



Issue Brief on *Landmines*

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Introduction

Women and men in some eighty countries live daily with the threat of landmines; women are particularly affected as they comprise the majority of the world's farmers and gatherers of food, water and firewood. Landmines block access to farmland, food, water and shelter, and act as a major obstacle to the transport and distribution of basic relief supplies, the repair of essential infrastructure, and the rehabilitation of homes, schools and clinics. An essential component of demining operations should be to ensure that those conducting the operations consult with women as they often identify priority areas for clearance, such as transportation routes to fields or markets, that may be different than those identified by military or political authorities. A second implication is that landmine awareness training, campaigns or classes are more successful when women are involved because women multiply vital information throughout their families and communities, particularly about signs of danger and preventing injury.

In his August 2003 report on the UN's mine action strategy, the Secretary-General stated, "Just as women, men, girls and boys tend to do different work, have differing mobility patterns and contribute to family and community life in diverse ways, their possible exposure to landmines and unexploded ordnance and the impact upon them will vary considerably. The quality and quantity of information available to women, men, girls and boys about the threats and effects of landmines and unexploded ordnance is likely to vary, as will their perspectives on priorities for mine action. Therefore, the unique needs and distinct perspectives of women and men, girls and boys must be taken into consideration in the design, implementation and evaluation of mine-action programmes. All aspects of mine-action programming must include gender considerations." [more...](#)

For individuals and communities alike, many of whom are already living in poverty and insecurity, the impact of landmines is not simply physical, it is also psychological, social, and economic. By taking away freedom of movement, and robbing children of the right to play, landmines erode peace of mind - particularly for parents. During recent conflicts, landmines have been deliberately used to target civilian populations, control their movements, and damage their mental health. Long after conflicts end, the presence of mines and UXO continue to pose a terrible threat, often making it impossible for displaced women to return to their homes, and prolonging suffering for everybody in the affected areas. By preventing the resettlement of IDPs and repatriation of refugees, and by blighting the prospects of local and national economic recovery, landmines undermine the prospects for peace and stability.



Fact Sheet

- While acknowledging that it is not possible to know with absolute certainty, according to the 2003 Landmine Monitor it is likely that there are between 15,000 and 20,000 new landmine casualties each year. Civilians account for the vast majority of new landmine casualties; only 15 percent of reported casualties in 2002 were identified as military personnel.¹
- In 2002 and through June 2003, there were new landmine casualties reported in 65 countries; the majority (41) of these countries were at peace, not war.²
- It is often women and girls who care for the injured immediately following injury and provide long-term support. The International Labor Organization found in 1998 that, "Evidence from Cambodia illustrates the gender dimension of disability as disabled men relied on their wives for support, while disabled women were abandoned by their partners or had difficulty in finding one."³
- In areas where employment opportunities are minimal, where people with disabilities are stigmatised or there is a shortage of training and rehabilitation facilities, mine survivors face enormous challenges. In most agrarian societies, the loss of a limb makes it almost impossible for a person to find work, and women, in particular, may be ostracised because they are perceived as being 'damaged.'
- Afghanistan is one of the most mine-affected countries in the world, with landmine casualties total approximately 200 per month. The US State Department estimates that as many as 4 million landmines still lie in wait. Landmines prevent girls from attending school, prevent water wells from being approached, obstruct commerce from safely traversing roads and bridges, prevent land from being tilled, and instill lasting psychological trauma to those who are at risk.⁴
- Women who have been injured by mines are not only a burden on their families and communities, but are often no longer perceived as being productive members of society. Amputated women are often perceived as less desirable as wives because they are no longer able to work in the fields, which is their traditional role in many countries.
- Mines are used to terrorize civilian populations. The psychological and social traumas associated with landmines can be as devastating on a mine-affected community as the immediate physical injuries sustained by mine victims. Women suffer terrible psychological consequences associated with the presence of landmines and landmine-related injuries. Some victims are permanently disfigured, while others living in mined areas face the constant fear that they may be next.
- Cambodia's first all female de-mining team has come under close scrutiny from the all male teams. One woman declares that, "this is a real example of what women in Cambodia can achieve. It will improve the profile of women and promote our position in society." The women range from 22 to 45 years old. The future development and economic growth of Cambodia depends on the work of the Mine Action Teams. Crops cannot be grown, wells cannot be drilled and schools, clinics and roads cannot be built until the landmines have been found and destroyed.⁵



