Landmine & Cluster Munition
MONITOR

Gender and the Mine Ban Treaty

June 2025

Following the Fifth Review Conference of the Mine Ban Treaty—the Siem Reap-Angkor Summit on a Mine-Free World, held from 25–29 November 2024 in Cambodia—and the adoption of the resulting Siem Reap-Angkor Action Plan, the importance of mainstreaming gender equality into humanitarian mine action has been reinforced.
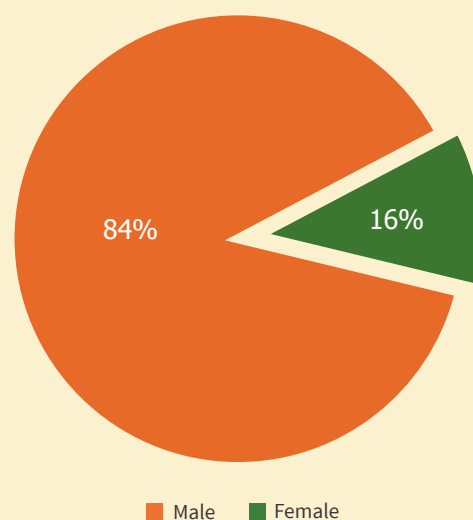
Since the outset in 1999, the Landmine and Cluster Munition Monitor has sought to report gender disaggregated casualties and on the implementation of age- and gender-sensitive assistance, to the extent that information is available. The Monitor actively encourages states and other mine action stakeholders to report on diverse and under-represented groups in affected communities, including survivors of landmines, cluster munition remnants, and explosive remnants of war (ERW), as well as risk education beneficiaries.

The world continues to face the consequences of mines/ERW, which are often exacerbated by intensified conflict and rising insecurity. Enhancing the understanding of the role that gender plays in relation to mine action is crucial to assessing and addressing the specific and varied impacts involved.
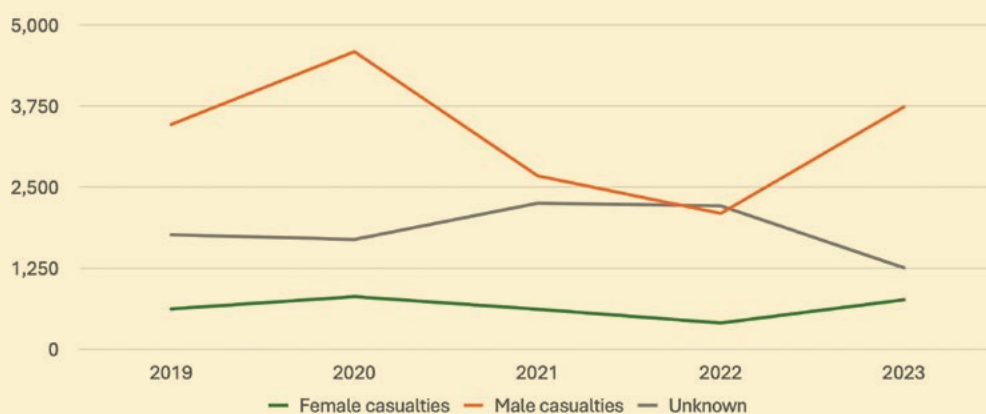
This factsheet provides an update to the Monitor's regular reporting on gender and diversity issues. It aims to provide the mine action sector with insights into key trends on the gendered impact of mines/ERW, informing inclusive and gender-sensitive responses.

Mine/ERW casualties by gender: 2019–2023
(where the sex was known)

84%   16%

■ Male   ■ Female

Data collected by the Monitor shows that since the Mine Ban Treaty's entry into force on 1 March 1999, men and boys have accounted for the vast majority of mine/ERW casualties.[1] For the five-year period from 2019–2023, women and girls represented 16% of casualties, where the sex was reported.

Mine/ERW casualties breakdown by gender: 2019–2023[2]

Female casualties — Male casualties — Unknown

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1   In Monitor data, casualties of landmines and ERW include people killed and injured, as well as those where it was not known if the casualty survived.
2   Totals for 2023 adjusted since the *Landmine Monitor 2024* report was published.

