



Scaling Up Explosive Ordnance Disposal Capacity in Sudan: Training EOD Operators

Photo 1: Aftermath of protracted fighting in Khartoum

When conflict erupted across Sudan in April 2023, cities and communities were transformed into frontlines. Fighting across the country has been characterized by intensive urban warfare, heavy artillery shelling and aerial bombardment between opposing forces. Today, the protracted fighting has resulted in widespread explosive ordnance contamination scattered across homes, streets,

schools and public buildings, in both cities and rural areas.

An estimated one in ten explosive weapons deployed in conflict fail to detonate on impact, leaving behind a lethal legacy of unexploded and abandoned munitions buried in rubble, hidden in burned-out vehicles and multi-story buildings.



Photo 2: Deminer inspecting a vehicle in Bahri, Northern Khartoum

In Khartoum state, the contamination is both unprecedented and uniquely urban, featuring a dangerous mix of landmines, rockets, grenades, and other unexploded ordnance spread across densely populated neighbourhoods.

As returns continue, the need for a scaled up mine action response is urgent. However, the lack of trained Sudanese personnel is limiting capacity to deploy additional mine action teams.



Photo 3: Aftermath of protracted fighting in Khartoum

Expanding Sudan’s National Mine Action Capacity

As the first international NGO to conduct clearance operations in Sudan since the conflict began, Danish Refugee Council (DRC) is committed to supporting capacity development of the mine action sector in order to ensure mine action is an essential, integrated part of all recovery efforts in Sudan.

By graduating 15 new EOD Level 2 operators, the course increased the number of qualified personnel able to respond to growing needs in Sudan by as much as 30%, helping expand the country’s ability to respond to explosive hazards and support safe humanitarian access and recovery efforts.

In May 2026, with support from the Sudan Humanitarian Fund, DRC delivered the first Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) Level 2 training conducted in Sudan since the outbreak of the conflict.

The intensive 25-day course, led by DRC Sudan’s Technical Adviser and supervised by the National Mine Action Center, successfully brought together 15 personnel from Sudanese national mine action organisations and the National Mine Action Center to upgrade their skills from EOD Level 1 to EOD level 2.



Photo 4: Course participants conduct practical exercises

Adapting to a Changing Contamination Landscape

The trainings, which combine classroom teaching with intense practical exercises and technical assessments, are particularly designed to support participants with these changes to the nature of explosive threats, from largely on rural minefields to dense urban areas used as battlefields.

Training these fifteen mine action professionals from level 1 to level 2 is both an opportunity for professional development, allowing these operators to take up higher positions within their organizations, but also critical for the expansion of the sector.

The course included advanced techniques, such as building search and urban clearance operations. Operators trained to EOD Level 2 are qualified to move, transport, and destroy multiple types of unexploded ordnance found in urban environments, where explosive items often cannot be safely destroyed where they are found.



Photo 5: Classroom teaching, EOD Identification

Graduates are equipped to take on positions as team leaders within their organisations, roles that have been particularly affected by shortages of trained personnel. By growing the number of qualified supervisors available, national mine action organisations will be able to deploy additional clearance teams and scale up operations in response to growing contamination risks across Sudan.



Photo 6: Practical training with model items, preparing for demolition

Trainee Spotlight: Responding to New Explosive Threats

For participants like Mohammed, the training also represented a personal milestone.

Mohammed began working in mine action 17 years ago as an assistant cook with a demining team. Over time, he has worked his way up to become a deminer and later an EOD Level 1 operator.

Reflecting on the course, he explained how the conflict has transformed the nature of explosive threats in Sudan:

“There have been many recent changes in the field of mine action in Sudan due to the current conflict. New types of explosive ordnance which were previously unfamiliar to us have appeared.

Through this course, we became familiar with many of these new threats and gained the knowledge to deal with them safely if encountered in the field.”



Photo 7: Mohammed on the job in Khartoum



Photo 8: Course Participant prepares for a demolition

Strengthening Recovery Through Mine Action

By strengthening national expertise and leadership, we ensure Sudanese organisations are equipped to address the country’s rapidly evolving contamination crisis, and that mine action is recognised as a critical foundation for humanitarian access, safe returns and long-term recovery.

DRC plans to conduct additional certification courses for Sudanese national NGOs at the Omdurman Regional Training Center in the coming months.

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