# Tajikistan

*FSD clears landmines, eliminates stocks of obsolete weapons and ammunition. FSD also tracks stocks of buried old pesticides.*

Since the inception of initial survey operations in 2003, FSD has implemented an integrated mine action programme in Tajikistan for fifteen years with several methodologies and initiatives; this has included non-technical survey teams, multi-purpose demining teams, mine dog detection teams and mechanical demining teams. In addition to its mine action programmes, FSD has also developed many environmental remediation projects, socio-economic and socio-medical interventions and capacity building projects in Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan. This close integration and long-term experience in Tajikistan affords FSD many freedoms that are difficult to come by for many.

Tajikistan acceded to the Mine Ban Treaty (Ottawa) in October 1999 and became a State Party to that Treaty in April 2000. Progress has been made in land release over the years through survey and clearance although much remains to be done to achieve full compliance with Ottawa Article 5; this is reflected in the current process of extension to 2025.

The Tajikistan National Mine Action Centre (TNMAC) estimates as of 31 Dec 2019 that there is still around 14 million square kilometres of land to be released through either technical survey or land clearance. Of the remaining contamination, it is estimated that approximately nine million square kilometres of land will require physical clearance assets and operations, and it is predicted that the remainder can be treated through NTS, land reduction and land release methodologies.

FSD has historically also run a stockpile destruction project for the disposal of weapons and ammunition up until early 2020 and has destroyed over 50 man-portable air defence units and over 800 tonnes of conventional ordnance, explosives and weapons.

FSD has also conducted several operations in support of the remediation of persistent obsolete pesticides (POPs) in Tajikistan which have been left behind and forgotten since Soviet times. Many communities have since inhabited contaminated areas and live nearby, or on top of/inside. contaminated sites and old storage buildings. Whilst it is always difficult to prove a direct causal link between such contamination and health effects, there is considerable evidence worldwide that there are proven negative effects on human and animal health where obsolete pesticides are stored and insufficiently monitored or managed. A report from the World Bank in 2020 also observed where pesticides are stored in the open, families that live and work in the vicinity may suffer acute or chronic exposure. Long-term exposure has been linked to a range of adverse health effects, from problems of the nervous, immune, reproductive, and endocrine systems and various types of congenital disabilities to injury of specific organs of the body and cancer. Nearby such storage sites, one may also find livestock grazing and edible crops growing on land irrigated with contaminated water also used for drinking.