- Landmines injure or kill approximately 10,000-15,000 people every year. Up to 30 percent of mine victims each year are youth aged 15 years or under.
- Currently, it is estimated that there are 110 million anti-personnel mines laid in about 68 countries, most of them in the developing world. Another 100 million remain in national stockpiles. Every year, two million new mines are laid. Mine clearance operations account for the removal of no more than approximately 100,000 mines a year. In other words, for every mine cleared, twenty new mines are laid. Many experts believe that it would take more than 1,100 years to clear the entire world of landmines, provided that no additional mines are planted.
- Asia is home to great numbers of anti-personnel mines: China keeps the world's largest stock of some 110 million mines, and India and Pakistan, with the fifth and sixth largest stockpiles, hold an estimated 6 million and 4-5 million respectively.
- A landmine that brings a vendor US\$3 in revenue, costs the international community between US\$300 and US\$1,000 to clear, according to the United Nations.
- It is believed that most of the mine holdouts are in Asia, where most landmines are manufactured. China has the largest stockpile, estimated at 110 million - around half the world's total holdings, and North and South Korea sit astride one of the world's most fortified borders. Warring parties in Nepal, Burma, and Kashmir continue to plant mines, adding to the millions already scattered around the region.
- Mines may be laid by hand or "seeded" from an aircraft or by artillery. They are often buried or hidden and may be laid in regular patterns around a village, along a road, on bridges, near single trees or along river banks. They may also be laid at random, without a map or plan of any sort. Many mines float so that after heavy rains they are found in unexpected locations.
- Mines continue to be dangerous even if they have been in the ground a long time. As time goes by, they may explode more easily as they become corroded or fragile.
- Mines are detected individually by prodding, metal detection or sniffer dogs. Prodding is slow, confusing and dangerous, especially when the mines are laid in hard-packed or stony soil, or when they are fitted with anti-disturbance fuses. Metal detection works well with metal-cased mines, but metal in modern mines has been increasingly replaced by plastic. New mines will soon be undetectable by their metallic content.
- Manual mine clearance is dangerous and requires well-trained personnel. Currently, accidents occur at a rate of one for every 2,000 mines destroyed.
- Landmines mostly harm civilians, especially women and children, and most victims are injured or killed after wars are over. People risk their lives by fetching wood or water, or farming in mined areas, activities they may need to continue even after being injured by a mine.
- Many youth are injured by landmines designed to look like toys. Some cannot resist the temptation to play with these new "toys" even if they are aware of the dangers. Young children also can't see mines like taller adults can, and they may not be able to read or recognise warning signs as they stray off safe routes while playing games or taking short-cuts.



- Wheelchairs are often unusable in rural communities ill equipped to make roads and buildings accessible. This means that disabled mine survivors may lack access to care or economic opportunities, or become socially isolated.
- Mines make it difficult for teachers, health-care workers and others to travel to mine-affected communities.
- Landmines are devastating to a country's economy. Fields contaminated with landmines are often left uncultivated, while the loss of agricultural lands may force communities to use land that is dangerous or unproductive. Often people have no choice and must farm areas that could be mined.
- Decreased productivity makes countries dependent on aid as areas that were once self-sufficient may become dependent on outside sources of food. In one part of Angola alone, it is estimated that landmines have reduced food production by more than 25 percent.
- Infrastructure such as roads, power lines, electric plants, irrigation systems, water plants, dams and industrial plants are often mined, making it impossible to maintain, repair or use them. This affects provision of services such as water and electricity, while goods cannot be transported along mined roads.
- Landmine victims need, on average, twice as many blood transfusions as other war wounded. Often, in war-ravaged countries, blood supplies are low or may not have been properly screened for HIV or hepatitis. Medical care may not be located close by and anaesthetics or antibiotics may be unavailable.
- Patients need an average of four operations and 32 days in hospital to recover, as well as physical rehabilitation, thereby placing a strain on public health resources.
- Only 30 percent of survivors receive prosthetics. They cost approximately US\$125, more than most families can afford. Children outgrow their prosthetics and may require as many as 10 new prosthetics in their lifetime.
- Mines are often placed along country borders and many refugees are injured as they flee areas of fighting, or as they return. Because refugees are a mobile population, it is difficult for them to receive medical care and mine awareness training. 136 countries have now ratified or acceded to the 1997 Mine Ban Treaty, with another 12 countries that have signed but not ratified the Treaty. Belarus is the most recent signatory, having joined on 3 September 2003. Belarus reportedly has a stockpile of more than four million mines, the sixth biggest in the world, according to the International Campaign to Ban Landmines (ICBL).
- The ICBL reports that more than 52 million stockpiled antipersonnel mines have been destroyed by 69 countries and the number of countries producing landmines has decreased from more than 50 to 15. Only Russia and Myanmar continue to lay mines, says the ICBL.
- In February 2004, the Bush administration reversed a ten-year policy to eradicate landmines. Under the policy, the United States will keep its 8.8 million "smart" antipersonnel mines, which are fitted with self-destruct mechanisms designed to blow the mines up after a period of time. The U.S. will stop using what it calls "persistent," or



