

The Impact of Mines/ERW on Children

Child casualties in 2019

Child casualties are recorded where the age of the victim is less than 18 years at the time of the mine or explosive remnants of war (ERW) explosion, or when the casualty was reported by the source (such as media) as being a child.

In 2019, there were at least 1,643 child casualties accounting for 34% of all casualties for whom the age group was known (4,777) and for 43% of civilian casualties for whom the age group was known (3,850).¹ Children were killed (622) or injured (1,021) by mines/ERW in 34 states and one other area in 2019.²

As in previous years, Afghanistan recorded the most child casualties of mine/ERW in 2019 (894). Children are extremely affected by mines/ERW in Afghanistan, the country where the highest number of child casualties of conflict was recorded since the United Nations (UN) began systematically documenting civilian casualties in 2009.

Syria had the next highest number of child casualties reported in 2019 (216). Syria has remained the country with the second highest annual number of child casualties after Afghanistan since 2015. Due to limited information, a lack of centralized data collection, and decreased access to many areas, it is likely that the actual number of child casualties is significantly higher.

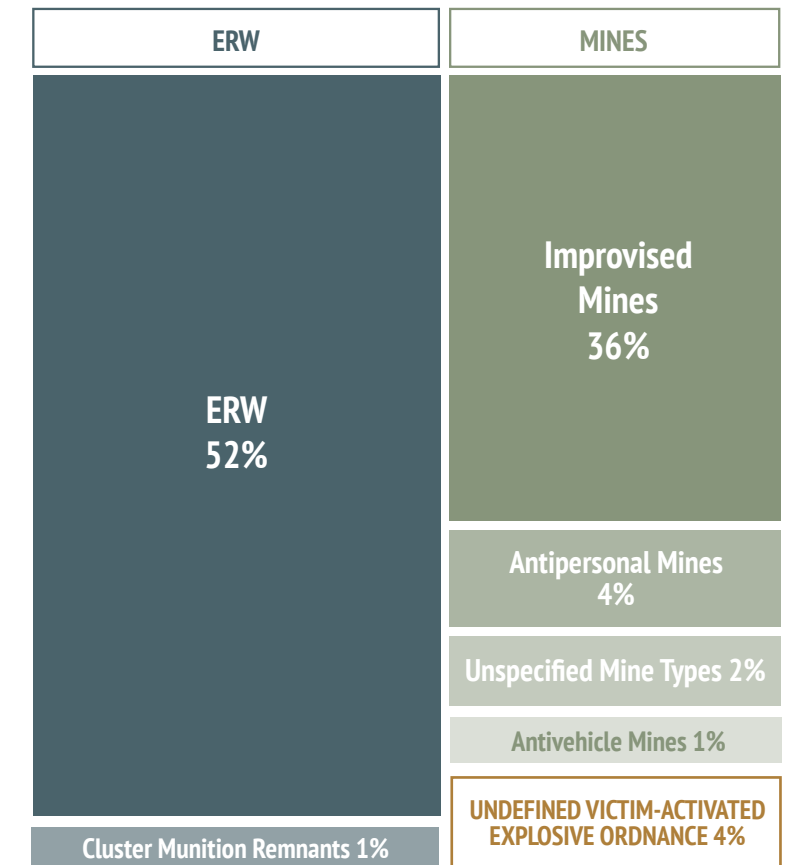
Girls represented 13% of all child casualties in 2019, while boys continue to constitute the vast majority of child casualties.

Countries with the most child casualties in 2019

Countries	Child Casualties	Percentage of total global child casualties in 2019 (where age group was reported)
Afghanistan	894	54%
Syria	216	13%
Yemen	74	5%
Myanmar	61	4%
Angola	49	3%
Pakistan	46	3%
Ukraine	37	2%

Note: States Parties to the Mine Ban Treaty are indicated in **bold**.

