



FSD's Mine Action Programme in Ukraine

September 2026

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Two FSD deminers using a large loop detector during clearance operations in the Chernihiv region (June 2026).

About FSD

FSD is a Swiss humanitarian non-profit organisation. Since 1997, we have worked to create a safer and more sustainable future for communities affected by war and instability. Our core mission is to protect civilians from landmines and explosive remnants of war. Since its founding, FSD has operated in around 30 countries and today employs around 700 staff across four continents.

DEMINING

FSD's locally recruited and trained teams identify, detect and dispose of landmines and unexploded ordnance, using specialised machines, drones and detection dogs where appropriate.

RISK EDUCATION

Alongside clearance operations, FSD educates communities about the risks posed by mines and other explosive ordnance, helping people recognise dangers, adopt safer behaviour and prevent potentially fatal accidents.

VICTIM ASSISTANCE

FSD provides socio-economic support and facilitates access to medical care for survivors of mine and explosive ordnance accidents, helping them resume suitable income-generating activities and supporting their socio-economic inclusion.

CAPACITY BUILDING

FSD trains and mentors local authorities and organisations to strengthen national expertise and help ensure that mine action capacities can be sustained over the long term.

WEAPONS & AMMUNITION DESTRUCTION

FSD destroys obsolete or abandoned weapons and ammunition to prevent accidental explosions and reduce the risk of their diversion or misuse.

ADVOCACY

FSD contributes to mine action forums and working groups and supports countries in fulfilling their obligations under the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention.

OUR IMPACT SINCE 1997



473,817,686

square metres cleared
and secured



1,408,641

explosive items
located and destroyed



3,489,592

people educated on the risks
of explosive ordnance



29

countries of operations

FSD Operations in Ukraine

(September 2026)



FSD's Mine Action Programme in Ukraine

The ongoing conflict has left large areas of Ukraine contaminated by mines and unexploded ordnance, making it one of the most heavily contaminated countries in the world. More than a quarter of the country is potentially affected. This contamination poses a serious threat to civilians, hampers humanitarian efforts, delays reconstruction and agricultural recovery, and prevents the safe return of displaced people.

As of September 2026, FSD works across Chernihiv, Donetsk, Kharkiv, Kherson, Poltava, Mykolaiv and Sumy oblasts. Our operations include:

- **10 survey teams assessing areas suspected of contamination**
- **33 demining teams locating and clearing explosive ordnance**
- **5 mechanical demining teams preparing land for clearance and removing rubble from damaged or destroyed structures**
- **1 mine detection dog team supporting clearance operations**
- **10 risk education teams raising awareness in schools and communities, complemented by digital campaigns and social media**

OUR IMPACT SINCE JUNE 2022

5,933,576

square metres of land cleared

589,045

people educated on the risks of explosive ordnance

134,305,856

square metres of land surveyed

2015

FSD began working in Ukraine, initially providing risk education in the Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts. The programme later expanded to include demining and capacity building.

2022

Following the full-scale invasion in February, FSD temporarily suspended mine action operations and provided emergency humanitarian assistance. In June, FSD established a new operational base in Chernihiv and resumed demining activities.

2023

FSD opened a new operational base in Kharkiv, expanding clearance operations in eastern Ukraine.

2024

FSD opened two satellite offices in Donetsk oblast and Kryvyi Rih to support its expanding operations.

2025

FSD launched two capacity-building projects: one supporting the State Emergency Service of Ukraine (SESU) in strengthening its mechanical demining capacity, and another supporting the local NGO Ukrainian Centre for Humanitarian Protection (UCHP) in developing its mine action capacities.

2026

FSD is active across seven oblasts, with 450 staff covering the full spectrum of humanitarian mine action activities.

FSD's Impact in Ukraine

FSD's work in Ukraine protects civilians from mines and other explosive ordnance. While the conflict is still active, some previously occupied areas have been liberated. In these areas, demining activities are essential to restore the conditions communities need to live safely, sustain their livelihoods and rebuild.



✓ SAVING LIVES

By locating and clearing mines and other explosive ordnance, and teaching people how to recognise and avoid these hazards, FSD protects communities from explosive threats and helps prevent devastating accidents.



✓ SUPPORTING THE SAFE RETURN OF DISPLACED PEOPLE

Explosive contamination can prevent displaced people from returning home long after fighting has ended. FSD clears homes, roads and surrounding land, removing one of the barriers to their safe return.