"dumb," antipersonnel and anti-vehicle landmines after 2010, four years later than the previous target date. "The U.S. announcement casts a sinister shadow over our commemoration of the progress made globally since March 1999 to eradicate antipersonnel mines," said Jody Williams, co-laureate, together with the ICBL, of the 1997 Nobel Peace Prize. "But, the Mine Ban Treaty has been extraordinarily successful at alleviating the global landmine problem without U.S. support for many years, and no doubt will continue to do so in the future." ⁶

- As of March 2004, the 1997 treaty banning the use, production, stockpiling, and transfer of antipersonnel landmines has been ratified or acceded to by 141 countries. Another nine countries have signed, but have not yet completed their ratification process, bringing the total number of countries supporting the treaty to 150. Notably, the 44 countries which have not yet joined the MBT include China, Russia, the USA, Israel, India, Pakistan, both Koreas, Iraq and Iran. ⁷
- According to the Landmine Monitor, the governments of India, Pakistan, Nepal and Russia have all acknowledged using antipersonnel mines during 2003; the government forces in Myanmar, Georgia and Iraq continued to lay mines throughout 2003. ⁸
- Afghan women have taken it upon themselves to de-mine their villages, which are littered with cluster bombs. 10-22% of the 1200 cluster bombs which were dropped by the US military in recent years remain unexploded across the country, which in addition to the ten million existing land mines from previous wars create a real element of danger to daily lives of women. ⁹
- As of March 2004, the Landmine Monitor estimated that 78 countries still have between 200 million and 215 million antipersonnel mines stockpiled, many of their governments remaining highly resistant to destroying their stocks. ¹⁰
- Although comprehensive data on landmine/UXO casualties is difficult to obtain, the Landmine Monitor estimates that there are between 15,000 and 20,000 casualties each year, 25 percent of them involving children. ¹¹

Frameworks and Definitions

Definitions:

"Anti-personnel mine" means a mine designed to be exploded by the presence, proximity or contact of a person and that will incapacitate, injure or kill one or more persons. Mines designed to be detonated by the presence, proximity or contact of a vehicle as opposed to a person, that are equipped with anti-handling devices, are not considered anti-personnel mines as a result of being so equipped.

"Mine" means a munition designed to be placed under, on or near the ground or other surface area and to be exploded by the presence, proximity or contact of a person or a vehicle.

"Anti-handling device" means a device intended to protect a mine and which is part of, linked to, attached to or placed under the mine and which activates when an attempt is made to tamper with or otherwise intentionally disturb the mine.



"Transfer" involves, in addition to the physical movement of anti-personnel mines into or from national territory, the transfer of title to and control over the mines, but does not involve the transfer of territory containing emplaced anti-personnel mines.

"Mined area" means an area which is dangerous due to the presence or suspected presence of mines.

"Mine action" refers to all those activities which address the problems faced by people as a result of landmine contamination. Mine action is not so much about mines as about people and their interactions with a mine-contaminated environment: it aims to recreate an environment in which people can live safely, in which economic and social development can occur free from constraints, and in which mine survivors are fully integrated into their societies. [more...](#)

"Victim assistance" refers to all care and rehabilitation activities that aim to meet the immediate and long-term needs of landmine survivors, their families, and mine-affected communities. In accordance with the definition developed by the International Campaign to Ban Landmines (ICBL), the activities and concerns involved can be divided into nine categories as follows: Emergency medical care; Continuing medical care; Physical rehabilitation, prostheses and assistive devices; Psychological and social support; Employment and economic integration; Capacity-building and sustainability; Legislation and public awareness; Access; and, Data collection. Principles and guidelines for victim assistance have already been established by a number of concerned organisations. They include:

"Landmine survivor" refers to any individual who has been directly injured by a landmine explosion and has survived the accident. Landmine Victims refer more generally to those who have been injured or killed by a landmine explosion, and also their families who suffer emotional, social and financial loss and the communities that lose access to land and other resources due to the presence of landmines. This more general definition is intended to recognize that the needs of those affected by the presence of landmines should drive all mine action efforts.