Data indicates that men and boys represent the majority of reported casualties and face specific challenges, with livelihood activities often placing them at high risk. Men and boys are more frequently involved in activities that increase their risk of encountering landmines and ERW. This includes livelihood activities such as agricultural work, herding, foraging, building, and traveling through contaminated areas for employment, education, or due to displacement. Boys are disproportionately affected among child casualties. This is partly due to social contexts and behavioral tendencies such as curiosity and risk-taking, leading to opportunities and interaction with unfamiliar objects including explosive items. In many cases, boys pick up or play with ERW, and are reported to mistake them for toys. Men and boys are often seen as primary breadwinners. Deaths of men and boys due to mines/ERW can drastically alter the economic and social conditions of the family. Injury caused by mines/ERW, including amputation but also other phyiscal and psychological impairmanets, can result in survivors being prevented from continuing agricultural work, manual labour, or military work as they had before the incident, leading to severe financial insecurity. Social stigma may be compounded by the perceived inability to fulfill expected gender-defined provider roles.

Reporting also shows that women and girls are likely to be disproportionally disadvantaged, in multiple ways, as a result of mine/ERW incidents. Among survivors, women and girls can face unique challenges, including stigmatization, and may have more limited access to rehabilitation and other forms of assistance due to social and cultural barriers. They suffer multiple forms of discrimination, including abandonment, and have limited access to medical services in some countries. Additionally, women often carry the responsibility of caring for family members injured in mine/ERW incidents, and for managing households in situations of extreme precarity and insecurity.

There is a significant difference in device types causing most casualties across the age groups. Boys and girls, rather than adults, are most impacted by ERW, which is attributed to curiosity as unexploded items may draw their interest, while their knowledge or perception of the hazards involved is often limited. Women are also disproportionately impacted by ERW, due to specific gender roles which bring them into contact with these devices. Accidents involving whole families have also been reported, often when the item is brought into the home as scrap metal or due to curiosity.

In the previous Mine Ban Treaty action plan period, for the five years up to 2025, the majority of casualties were caused by improvised mines, also known as victim-activated improvised explosive devices (IEDs). These incidents often involved larger quantities of explosives, in active conflict zones, resulting in a high ratio of casualties who did not survive the incident.[3]

Over the five-year period from 2019–2023, of all male mine/ERW casualties, 35% were killed (where the outcome was known). Among female casualties, 36% were killed. In the early 2000s, the proportion of deaths among reported female casualties was higher than for males. This gap has narrowed significantly over the past two decades, while still fluctuating between years.

Ten countries with the highest percentage of female mine/ERW casualties: 2019–2023[4]

Country	Female casualties (as % of casualties)
Burkina Faso	47%
Angola	39%
Yemen	28%
DRC	27%
Lao PDR*	24%
South Sudan	23%
Myanmar	22%
Somalia	19%
India	19%
Afghanistan	18%

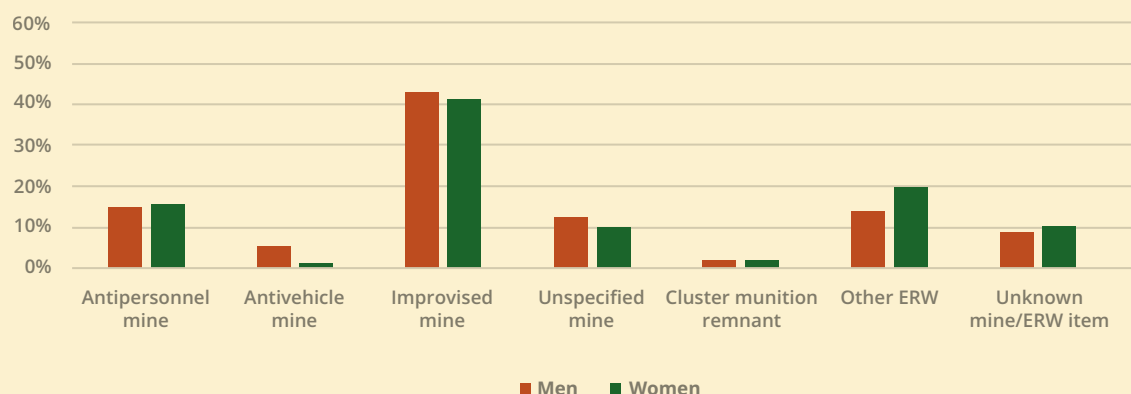Note: Countries in **bold** are States Parties to the Mine Ban Treaty; DRC=Democratic Republic of the Congo.
*Lao PDR is party to the Convention on Cluster Munitions.

