



## WESTERN BALKANS SALW CONTROL ROADMAP

### MULTI-PARTNER TRUST FUND

Final Report 21 February 2020 – 31 October 2022

<p align="center"><b>Project Title &amp; Project Number</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Project Title: <b>Urgent Action on Ammunition Destruction - Project EXPLODE+, in Bosnia and Herzegovina</b></li> <li>Project Number <b>BIH10/00084048</b></li> <li>MPTF Office Project Reference Number: <b>00120226</b> <sup>2</sup></li> </ul>	<p align="center"><b>Country, Locality(s), Priority Area(s) / Strategic Results<sup>1</sup></b></p> <p><i>Country/Region: <b>Bosnia and Herzegovina</b></i></p> <p><i>UNDAF 2015-2020 Outcome 3. "By 2019, there is effective management of explosive remnants of war and armaments and strengthened prevention of and responsiveness to man-made and natural disasters"</i></p> <p><i>CPD 2015-2020 Output 1. "Sustainable remnants of war and arms control management in place."</i></p> <p><i>Priority area/ strategic results: GOAL 5, 6 and 7</i></p>
<p align="center"><b>Participating Organization(s)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Organizations that have received direct funding from the MPTF Office under this project: UNDP Bosnia and Herzegovina</li> </ul>	<p align="center"><b>Implementing Partners</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>National counterparts (government, private, NGOs) and other International Organizations</li> </ul>
<p align="center"><b>Project Cost (US\$)</b></p> <p>Total approved budget as per project document: USD 583,546</p> <p>MPTF /JP Contribution<sup>3</sup>:  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>by Agency (if applicable)</li> </ul> </p> <p>Government Contribution</p> <p>Other Contributions (donors)</p> <p><b>TOTAL: USD 583,546</b></p>	<p align="center"><b>Project Duration</b></p> <p>Overall Duration: 32 months</p> <p>Start Date<sup>4</sup>: 21.02.2020</p> <p>Original End Date<sup>5</sup>: 31.05.2021</p> <p>Current End date<sup>6</sup>: 31.10.2022</p>
<p align="center"><b>Project Assessment/Review/Mid-Term Eval.</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes    <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No    Date: <i>dd.mm.yyyy</i></p> <p>Mid-Term Evaluation Report – <i>if applicable please attach</i></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes    <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No    Date: <i>dd.mm.yyyy</i></p>	<p align="center"><b>Report Submitted By</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tarik Ucanbarlic, EXPLODE+ Project Manager</li> <li>Participating Organization (Lead): UNDP BiH</li> <li>Email address: <a href="mailto:tarik.ucanbarlic@undp.org">tarik.ucanbarlic@undp.org</a></li> </ul>

<sup>1</sup> Strategic Results, as formulated in the Strategic UN Planning Framework (e.g. UNDAF) or project document;

<sup>2</sup> The MPTF Office Project Reference Number is the same number as the one on the Notification message. It is also referred to as "Project ID" on the project's factsheet page the [MPTF Office GATEWAY](#)

<sup>3</sup> The MPTF or JP Contribution, refers to the amount transferred to the Participating UN Organizations, which is available on the [MPTF Office GATEWAY](#)

<sup>4</sup> The start date is the date of the first transfer of the funds from the MPTF Office as Administrative Agent. Transfer date is available on the [MPTF Office GATEWAY](#)

<sup>5</sup> As per approval of the original project document by the relevant decision-making body/Steering Committee.

<sup>6</sup> If there has been an extension, then the revised, approved end date should be reflected here. If there has been no extension approved, then the current end date is the same as the original end date. The end date is the same as the operational closure date which is when all activities for which a Participating Organization is responsible under an approved MPTF /JP have been completed. As per the MOU, agencies are to notify the MPTF Office when a programme completes its operational activities.

## I. Background

The disposal processes of the Ministry of Defense and the Armed Forces Bosnia and Herzegovina (MoD/AF BiH) surplus ammunition have been carried out since 2006. Up to date, around 16,350 tonnes of ammunition have been disposed of. The latest official data of the MoD BiH shows that the AF BiH are currently managing up to 12,150 tonnes of ammunition stockpiles in total. Considering that AF BiH require 7,500 tonnes of ammunition to be fully operational, there is 4,650 tonnes of surplus ammunition. Out of the surplus quantity, 25-30% is considered unsafe for further storage and following the findings of 100% inspections by the end of October 2018, it has been confirmed that most of the stock is over 35 years old. This combined with lack of proper care, service records and unknown history of storage conditions in the past, calls for immediate action in terms disposal of ammunition quantities that are unsafe for further storage. This is a crucial measure in the attempt to avoid an Uncontrolled Explosion of Munition Site (UEMS). UEMS cause a loss of life, damage to infrastructure and lead to a humanitarian crisis in the specific region. UEMS also risks contaminating surrounding areas where prospects for future use and development drastically decreases for years until the area has been cleared and secured.

