

Regional Conference on Addressing the Humanitarian Impact of Improvised Anti-
Personnel Mines Within the Context of the Convention

Perspectives on Improvised Anti-Personnel Mines: the Global Impact and the Multifaceted Threats Posed by Improvised Anti-Personnel Mines

United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research

13-15 February 2024, Accra, Ghana

Theò Bajon,
Associate Researcher, UNIDIR's Conventional Arms and Ammunition Programme



Acknowledgments



Liberté • Égalité • Fraternité
RÉPUBLIQUE FRANÇAISE



Federal Foreign Office



Australian Government

Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade



The global threat of improvised landmines



States Parties that are believed or known to have improvised landmine contamination (The Landmine Monitor 2023)

Global Impacts of Anti-Personnel Mines of improvised landmine (I)

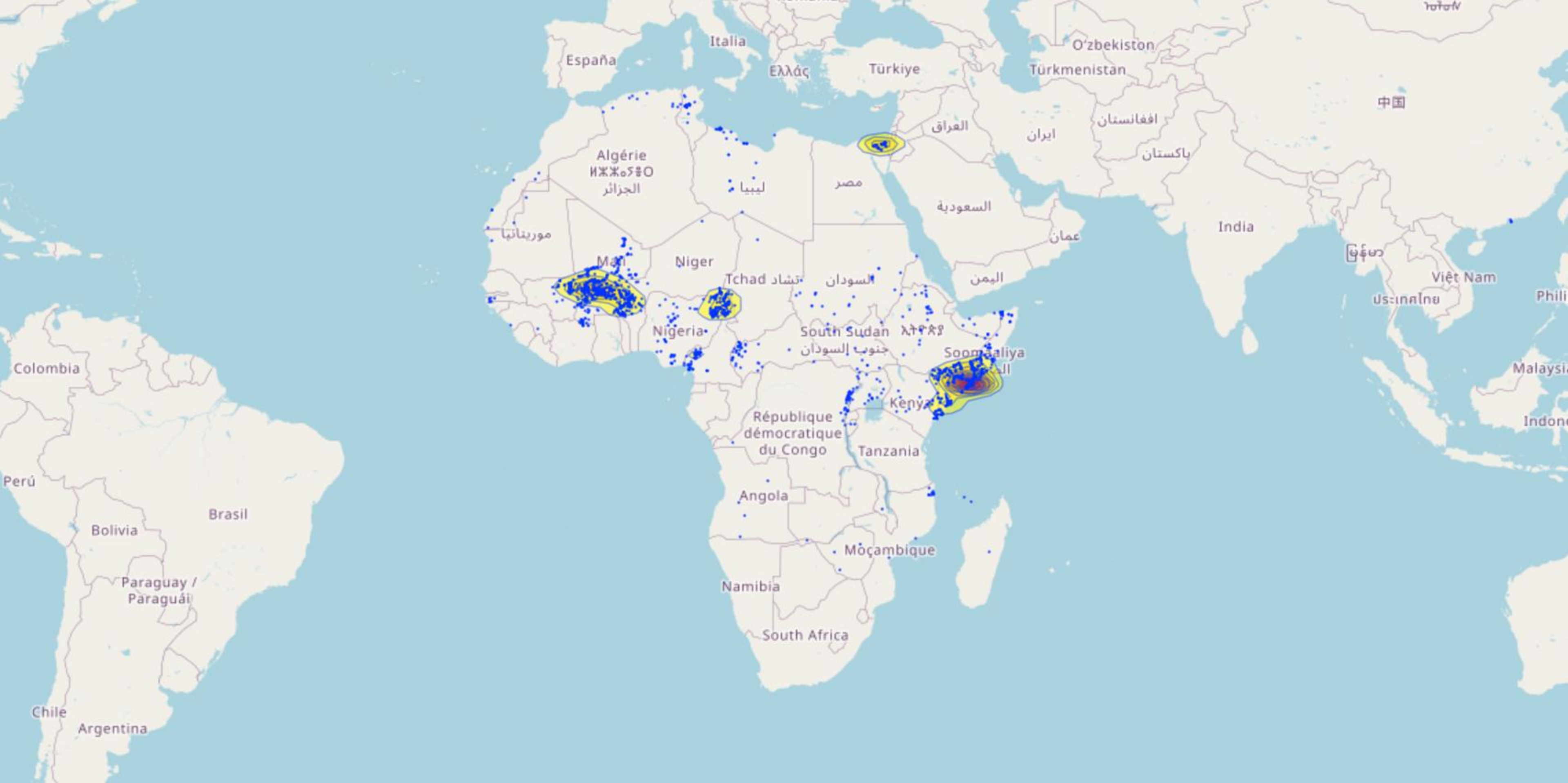
- Use of improvised mines by non-state armed groups (NSAGs) has been rising in many conflict zones since the 2000s, coinciding with the global spread of information on IED manufacture. Their use has accelerated conflicts in parts of Africa, Asia, and the Middle East.
- Victim-activated improvised mines are banned under the Mine Ban Treaty. However, some NSAGs have refused to halt their use, and sometimes their effects cannot be distinguished from factory-made landmines.



