

Thanks Chair,

## **Sudan Report on Victim Assistance**

This Report will focus mostly on the achievements and strategies adopted during the course of the past months, from April to October 2007.

First and foremost, I would like to mention that VA in Sudan addresses the needs of mine/ERW victims and PWDs in general, without discrimination in terms of gender, age, sex and creed.

We believe that Victim Assistance represents a set of concrete activities and strategies to improve the quality of life of mine/ERW victims and PWDs in the country.

From March to November 2007, a team composed of national authorities and partners including the United Nations Mine Action Office developed the Victim Assistance National Strategic Framework and the Victim Assistance National Work Plan.

Both documents represent the culmination of a broad-based consultative process at the national level, between Government bodies, UN agencies, NGOs, mine/ERW victims and other organizations.

The development of the two documents placed a great emphasis on the direct involvement of key ministries and prioritized consultation with authorities and partners. The objectives of the strategic framework and work plan were identified to target directly the needs identified on the ground.

Two National VA workshops and several meetings and brainstorming sessions were organized to prepare, present and discuss the draft of the documents. All initiatives were attended by a large forum which actively interacted and contributed towards the finalization of the VA plan in Sudan.

In this regards, I would like to emphasize that the process included the participation of authorities from both the North and South of the country. Therefore, both the Strategic Framework and the Work Plan take into consideration the different needs and contexts existing in Sudan.

The main goals described by the Strategic Framework have been elaborated further into the Work Plan, which also includes targets and indicators. All objectives and targets have been designed to be achievable, measurable, time-bound and to be incorporated into the work and

financial plans of the relevant ministries and commissions.

There are several VA-related projects currently ongoing in Sudan, with all projects implemented in collaboration with Government authorities at central, state and local levels.

As a result of a call for proposals organized in the past months, a total of 11 VA-related grants were selected and funded. All projects target mine/ERW victims and PWDs and are implemented by local NGOs and CBOs. The grants were awarded under the umbrella of the Human Security Trust Fund Program funded by the Japanese Government. Sudan would like to take this opportunity to officially thank the Japanese Government for their continuous support.

As already reported in other forums, all mine/ERW victims are entitled to receive prosthetic services free of charge. The Government of Sudan allocated a total of 380,000 USD\$ for the procurement of components and materials for the production of prostheses, orthotics and mobility aids.

ICRC is continuing to provide its precious support to mine/ERW and PWDs through the collaboration with NAPO, the training of technicians in different specialties of physical rehabilitation and the construction of a large orthopedic centre in Juba. I would like to take this opportunity to thank ICRC for the support they are giving.

A VA needs assessment was carried out in the south of Sudan (areas of Wau and Juba) which identified over 1,000 Mine/ERW victims. According to the IMSMA database, the total number of mine/ERW victims in Sudan is 4,035. However, we believe this number to be higher considering that several areas have not been thoroughly surveyed due to security reasons.

In Sudan, Victim Assistance is well coordinated. Two VA working groups (based in Khartoum and Juba) have been established. The working groups meet monthly.

The VA working group in Khartoum is chaired by the *National Mine Action Centre* (VA department) and co-chaired by the *Ministry of Social Welfare, Woman and Child*, while the VA working Group in Juba is chaired by the *Ministry of Religious, Gender and Social Welfare* and co-chaired by the *Ministry of Health*.

Members of the working groups have also undertaken important initiatives to build their capacity in terms of VA and disability-related issues and project design and management. This was carried out through workshops and orientations organized by the chairs and members of the working groups.

Despite the important achievements obtained in the past months, Sudan needs to work very hard to address the needs of mine/ERW victims and PWDs.

The VA National plan which has now been adopted by the Government and will guide the VA interventions in the country needs now to be followed and implemented.

This can be done only by streamlining the VA plans' objectives into the government work and financial plans, through well-coordinated interventions and continuous support from partners and donors.

To conclude I would like to mention that the Ottawa Convention has greatly contributed in the peace process in Sudan as the former fighting

parties, through Mine Action activities, are now working together for the reconstruction of the Country and to support PWDs and mine/UXO victims in Sudan.

Thank you very much for your kind attention.