From January 2010 to March 2019, globally, there have been 215 unplanned explosions of munitions sites with over 1,600 casualties and over 7,100 injured people. At the same time, there were 6 incidents in the region (Serbia, Albania, Montenegro, and Croatia) causing 3 deaths and injuring 10 persons. An incident of an unwanted explosion in Serbia in February 2017, saw 4 more casualties and 25 persons injured. This brings the total to 7 deaths and 35 injured persons in the region since 2010. In comparison to this, Bosnia and Herzegovina, still is the only country in the region that did not experience UEMS during this period.

The focus of UNDP's interventions is the concentrated support to ammunition reduction in order to enable sustainable stockpile management and thus provide for stable and risk-free development opportunities for local communities in the proximity of Ammunition Storage Sites (ASS) as well as for the country.

The Project is set to provide supporting role in ammunition disposal to MoD/AF BiH, focusing on complex ammunition only, for additional two years or until the end of 2022. After this deadline it is expected that MoD/AF BiH takes over of the full ownership and control of ammunition stockpile management system of their own. Furthermore, the project is complementary with all previous and ongoing interventions implemented thus far by the national and international actors under the Ammunition, Weapons and Explosives Master Plan and coordination with EUFOR, supported by NATO HQ - Sarajevo, EU, UNDP and OSCE.

The objective of the Project is to assist the MoD/AF BiH in the reduction of ammunition stockpiles to a manageable level to create preconditions for the establishment of a sustainable ammunition stockpile management system owned by the MoD/AF BiH. In addition, the objective will contribute to the achievement of the strategic and operational goals of the MoD/AF BiH aimed at increasing the overall efficiency of the AF BiH by addressing the issue of excess, obsolete, faulty ammunition, and military equipment.

## II. List of acronyms

<b>AF BiH</b>	Armed Forces of Bosnia and Herzegovina
<b>ASS</b>	Ammunition Storage Site
<b>AWE Master Plan</b>	Master Plan for Ammunition, Weapons and Explosives
<b>BiH</b>	Bosnia and Herzegovina
<b>EU</b>	European Union
<b>EUFOR</b>	European Union Forces in Bosnia and Herzegovina
<b>EUSR BiH</b>	European Union Special Representative to Bosnia and Herzegovina
<b>JS AF BiH</b>	Joint Staff of the Armed Forces of Bosnia and Herzegovina
<b>MLRS</b>	Multiple Launch Rocket System
<b>MoD BiH</b>	Ministry of Defense of Bosnia and Herzegovina
<b>NHQSa</b>	NATO Headquarter Sarajevo
<b>OSCE BiH</b>	Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe Mission to Bosnia and Herzegovina
<b>UNDP</b>	United Nations Development Programme
<b>UEMS</b>	Uncontrolled Explosion of Munition Site

### III. Executive summary

The following represents an overview of the implementation of the activities under this Project, for the period 21 February 2020 – 31 October 2022.

*Output 1: Sustained reduction of unsafe ammunition complex systems enabling higher safety and security for storage facilities and local communities nearby* aimed to support the industrial disposal of 76 tonnes of unsafe ammunition in a controlled environment - including the environmentally friendly disposal of scrap materials resulting from the disposal processes. In terms of contribution to the impact level change, this output and related activities aimed to contribute to the establishment of an effective management of ammunition stockpiles in possession of MoD/AF BiH through setting up a sustainable ammunition life-cycle management system.

**During 2020**, the recruitment process for the engagement of the Project Officer was completed. In terms of the implementation of the activities, both the COVID-19 impact, and the late delivery of the MoD BiH 2020 Disposal Plan had a relatively negative effect overall. The official Disposal Plan had failed to allocate the agreed quantities and types of ammunition for disposal, as was initially planned and agreed in the project document. As a result of this, a programmatic project revision and a no-cost extension was carried out to mitigate these challenges. Additionally, the project team noted and reported to the Steering Committee on the lack of decision-making within the MoD BiH in 2020, that further reflected negatively and caused delays in activity implementation. An international contract was signed in September 2020 for the disposal of 2,667 pcs of “Zolja” and 650 pcs of white phosphorous ammunition<sup>7</sup>. A national contract was signed in October 2020 for the disposal of 1,000 pcs of RPGs<sup>8</sup>.

**During 2021** (Q1 and Q2), the contract mentioned above, for 2,667 pcs of “Zolja” and the 650 pcs of WP was mutually annulled between the UNDP BiH and the Esplodenti Sabino company, located in Italy, due to an accident that occurred in the part of the facility handling propellants (powder). This accident and the ensuing investigations carried out by the Italian national authorities rendered their licensing as void and as result severely impacted the overall implementation of disposal contracts/activities<sup>9</sup>. Additionally, the project activities were again initiated with a delay, as in 2020, as the annual 2021 Disposal Plan was published in July 2021, with a seven-month delay. Once it was made available, the project ascertained that the Disposal Plan contained certain data inaccuracies and inconsistencies regarding the ammunition assigned to UNDP. Therefore, during 2021/Q1 and 2021/Q2, the project team did not have a disposal plan in accordance with which it could plan any tendering procedures and ammunition disposal. Operating under difficult circumstances, the project did however manage to initiate another tendering procedure for 2,667 pcs of “Zolja” and the 833 pcs of WP (increased quantity due to additional available units in accordance with 2021 Disposal Plan, once made available), with the contract successfully awarded to another international civilian disposal facility<sup>10</sup>.

