



FSD



Building a Safe and Sustainable Future After Armed Conflict

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Message From the Director

Dear Reader,

For over 25 years, FSD has been committed to protecting civilian populations by destroying mines and explosive remnants of war, promoting resilience to climate change, and supporting peace processes. In these pages, we invite you to discover the stories of families confronted every day with the danger of mines, of survivors of accidental explosions who are rebuilding their lives, of our deminers, and of success stories we take pride in.

Step by step, we continue our mission toward a safer future. Every cleared piece of land allows farmers to cultivate their fields and feed their family, essential infrastructure to be rebuilt, communities to regain safety, and children to return to school without fear.

Even today, nearly one-third of countries remain contaminated by mines and other explosive remnants of war. Our teams in the field work tirelessly to move closer to a mine-free world. Every landmine cleared is a life saved.

I extend my heartfelt gratitude to all those whose dedication and daily commitment make this mission possible.

Sincerely,



Hansjörg Eberle
Director of FSD



Training Women in Demining in Tajikistan

Once a Kindergarten Teacher, Now a Deminer for FSD



Iskandarova Zebonisso comes from the Rudaki district in western Tajikistan. A few years ago, the 31-year-old woman worked in a kindergarten. Today, she locates mines and explosive remnants in the south of the country, along the Afghan border. Widowed and a mother of three, she is the sole provider for her family.

Iskandarova is part of an FSD demining team operating in this remote and mountainous region of Tajikistan. Her team consists of two men and three other women: Majidova, Sharapova, and Nabotova. These women, also mothers, previously worked as a farmer, a saleswoman, and a nurse. All of them underwent FSD’s humanitarian demining training and now play a vital role in clearing their country of these dangerous remnants of war.

“



Empowering women is not only a moral obligation but also a necessity for a mine-free Tajikistan. Their strength, resilience, and determination are invaluable for progressing toward peace and security.

Angela De Santis, Deputy Head of Operations at FSD

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**Our Operations
in Tajikistan**





Before beginning demining operations, deminers test their detectors for proper functionality using a small piece of metal (Tajikistan, 2024).

Supporting Vulnerable Populations in the Central African Republic

Fun and Learning for the Children of Bouar

Dieu Merci is a schoolboy in the city of Bouar in the Central African Republic, a country that has endured decades of violence and political instability. In this challenging context, where resources for education are limited, Dieu Merci and his classmates have few opportunities to play or develop hobbies.



“

I take music lessons, and I play the guitar. I want to become a great musician.

Dieu Merci Bazou, Central African schoolboy

”

As part of its peacebuilding programme, FSD supports orphanages, schools, and extracurricular activities, offering children opportunities to grow and thrive in a safe and supportive environment.

Like Dieu Merci, many children are eager to participate in recreational activities that help them express themselves, develop skills, and gain confidence. While this aspiring musician takes guitar lessons, others diligently attend dance or sewing classes.



[Rehabilitating an Orphanage](#)





In its rehabilitation projects, FSD sources materials from artisans in surrounding villages to support the local economy (Central African Republic, 2021)

Establishing Urban Gardens for Conflict Victims in Colombia

Plants of Hope in Bogotá



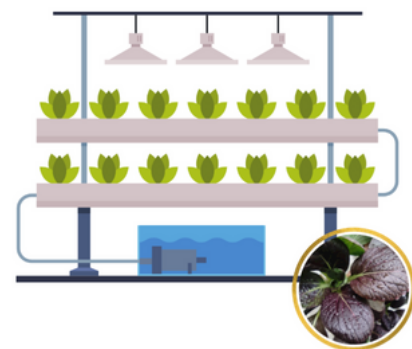
In Colombia, decades of armed conflict have displaced more than 8 million people, forcing many to start over from nothing. Among them is Rosa Quiñones, who fled her home over 15 years ago due to the threat of landmines and armed violence. Since arriving in Bogotá, she has been working hard to rebuild her life.



To support conflict victims, FSD has established urban vegetable gardens in Bogotá's reception centres. These gardens not only improve food security but also enable those affected by the conflict to develop a source of income. Rosa was one of the first beneficiaries of this project. Today, she is the one who passes on her know-how in centres for displaced people in the region.

WHAT IS A HYDROPONIC VEGETABLE GARDEN?

It is a system of growing plants without soil in a controlled environment, where the roots are directly immersed in a nutrient-rich solution essential for their growth.





FSD supports survivors of mine accidents in growing and selling herbs and vegetables cultivated in the gardens (Colombia, 2023).

Allowing Communities to Safely Reunite in Iraq

Clearing the Mountains of Mosul



Dear Reader,

My name is Chris Hunter and I've been part of FSD's team in Iraq for several years. As a Senior Technical Advisor, my primary role is to identify and neutralise improvised mines and other explosive remnants of war located by my colleagues. Today, I would like to take you to an area that my team is currently clearing of explosive hazards near Mosul.

In the heart of these mountains, many improvised explosive devices (IEDs) are hidden. These homemade landmines, laid during the conflict by the Islamic State forces, still regularly claim the lives of many innocent victims. Clearing this area of mines is no easy task for our teams. The temperature often exceeds 40 degrees, and the steep terrain demands extreme caution, as well as particularly high-levels of stamina for our deminers, who carry many kilos of equipment to reach the minefields.