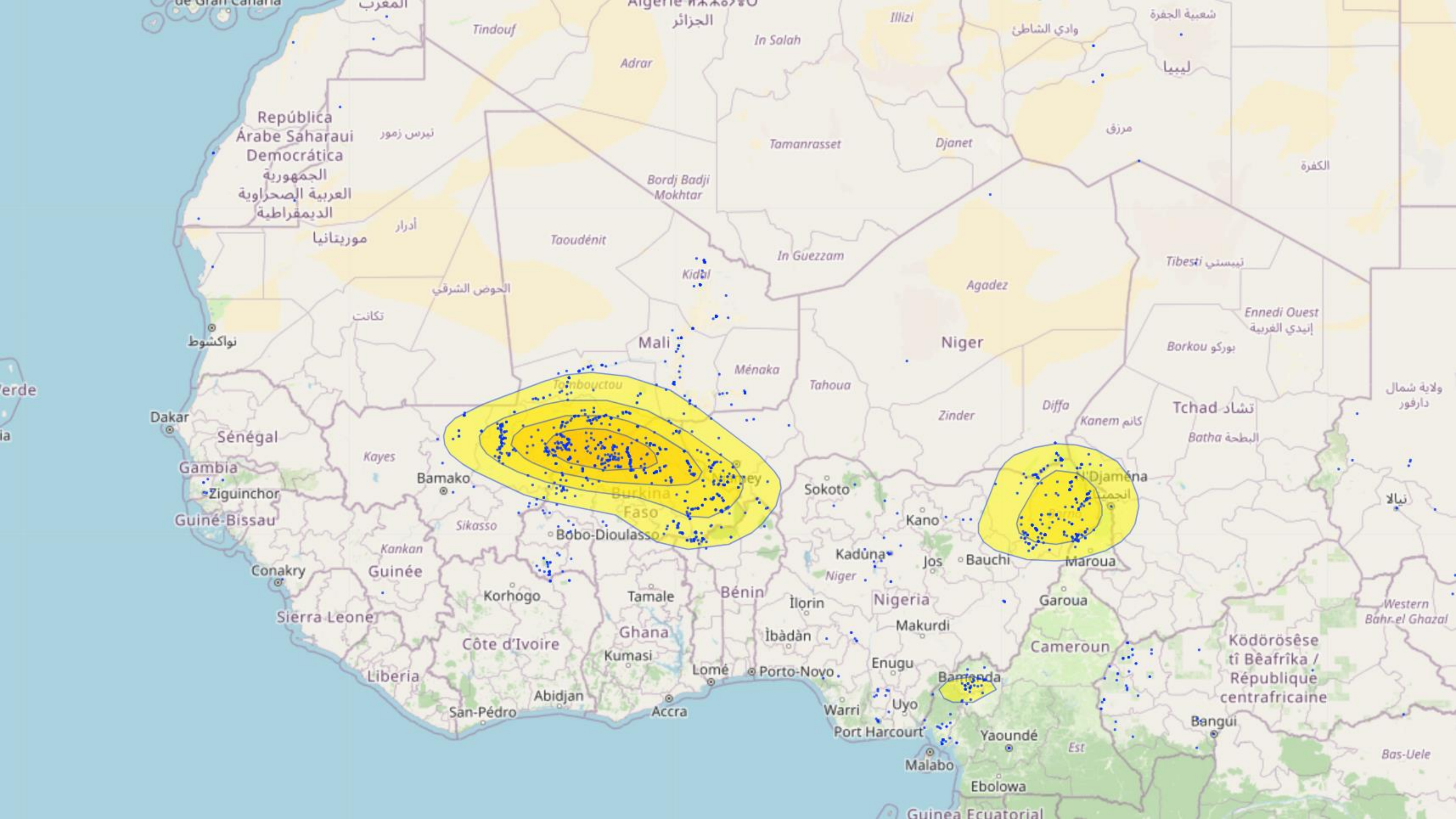
Global Impacts of Anti-Personnel Mines of improvised landmine (II)