**During 2022**, the project was granted an extension to 31 October 2022 to ensure full completion of all the on-going contracts for disposal, including a) 1,000 pieces of RPG ammunition with Pretis; b) 2,667 pieces of RPG “Zolja”, and c) 833 pieces of white phosphorus (WP) ammunition, latter two both with DemilTech, Croatia. The 2022 Disposal Plan was received in March 2022, again containing discrepancies (as in 2020 and 2021) that impacted ammunition originally committed in the project, namely: 53,097 ammunition fuses, 1,628 units of white phosphorus ammunition, and 22,880 units of rifle grenades. The 2022 Disposal Plan had not undergone any revision in the course of 2022, and as such, there has been no progress in dealing with these discrepancies. Therefore, the project team concluded

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<sup>7</sup> A contract was signed with the Esplodenti Sabino company, Italy

<sup>8</sup> A contract was signed with the Pretis d.o.o. company, BiH

<sup>9</sup> No UNDP ammunition was affected, as the process of obtaining the export licenses for all contracted ammunition was still on-going in BiH.

<sup>10</sup> A contract was signed with the DemilTech company, Croatia

that the remaining ammunition will not be possible to be disposed of before the end of the project duration, 31 October 2022.

In terms of catalytic value of the project, the Trust Fund resources have enabled UNDP to respond to institutional requests for urgent support, that otherwise would not have been possible. Through direct intervention of the EXPLODE+ platform in ammunition disposal, the preconditions have been established, enabling the initiation of other stockpile management interventions, therefore the project played an integral part for providing the basis for stockpile management. More specifically, the project contributed to the implementation of the AWE MP, under the local ownership of the MoD BiH, through planning sessions/processes, joint activities and results. The AWE MP, led by the MoD BiH, developed and implemented the necessary structures and procedures for effective weapons and ammunition management. The EXPLODE+ platform will continue to support the AWE MP and its effective management of ammunition stockpiles through LCM system beyond the current project, until 2025.

#### IV. Overview of progress towards results

PROJECT OUTPUT	PROJECT OUTPUT INDICATOR	TARGET	STATUS OF PROJECT RESULTS	ACHIEVEMENTS AGAINST INDICATORS
Sustained reduction of unsafe ammunition complex systems enabling higher safety and security for storage facilities and local communities nearby	Percentage of realization of MOD/AF BiH Plan of operations with Ammunition and Explosives for 2022 of MoD/AF BiH (contribution to overall reduction of annual quantity of ammunition disposed of).	Disposal of: 53,097 ammunition fuses	Activities not initiated	No procurement procedures were initiated, as all ammunition was pending decisions and approvals for official release to non-military disposal actors/processes.
		Disposal of: 1,495 pieces of white phosphorus ammunition	Activities not initiated	Percentage of achievement: 0%
		Disposal of: 22,800 pieces of rifle grenades	Activities not initiated	
	Quantity of rifle grenades, white phosphorous ammunition, fuses, RPG "Zolja" and different types of RPG's successfully disposed of.	Disposal of: 2,667 pieces of rocket propelled grenade M80 – 64mm "Zolja"	Achieved	2,667 pcs of RPG "Zolja" disposed by 30 June 2022. Percentage of achievement: 100%
		Disposal of: 966 pieces of white phosphorus	Achieved	833 pcs of WP (all quantity available) disposed by 26 October 2022. Percentage of achievement: 86%
		Disposal of: 1,000 RPG pieces of ammunition	Achieved	1,000 pcs of RPG disposed by December 2021, and transport of scrap carried out on 27 October 2022. Percentage of achievement: 100%

## V. Progress review

<b>Output 1:</b>	<b>Sustained reduction of unsafe ammunition complex systems enabling higher safety and security for storage facilities and local communities nearby.</b>		
<b>Budget:</b>	US\$ 393,065.80	Spent (US\$):	Costs incurred: US\$ 175,237.5
			Legal commitments: US\$ 0

### **Output 1 - Sustained reduction of unsafe ammunition complex systems enabling higher safety and security for storage facilities and local communities nearby**

Through this output, the Project aimed to support the industrial disposal of 76 tonnes of unsafe ammunition in a controlled environment, including the environmentally friendly disposal of scrap. This included disposal of **i)** 53,097 ammunition fuses, 1,495 pieces of white phosphorus ammunition, and 22,800 pieces of rifle grenades (*in lieu of the originally planned 69,000 pieces of 23mm round ammunition*); **ii)** 2,667 pieces of rocket propelled grenade M80-64mm "Zolja" and 966 pieces of white phosphorous ammunition (*in lieu of the originally planned 3,200 pieces of "Zolja"*); and **iii)** 1,000 pieces of rocket propelled grenade (RPG) ammunition of different types.