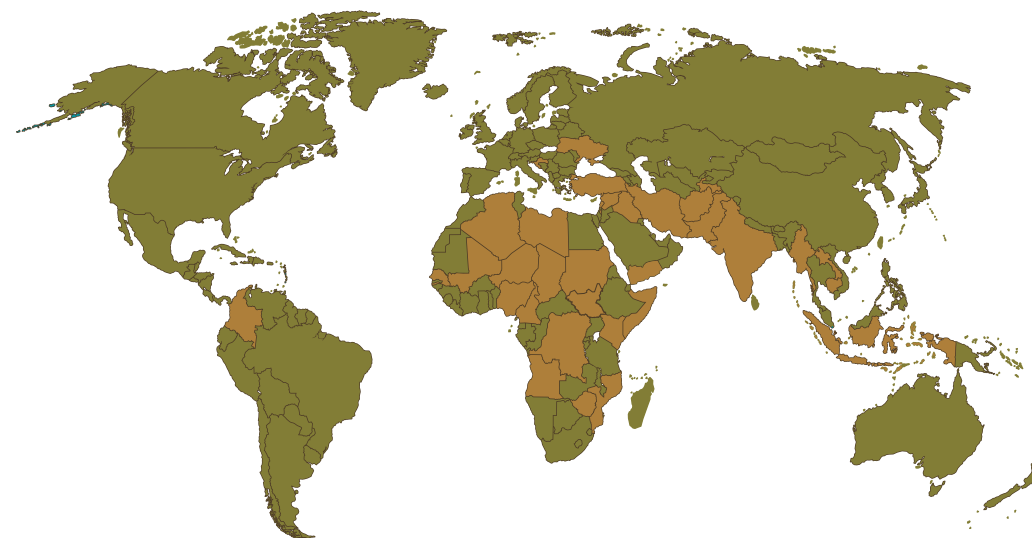
Devices causing child casualties in 2019



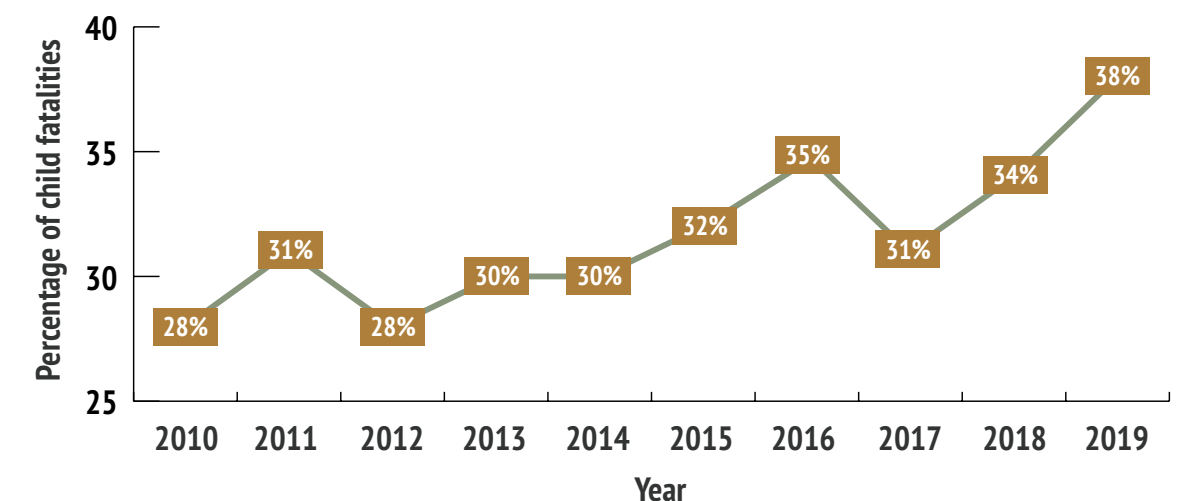
Child casualties recorded in 2019*

Afghanistan, Algeria, Angola, Cambodia, Cameroon, Chad, Colombia, Croatia, Democratic Republic of Congo, India, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Kenya, Lao PDR, Lebanon, Libya, Mali, Mozambique, Myanmar, Niger, Nigeria, Pakistan, Palestine, Senegal, Somalia, Somaliland, South Sudan, Sudan, Syria, Tajikistan, Turkey, Ukraine, Yemen, and Zimbabwe.

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Percentage of child casualties killed 2010–2019



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Preventing child casualties

Risk education is one of the key methods to raise awareness among children of the risks of mines and ERW and to teach safe behavior. All of the states in which risk education was reported in 2019 also reached children.

Children are a key risk group because they are growing up in contaminated areas and often lack knowledge of the risks. In many states, children, particularly boys, are responsible for looking after animals and undertaking household chores, which may take them into mined areas. Although fewer reported mine incidents involve girls, women and girls are often an important group to target in risk education as they can help promote safer behavior among men and among children and peers. In some states children are more at risk from ERW, including cluster munition remnants, because they pick up items out of curiosity.