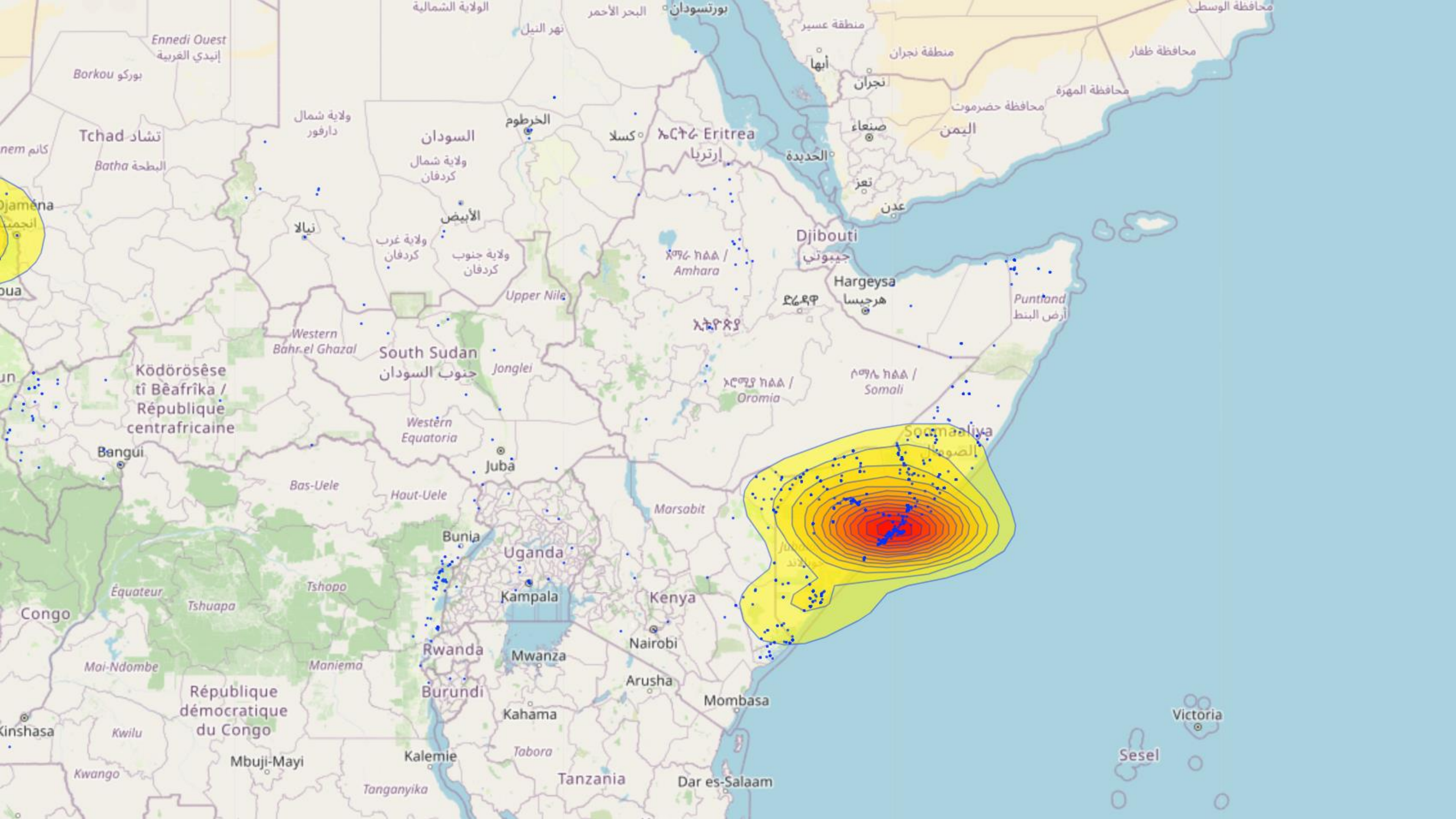
- NSAGs adapt quickly to upstream countermeasures and even downstream measures. Improvised victim-activated mines use sensitive fuzes reacting to very light pressure. This heightens the risk for civilians, especially children.
- Mine action programs struggle to keep up with the challenge. Survey and clearance are hampered by a lack of technical data on ever-evolving improvised designs. Risk education challenges include limited understanding of motivations and emplacement methods by the perpetrators.
- Strengthened international cooperation to address the threat. National policies, border management, and joint responses across conflict is crucial to countering the growing impacts of improvised landmines.





IEDs incidents in Africa from 2020 to early 2024 (ACLED Database)





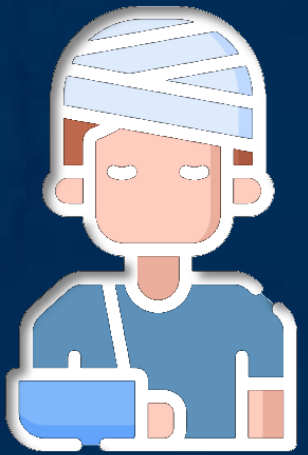
Anti-Personnel Mines of an Improvised Nature and Improvised Explosive Devices

- The APMBC prohibits all anti-personnel mines without distinguishing between manufactured and improvised mines
- However, the broad term "IED" has caused confusion, as it can refer to a range of improvised weapons beyond APMs
- Certain IEDs constitute APMs under the Convention if they are:
 - Designed to explode from contact, proximity or presence of a person
 - Capable of incapacitating, injuring or killing one or more individuals
- Even if homemade, such IEDs have the same indiscriminate effects as manufactured mines
- States Parties must fulfill all Convention obligations, like clearance and reporting, for areas affected by improvised APMs



Global Challenges and Impacts

- Rising civilian casualties from improvised mines globally in recent years. The use of victim-activated improvised mines by NSAGs has increased casualties in many States Parties and states not party to the Mine Ban Treaty in recent conflict zones. They pose challenges for accurate data collection and response by mine action programs.
- Socioeconomic impacts through long-term effects on communities. In addition to lives lost and physical injuries, landmines deny safe access to livelihoods and productive land for farming, grazing, collecting food and water. They undermine development and reconstruction efforts.
- Proliferation issues as conflict dynamics change and mines spread across borders. Ongoing conflicts and instability have resulted in new mine contamination through non-state groups armed spreading across porous borders. This undermines mine action progress and poses challenges for accurate mapping and clearance prioritization. Stockpiles of mines also remain insecure in some conflict-affected countries.