#### **Key results achieved, and activities implemented in the reporting period:**

##### **1. Description of activities implemented during the reporting period**

###### ***1.1 Disposal of 69,000 pieces of 23mm ammunition***

During 2020<sup>11</sup>, the project underwent a programmatic revision relating to the 69,000 pieces of the 23mm ammunition. The MoD BiH, in its 2020 Disposal Plan, decided to dispose of the subject ammunition using their own disposal facilities, that were upgraded by UNDP (TROM, Dobo). As a result of this reallocation of ammunition, the MoD suggested substitute ammunition for UNDP, namely the: *53,097 ammunition fuses, 1,495 pieces of white phosphorus ammunition, 22,800 pieces of rifle grenades*. The project team informed the donor of this development, and based on these consultations, carried out the programmatic revision of the project, and replaced the 69,000 pieces of 23mm ammunition with the ammunition suggested by MoD. The substitute ammunition, according to cost estimates, remained fully within the initially planned and agreed budget lines and costs.

Despite all efforts of the project team throughout the project' duration, this ammunition was never processed due to various circumstances and reasons. As it was communicated to the Steering Committee, the MoD failed to change the method of disposal for the ammunition fuses from 'open detonation disposal' to 'industrial disposal', thus the ammunition could not be disposed by UNDP. This, coupled with extremely slow decision-making, and dissemination of all relevant decisions for ammunition disposal, the subject ammunition never reached the status to be disposed of in internationally supported projects. As such, in summary, throughout the project's duration (2020-2022), no procurement procedures were initiated, as all ammunition was pending decisions and approvals for official release.

###### ***1.2 Disposal of 3,200 pieces of rocket propelled grenade M80 – 64mm "Zolja"***

During 2020, procurement procedures were initiated for 2,667 (out of 3,200 envisaged) pieces of "Zolja" for disposal, with awarded contracts given to the international civil disposal facility, the Esplodenti Sabino company,

<sup>11</sup> This change in project activity was approved by the Steering Committee in November 2020/Q4

in Italy. The remaining 533 pieces of “Zolja” were not released by the MoD in its 2020 Disposal Plan; however, substitute ammunition – in the shape of 966 pieces of white phosphorous (WP) ammunition<sup>12</sup> was suggested by the MoD. Following this amendment in 2020, the MoD BiH announced and requested support from UNDP in wanting to prioritize the disposal of 650 pieces WP (out of batch of these 966 pcs), as this ammunition was classified as extremely volatile and a safety risk. The 650 pcs of WP were part of a wider list of ordnances set for urgent disposal by the MoD, in their aim to tackle the burden of obsolete ammunition in storage sites. To move effectively, UNDP set a tendering procedure for disposal of 2,667 pcs of “Zolja” and the 650 pcs of WP that was successfully awarded to Esplodenti Sabino (ES), Italy.

This contract that was awarded to the ES in (2020/Q4) and was meant to initiate the disposal activities for the contracted ammunition. However, the project team became aware in December 2020 of an accident (explosion), that occurred at the part of the facility handling propellants (powder). In 2021/Q1, the project team was informed by ES management that an on-going investigation by the Italian authorities into the deaths of three ES staff was initiated, and consequentially, the work licence of ES and all work-related activities were stopped. Of note, no UNDP ammunition was present on-site of the facility at the time of the incident, as all ammunition was still pending the export license. To mitigate this challenge, UNDP Senior Management advised a mutual contract annulment, which finalised in 2021/Q2. Once the annulment was finalized, the project team initiated another tendering procedure for 2,667 pcs of “Zolja” and the 833 pcs of WP (increased quantity due to additional available units in accordance with 2021 Disposal Plan, once it was made available to UNDP), with the contract successfully awarded to the DemilTech company in Croatia.

The implementation of the contact with DemilTech experienced several obstacles, relating to the issuance of relevant decision by the MoD BiH. The project team advocated and urged the relevant institutions in the process on many occasions. Bearing all these difficulties in mind, during 2022, the disposal of 2,667 pieces of RPG “Zolja” was completed (30 June 2022), and the final verification visit was carried out as planned, during 2022/Q4, to confirm the disposal process has finished. The disposal of 833 units of WP ammunition was carried out on 26 October 2022, and the final verification visit was carried out on 27 October, confirming the disposal process has finished.

### ***1.3 Disposal of 1,000 pieces of rocket propelled grenade (RPG) ammunition of different types***

During 2020, the procurement procedures were finalised in Q4 for all 1,000 pieces of RPGs for disposal. In 2021, the 1,000 pieces of RPG ammunition finally received all necessary MoD BiH decision and approval for disposal, but only in 2021/Q4. The subject ammunition was transported to the disposal site and has been disposed at the facility during December 2021. The final verification mission, including verification of completed works and assessment of scrap materials that are to be returned to MoD BiH, weighing, packaging, was conducted on 4 February 2022. The transport of the scrap material from the disposal facility to the Armed Forces BiH depot was carried out on 27 October 2022, and the disposal is fully completed as foreseen.