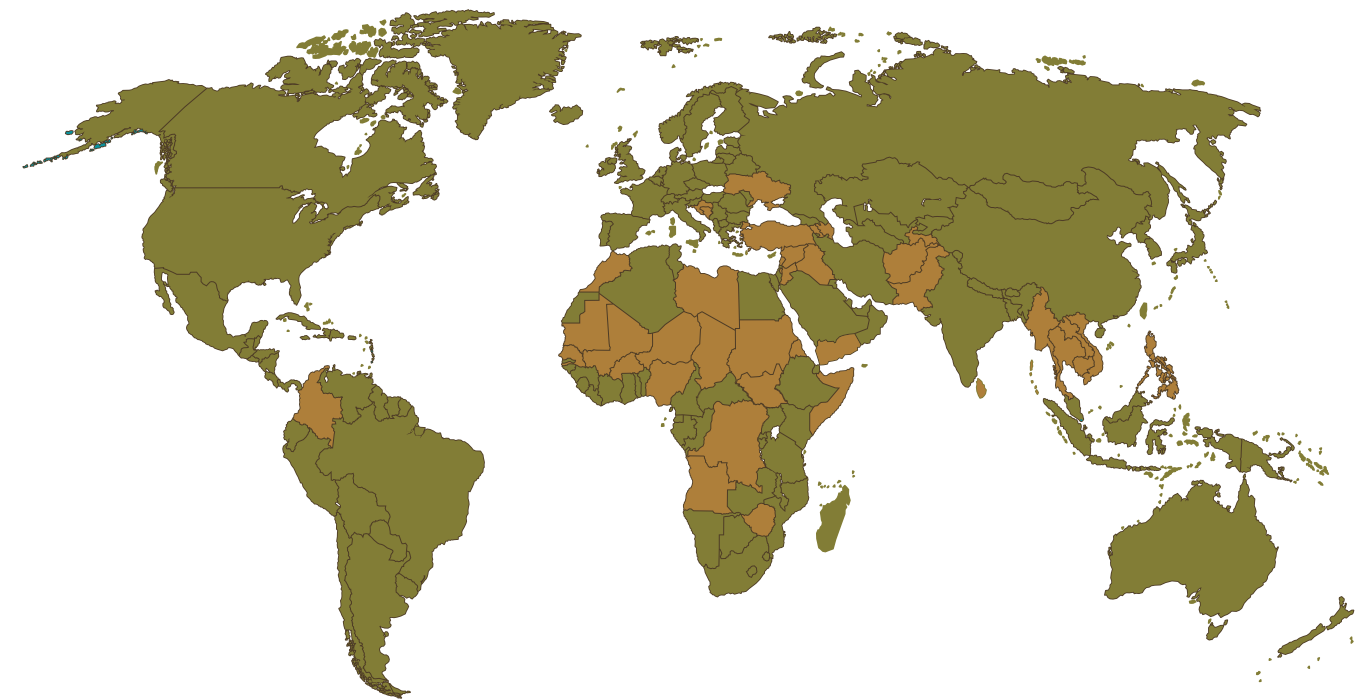
Risk education has been integrated into the school curriculum in several States Parties to the Mine Ban Treaty and the Convention on Cluster Munitions, including Afghanistan, Cambodia, Lao PDR and Sudan. In 2019, risk education messages were also conveyed to children through interactive means such as puppet shows, games and role play, as well as videos and interactive apps.

Reaching children with disabilities has not always been well addressed by risk education, but in 2019 there were some positive examples of risk education targeting them.

- In Ukraine, the Swiss Foundation for Mine Action (FSD) implemented a small project in specialized education institutions for children with disabilities which included using a sign language trainer.
- Humanity & Inclusion (HI) in Iraq produced risk education videos with sign language and subtitles, and used braille for risk education in Colombia.
- In Yemen, the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) supported a risk education program for hearing impaired children.

In 2019, UNICEF contributed to protecting civilians, particularly children, from the effects of improvised explosive devices (IEDs) in Afghanistan, Colombia, Chad, Iraq, Libya, Myanmar, Niger, Nigeria, Pakistan, Palestine, Syria, Ukraine, and Yemen, through integrated programs that included risk education, child-focused victim assistance, and injury surveillance.³

States and other areas where children received risk education in 2019*



Abkhazia, Afghanistan, Angola, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Chad, Colombia, Croatia, Democratic Republic of Congo, Eritrea, Iraq, Jordan, Lao PDR, Lebanon, Libya, Mali, Mauritania, Morocco, Myanmar, Nagorno Karabakh, Niger, Nigeria, Pakistan, Palestine, Philippines, Senegal, Somalia, Somaliland, South Sudan, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Syria, Tajikistan, Thailand, Turkey, Ukraine, Vietnam, Yemen, and Zimbabwe.