Perspectives and Impacts of Improvised Anti-Personnel Mines

- Increased use in recent conflicts has exacerbated humanitarian challenges (Rising civilian casualties, Fuel instability through long-term socioeconomic impacts on communities)
- Pose difficulties for mine action due to improvised nature/lack of industrial standards (More challenging to detect, identify and clear from affected areas)
- Indiscriminate nature makes distinction between civilians and combatants impossible
- Addressing them is important from both humanitarian and peace/security perspectives
- Cooperation with all relevant actors needed given cross-border proliferation issues



UNIDIR C-IED Capability Maturity Model (CMM) and Self Assessment Tool (SAT)



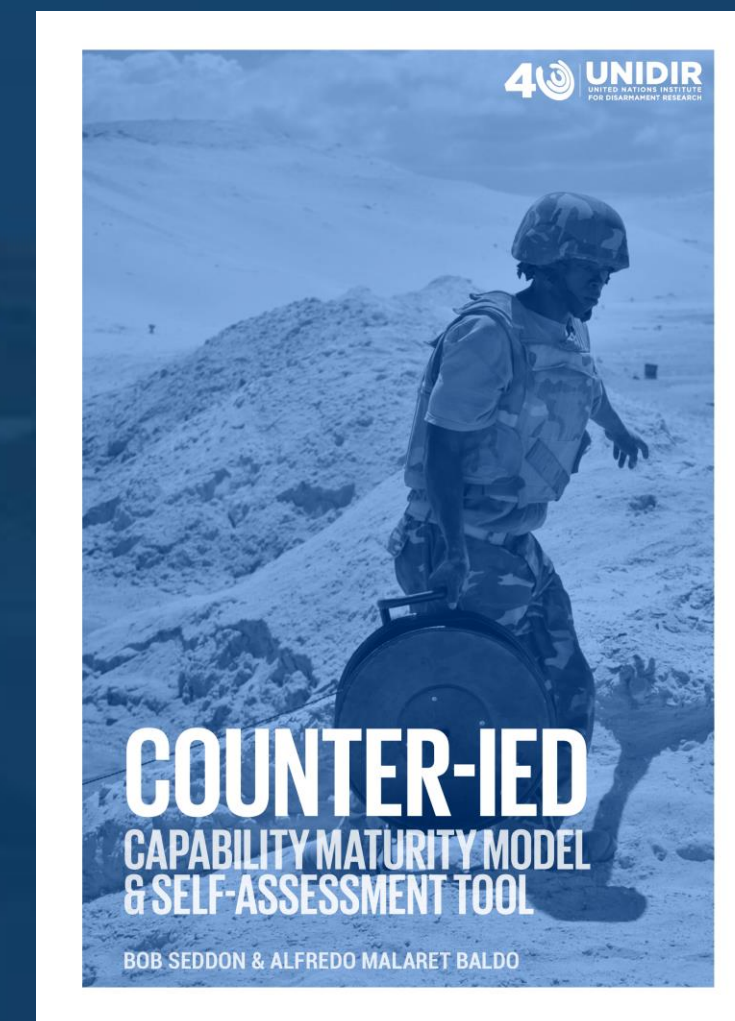
UN GA mandated UNIDIR to develop a voluntary self assessment tool to support States in identify gaps and challenges in national regulations and preparedness regarding IEDs

→ **UNIDIR** developed, through an inclusive, multi stakeholder process the **voluntary C IED Self Assessment Tool (SAT) and Capability Maturity Model (CMM) CMM**, launched in 2020.

Findings generated from the use of the tool can inform:

- National priorities for the design, implementation and review of national measures;
- National and sub-/regional strategic approaches;
- Assistance programming.

UN Secretary General recommended, and UN GA encouraged, interested States to use the Tool. CCW APII GoE uses it to inform the sharing of good & effective practices.





UNIDIR

Upstream counter-IED activities

Downstream counter-IED activities

- National Policy, Legislation and Regulations
- Security and Control of Explosives
- IED Risk Education
- Counter-IED Capability Development
- Border Controls
- Control of IED Precursors
- Regional and International Cooperation and Information Sharing
- Intelligence-Led Operations

- Development of IED Countermeasures
- Judicial Process
- Identification of Perpetrators
- Technical Exploitation of Recovered IEDs
- Information Management
- Recovered Evidence Analysis
- IED Response – Scene Exploitation
- IED Response – Render Safe