## **2. Difficulties encountered, and measures taken to overcome the problems**

The initial activities of the EXPLODE+ project were suspended during **2020/Q1** in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. The process of ammunition disposal was re-initiated jointly in **2020/Q2** with partners and service providers, coinciding nicely with the publishing of the MoD BiH 2020 Disposal Plan, albeit 5 months late. However, the 2020 Disposal Plan included changes to the initial plans UNDP had regarding ammunition disposal. Additionally, the MoD BiH became unresponsive and prolonged the issuance of relevant decisions, related to the actual start of the process. In **2020Q3**, the main challenge stemmed from the changes in the 2020 Disposal Plan, that meant that several of the types and quantities of ammunition planned to be disposed of within this project were no longer at the disposal of UNDP. Moreover, the lengthy decision-making processes in the MoD

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<sup>12</sup> This change in project activity was approved by the Steering Committee in November 2020/Q4

impacted the approval for the disposal of the 2,667 pieces of “Zolja” ammunition and 1,000 pieces of RPG. In **2020/Q4**, a change in implementation (project revision) triggered a new round of meetings and coordination with the MoD BiH counterparts to ensure that all substitute ammunition agreed upon, will be ready to be procedurally released to UNDP. However, the MoD continued prolonging the issuance of relevant decisions, causing further delay of the demilitarization process of the 2,667 pieces of “Zolja”, planned for 2020/Q4. Of note, these decisions are a formal precondition for the start of the overall demilitarization operations and protocol adherence. UNDP had issued several urgency letters to initiate the protocol, but to no avail as no decision during 2020/Q4 had been made by the MoD to start the operations.

During **2021/Q1 and 2021/Q2**, the project team was addressing the impacts on the disposal processes and contractual obligations arising from the incident at the Esplodenti Sabino facility, in Italy, as previously described. Further to this, in mid-January 2021, the project team was informed of an on-going investigation by the Italian authorities into the deaths of facility staff, and consequentially, a cessation of the work license and all work-related activities. This incident directly affected two of the signed contracts for the disposal of ammunition, specifically the 2,667 pieces of rocket propelled grenade M80 – 64 “Zolja” and 650 pieces of white phosphorous ammunition. This situation severely delayed the project implementation. As a result, a mutual cancellation of the contract between UNDP and ES for 2,667 pieces of rocket propelled grenade M80 – 64 “Zolja” was finalised on 28th June 2021. The second contract for the 650 pieces of white phosphorus ammunition expired also during Q2 reporting period, as ES facility was not operating at all. During **2021/Q3 and 2021/Q4**, the project team initiated another tendering procedure for 2,667 pcs of “Zolja” and the 833 pcs of WP (increased quantity due to additional available units in accordance with 2021 Disposal Plan), with the contract was successfully awarded to another international civilian defense facility. This reporting period, 2021, was marked with significant challenges and difficulties arising from the slow decision-making of the MoD BiH and the late publication and data discrepancies contained in the 2021 Disposal Plan. The project team and UNDP Senior Management kept addressing the challenges related to the slow decision-making processes within the MoD and AF BiH, through official urgency communication being sent to the Defense Minister BiH requesting that the subject ammunition, of all three signed contracts, is given proper and necessary decisions for disposal. As highlighted, the MoD has been prolonging the issuance of relevant decisions that would facilitate the agreed processes of ammunition disposal. With the overall aim to address the challenges related to the slow decision making of the MoD BiH, the project team attended several official meetings requesting this information. The issues were also presented at the 18<sup>th</sup> MoD BiH Ammunition, Weapons and Explosives Strategic Committee Master Plan meeting held on 21 September 2021. The overall objective here was to present the issues through a joint front among international community with the aim to unlock the processes/situation that has been stalled overall for over 18 months now, by offering the MoD and AF BiH a new level of engagement with international actors, that now have a consolidated set of requests for the commitment and actions that are needed to be taken by the MoD and AF BiH, under a clear set of deadlines. During this meeting, UNDP BiH voiced concerns related to these problems in project implementation, recommending to the MoD BiH to revise the 2021 Disposal Plan in such a way to confirm and approve all ammunition types and quantities designated for disposal to UNDP, to align the method of disposal to enable disposal in civilian capacities and ensure overall more effective decision-making. As an outcome of the meeting, the MoD converted the recommendations presented by EUFOR on behalf of all international stakeholders into a set of conclusions to be endorsed by the Defense Minister. One conclusion was related specifically to UNDP, whereby the MoD BiH has put forward a request to UNDP BiH to continue with support and engagement until December 2022, in disposal of complex ammunition, to complete all on-going and planned activities derived from the annual Plans of Operation. In addition, the conclusion also reiterates that the MoD will revise the current 2021 Plan in accordance with UNDP requests, in so far as to align the designation of the disposal method with UNDP civil capacities/industrial approach, as well as to ensure a faster and more efficient decision-making process. Of note, UNDP was the only international organization that took part in the Preparatory Session for the Disposal Plan for 2022, held on 29 December 2021. At that meeting, UNDP staff noted that the contents of the revised 2021 Plan could be



integrated in the 2022 Plan, which would also provide grounds for UNDP to continue with planned and committed activities.