"Active surveillance" are systems to identify the presence and impact of mine/UXO contamination, including accidents. An active surveillance system goes beyond data collection to include reporting and response mechanisms, so that affected communities can inform and get a response from the mine action programme and that such programmes are alert and responsive to public safety needs.

"Community mine action liaison" is a component of mine risk education. Liaison with mine/UXO affected communities to exchange information on the presence and impact of mines and UXO, creating a reporting link with the mine action programme and develop risk-reduction strategies.

"Explosive Remnants of War" is the collective term for any explosive ordnance or other explosive item, object, or part thereof, whether fired or unfired, left over as the result of armed conflict.

"Mine Risk Education" defines educational activities aimed at reducing the risk of injury from mines/UXO by raising awareness and promoting behavioral change.

"Mine risk reduction" refers to those actions which lessen the probability and/or severity of physical injury to people, property or the environment.

"Unexploded Ordnance" refers to explosive ordnance that has been primed, fused, armed, or otherwise prepared to use or used. It may have been fired, dropped, launched or projected yet



remains unexploded either through malfunction of design or for any other reason.
Source: UNICEF Mine Action Strategy 2002-2005.

Frameworks:

[Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction](#) (Mine-Ban Convention) Opened for signature at Ottawa: 3-4 December 1997,
Depositary: Secretary-General of the United Nations, Entered into force on 1 March 1999

[The Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons](#) (CCW) comprises four protocols which restrict the use of certain kinds of weapons that maim and kill indiscriminately, including mines, booby traps and weapons that leave undetectable fragments in the body. Ninety member states have signed the convention. The Convention dates from 1980 and was reviewed in 1996 and 2001. Tools and Checklists

Tools and Checklists:

[Gender Perspectives on Landmines](#), Briefing Note 5, Gender Perspectives on Disarmament, UN Department for Disarmament Affairs and the Office of the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Gender Issues.

[The Landmine Monitor](#), published since 1999, The Landmine Monitor system consists of a Global Reporting Network and an Annual Report, as well as periodic Fact Sheets and independently published Country Reports.

[Mine Action and effective coordination: the United Nations policy - Sectoral policy: The scope of action of mine action centres and organizations in victim assistance](#)

[The UN Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities](#)

- "[A collection of guidelines, best practices and methodologies](#)" published and distributed by the Co-chairs of the Standing Committee on Victim Assistance and Socio-economic Integration of the AP Mine Ban Convention in May 2001;

- [The Joint ICRC-WHO Strategy for the Prevention, Care and Rehabilitation of Victims of Landmines](#)

[Guidelines for UN Country Programmes Preparing the 2004 Mine Action Portfolio \(MAP\)](#)

UN Resources

UN Documents

Report of the Secretary-General to the General Assembly, 16 October 2001.

A/56/448/Add.1 The United Nations Mine Action: a Strategy for 2001-2005. The report states that "We envision a world free of the threat of landmines and unexploded ordnance, where



individuals and communities live in a safe environment conducive to development, and where mine survivors are fully integrated into their societies." It declares that the purpose of mine action is to recreate a safe environment conducive to normal life and development. The mission statement of the Mine Action Strategy is to "work in partnership with others to reduce the threat posed by landmines and unexploded ordnance, increase the understanding of the global mine problem, assist affected nations and coordinate international mine-action efforts." Mine action refers to all activities geared toward addressing the problems faced by populations as a result of landmine or unexploded ordnance contamination. Mine Action encompasses five core components:

- a) mine awareness and risk reduction education;
- b) minefield survey, mapping, marking and clearance;
- c) victim assistance, including rehabilitation and reintegration;
- d) destruction of stockpiled anti-personnel landmines;
- e) advocacy to stigmatize the use of landmines and support a total ban on antipersonnel landmines.

The strategy is built around six goals which are relevant to the core components of mine action.

- 1) Information is produced and made available to all to understand and address mine-action problems.
- 2) Rapid response capability is in place to meet mine action requirements in emergency situations.
- 3) National and local capacities are in place to plan, coordinate and implement mine-action programmes.
- 4) Mine-action operations are implemented in a safe and cost-effective manner.
- 5) Adequate resources for mine action are mobilized and their use is effectively coordinated.
- 6) International instruments that address the mine/unexploded ordnance problem are universalized.