**Feedback loop
Lessons learned**

IED Incident



Before an IED incident

After an IED incident



Use of the UNIDIR C-IED CMM & SAT since 2020

based on information available to UNIDIR

2020

2021

2022

2023



Spain 



Yemen 



Somalia



Sri Lanka



Maldives



Côte d'Ivoire 



Sahel



Pakistan



Burkina Faso 



Niger



Mali



Philippines 



Somalia



Thailand 



Maldives



Pakistan



Ghana



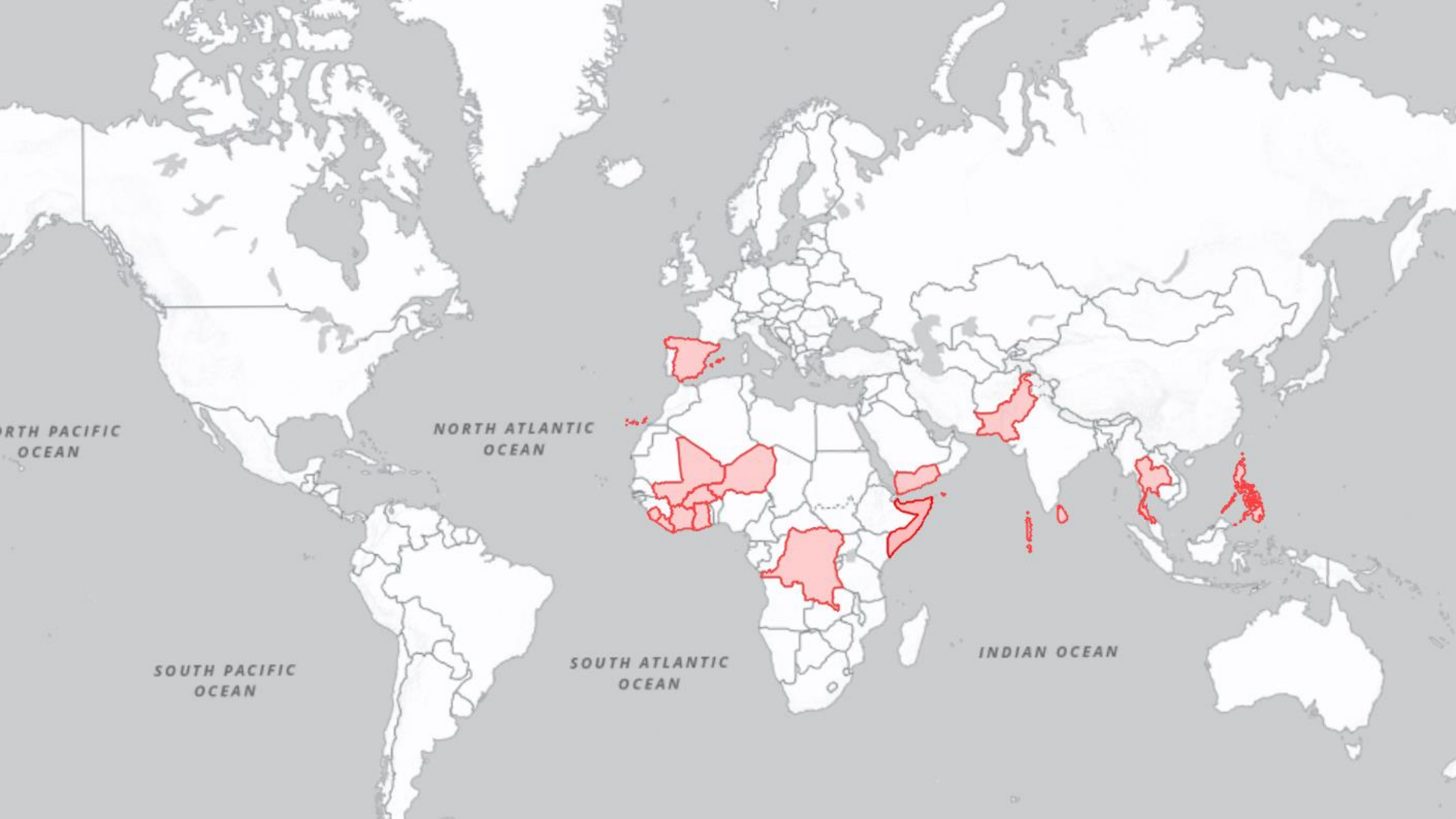
DRC



Sierra Leone



Liberia



NORTH PACIFIC OCEAN

NORTH ATLANTIC OCEAN

SOUTH PACIFIC OCEAN

SOUTH ATLANTIC OCEAN

INDIAN OCEAN



Global Impact and Threat posed by improvised landmines from the use of the UNIDIR C-IED CMM and SAT (I)



Widespread Nature of the Problem

- Used by armed groups in many ongoing conflicts worldwide
- Threat also emerges in other situations of instability and violence

Evolving Tactics and Complex Networks

- Design and deployment continually adapted to changes in environment
- Production and operations often involve transnational networks

High Human Cost

- Indiscriminately endanger civilians as well as military/security forces
- Significant loss of life and injuries caused over past decades



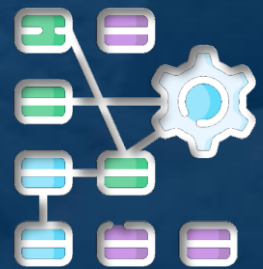
Global Impact and Threat posed by improvised landmines from the use of the UNIDIR C-IED CMM and SAT (II)



Undermining Development and Recovery

- Contamination prevents safe access to livelihoods and basic services
- Diversion of national resources away from development priorities

Growing Complexity of Response



- Holistic "whole of society" approach needed due to root political/social causes
- National capacity building must cover multidisciplinary prevention/response