**During 2022/Q1**, the project received a final no-cost extension which was granted to complete all on-going contracts for disposal of ammunition.<sup>13</sup> The 2022 Disposal Plan was received in March 2022, containing discrepancies that impact ammunition originally committed in the project, namely: 53,097 ammunition fuses, 1,628 units of white phosphorus ammunition, and 22,880 units of rifle grenades. The 2022 Disposal Plan has not undergone any revision during the project's extended duration, and as such, there has been no progress in dealing with these discrepancies. Therefore, the project team concluded that the remaining ammunition will not be possible to be disposed of before the new end date, the end of October 2022. Based on the information and data contained in the 2022 Disposal Plan of the BiH MoD – which contains the discrepancies with project-committed ammunition as well as the incorrect method of disposal for some of the types of ammunition - the project team informed the Steering Committee that it considered it unlikely for issues to be resolved during 2022. Therefore, the project extension in 2022 did not consider the remaining ammunition committed in the project: 53,097 ammunition fuses, 1,628 units of WP ammunition, and 22,880 units of rifle grenades. The project will thus return the allocated funds for these disposals in the amount of approx. \$225,000. Aside from these measures, there were no other challenges encountered during the implementation of the on-going contracts during 2022. The donor was updated regularly, on a monthly and quarterly basis on all developments regarding the disposal contracts.

It is noteworthy that the project team continuously attended the MoD BiH Ammunition, Weapons, Explosive Strategic Committee Master Plan sessions. These sessions were used to reiterate the challenges and bottlenecks observed during implementation of activities, as well as to present solutions. This was evident during the 18th session, where an agreement for substitute ammunition was reached and on the basis of which, a no-cost extension was granted for the implementation of the project. During the 19th session, the project continued to lobby for the issuance of relevant decisions. At the 20th session, the project presentation was crucial in terms of advocating with the defence minister to allocate substitute ammunition and revise the annual Disposal Plans in accordance with UNDP project/activities/available funds. The 21st MoD BiH Ammunition, Weapons and Explosives Strategic Committee Master Plan meeting, hosted by UNDP, served as a closing event, explained in more detail in the section below.

### **3. Changes introduced in implementation**

In 2020, to mitigate the challenges that resulted from the delays and changes in the 2020 Disposal Plan and the COVID-19 pandemic, a project revision was proposed to the MPTF Steering Committee, consisting of a programmatic revision for substituting the ammunition no longer available to UNDP with other types of ammunition, and a six-month non-cost extension. In 2020/Q4 the MPTF Steering Committee approved the first programmatic revision and a six month-extension of the project, changing the types and quantities of ammunition for disposal. According to the first programmatic revision, the project from then supported the industrial disposal of 76 tonnes of unsafe ammunition (53,097 ammunition fuses, 2,461 pieces of white phosphorus ammunition, 22,800 pieces of rifle grenades, 2,667 pieces of rocket propelled grenade M80 – 64mm “Zolja” and 1,000 rocket propelled grenades (RPG) different models and types).

In 2021, and specifically in Q3 and Q4, the project initiated a second no-cost extension for additional 12-months, as well as revised budget and a change to the proposed quantities of ammunition for disposal, as a programmatic revision. The no-cost extension was based on the outcomes of the 18<sup>th</sup> MoD BiH Ammunition, Weapons and Explosives Strategic Committee Master Plan session. The extension was requested to ensure enough time for the tendering procedures to be carried out as planned, while also considering the potential

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<sup>13</sup> Three ongoing contracts for disposal of a) 1,000 pieces of RPG ammunition; b) 2,667 pieces of RPG “Zolja”, and c) 833 pieces of white phosphorus (WP) ammunition

(additional) slow decision-making within the MoD. It is important to note that the request coincided with an official request from the MoD BiH to UNDP to continue providing support until December 2022, to complete all the on-going and planned activities. Upon the receipt of the requested project revision, the MPTF Steering Committee in November 2021 approved an *initial three-month extension* of the project, however the additional nine-months were pending approval once the Revised 2021 Disposal Plan from MoD BiH had been provided.

In 2022, the project was granted a third no-cost extension (8-months) to complete all on-going contracts for disposal of ammunition. The 2022 Disposal Plan was received in March 2022, containing discrepancies that again impact ammunition committed in the project, namely: 53,097 ammunition fuses, 1,628 units of white phosphorus ammunition, and 22,880 units of rifle grenades. The project team considered it unlikely that the issues would be resolved by end October 2022, the latest end date of the project. The donor was made aware of this issue through several reports, meeting and updates. Also, in light of the available funds, the project team made budget reallocations of a minor nature to procure materials and goods (notebook, folders and pens) in order to promote the project in the envisaged 21<sup>st</sup> MoD BiH Ammunition, Weapons and Explosives Strategic Committee Master Plan meeting, held in early October 2022. This event was an ample opportunity to present final project achievements. This event also served as a closing event of the project since the end date was 31 October 2022<sup>14</sup>.

#### 4. Achievements

- ✓ 1,000 pieces of RPG ammunition were disposed at the facility in 2021, and the final verification mission was conducted on 4 February 2022. The transport of the scrap material from the disposal facility to the Armed Forces BiH depot was carried out on 27 October 2022, and the disposal is fully completed as foreseen.
- ✓ The disposal of 2,667 pieces of RPG “Zolja” was completed by 30 June 2022. The final verification visit was carried out as planned, on 6 October 2022, to confirm the disposal process has finished.
- ✓ The disposal of 833 units of WP ammunition was carried out on 26 October 2022. The final verification visit was carried out on 27 October, confirming the disposal process has finished.