Despite these challenges, our motivation is unwavering. Every day, seeing the smiles on the faces of the children and families living nearby strengthens our determination. We are delighted to be able to help people to live their lives again in complete safety, and ultimately to be helping to create a brighter future for generations to come.

Every explosive device neutralised represents a potential life saved and a further step towards the recovery of this magnificent region scarred by years of conflict.

Yours sincerely,
Chris Hunter

[**Follow Chris in the field**](#) 



Improvised mines pose a particular challenge for FSD deminers and require intense focus during their clearance (Iraq, 2022).

Raising Awareness of the Dangers of Mines in the Philippines

Preventing Fatal Accidents in Remote Villages of Mindanao

“I heard the explosion and saw him on the ground, motionless,” recalls a mother who tragically lost her son in the accidental detonation of an explosive remnant of war. Her son and his friends had been playing with what they thought was a harmless piece of metal when the accident occurred. Sadly, his case is not unique. On the island of Mindanao, unexploded ordnance (UXO) remain a major threat, scattered around the villages and agricultural fields.

To reduce the number of accidental explosions, FSD’s risk education teams travel long distances—sometimes walking for hours or crossing rivers by boat—to reach remote villages. They know their work has already saved lives. Children are particularly vulnerable—driven by curiosity, they often mistake these deadly objects for toys.

“



"It was a day like any other; everything felt completely normal. And then, suddenly, the explosion happened."
Jowahdi, survivor of an improvised mine explosion

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**Jowahdi's
Testimony**





BABALA !!!

Ang UXO o bombang hindi sumabog ay mapanganib. Maaring sumabog at nakamamatay

BOMBA O UXO (UNEXPLODED ORDNANCE)

- 100mm Projectile
- M271 10mm Anti Tank Projectile
- 2.75M Rocket
- MK-81 250lb Aircraft Bomb
- ATGL-7 (RPG-7)

Ang MGA dapat gawin:

- ✓ Huwag laphan ang UXO.
- ✓ Huwag hawakan ang UXO.
- ✓ Huwag pulutin o ibenta ang UXO.
- ✓ Huwag puktukin o kalinain ang UXO.
- ✓ Huwag paglaruan ang UXO.
- ✓ Huwag hukayin ang UXO.
- ✓ Huwag busukin o sundutin ang UXO.
- ✓ Huwag bahalin ng anumang bagay ang UXO.
- ✓ Huwag sumuagin ang UXO.

Ang DAPAT gawin:

- ✓ I-report agad sa Pulis o sa inyong Barangay Officials.

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FSD's risk education teams visit schools and travel through villages to ensure as many people as possible receive life-saving information (Philippines, 2023).

Training Mine Victims in Sewing in Afghanistan

Rebuilding Livelihoods After a Mine Accident

Hnfna is just 18 years old and lives in the steep, remote mountains of Badakhshan in northern Afghanistan. As a young child, she was collecting firewood in the forest when an accidental explosion severely injured her.

“*Walking has become a struggle for me. I can't travel long distances or work.*”
Hnfna, survivor of an accidental explosion

Hnfna lives with her younger sister and her parents, who have done their best to support her. However, they are now elderly, and her father, who has lost his sight, is no longer able to work. The burden of providing for the household has fallen entirely on her shoulders. But without an education or employment prospects, the future seemed hopeless.

Through FSD's mine survivor support programme, Hnfna received training in sewing, along with the necessary equipment to start her own small business. Despite her physical challenges, she now has the means to earn a living and support her family.





Every year, thousands of people lose their lives in accidental explosions. Risk education remains essential as long as demining is not complete (Afghanistan, 2021).

Partnering with Mine Detection Dogs in Ukraine

Who Are Our Four-Legged Deminers?

At FSD, we have a rather unique demining team—twelve highly trained mine detection dogs and their handlers. Deployed in Ukraine to strengthen our clearance efforts, these Belgian Malinois and German Shepherds use their exceptional sense of smell to detect explosive vapours with remarkable precision.

“



TNT is just one year old, the youngest member of the team. Ukraine is the first country where she will put her skills to the test.

Maksim Brusentsev, dog handler

”

“

Zara is calm and reliable—you can trust her with your life without hesitation.

Mykhailo Sytar, dog handler



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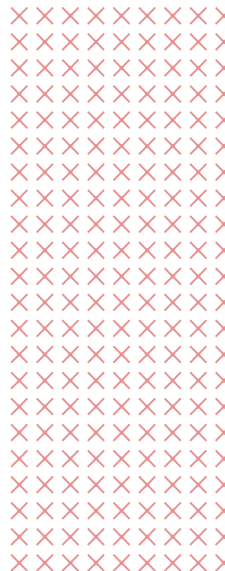
“



Szabi is a gentle and composed dog, but the moment she sees her toy, she bursts with energy!

Sofia Shakhova, dog handler

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 [Our Operations in Ukraine](#) 



Thanks to their exceptional sense of smell, the dogs can accurately detect the vapours emitted by mines and other explosive remnants of war (Ukraine, 2024).





More Information



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