✓ RESTORING ACCESS TO FARMLAND

For farming communities, contaminated land means lost income and disrupted livelihoods, while also affecting food security. By clearing farmland, FSD enables farmers to resume their activities and helps bring productive land back into use.



✓ PAVING THE WAY FOR RECONSTRUCTION

Rebuilding cannot begin until land and infrastructure can be accessed safely. FSD clears explosive hazards around damaged infrastructure and other priority areas, allowing reconstruction and the restoration of essential services to move forward.



✓ PROTECTING CHILDHOOD AND FUTURE GENERATIONS

Mines and unexploded ordnance can restrict where children go to school, play and spend time with family and friends. Through demining operations and risk education, FSD helps reduce these constraints today while preventing explosive contamination from continuing to affect future generations.



Making a Forest Safe Again in Chernihiv

CONTEXT

Around 7,000 people live in this community in Chernihiv oblast. The surrounding forest has long played an important role in everyday life, providing firewood, berries and mushrooms, as well as places for recreation. The conflict changed this. Mines and unexploded ordnance have made parts of the forest and surrounding land hazardous, severely restricting access for its inhabitants.

KEY FIGURES

+200,000

square metres of forest and surrounding land identified for clearance

7,000

people living in the community

“



The forest has become a dangerous place. Walking through the woods is frightening. People are afraid.

Kostiantyn Kolomiets, forester and resident in Chernihiv oblast.

”

FSD'S INTERVENTION

- FSD's non-technical survey teams identified more than 200,000 square metres of hazardous land requiring clearance.
- FSD's demining teams are clearing areas where remnants of Uragan rockets and other explosive ordnance pose a major threat to local communities.
- Dense vegetation and large trees make access and the use of metal detectors more difficult. Mechanical assets and large-loop detectors can be used in surrounding open fields.
- Local foresters like Kostiantyn guide FSD's deminers through difficult terrain, helping them work more efficiently and access hard-to-reach areas.

OUR IMPACT

Making the forest safe again will allow people to use it as they once did, without the threat of explosive ordnance. It will also reduce the risk of explosive remnants triggering fires that could spread rapidly through the forest. Once the area is cleared, people will be able to spend time there again, reconnect with nature and regain a part of everyday life that the conflict has made inaccessible.

FSD's mine action operations will continue at full capacity across the four oblasts of Chernihiv, Kharkiv, Kherson and Donetsk. Survey and risk education activities have also expanded into the neighbouring oblasts of Sumy and Mykolaiv, with plans to further develop these activities in the coming months.

FSD will continue to support its local NGO partner, the Ukrainian Centre for Humanitarian Protection (UCHP), in developing both its operational and organisational capacities. This includes building key support functions such as logistics, finance and human resources. UCHP has already secured accreditation for explosive ordnance risk education, non-technical survey and clearance activities. Two trained clearance teams have already been transferred to UCHP's management, with a third to follow in the coming months.

FSD will also continue its capacity-building programme supporting the State Emergency Service of Ukraine (SESU). The project includes the refurbishment of a workshop and repair facility to provide logistical and technical support for the use and maintenance of demining machines allocated to SESU, reinforcing the long-term capacity of Ukrainian authorities in mechanical demining.

FSD will further expand the technical expertise of its national staff through regular training programmes delivered by its in-house training centre, which is accredited to provide the standard deminer training course required in Ukraine.

FSD will pursue its collaboration with non-profit start-up FindMine to test its UAV-based remote sensing system in Ukraine. Equipped with ground-penetrating radar, the UAV can detect buried objects such as mines and unexploded ordnance.

FSD is also piloting an innovative digital hazard-marking system. Signs with QR codes have been installed in village centres and along routes leading to areas contaminated with explosive ordnance. By scanning the codes, people can access up-to-date digital maps showing contamination risks, helping them better understand the risks in their surroundings and avoid hazardous areas. Following successful initial tests, the project will be expanded to additional regions.



Developing the Capacities of a Local NGO

CONTEXT

With vast areas of Ukraine affected by mines and other explosive ordnance, addressing contamination will require sustained mine action efforts for years to come. Developing strong national expertise and operational capacity is therefore essential to ensure a long-term, locally led response.

