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**DRC** DANISH REFUGEE COUNCIL

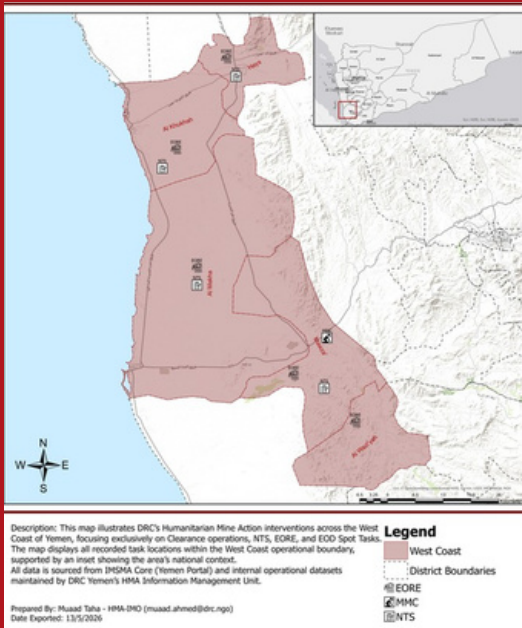
JUL 2023 - JUNE 2026

## OBJECTIVE

Improve the physical safety and enhance access to humanitarian services among conflict-affected populations in Yemen

## LOCATION

Yemen, West Coast including Hodeidah and Taiz



# DRC'S HUMANITARIAN MINE ACTION (HMA) INTERVENTIONS IN YEMEN FUNDED BY THE EU

## HUMANITARIAN SITUATION AND NEEDS

Yemen's civil war between the internationally recognized government (IRG) in the south and the de facto authorities (DFA) in the north, beginning in 2015, has resulted in massive explosive ordnance (EO) contamination. Today, Yemen is among the most heavily impacted countries in the world, with Hodeidah and Taiz governorates among the most heavily contaminated in Yemen. In 2023, EO accounted for more than half of child casualties due to armed violence.



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# THE EUROPEAN UNION'S HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE

In 2023 the European Union funded a 5 million EUR Humanitarian Mine Action response to the crisis, implemented by the Danish Refugee Council. Spanning three years, the project integrated key pillars of mine action – Explosive Ordnance Risk Education, Survey of Hazardous Areas, Victim Assistance, and Clearance – to deliver impactful and measurable benefits to vulnerable populations on Yemen’s West Coast.

Across the lifespan of the project, two minefields were cleared in Mawza, Taiz Governorate, releasing land contaminated by Anti-Vehicle mines back to the communities and enabling the resumption of agricultural activities.

All the landmines located were locally-manufactured Anti-Vehicle mines of the kind that have caused hundreds of casualties and created fear in communities across Yemen’s West Coast. DRC’s EU-funded teams destroyed the mines using thermite torches – a non-explosive tool imported into the country with EU support.

In addition, EU-funded survey teams assessed more than 200 communities and identified 54 Hazardous Areas where Anti-Vehicle and Anti

-Personnel mines were planted – often in a haphazard manner, making survey in Yemen a complex process. In doing so, more than 2.1 million square metres of confirmed and suspected minefields were added to Yemen’s national database – in addition to the 57 million previously identified by DRC teams.

Survey teams also located, marked and ensured the safe removal or destruction of 76 items of unexploded ordnance such as rockets, grenades, and Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) that pose a severe threat to communities across the West Coast.

More than 45,000 at-risk civilians benefited from Explosive Ordnance Risk Education, with children targeted as an especially vulnerable demographic. In addition thousands more people were reached in Mokha, Taiz thanks to an EU-funded risk education radio broadcast – designed to reach workers and others unable to attend in-person sessions.



## SUCCESS STORY: A SAFER FUTURE FOR AL SHAMI THROUGH MINE CLEARANCE AND RISK EDUCATION

In the village of Al-Shami in Taiz, landmine contamination severely disrupted the lives of many, stripping them of the ability to move safely, farm their lands, or even let their children play outside. As families returned home when the conflict on Yemen's West Coast drew to a tense stand-off, the returning populations noticed the mines left behind by conflict, yet their true danger was not fully understood by many until explosions began striking vehicles and livestock, leaving the residents in fear for their lives.

Abdullah, the community leader of Al-Shami village and a returnee from displacement, shares:

*"We used to find strange objects on the ground and thought they were ordinary things. They looked like the pot lids we use for cooking, until we saw them explode—once under a passing car—and this type of incident kept repeating. Only then did we realize we were living on top of a minefield."*

With the funds from the European Union (EU), the Danish Refugee Council (DRC) Risk Education team was able to provide awareness sessions to the majority residents in the Al-Shami area. This education reached all segments of the village—men, women, children, and the elderly. It significantly raised the community's awareness on how to identify strange objects, the importance of staying away from them, and the mechanism for reporting them to the community leader.

Describing the impact of these sessions, Abdullah says:

*"If it weren't for the risk education, there would be even more victims. The increased safety and the reduction in incidents in the area are undeniable. They made us take the danger of these objects seriously. Today, residents immediately report any strange object they find."*

Following the risk education, and with funds from the European Union, DRC demining teams cleared two minefields in Al-Shami village. This clearance has allowed parents to let their children play in the cleared zones without restricting their movement and, finally, released arable farmland for much-needed agriculture and economic development. Abdullah notes:

With their livelihoods impacted by the legacy of conflict, many in the community faced extreme economic hardship or were driven far afield to seek alternative work. Now, farmers have started to return to their fields.

***"Our land is our livelihood, and we are eagerly looking forward to the end of the clearance operations so we can return to plowing and farming our land once again."***

Abdullah concludes,



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