The report concludes that the strategy is ambitious, but attainable.

Security Council Open Debate, 13 November 2003 Mine action is a dynamic factor of peacekeeping operations that contributes to the way the United Nations plans and conducts its operations, the UN's chief peacekeeping official said today. The Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Jean-Marie Guéhenno, told an open briefing of the Security Council in New York that early planning by mine action specialists is essential to any efficient emergency peacekeeping operations. [more...](#)

Mine Action and Effective Coordination: The UN Policy (1998) was submitted by the Secretary-General and welcomed by the 53rd session of the UN General Assembly. The policy states the key principles for UN mine action, and defines its five components: mine risk education; advocacy; survey, mapping and clearance; 'victim assistance'; and stockpile destruction. The Policy divides the responsibility for these activities across 11 UN agencies and departments, and outlines coordination mechanisms for UN and other organisations such as the ICRC, International Campaign to Ban Landmines and NGOs. [more...](#)

Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations mine action: a strategy for 2001-2005 (A/58/260/Add.1) [more...](#)

For more documents, see the comprehensive UN Mine Action Documents data base [more...](#)

Activities of UN Departments, Funds and Agencies

United Nations Mine Action Service was formed in October 1997 and is the response of the United Nations system to the global landmine and unexploded ordnance (UXO) problem. At the



field level, it is responsible for providing mine action assistance in the context of humanitarian emergencies and peacekeeping operations. United Nations mine action includes five core components: Mine clearance; Mine awareness and risk reduction education; Victim assistance; Advocacy in support of a total ban on antipersonnel landmines; and, Stockpile destruction. Activities in these areas are implemented at both the global level, and at the field level, where assistance programmes are now ongoing in thirty affected countries. Since 1993, the role of the United Nations in mine action has been repeatedly reaffirmed and supported by Resolutions of the UN General Assembly, in particular the latest Resolution on Assistance in Mine Action (A/55/542). [more...](#)

While mine action is an area that has evolved rapidly over the last number of years, little documentation, research or analysis exists to understand the gender dimension of landmines. To address this, UNMAS proposes to examine how the presence of landmines and UXO may affect women and girls in different ways that it affects men and boys through a project that will examine how gender perspectives are integrated into the design and implementation of mine action programs. A consultant specializing in gender issues is being recruited to conduct studies in five mine-affected countries amongst the following; Afghanistan; Cambodia; Guatemala or Nicaragua; Mozambique or Angola; and Kosovo. The consultant will work closely with Mine Action Programs and Centres, relevant national authorities and key stakeholders, including local women's organizations. A final report will serve as a framework to integrate gender perspective into Mine Action. It will serve as a guide to UN agencies, national authorities, and organizations that plan, implement and monitor initiatives and mine action activities.

The Department for Disarmament Affairs (DDA) supports the role of the Secretary-General in relation to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction (AP Mine Ban Convention) and the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects (CCWC). It is the repository of all treaty-related information, in particular, information submitted under Article 7 of the AP Mine Ban Convention and under Amended Protocol II of the CCW Convention, with the aim of supporting transparency measures and the facilitation of compliance. DDA also provides conference servicing for the annual meetings of the States Parties to both Conventions. [more...](#)

As the Depository for the Convention, the UN facilitates the gathering and exchange of information about States Parties' compliance. Article 7 reports are submitted to the UN Department for Disarmament Affairs (DDA), the department responsible to the UN Secretary-General for handling his responsibilities under the Convention. Reporting under Article 7 is a legal requirement of every State Party. The United Nations helps States Parties meet their Article 7 obligations and supports transparency measures by:

Making available the forms for reporting under Article 7 adopted at the First Meeting of States Parties in all six languages of the UN: Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish. Forms can be obtained in three different ways: on paper; on diskette; or downloaded from [DDA's website](#).

Serving as repository of all Article 7 reports.

Making available all reports submitted under Article 7 through the [DDA Article 7 database](#)

Providing technical assistance to governments in preparing their Article 7 reports in accordance with the guidelines adopted at the Third Meeting of States Parties (Guide to Reporting under



Article 7 of the Ottawa convention (APLC/MSP.3/2001/INF/1). Such assistance is provided, inter alia, through the [UN mine action country teams](#).