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Risk education in schools in Mine Ban Treaty States Parties



Risk education in school curriculum

Afghanistan, Cambodia, Colombia, Democratic Republic of Congo, Mali, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Thailand

Risk education outside of the formal school curriculum

Angola, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Chad, Croatia, Ecuador, Eritrea, Iraq, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Palestine, Senegal, Somalia, South Sudan, Tajikistan, Ukraine, Yemen, Zimbabwe



No risk education in schools reported

Cyprus, Ethiopia, Oman, Peru, Serbia, Turkey

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Age-sensitive victim assistance for children

Age-sensitive victim assistance remained among the significant under-reported aspects of victim assistance, particularly with regard to child survivors or children who are the family members of survivors and/or persons killed by mines and ERW.

Child survivors have specific and additional needs in all aspects of assistance. For example, children whose injuries resulted in amputated limbs require more complicated rehabilitative assistance. They need to have prostheses made more often as they grow and may require corrective surgery for the changing shape of a residual limb.

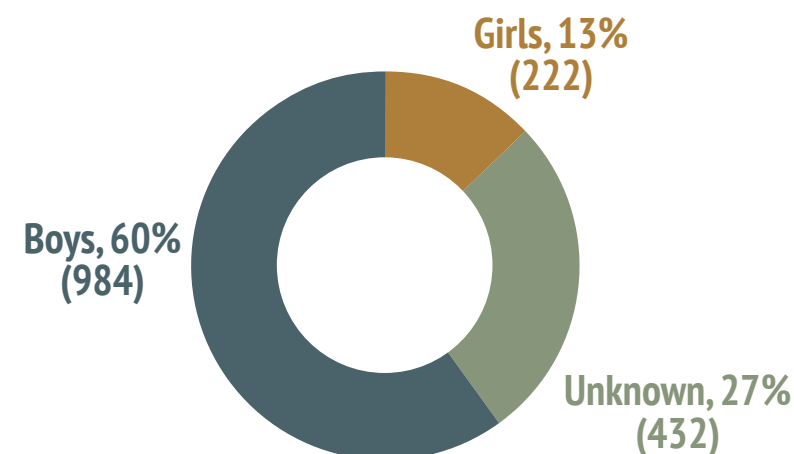
An increasing number of activities to address the specific needs of survivors according to their age were reported by States Parties to the Mine Ban Treaty and the Convention on Cluster Munitions. However, the needs have far overshadowed the progress made to date.

A number of international actors sought to improve the situation for children in humanitarian settings, citing Landmine Monitor casualty data and other sources on high numbers of child casualties resulting from mines/ERW.⁴ National programs to promote inclusive education at all levels, as part of national education plans and policies, can contribute to the inclusion of child survivors and indirect child victims.

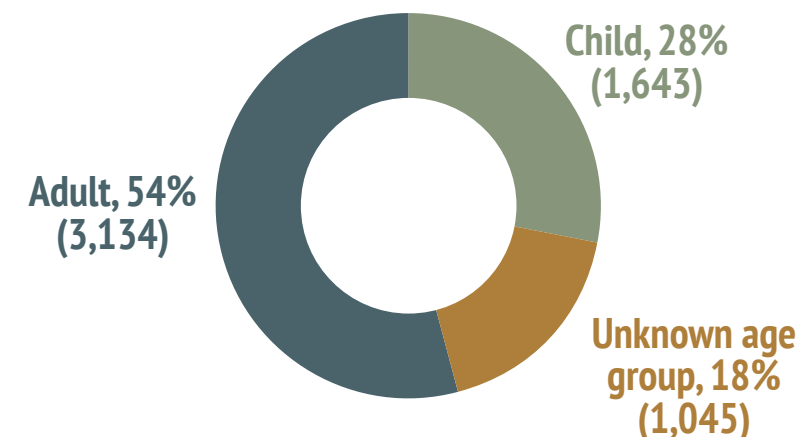
In 2019, the UN's interagency Protection Standby Capacity Project (ProCap) launched a deployment in response to the impact of mines/ERW on children. The objectives were to improve interagency collaboration; reduce the rate and number of children killed and injured; increase the survival rates of child casualties, especially those seriously injured and in a critical state after the incident; and provide medium-term healthcare services to improve physical and mental health for child survivors, as well as social inclusion, including access to education.⁵