Between 2019 and 2023, in several affected countries, women and girls accounted for a higher proportion of mine/ERW casualties than the global average. The highest proportions of female casualties were recorded in Burkina Faso (47%) and Angola (39%), indicating near parity between male and female casualties in some country-specific contexts. Elsewhere, notable high proportions of female casualties were reported for Yemen (28%), the Democratic Republic of the Congo (27%), and Lao PDR (24%). In South Sudan (23%), Myanmar (22%), Somalia (19%), India (19%), and Afghanistan (18%), women and girls also accounted for a significant proportion of total mine/ERW casualties. These findings underscore the need for context-appropriate gender-responsive mine action, including victim assistance and risk education.
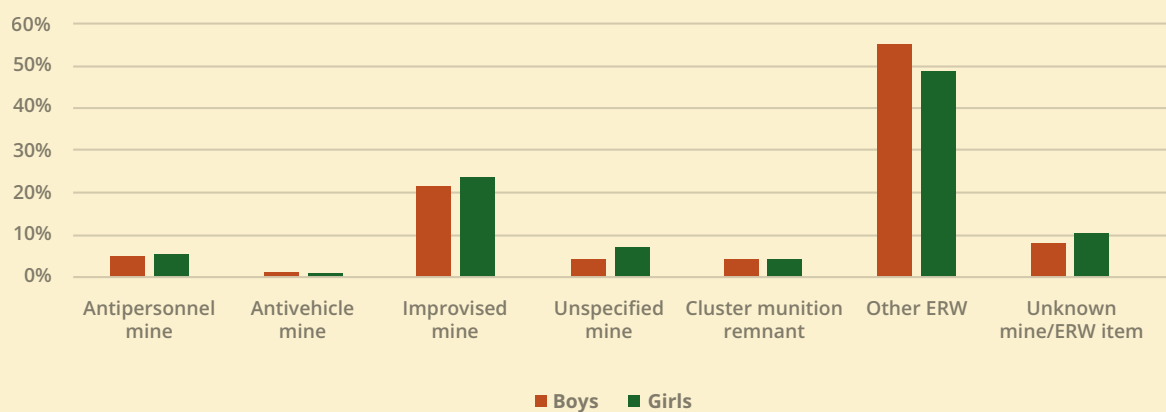
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3 Improved data collection over the past two decades, attributed in large part to the success of the Mine Ban Treaty and the efforts of mine action stakeholders, has contributed to this changing statistical pattern, allowing clearer identification of trends. Previously, casualty data, often sourced from healthcare facilities, omitted many people who died before they could receive emergency care.

4 Based on the percentage of casualties by gender, where the sex was known, as recorded among countries with more than 100 casualties in the period 2019–2023.
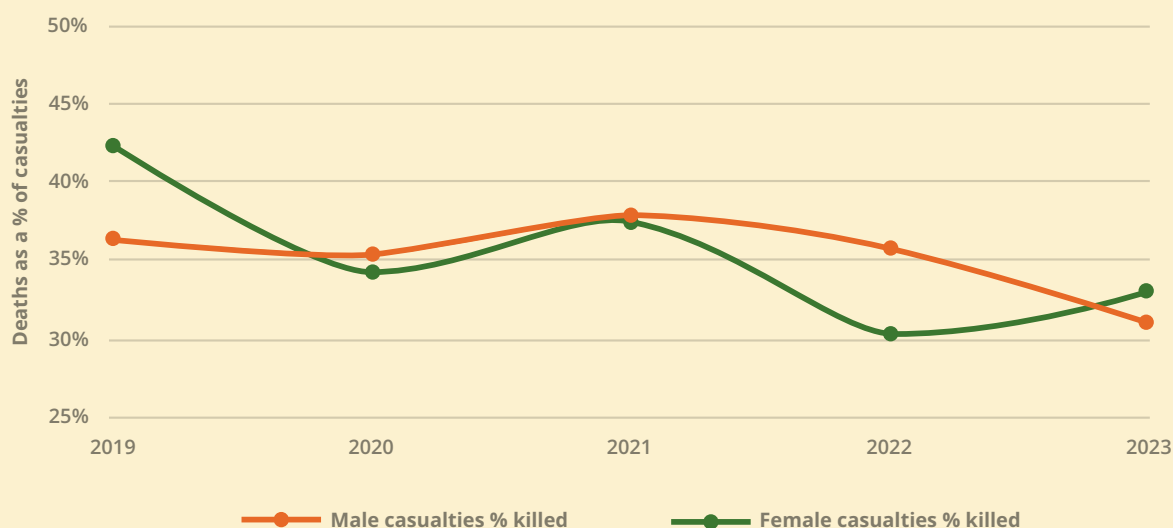
Percentage of women and men casualties by device type: 2019−2023

