



An Operational Review of the Role of Mine Action in Assistance to Mine and Unexploded Ordnance Victims

Presentation to the Standing Committee Meeting

*Geneva
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1.0 Background

The United Nations (UN) has defined mine action as containing five distinct pillars: Mine Clearance, Mine and UXO Awareness, Mine Ban Advocacy, Mine Stockpile Destruction, and Mine and UXO Victim Assistance. Yet, of the five pillars, victim assistance has not received the same attention as the others, and mine action practitioners have often been unclear as to its operational role within mine action. Currently, there are few mine action organisations that have a victim assistance component and that is equally true of the co-ordinating entities, such as the national or UN mine action centres.

Therefore GICHD believed the time was ripe for field-level research that would provide straightforward guidance to mine action practitioners vis-à-vis their role in promoting appropriate victim assistance activities, as part of mine action operations.

2.0 Definition

The primary objective of the GICHD VA Study is to bridge the gap between what mine action practitioners believe is their mandate and the actions carried out at field level. The Study does not pre-suppose greater or lesser active involvement on the part of mine action practitioners, but rather hopes to provide concrete recommendations as to how that involvement might be structured.

3.0 Beneficiaries

The primary beneficiaries of the study will be mine action professionals in general and mine action centres in particular, helping them to develop a clearer understanding of the relationship between victim assistance activities and mine action and consequently to plan with more certainty.

4.0 Study Methodology

Case studies in four countries will provide the basis of analysis. Cambodia, Eritrea/Ethiopia, Kosovo, and Nicaragua were chosen as they reflect a variety of different socio-economic, geographical and situational experiences as well as different mine action.

Last Friday here in Geneva a User Focus Group (UFG), made up of field-based victim assistance expertise, met to review the initial results. The UFG, provided comments regarding accuracy, the need for additional research, general recommendations of the Study and follow-up activities. The draft is currently under review based on this first round of commentary.

In addition to the UFG a Steering Group has also been created. The SG is composed of heads of leading organisations within the field of mine action. Aside from finalising the overall terms of reference for the Study, the SG will receive successive drafts and have final review of the Study.

5.0 Outputs

The principal output of the project will be a detailed study report, hopefully by the Third Meeting of State Parties.