In total, the project ensured disposal of **27 tonnes of unsafe** ammunition in a controlled environment, including the environmentally friendly disposal of scrap. This amounts to 35.5% of tonnes disposed out of the envisaged 76 tonnes that the project was aiming to achieve.

## VI. Monitoring and Evaluation of activities

The monitoring of project activities and their results were primarily carried out via verification visits. During these verification visits, examination and monitoring of ammunition disposal were under scrutiny of (in sequence of operations): 1) UNDP designated officer, 2) EUFOR designated officer and last but most important 3) Verification Committee of MoD/AF BiH. Upon completion of the milestones within disposal plan or upon the completion of ammunition disposal, verification reports were issued by selected contractors and adopted by the verification committee of MoD/AF BiH. With this mechanism in place, all involved parties in the process were ensured in completion of disposal process of all ammunition items. This sort of monitoring mechanism brought together beneficiaries and stakeholders to assess the completion of an activity against several milestones and agree on narrative assessments and evaluations.

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<sup>14</sup> <https://fena.ba/article/1293281/nmimes-rijesenno-7-500-tona-municije-i-renovirano-90-objekata-video>; <http://mod.gov.ba/aktuelnosti/vijesti/?id=95151>

The project team carried out five such verification visits to ensure completion of the disposal process of all ammunition items. The verification visit reports are attached to the final project report for additional detail.

Below is a list of the visits:

Verification type	Ammunition type and quantity	Date and location	Verification report
First (initial) verification mission	2,667 pieces of "Zolja	07 July 2022, Gospic, Croatia	Yes, attached
Second (final) verification mission	2,667 pieces of "Zolja	06 October 2022, Gospic, Croatia	Yes, attached
First (initial) verification mission	833 pieces of white phosphorous ammunition	06 October 2022, Gospic, Croatia	Yes, attached
Second (final) verification mission	833 pieces of white phosphorous ammunition	27 October 2022, Gospic, Croatia	Yes, attached
Final verification mission	1,000 pieces of RPGs	04 February 2022, Pretis, BiH	Yes, attached

## VII. Coordination with relevant stakeholders - Partnerships

As the EXPLODE+ Project is set up as a multi-functional project platform, working as a part of the Ammunition Weapons and Explosive Master plan (AWE MP) BiH, as the main strategic framework strategy of the Ministry of Defence BiH and Armed Forces BiH (MoD/AF BiH) that guides large-scale national efforts and comprehensive international community (IC) efforts in achieving sustainable stockpile management, risk reduction and continued development opportunities, coordination with relevant stakeholders was paramount. This was particularly visible within the implementation of the AWE MP as different stakeholder oversee different areas of work as to avoid overlapping, while ensuring the best possible usage of resources and time available. Within this set up, EXPLODE + was in constant communication with the MoD/AF BiH, EUFOR (SAWAD), USA Embassy Sarajevo, OSCE Mission in BiH, as implementers of the plan, as well as with donor community with Kingdom of Norway, United Kingdom, UN Funding Windows-channeled German funds in ammunition disposal, and Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, as for the support in infrastructure upgrades. By continually upholding straightforward and open coordination with IC representatives, the project has been able to maintain a transparent, coherent, and targeted interventions in the overall process of project implementation.

Throughout the project's duration, the EXPLODE+ project team coordinated extensively with the representatives of MoD/AF BiH, EUFOR and USA Embassy, as the main interlocutors of the AWE MP joint activities. The series of work meetings were especially organized (UNDP, MoD/AF, EUFOR) to tackle the issues and updates on activities conducted in accordance with the MoD/AF BiH, Operational Plan for Ammunition Disposal for 2020 (Plan 2020); comparison of ammunition lists stored at military ammunition sites; and revision and substitutes of the quantities and types of ammunition set for disposal under the civilian industrial capacities (UNDP BiH), coordination and the process of obtaining decision for ammunition disposal as a prerequisite for the process implementation. Because of these meetings, UNDP BiH was able to accumulate details on the substitute quantities and types of ammunition from the MoD/AF BiH for the MPTF Project Revision.

Overall, based on these meetings, the EXPLODE+ project team also observed that all of the AWE MP partners were also affected in different stages of the implementation of the joint activities of the Master Plan, through

delayed planning processes, amendments of the Disposal Plans, inaccurate data, and slow decision-making on side of the MoD BiH.

During the reporting period, the 21<sup>st</sup> MoD BiH Ammunition, Weapons and Explosives Strategic Committee Master Plan meeting, was organized by UNDP. All relevant partners of the Master Plan participated at the session, where the 2022 results were presented, as well as the upcoming activities in 2023. At the same time, the partners identified the remaining challenges and ways in how to mitigate them. The main conclusions of the meeting are presented below:

- The overarching priority of all actors included in the disposal processes remains the safety of personnel working directly with weapons, ammunition and explosive ordnances (AWE), as well as the overall safety of the communities residing in the vicinity of the weapons and ammunition storage sites (W/ASS).
- As a follow-up to a successful partnership with MoD/AF BiH in ammunition stockpile management, UNDP will explore the potential of starting a new project, jointly with partners and donors, to complete the infrastructure upgrades of prospective weapons storage sites. This will ensure that AWE Master Plan phases are finalized, while strengthening the security levels of stockpile management systems, as well as ensuring overall safety of BiH citizens and the wider region.