Men ▪ Women

Percentage of girl and boy casualties by device type: 2019−2023

Boys ▪ Girls

Death rate among female and male casualties: 2019−2023

Male casualties % killed ●——●   Female casualties % killed ●——●

Risk education and gender

United Nations Security Council (UNSC) Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security (2000) declares "the need for all parties to ensure that mine clearance and mine awareness programmes take into account the special needs of women and girls."[5]

The Mine Ban Treaty requires States Parties to "provide an immediate and effective warning to the population" regarding mines and suspected hazard areas. To be effective, risk education must be sensitive to gender, age, and disability, and take the diverse needs and experiences of people living in affected communities into account. The consideration of target areas, high-risk groups, and the activities and behaviors that place people at risk from mines/ERW, is crucial to the design and implementation of effective risk education programs. Research conducted by the Landmine and Cluster Munition Monitor indicates that:
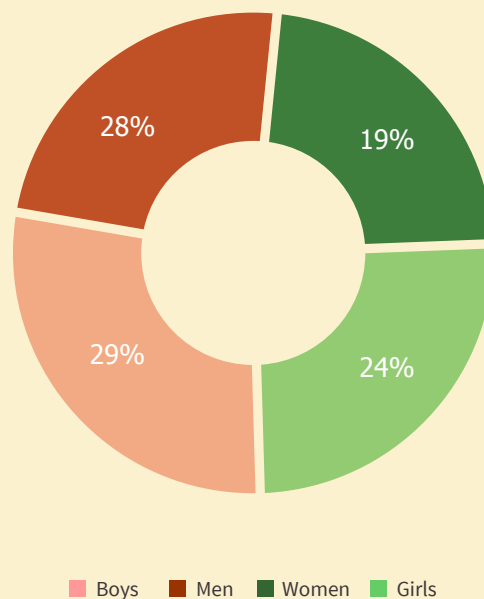
- Working-age adult men are a high-risk group, primarily due to their economic responsibilities.

- Men are at risk due to livelihood activities in rural areas including cultivation, the collection of forest products, hunting, fishing, foraging, and tending animals.

- Children are particularly vulnerable due to their natural curiosity and limited knowledge of the dangers posed by mines/ERW.

- Boys are noted to engage in high-risk behaviors, including activities which may take them into hazardous areas such as playing outdoors, tending animals, and undertaking household chores including the collection of firewood.

- Men and boys are reported to be more likely to take intentional risks due to economic necessity.

Providers of risk education have reported to the Monitor that, in general, women and girls were less likely to engage in unsafe behaviors or to travel as far from home as men and boys. Nevertheless, women and girls remain an important target group due to livelihood activities that place them at risk from mines/ERW, while they can also pass on key messages and help promote safer behavior among men and boys. This is particularly the case in areas impacted by conflict, such as in Gaza and Ukraine, where women are considered important to reach because of their ability to pass information on to others.

Disaggregated data on risk education collected by the Monitor in States Parties and states not party to the Mine Ban Treaty indicates that in recent years, risk education has reached significant numbers of women and girls, as well as the high-risk group of men and boys.

Working-age adult men were cited by most States Parties and risk education providers as a high-risk group, primarily

Risk education beneficiaries by gender and age in States Parties to the Mine Ban Treaty (2021–2023)

- Boys
- Men
- Women
- Girls

due to their economic responsibilities. Men, as well as boys, were also reported to be more likely than other groups to take intentional risks due to economic necessity. However, in 2023, adult male beneficiaries of risk education decreased by almost 9% compared with 2022.

While the number of girls reached by risk education providers during 2023 increased by 7% compared to 2022, the number of women reached saw an 11% year-on-year decline.

Victim assistance and gender

Gender is a key consideration in victim assistance programming.

Among mine/ERW survivors, whose rights are also addressed by the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), women and girls often experience greater discrimination than men and boys, with more living in poverty and experiencing lower rates of employment.

Female survivors face additional challenges in accessing medical care in some countries due to the lack of gender-sensitive services, including a lack of female rehabilitation professionals. In addition to health services for female survivors, the widows and female family members of mine/ERW victims are in need of socio-economic and other forms of assistance.

