads/gichd/Publications/Sri\\_Lanka\\_National\\_Mine\\_Action\\_Completion\\_Strategy\\_2023-2027.pdf](https://www.gichd.org/fileadmin/uploads/gichd/Publications/Sri_Lanka_National_Mine_Action_Completion_Strategy_2023-2027.pdf)

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26 Data provided by mine action organisations, as of March 2024.

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GICHD's visit to Kosovo, 2021 ©GICHD / Giovanni Diffidenti