Coordinated Global Action Critical

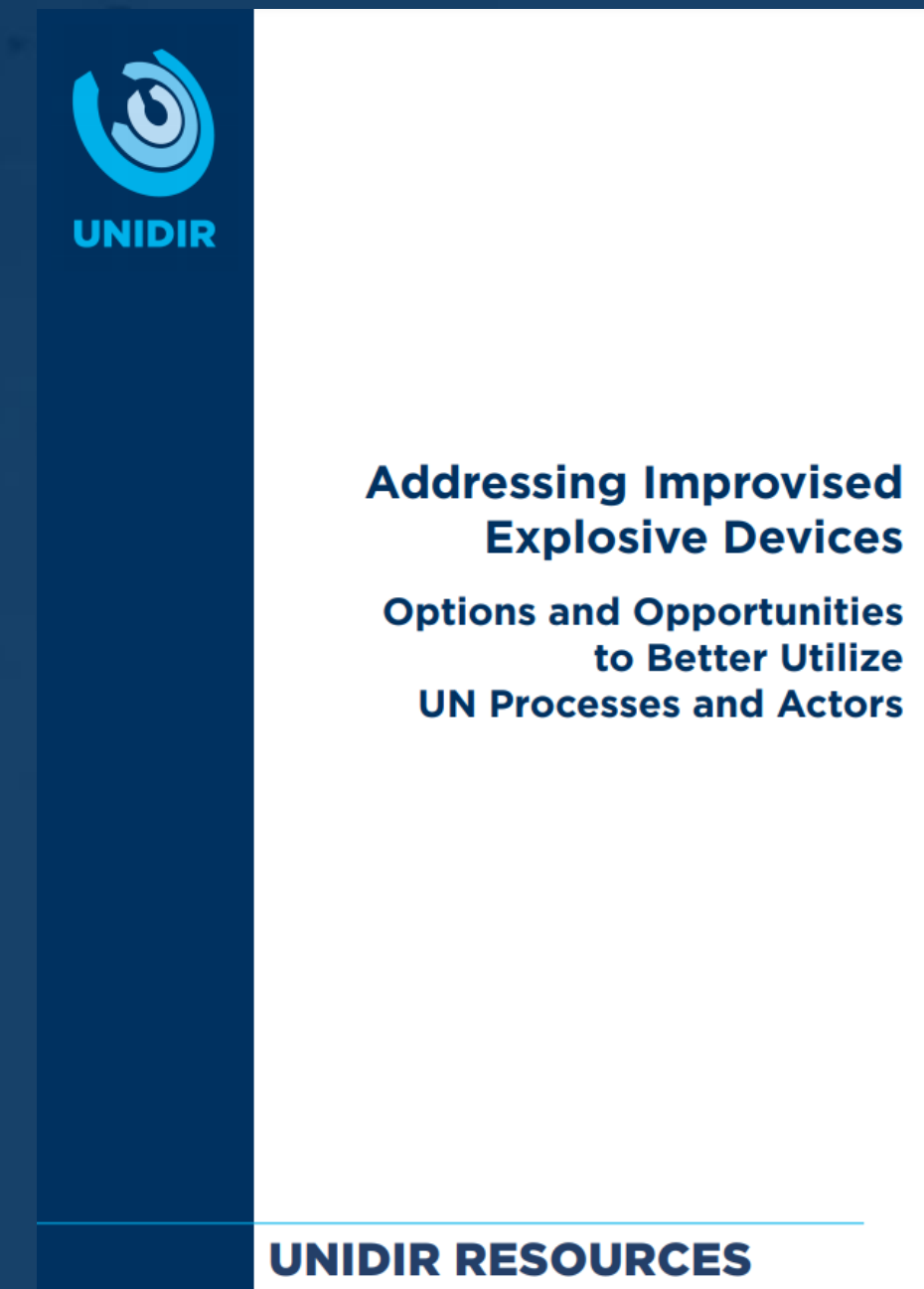
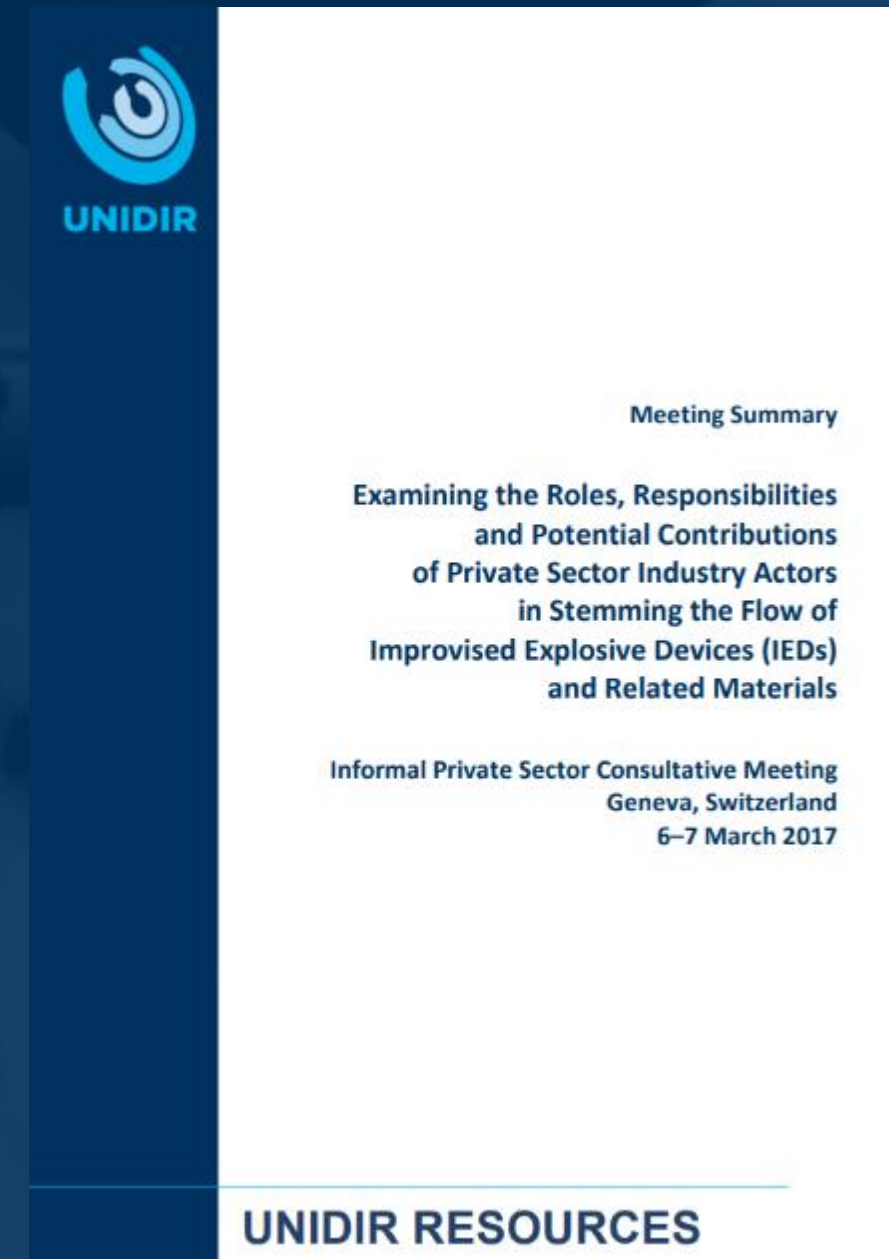