FSD'S INTERVENTION

- In 2025, FSD launched a three-year programme with UCHP, a local NGO, to develop its technical and organisational capacities across humanitarian mine action.
- FSD trains and mentors UCHP teams in non-technical survey, explosive ordnance risk education and clearance. Two demining teams are now fully operational, alongside one risk education team and one non-technical survey team.
- FSD also supports UCHP in strengthening its administrative and financial functions, enabling it to manage and sustain its mine action activities.
- FSD has assisted UCHP in obtaining national accreditation for non-technical survey, risk education and demining activities.
- Future plans include training in vegetation cutting, along with specialised courses to reinforce manual demining teams' expertise.

KEY FIGURES

168,688

square metres of land cleared by UCHP teams

13,978,034

square metres of land surveyed by UCHP teams

13,978

people educated on the dangers of explosive ordnance by UCHP teams



OUR IMPACT

UCHP teams are already putting their newly developed expertise into practice, clearing and surveying contaminated land and delivering risk education to affected communities.

As the programme progresses, UCHP will be able to deploy more teams, expand the range of activities it conducts and take on increasingly complex mine action operations.



FSD dog handler working with a mine detection dog during clearance operations in the Kharkiv region (July 2026).

Our Funding

As of September 2026, FSD's mine action activities in Ukraine are supported by the following donors:

Switzerland

The Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) funds FSD's humanitarian mine action programme in Kharkiv and Kherson oblasts. The State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO) funds a separate capacity-building project to rehabilitate a workshop for the repair, maintenance and modernisation of demining machines used by the State Emergency Service of Ukraine (SESU).

United States of America

Funding from the U.S. Department of State's Office of Weapons Removal and Abatement (PM/WRA) supports FSD's operations in Chernihiv and Donetsk oblasts.

World Food Programme (WFP) & Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO)

In partnership with WFP and the FAO, FSD conducts mine action activities focusing on small farms of up to 300 hectares and household garden plots in Kharkiv and Donetsk oblasts.

Partnership Fund for a Resilient Ukraine (PFRU)

PFRU contributes to the project to rehabilitate a workshop for the repair, maintenance and modernisation of demining machines used by SESU.

Other foundations, Swiss cantons and cities, and private donors

Their contributions provide general support for FSD's mine action activities across the various oblasts where FSD operates.

FSD Ukraine's operational budget for 2026 amounts to approximately CHF 28 million. Additional funding proposals are currently under consideration by institutional partners to further expand operations and accelerate demining efforts across the country.



Remnants of a Grad rocket identified in the Kharkiv region (August 2026).



An FSD deminer marking a hazardous area during clearance operations in the Chernihiv region (June 2026).



A drone flying over an area contaminated by explosive remnants of war during a non-technical survey in the Kharkiv region (May 2026).



FSD's Expertise



29 YEARS OF OPERATIONAL EXPERIENCE IN HUMANITARIAN DEMINING

FSD has implemented comprehensive mine action operations internationally for close to three decades, including survey and demining, stockpile destruction, explosive ordnance risk education and victim assistance. Its first demining project was launched in Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1998. Since then, FSD deminers have cleared more than 1.4 million explosive devices worldwide.

Operations have spanned around 30 countries, including Sudan, Laos, Iraq and Afghanistan. Large-scale programmes have been successfully implemented, involving the recruitment and on-site training of thousands of deminers, notably in Sri Lanka.

FSD's teams include internationally recognised mine action experts who regularly contribute to key sector publications and events.



LOCALISATION & CAPACITY BUILDING

FSD regularly advises and trains government institutions — currently in Kyrgyzstan, the Philippines and Ukraine — and supports the establishment of national demining coordination structures. Capacity-building programmes for local demining organisations further strengthen national ownership and enable a long-term transition to locally led mine action.



INNOVATION & TECHNOLOGIES

FSD has long been engaged in research and development projects exploring the application of technology in mine action. As a field-based organisation, it collaborates with universities and private-sector partners on innovation initiatives and supports the testing of new tools and equipment in operational environments. In Switzerland, FSD works closely with partners such as the Urs Endress Foundation in Arlesheim and the École Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne (EPFL) to advance practical solutions for mine action.



A LONG-STANDING ENGAGEMENT IN UKRAINE

FSD has been active in Ukraine since 2015, reflecting a sustained commitment to humanitarian mine action in the country. Over the years, operational bases have been established, hundreds of local staff recruited and trained, and close working relationships built with Ukrainian authorities and national and international partners, as operations have adapted to evolving needs.



More information

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