Mine Action is also part of DD&R

Exerpt from Gender Perspectives on Disarmament Demobilization and Reintegration. by Agnès Marcaillou. United Nations Department for Disarmament Affairs. 9 March 2004.

UN Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) emphasized “the need for all parties to ensure that mine clearance and mine awareness programs take into account the special needs of women and girls”;

This commitment is reflected in the UN Mine Action Strategy for 2001-2005, which contains as a guiding principle and an explicit objective to ensure that gender considerations are included in all aspects of UN-supported mine action programming;

Using DDA's experience in the development of its GAP, collaborative efforts between UN DDA, UNMAS/DPKO, and OSAGI resulted in the development of a set of user-friendly, gender guidelines for use in mine action, to be published in 2004;

These guidelines address the following “pillars” of mine action:

Landmine impact surveys : prior to implementing MA activities, and before mine clearance, a landmine Impact survey is conducted to assess the socio-economic impact caused by the actual or perceived presence of landmines and unexploded ordnance (UXO). Gender considerations will be borne in mind when planning and conducting such surveys;

Mine clearance : Once an area has been identified for clearance, the actual clearance will be conducted by either a national or international de-mining team. De-mining teams have traditionally been all-male, and when they are from outside of the project area, they often constitute an important economic force in the community. This situation creates an inherent power imbalance between the de-mining team and the local population, which heightens the risk of sexual exploitation and sexual abuse of the local population;

In countries such as Cambodia, Sri Lanka and Croatia, national, all-women, national de-mining teams exist, and point to the growing opportunities to include women in clearance of landmines and UXO;

Victim assistance : The majority of direct victims of landmines and UXO are boys and men between the ages of 15-30; survivors cared for by women; female survivors are stigmatized; male survivors experience a sense of loss of self worth; male deaths result in greater numbers of women-lead households (a factor of poverty); difference in access to health care;

Mine risk education : Different mine risk education messages need to be formulated for women, men, boys and girls This is due to the different levels and types of exposure to landmines and UXO experienced by each group due to their different roles and responsibilities and the division of labor in communities (risks associated with agricultural tasks versus subsistence).

The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) is the UN focal point on mine awareness education. It also plays a significant role in advocacy and mine victim assistance. In the area of mine risk reduction, UNICEF seeks to ensure, but not necessarily itself implement, mine awareness education wherever needs have been identified. UNICEF is particularly active in school-based and other child-focused components of community mine-awareness programmes,



working in close collaboration with other UN agencies, government partners, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and international and local non-governmental organisations (NGOs). Using the advantages of its widespread, long-term country presence, strong regional and country structures and national partnerships, UNICEF is focussing on responding quickly and flexibly to the urgent needs of communities in high-risk areas. As the lead advocate on behalf of children and women, UNICEF continues to play an active role in supporting a total ban on antipersonnel landmines, including promotion of the universal ratification and implementation of the Antipersonnel Mine Ban Convention through extended outreach initiatives of its headquarter, regional and field office staff, and in close collaboration with UN agencies and partners such as the International Campaign to Ban Landmines (ICBL) and the ICRC. Landmine victim assistance is part of UNICEF's work in the broader areas of disability and child protection. UNICEF advocates for the needs and welfare of those affected or potentially affected by landmines and other explosive remnants of war in a wide range of humanitarian and development forums, publications and media releases with the aim of ensuring effective support and access to services for children and others injured by landmines. UNICEF is currently undertaking, supporting or planning mine awareness education and advocacy activities in 28 countries. [more...](#)

UNICEF Mine Action Strategy 2002-2005:

UN Mine Action Strategy encompasses four core components:

- a) mine awareness and risk reduction education;
- b) minefield survey, mapping, marking and clearance;
- c) victim assistance, including rehabilitation and reintegration;
- d) advocacy to stigmatise the use of landmines and support a total ban on antipersonnel landmines.

Goal 3, Objective 3.3 under Regional and Country Office Mine Action Responsibilities states that "Public and community health, disability and other services are accessible to mine survivors, especially women and children." Under this goal the Country Programme, Regional Office, and Headquarters' responsibility is to "raise awareness of the rights of the disabled and link this work to CRC and CEDAW."

Source: UNICEF Mine Action Strategy 2002-2005.