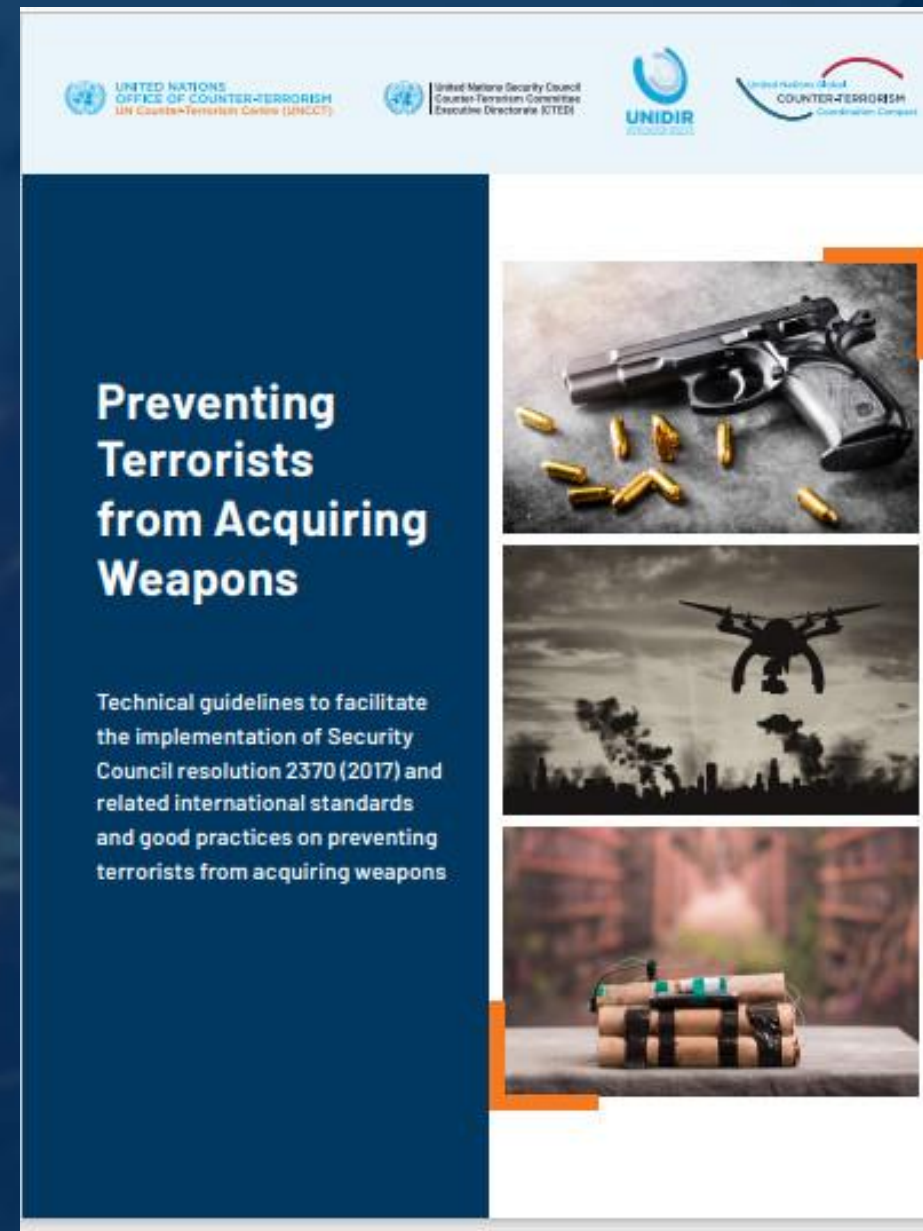
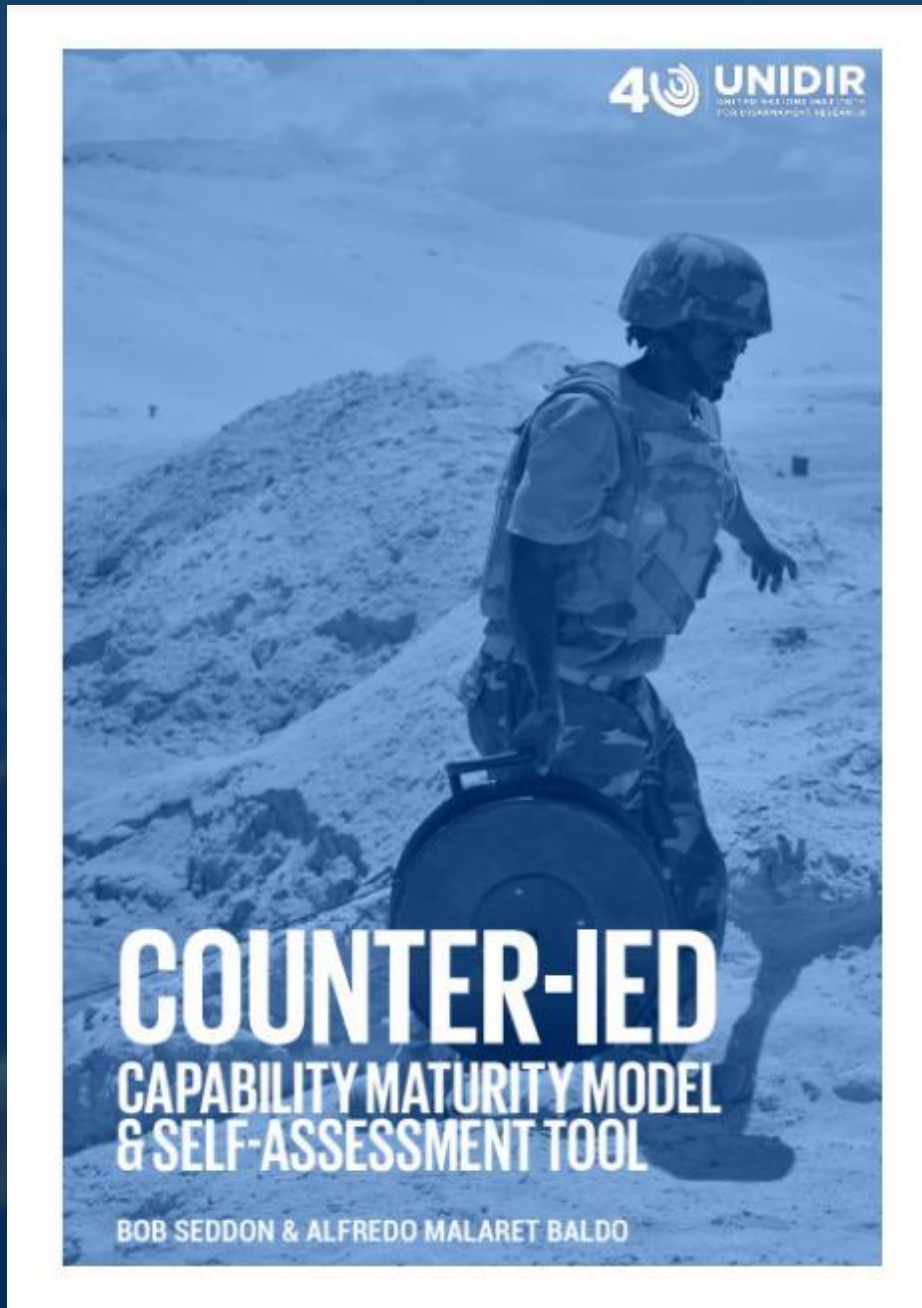