In Afghanistan, a substantial fall in international financial

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5   The focus on gender in the Oslo Action Plan, which was adopted at the Fourth Review Conference of the Mine Ban Treaty in 2019, coincided with the 20th anniversary of UNSC Resolution 1325, which emphasizes a gender-based approach to mine action among its provisions.

and technical support for healthcare infrastructure after the Taliban's takeover in August 2021 has critically undermined the public health system, disproportionately impacting women and girls amid restrictions imposed on their freedom of movement and employment. Access to services for women and girls has been severely impeded, and the training of female healthcare professionals has been almost entirely obstructed.[6]

In countries experiencing recent and ongoing conflict, such as Sudan and Ukraine, the destruction of hospitals and healthcare facilities caused by use of explosive weapons, as well as the presence of mine/ERW contamination, has further restricted access to healthcare for women and girls.

Gender in data and reporting

Many States Parties reported disaggregated data related to mine action and victim assistance in their 2024 Mine Ban Treaty Article 7 reporting, and in response to Monitor questionnaires.

Afghanistan and Iraq provided detailed sex- and age-disaggregated casualty data, and reported on beneficiary demographics in the areas of physical rehabilitation and socio-economic support.

Despite constraints due to armed conflict, Sudan included age and sex breakdowns in casualty data, and noted targeted assistance to female survivors and persons with disabilities. Tajikistan disaggregated some risk education and victim assistance data by sex and age. Albania and

Yemen reported limited disaggregated data, primarily by sex, in relation to risk education activities. However, systematic and comprehensive disaggregation across all pillars of mine action remained inconsistent among States Parties.

Cambodia reported on efforts to be increasingly gender-responsive, through offering integrated medical, psychological, legal, and protection support tailored to women and girls affected by gender-based violence. It also reported increased gender sensitivity in mine/ERW victim assistance programs, with the aim of ensuring that women and girls receive comprehensive, respectful, and inclusive support aligned with their specific needs.

Zimbabwe emphasized linkages with the Women, Peace and Security agenda, affirming the importance of gender-sensitive approaches in mine action.

Gender aspects in the Siem Reap–Angkor Action Plan[7]

The Siem Reap-Angkor Action Plan emphasizes the full integration of gender considerations across all aspects of mine action, including planning, implementation, data collection, and reporting. It calls for the removal of barriers to equal participation, the use of sex-disaggregated data, and the tailoring of services—such as risk education, victim assistance, and socio-economic inclusion—to meet the distinct needs and experiences of women, men, girls, and boys in affected communities.

Relevant actions are as follows:

Action 1: Demonstrate high levels of national ownership, partnership and coordination

- Encourages integration of gender equality into national development strategies related to mine action.

Action 5: Ensure inclusive Convention implementation and gender-balanced participation

- Promotes mainstreaming gender into all Mine Ban Treaty activities and removing barriers to full, equal, and meaningful participation.

Action 19: Prioritize survey and clearance based on inclusive criteria

- Requires consideration of gender-specific needs in determining clearance priorities.

Action 23: Ensure gender-sensitive extension requests for Article 5 deadlines

- Calls for the inclusion of gender considerations in multi-year survey and clearance plans within Article 5 extension requests.

Action 27: Provide context-specific mine risk education

- Requires mine risk education to be sensitive to gender and tailored to different needs in affected communities.

Action 29: Report on mine risk education with disaggregated data

- Mandates data disaggregation by gender in reporting on risk education implementation and outcomes.

6   Human Rights Watch (HRW), "A Disaster for the Foreseeable Future: Afghanistan's Healthcare Crisis," 12 February 2024, bit.ly/HRWAfghanistanHealthcare12Feb2024.
7   Siem Reap-Angkor Action Plan, Mine Ban Treaty Fifth Review Conference, Siem Reap, 28 November 2024, docs.un.org/en/APLC/CONF/2024/WP.23/Rev.1.

Action 30: Assign a focal point for victim assistance and inclusive planning

- Ensures national victim assistance plans reflect the needs and rights of mine victims with attention to gender, age, and disability.

Action 32: Collect victim data disaggregated by gender

- Calls for the disaggregation of victim data by gender to support the provision of comprehensive and inclusive assistance.

Action 36: Ensure access to mental health and psychosocial support

- Requires gender-disaggregated reporting on access to mental health services for survivors and affected families.

Action 37: Strengthen social and economic inclusion of mine victims

- Promotes equal access to education, employment, and support services for survivors, with gender-disaggregated data.

Action 43: Provide assistance with gender-sensitive implementation

- Donor support should reflect the gendered needs and experiences of mine-affected communities.

Action 45: Share good practices including gender integration

- Encourages international cooperation to exchange experience on integrating gender into mine action programming.