United Nations Development Programme: Within the UN system, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) is responsible for addressing the socio-economic consequences of landmines and UXO, and for supporting national and local capacity building initiatives to eliminate the long-term consequences of the problem. UNDP is primarily charged with assisting mine-affected countries to develop sustainable mine action programmes. To do so, it helps national and local authorities to develop the skills required to plan, implement and support mine action programmes, and to mobilise the necessary resources. Over the past few years, UNDP's programmes in mine action have increased due to widespread awareness of the value and importance of capacity-building strategies for dealing with the long-term consequences of landmines and UXO. UNDP is currently supporting mine action in Angola, Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cambodia, Chad, Croatia, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Guinea-Bissau, Laos, Lebanon, Mozambique, Somalia, Thailand and Yemen. The United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) acts as a general service provider for many of these programmes, and the work is coordinated by the United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS) to ensure an integrated UN response. [more..](#)

The World Health Organisation (WHO) response to antipersonnel landmines dates back to December 1997. Following the Signing of the Antipersonnel Mine Ban Convention, WHO acted in conjunction with the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) to develop a public health strategy and key principles for victim assistance. A WHO resolution (EB 101.R23) for concerted public health action on antipersonnel mines was approved by the Executive Board at its 101st



session and later endorsed at the Fifty-first World Health Assembly (WHA 51.8) in May 1998. In addition, the need to carry out an integrated, non-discriminatory approach to victim assistance was outlined in the "Joint ICRC-WHO Strategy for the Prevention, Care and Rehabilitation of Victims of Landmines." These documents provide a framework to guide policymakers in designing comprehensive national plans of action that incorporate victims of all types of trauma and identifies priorities. States Parties of the Antipersonnel Mine Ban Convention endorsed a comprehensive framework for victim assistance at the First Meeting of States Parties held in Maputo, Mozambique. The Maputo Declaration states the need to integrate assistance for landmine victims, their families and communities, into broader public health and socio-economic strategies. The support of the donor community has made it possible to operationalise victim assistance in a number of different national contexts with the ongoing support of non-governmental organisations and other collaborating partners. WHO has several landmine partners, including the ICRC, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the International Campaign to Ban Landmines (ICBL), Emergency-Life Support for Civilian War Victims, Canadian Network for International Surgery, and Handicap International. It also works with a number of collaborating centres in nations across the globe as part of WHO country-based victim assistance. [more...](#)

The United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) has been designated as a principal provider of mine action services within the United Nations system. In March 1998, UNOPS established a dedicated Mine Action Unit (MAU) with specific project management, technical and legal expertise. This unique combination of skills has enabled UNOPS to provide a focused capacity to support all aspects of the execution of mine action programmes. The MAU enables UNOPS to maximize its role as a service provider by implementing integrated mine action and capacity building programmes, principally on behalf of the United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and the United Nations Office of the Iraq Programme (UNOIP). The MAU plays a critical role in serving as a bridge from emergency initiatives to development projects. [more...](#)

International Labor Organization: The ILO Focus Programme on Crisis Response and Reconstruction (IFP/Crisis) supports and assists national governments and agencies, local NGOs and organization of persons with disabilities in the planning and implementation of general demobilization and reintegration programmes, the promotion of national training policy, and the establishment of local and national associations of disabled ex-combatants, war veterans, landmine survivors, other persons with disabilities and victims of conflict.

The Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining supports Humanitarian Mine Action through operational assistance, research, and support to the implementation of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention. It is an independent Foundation supported by 18 governments. [more...](#)

The Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) ReliefWeb: ReliefWeb serves as a valuable source for the latest news and updates concerning landmines and mine clearance activities. [more...](#)

The Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) is responsible for sharing all relevant information with UNMAS and other partners regarding the humanitarian implications for landmines. It will work to ensure that humanitarian needs are met as an integral component of the overall humanitarian endeavor as well as advocate for a global ban on antipersonnel landmines and victim assistance.

Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) will make certain that the needs of refugees and other populations of concern to UNHCR are met. Particularly,



UNHCR will work with UNICEF to develop appropriate mine awareness programmes in refugee camps and with WFP for the safe delivery of food.

The World Food Programme (WFP) is involved in mine action in relation to its mandate to provide food assistance. WFP's main areas of concern are 1) the clearance of access roads for the speedy and cost-effective delivery of food assistance 2) the clearance of land required for the safe return of displaced populations 3) the clearance of crop land for agricultural use in order to promote sustainable levels of local food production.

The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) is involved in mine clearance in relation to its humanitarian agriculture relief activities in countries affected by complex emergencies. The definition for the selection of priority sites requiring mine clearance is a prerequisite to the formulation of humanitarian relief/short term rehabilitation interventions.

