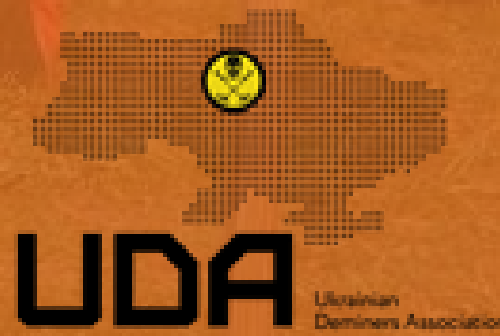




From Support to Lead: the capacity development experiences of
UDA and MAG in Ukraine

Mine Action Symposium 2026 - Split, Croatia



Who we are



- UDA is the largest Ukrainian national mine action operator, founded in 2018 and based in Kyiv.
- Since 2018 UDA has:
 1. Reached more than 550,000 people through face-to-face EORE.
 2. Provided assistance to more than 3,120 victims through the Mine Victim Assistance (MVA) programme.
 3. Built operational capacity to deploy 5 clearance teams, 10 NTS teams, 2 marking teams and 2 EOD teams.
 4. Conducted non-technical surveys covering 278.9 million m² across Ukraine and submitted 438 official NTS reports (last year data).
- UDA is funded by institutional donors, UN agencies and through partnerships with international NGOs, including MAG as a strategic partner.
- UDA currently implements 16 active projects across Ukraine.
- MAG is a Nobel Peace Prize-winning charity founded in 1989 and based in Manchester.
- We limit the causes and address the consequences of conflict and armed violence.
- The work of our 5,000+ staff in 35+ countries saves lives, eases suffering, protects human rights and contributes to sustainable peace for the hundreds of millions of people affected
- MAG has been operational in Ukraine since 2022 and currently employs 453 staff members (426 national and 27 international), including 33 operational teams and support functions.
- As a key part of our approach to humanitarian mine action, we prioritise the development of sustainable national capacity



Origins of the Partnership

- Ukraine in 2022 - HMA sector was small in comparison to the nature and scale of contamination that was developing
- MAG
 1. Assessment mission confirmed that there was space and need to establish programme in-country but lacked registration/accreditation so unable to operate directly
 2. Partnership work aligns with global approach of building sustainable national capacity
- UDA
 1. Had been operational since 2018 but lacked accreditation in a variety of activities including technical survey, manual clearance and BAC so restricted in potential
 2. Since 2018, capacity development beyond technical expertise has been a strategic goal

= Strategic objectives and operational needs of both partners

First steps: from MoU to Action Plan

- April 2022: Initial MAG assessment to Ukraine; first meeting between MAG and UDA focal points
- May 2022: MoU signed between MAG and UDA, outlining key areas of collaboration between the organisations
- May 2022: Initial EORE sessions delivered by UDA through subcontracting agreement with MAG
- September 2023: Two-week capacity development assessment of UDA, led by MAG's Head of Partnerships; Capacity Development plan submitted to donor
- January 2024: Commencement of Capacity Development Action Plan





Capacity development in action

- Technical: Embedded technical oversight, training in a range of HMA tools and techniques, provision of equipment
- Institutional: logistics and procurement, security, anti-corruption, information management, and project cycle management, especially regarding proposal writing and reporting.
- Cross-cutting: gender baseline assessment and action plan, training in conflict sensitivity
- Joint advocacy with donors and in national/international fora about the importance of such partnerships for sustainable national capacity

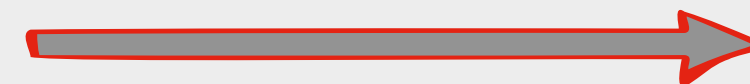


May 2022:

First EORE sessions delivered through UDA

March 2026:

Five joint projects, including first contracts with UDA as lead partner



Key lessons learned

- Dedicated capacity is required from both sides in order to do this work effectively – it is a long-term investment that requires a comprehensive and systematic approach.
- Donor support is critical, and multi-year funding should be sought for this work where possible
- Trust, transparency, mutual respect and a ‘win-win’ approach are essential to genuine capacity development.
- There is no ‘end goal’ – especially for forward-looking organisations working in complex environments.
- Local organisations are not only implementers but also strategic partners who understand the context, risks and needs on the ground.
- Investment in people is the most valuable investment in humanitarian mine action.





Looking to the future

- Explore new areas of cooperation including innovation, technology and operational efficiency in HMA
- Conduct joint capacity development of non-HMA organisations
- Continued push for UDA to be included in relevant sector discussions where there is still exclusivity to INGOs
- Joint advocacy for localisation and sustainable national capacity within the sector, ensuring that national organisations play a central role in shaping the future of the sector
- Continue to share learning across the sector, facilitated by the establishment of an organisational localisation framework for HMA at MAG
- Continued shift from traditional capacity development towards genuine capacity exchange