The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) recognizes that children with disabilities should have full enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms on an equal basis with other children, and also recalls obligations undertaken by States Parties to the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

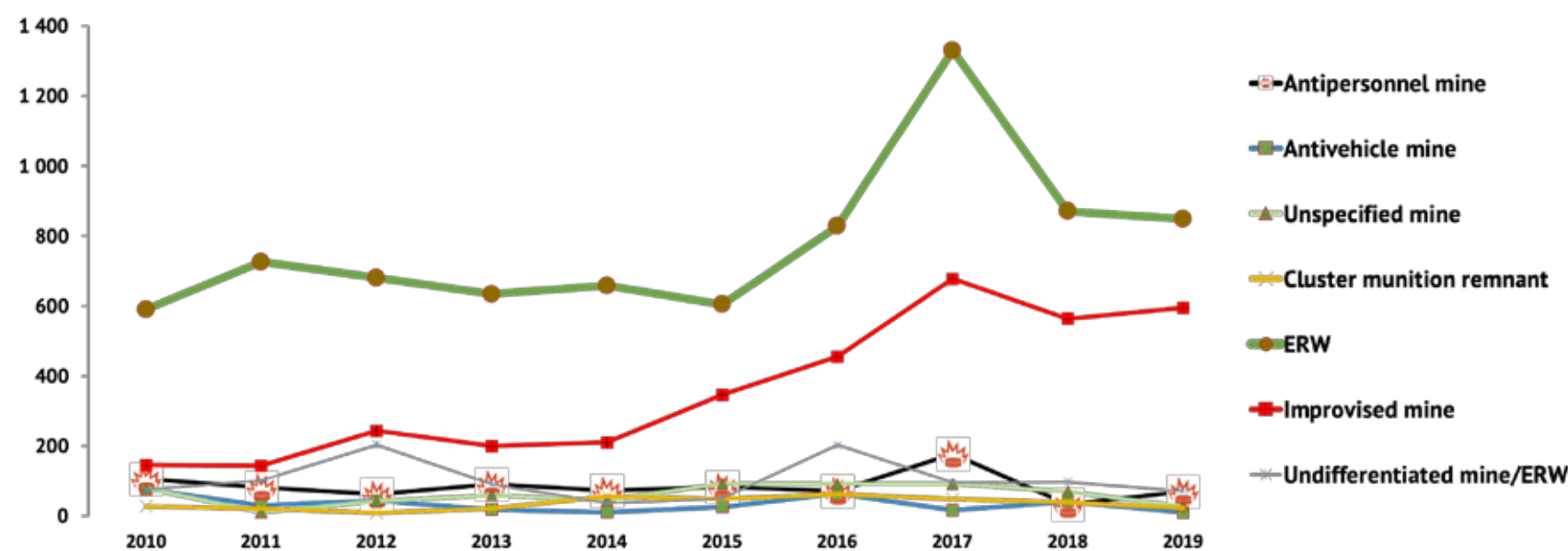
Child casualties by gender in 2019



Child casualties among all casualties in 2019



Explosive items causing child casualties: 2010–2019



* These maps are for illustrative purposes and do not imply the expression of any opinion on the part of the Landmine and Cluster Munition Monitor.

¹ Casualty figures for 2019 have been updated since publication of *Landmine Monitor 2020*, which reported at least 1,562 child casualties in 2019, accounting for 35% of all casualties for whom the age group was known (4,508) and 43% of civilian casualties for whom the age group was known (3,598).

² In 26 States Parties: Afghanistan, Algeria, Angola, Cambodia, Cameroon, Chad, Colombia, Croatia, Democratic Republic of Congo, Indonesia, Iraq, Kenya, Mali, Mozambique, Niger, Nigeria, Palestine, Senegal, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, Tajikistan, Turkey, Ukraine, Yemen, and Zimbabwe; eight states not party: India, Iran, Lao PDR, Lebanon, Libya, Myanmar, Pakistan, and Syria; and one other area: Somaliland.

³ United Nations, "Countering the threat posed by improvised explosive devices: report of the Secretary-General," 17 July 2020, pp. 9–10.

⁴ Global Protection Cluster, Child Protection Area of Responsibility, "Webinar: Mitigating the Impact of Explosive Ordnance on Children through Collaborative Humanitarian Action," 11 June 2020.

⁵ Global Protection Cluster, Mine Action Area of Responsibility, "Mine Action and Global Humanitarian Architecture," undated.