## **VIII. Sustainability**

The project is envisaged on a baseline of joint and concerted efforts of the international community in BiH towards ammunition disposal, stockpile management and streamlining ammunition storage facilities, with the aim to reduce the cost of resources needed to safeguard those sites by the MoD/AF BiH.

The project and all its activities coordinate, cross-fertilize, and complement the ongoing domestic and international assistance efforts. The project's work is directed by the Ammunition and Explosive Master Plan (AWE MP) as the main strategic framework of the MoD BiH that guides large-scale national efforts and comprehensive international community (IC) involvement in this domain of BiH progress. Within this framework, and in close partnership with MoD/AF BiH, the project has invested efforts in sustaining an inclusive and partnership-based approach throughout all activities and their planning.

In addition, all aspects of activity planning and implementation were overseen and coordinated by EUFOR. The project activity implementation will be complementary to the systematic capacity building training programme on stockpile management supported by the EUFOR, which in partnership with NATO Headquarters Sarajevo (NHQS), support the ammunition inventory, field inspection of ammunition and overall governance of the stockpiles.

In general, the project will have longer-term security, safety and development effects, triggered by the disposal of unstable ammunition and institutionalization of demilitarization capabilities in the MoD and AF BiH, which jointly form a safer and more secure environment for the AF BiH personnel, several communities living in the vicinities of the ammunition stockpile storage locations in risk of the unplanned explosions, and the wider region in risk of proliferation and trafficking of weapons and ammunition.

## **IX. Update on risks and mitigation measures**

During the reporting period, there have been two significant and repetitive risks, which became prevalent in project implementation:

1. **Slow decision-making process of MoD/AF BiH** – risks related to the **decision-making process, coupled with lack of accuracy** when it comes to MoD/AF BiH stockpile inventory, and in conjunction with changes introduced to the 2020/2021/2022 Disposal Plans, were mitigated through coordination with MoD BiH and EUFOR BiH. These risks were already met through increased work meeting with MoD BiH, and allocation of alternate ammunition urgently set for disposal. In addition to that, the project coordinated with MoD BiH and EUFOR ensuring timely decision-making process takes place on appropriate level within institutions to have all activity implementation conducted within the newly stipulated timeframe.
2. One of the overarching challenges for the project was the fact that the situation changed **almost daily, making it difficult to assess**. One of the constant risks was that the MoD BiH will not deliver on what was agreed or what was expected of them. The project team diligently worked on ensuring this risk was being met, through intensified coordination with stakeholders, particularly the MoD BiH focal points.

## X. Lessons learnt

During the project's implementation, some lessons-learnt have been identified by the project team. Specifically, these are categorised below:

- 1) **Flexibility** – need to be able to adapt to mid-project risen challenges in an effective and streamlined way, whether its changes in implementation or time extension requests.
- 2) **Time management** – in situations where implementing agency needs to adapt project document to changes in implementation, we need to consider at least four months for project revision processes.
- 3) **Discrepancy in baseline data** management on ammunition can/will upset planned activities especially combined with inconsistent decision making.

## XI. Communication and visibility

Photos from the disposal process and the final verification missions:



Disposal of Zolja





Disposal of mortar shell 120 mm smoke



Removing the RPG from boxes



Disconnection of the electrical connector between launcher and rocket



Removing rocket from the launcher



Annex 1: Implementation steps in the process of disposal of ammunition

Ammunition	Steps
<b>1,000 RPG (Disposal in BiH)</b>  <b>COMPLETED</b>	1. MoD Disposal Plan 2020
	2. Confirmation of type, model, and quantities for tendering
	3. Tendering process
	4. Selection of contractor and signing of contract
	5. Decision for ammunition release to designated contractor
	6. Transport of ammo
	7. Disposal process
	8. Verification process
<b>2,667 RPG 'Zolja' (Disposal in Croatia)</b>  <b>COMPLETED</b>	1. MoD Disposal Plan 2021
	2. Confirmation of type, model, and quantities for tendering
	3. Tendering process
	4. Selection of contractor and signing of contract
	5. Decision for ammunition release to designated contractor
	6. Export approval from MoD BiH on behalf of BiH Government
	7. Import license granted by Croatia Government
	8. Export license from MOFTER BiH
	9. Transport permit from Ministry of Security BiH
	10. Transport announcement from Croatian authorities
	11. Transport of ammunition to the site
	12. Disposal process
	13. Verification process
<b>833 WP (Disposal in Croatia)</b>  <b>COMPLETED</b>	1. MoD Disposal Plan 2021
	2. Confirmation of type, model, and quantities for tendering
	3. Tendering process
	4. Selection of contractor and signing of contract
	5. Decision for ammunition release to designated contractor
	6. Export approval from MoD BiH on behalf of BiH Government
	7. Import license granted by Croatia Government
	8. Export license from MOFTER BiH
	9. Transport permit from Ministry of Security BiH
	10. Transport announcement from Croatian authorities
	11. Transport of ammunition to the site
	12. Disposal process
	13. Verification process