

Standing Committee on Victim Assistance and Socio-Economic Reintegration
Questionnaire Response: Australia

Since the First Review Conference (December 2004), has Australia provided assistance from specialised mine action or post-conflict funds and to or through organisations whose efforts are intended to specifically target landmine survivors and other war wounded with a view to assisting any of the 24 States Parties to the Convention which have reported the responsibility for significant numbers of mine victims?

Survivor assistance is a key objective of Australia's mine action strategy, launched in May 2006. Supported by a 5-year A\$75 million pledge, Australia has increased its support for survivor assistance, aiming to reduce the suffering of survivors and support their socio-economic rehabilitation. The strategy prioritises integrated approaches that include mainstreaming of survivor assistance into existing services, or those being developed as part of national development and poverty reduction strategies.

In the case of Cambodia, one of the 24 states parties with a significant number of mine victims, Australia has committed A\$1.2 million in 2007 to a Landmine Victim Assistance Program, which consists of:

- Landmine Victim Assistance Fund (LVAFF) providing small grants to NGOs. In 2007 the LVAFF has committed funding of A\$650,000 to 10 NGOs to provide livelihood training, physical rehabilitation, provision of prostheses and orthoses, health and nutrition to landmine victims and other people with disabilities in mine affected communities; self-esteem and confidence building via self-help groups, participation in sport and loans for small business; and integration of children with disabilities into mainstream schools and the community
- Landmine/UXO risk reduction and education in partnership with Cambodian Red Cross
- Support for the Cambodian Mine Victim Information System (CMVIS)
- Strengthening government capacity to develop a National Strategy for Landmine Victim Assistance.

In 2006 Australia provided A\$105,000 to support the Victim Assistance Expert position within the Implementation Support Unit with the GICHD. The expert provides valuable advice and assistance to the 24 states parties concerned to develop victim assistance plans and objectives.

Australia has supported the 2006 edition of the *Landmine Victim Assistance: Overview of the Situation in 24 States Parties*, which aims to measure progress in fulfilling priorities identified in the Nairobi Action Plan. This third enhanced edition of the report updates States' progress on ensuring victim assistance objectives are measurable and achievable, and highlights areas for continued improvement. We commend it to both affected states and donors as a practical tool for informing policy and programming decision-making.

Other assistance includes:

- Cambodia – ICRC Mine Action 2006 Appeal: A\$318,000
- Afghanistan – Austcare project aiming to integrate people with disabilities into the broader community by providing access to vocational training skills: A\$150,000 in 2006
- Afghanistan - ICRC Mine Action 2006 Appeal: A\$1million
- Angola – UNICEF Mine Risk Education & Victim Assistance – research to identify the needs of mine victims and children affected by landmines and ERW, and advocacy to promote the rights of mine victims, with a special focus on child victims: A\$1million in 2007.

With respect to bilateral cooperation between Australia and the 24 States Parties in question, provide examples or case studies of support which may ultimately advance the well being of landmine survivors.

Victim assistance is an integral part of Australia's bilateral mine action and development program in Cambodia. The following activities and projects have contributed to advance the physical, social and economic well being of landmine survivors.

- Funding for CMVIS data collection of landmine casualties in Cambodia, including disaggregation of data on a monthly and annual basis for planning and policy purposes
- Funding in partnership with UNICEF for the Physical Rehabilitation Sector Evaluation Report released in October 2006 with ensuing recommendations for the sector.
- Direct funding via the Landmine Victim Assistance Fund to NGOs to conduct programs in physical rehabilitation, economic reintegration, and psychological support and social reintegration
- AusAID membership of the Landmine Victim Assistance Steering Committee with funding committed through the Landmine Victim Assistance Program to strengthen government capacity to develop a National Strategic Plan for landmine survivors
- Funding commitment to Cambodian Red Cross to further strengthen mine risk education programs and victim assistance activities.

What is the policy of Australia's development agency as it concerns disability and development programming?

While Australia does not have a specific policy on disability for its development cooperation program, Australia recognises the merits of addressing disability in development programs. Under AusAID's health policy released in August 2006, assistance for disability will be considered in bilateral country programs if it is prioritised by individual partner governments. Disability assistance has already been integrated into the Australian aid program through programs such as humanitarian assistance (including mine action), international health programs and volunteer schemes.