- Because of the diverse, transnational threat, no state can address this alone
- Knowledge exchange and consistent support critical to curb proliferation
- Monitoring evolving dynamics helps strengthen appropriate responses

UNIDIR research and contributions moving forward (2024-2025)

- ① **Develop an online interactive map of Member States' applications of the UNIDIR C-IED CMM and SAT. This will serve as a centralized repository documenting global usage of the tools.**
- ② **Conduct a comprehensive review and update of the Counter-IED CMM and SAT. This will involve stakeholder consultations and validation processes to ensure the tools remain responsive to evolving needs.**
- ③ **Compile lessons learned and good practices identified from Member States' self-assessments. Produce a publication documenting case studies on proven national counter-IED measures for promoting shared learning.**
- ④ **Explore opportunities to strengthen multilateral cooperation frameworks through research and expert consultations. Provide recommendations to relevant organizations on enhancing information sharing, operational collaboration, and coordination against threats posed by IEDs.**

UNIDIR tools, research and knowledge products



Click directly on the covers to access the tools publications

<https://www.unidir.org/publications>

CONTACTS

Conventional Arms and Ammunition Programme

Paul Holtom, Head of Programme, paul.holtom@un.org

Hardy Giezendanner, Senior Researcher, giezendanner@un.org

Mohamed Coulibaly, Researcher, mohamed.coulibaly1@un.org

Theò Bajon, Associate Researcher, theo.bajon@un.org

www.unidir.org

@UNIDIR