Women and landmines - content in the Independent Experts' Assessment of the Impact of Armed Conflict on Women and Women's Role in Peace-building

The hope is to return home, and repatriation is the preferred option of host countries. But that may not be possible. Violence goes on for years in some cases and landmines may make agriculture nearly impossible.

Civilian casualties from injuries and wounds can be very high during guerrilla warfare and when small arms and landmines are used. Women and children are often the most exposed to these dangers, especially if they are primarily responsible for gathering fuel or water. Most of the civilian casualties of the 23-year war in Afghanistan have been a direct result of ballistic or landmine injuries. In 1995, long before the current fighting, Afghanistan had the highest population-based rates of landmine injuries and the highest mortality, even in comparison with such heavily mined countries as Bosnia, Cambodia and Mozambique. Although the numbers are not documented, women are much less likely than children and men to have access both to treatment and to rehabilitation and prostheses. In Angola women and girls who have lost limbs from mine injuries have faced social isolation and economic loss.

Recommendations on Women and landmines

[The Beijing Platform for Action](#) (1995) recognizes that women and children are particularly affected by the indiscriminate use of anti-personnel landmines. It urges the ratification of international conventions that would prohibit landmines. Recommended actions to be taken by Governments include: Undertake to promote assistance in mine clearance, notably by facilitating, in respect of the means of mine-clearing, the exchange of information, the transfer of technology and the promotion of scientific research. Undertake to encourage further international efforts to seek solutions to the problems caused by anti-personnel landmines, with a view to their eventual elimination, recognizing that States can move most effectively towards this goal as viable and humane alternatives are developed. (Para 143).

[The Commission on the Status of Women](#) (1998): Agreed Conclusions on the Critical Areas of Concern of the Beijing Platform for Action. Actions to be taken by Governments include: In order to alleviate the suffering of women and children caused by landmines, work towards the objective of eliminating anti-personnel landmines; and in this regard take due note of the conclusion of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-personnel



Mines and on Their Destruction and its implementation by those States that become parties to it; Provide landmine awareness campaigns or classes in close cooperation with communities and community leaders formally and informally, making them accessible to women in afflicted areas, and provide resources and assistance for landmine clearance and share technology and information so that local populations can engage effectively in the safe clearance of landmines. Support programmes for the rehabilitation and social integration of women victims of anti-personnel landmines, and demining and mine awareness activities.

¹ International Campaign to Ban Landmines. "Landmine Monitor." 2003 <http://www.icbl.org/lm/2003/intro/survivor.html>

² International Campaign to Ban Landmines. "Landmine Monitor." 2003 <http://www.icbl.org/lm/2003/intro/survivor.html>

³ International Labour Organization. "Gender Guidelines for Employment and Skills Training in Conflict Affected Countries. 1998 <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/employment/recon/crisis/papers/gender.htm>

⁴ US State Department. "Facts about the Political and Security Situation of Women in Afghanistan. 9 May 2002 <http://usinfo.state.gov/topical/pol/terror/02050923.htm>

⁵ Reuters Alert Net. "Photo Gallery: Cambodian Women Clear Mines. 19 December 2003 <http://www.alertnet.org/thenews/photogallery/KHmag.htm>

⁶ International Campaign to Ban Landmines Homepage <http://www.icbl.org/>

⁷ IRIN News. "GLOBAL: The Long Road to a Mine Free World." 2 March 2004 <http://www.irinnews.org/report.asp?ReportID=39773&SelectRegion=Global&SelectCountry=GLOBAL>

⁸ IRIN News. "GLOBAL: The Long Road to a Mine Free World." 2 March 2004 <http://www.irinnews.org/report.asp?ReportID=39773&SelectRegion=Global&SelectCountry=GLOBAL>

⁹ Kolhatkar, Sonali. "Afghan Women Continue to Fend for Themselves." *Foreign Policy in Focus*. March 2004 <http://www.fpif.org/papers/2004afghanwom.html>

¹⁰ IRIN News. "GLOBAL: The Long Road to a Mine Free World." 2 March 2004 <http://www.irinnews.org/report.asp?ReportID=39773&SelectRegion=Global&SelectCountry=GLOBAL>

¹¹ IRIN News. "GLOBAL: The Long Road to a Mine Free World." 2 March 2004 <http://www.irinnews.org/report.asp?ReportID=39773&SelectRegion=Global&SelectCountry=GLOBAL>

