

*Victim Assistance Experts parallel meetings, 28 November 2018*

Dear Chairmen, dear colleagues and friends!

First of all, I would like to thank and congratulate ISU, GICHD and the Committee on Victim Assistance for resuming of organizing parallel meetings of the Victim Assistance Experts!

This kind of event is real capacity building for national Victim Assistance experts and from another side, it is one of the windows giving us opportunity to share experiences, thoughts, doubts and together finding the best ways to provide Victim Assistance in our countries. VA experts are professionals, who are on everyday basis meeting with landmine survivors and families of victims, they can have “burnout”, therefore experts need a parallel programme with such a special spirit, which can be considered as part of their “recharging”.

Victim Assistance Programme in Tajikistan is closely cooperating with the structures of the Ministry of Health and Social Protection of population - Division of social protection, Emergency Situations department and medical services, local social protection structures in the mine-affected districts and organizations of landmine survivors and other persons with disabilities and building national capacities in the field of Victim Assistance.

TNMAC during 2017-2018, with the support of US DOS and UNDP and willingness of the Government of Tajikistan has undertaken the following Victim Assistance related activities to fulfil the Action 15 of the Maputo Action Plan's:

Adopted following legal documents in which we have specific articles regarding capacity building of local specialists:

- The multi-sectoral National Programme on Rehabilitation of People with Disabilities 2017-2020 that was adopted in late 2016 (resolution number 455 dated 28 October 2016) and that is in line with the CRPD principles represents a shift away from a charity approach to a human rights-based approach.
- National Strategy of the Republic of Tajikistan in humanitarian Mine Action for 2017-2020 adopted in 2017.
- Tajikistan Mine Action Programme Gender and Diversity Mainstreaming Strategy for 2018-2022
- Taj accessibility standards
- Tajikistan signed UNCRPD on 22 March 2018.
- Developed of the working plan on Tajikistan joining UN CRPD

For your information, the National Development Strategy 2016-2030 (NDS) and the Mid-Term Development Strategy for 2016-2020 (MTDS) endorsed by the Government in 2016 take due consideration of the issues and rights of persons with disabilities.

Tajikistan Victim Assistance Programme have published books and guidelines for social workers, medical staff and psychologists.

Medical staff (Surgeons and trauma doctors) in the Central District Hospitals are available in all mine - affected districts. However, there is a need to organize a refresh training on “War Trauma and Amputation Technics” for trauma doctors from mine-affected districts.

In 2018, 21 doctors from mine-affected districts trained on psycho-social support in crisis situations in the first quarter continue provision of the first psychological aid to landmine survivors and PWDs.

In the past, we organized study tours for the rehabilitation experts to Kazakstan and Afghanistan.

Training for landmine survivors on “Peer to Peer support” was organized in cooperation with Afghanistan colleagues in 2012. In 2018, capacity building for 40 paralegals out of people with disabilities from 8 piloting districts was organized in the framework of the UNDP project “Rule of Law and Access to Justice” and UNPRPD funded project.

**Study visit** to Helsinki for the Working Group on CRPD on implementation of UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and accessible environment was organized in 2018.

**Capacity building for architects and designers:** Training on “Tajikistan standards for accessibility to buildings and constructions for PWDs” for more than 120 local architects and designers from Dushanbe and regions - greatly contributed to removing barriers, raising awareness on disability, increased public acceptance and understanding of disabilities.

**Coordination:** in 2018, Tajikistan provided organized five Technical Working Group (TWG) meetings on Victim Assistance were conducted for 191 participants, namely, 96 staff of districts departments of social protection, 58 volunteers of the Tajikistan Red Crescent Society, and 37 landmine/ERW victims (47 women and 144 men) got familiar with the Integrated approach to VA.

**Regarding physical rehabilitation:** Movability Foundation is providing capacity building support to P/O technicians in the National Orthopedic Center. In the result of our cooperation with INGO “Polus Center”, Expert on Prosthetics and Orthotics provided on-the-job capacity building training for P/O technicians in the SUEPOP in February 2018. Recently – the list of most important assistive devices was compiled by all disability implementing partners working in the disability sector.

**We ready to share our experience with colleagues from other countries.** For example, this year we had visitors – national VA/MRE experts from Armenian Mine Action Centre. In 2018, we also shared our experience with the participants of the Senior Managers’ Course in Mine Action in Dushanbe about Local Context of Victim Assistance Programme.

Dear Colleagues, **capacity building is one of the crucial and the most important components** that requires special and constant attention. Taking into account that local contexts in our countries are similar therefore, I would like to propose implement capacity building through enhancing of regional cooperation, because it is the most cost-effective way.

I would like also to share with you **our challenges in implementing Victim Assistance:** first of all it is lack of funding for Victim Assistance activities. All other challenges are consequences from this challenge. For example, retaining of medical and rehabilitation staff, lack of budget for capacity building and low salaries of the rehabilitation experts.

With regards to the accessibility – availability of services in the remote mine-affected districts and its physical accessibility is gradually improving. Development of the National Program “Accessible environment for people with disabilities” is contributing to the improving situation with accessibility to the buildings and constructions in Tajikistan.

It would be reasonable, if in Tajikistan we introduce International Classification of disability and it would be easy if the reason “landmine explosion” will be indicated as a reason of disability.

Thank you for your attention!