

**PRELIMINARY OBSERVATIONS  
STATUS OF IMPLEMENTATION – IRAQ**

**COMMITTEE ON VICTIM ASSISTANCE**  
(Algeria, Ecuador, Sweden and Thailand)  
Intersessional Meetings  
22-24 June 2021

1. The Committee welcomes the submission by Iraq of updated information on its victim assistance activities. Based on the information provided, the Committee presents the following preliminary observations.

**Mine casualties**

2. The Committee observed that Iraq reported a total of 38 casualties in 2020 of which 21 persons were killed and 17 persons were injured, which will be added to the total of 34,043 casualties recorded by the Directorate of Mine Action (DMA).
3. The Committee appreciates the efforts made by Iraq in disaggregating the casualty data by gender and age, and it would welcome additional information on impairments/disabilities of the victims, prior to their accidents.

**VICTIM ASSISTANCE ACTIONS:**

**Strengthen partnerships and integrate victim assistance into broader national policies, plans and legal frameworks and designation of a government entity to oversee the integration (Action #33 and also Actions #1 and #6)**

4. The Committee observed that Iraq reported that the Commission of Persons with Disabilities and Special Needs (CPWDSN), which is responsible for the disability program in Iraq, is the government entity that ensure the integration of victim assistance into broader programmes and legal frameworks. Iraq reported that the Commission memberships included representatives of mine/ERW survivors and that the Law 38 for the Care of Persons with Disabilities and Special Needs ensures the rights of all persons with disabilities including mine survivors.

**Develop and implement measurable, realistic and time-bound national action plan (Action #33 and also Action #2)**

5. The Committee would welcome information on status or development and implementation of the victim assistance action plan or the inclusion of victim assistance commitments into other existing national action plans, such as disability plans.

**Removing barriers including physical, social, cultural, political, attitudinal and communication barriers to access such services (Action #33)**

6. The Committee would welcome Iraq reporting on measures in place and progress made to remove any barriers that may hinder social and economic inclusion and participation of mine victims in Iraq.

**Applying multi-sectoral efforts to ensure that the needs and rights of mine victims are effectively addressed in line with the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (Action #34)**

7. The Committee observed that Iraq reported that in accordance with the Law 38 which ensures the rights of mine survivors, and their inclusion in relevant policies and legal frameworks related to disability, health, education, employment and development, various ministries have adapted their policies and progress to meet the needs of persons with disabilities, such as the followings:
- the Ministry of Transport allocated special seats in public transport buses and offers discount for travel ticket for Iraqi Airways and Trains;
  - the Ministry of Youth and Sports established a special stadium for athletes with disabilities to increase their participation in local and international sports, in addition to supporting the activities carried out by the Paralympic Committee;
  - the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs allocated monthly salary (pension) for persons with disabilities and offers loans for those who are seeking to invest; and
  - the Ministry of Trade facilitates the ownership of adapted cars with reduced prices.

**Establish or strengthen of a centralised database / national information management system (Action #35 and also Action #9)**

8. The Committee observed that Iraq reported that the DMA has been working with the Ministry of Health and Environment and Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs represented by the CPWDSN to develop a unified database that brings together information on persons with disabilities and mine victims.
9. The Committee would welcome further information on progress made in creating the centralised database.

**Access to first aid and ongoing emergency medical care (Action #36)**

10. The Committee observed that Iraq reported that there are no first aid services available in mine affected communities, casualties are transported to hospitals by relatives or any available means or medical support provided by organisations. The report adds that medical care is provided by public hospitals and upon discharge for hospital, survivors are referred to rehabilitation centres as necessary.
11. The Committee would welcome further information on existing efforts to provide effective and efficient first aid to casualties in mine-affected communities, as well as other medical emergency services.

**Developing national referral mechanism (Action #37)**

12. The Committee observed that Iraq reported that the community rehabilitation unit in each of the disabled rehabilitation centres located in all governorates is not activated due various obstacles including financial constraints and security situation in Iraq. Ira reported that this unit needs significant financial allocations in terms of logistical support, the allocation of vehicles and specialized cadres, including physicians, researchers, processors, and the provision of especially for logistic preparations.
13. The Committee would welcome further information on the efforts to establish a national referral mechanism to facilitate access to services for mine victims, including by creating and disseminating a comprehensive directory of services.

**Access to rehabilitation services including physiotherapy, assistive devices and occupational therapy (Action #38)**

10. The Committee recalls that in 2020 Iraq reported on the availability of 23 rehabilitation centres throughout the country providing different types of rehabilitation services and that the CPWDSN monitors the provision of such services and the implementation of laws related to protection of the rights of persons with disabilities including mine survivors.
11. Like in the previous year, the Committee would welcome information on whether the rehabilitation centres also provide occupational therapy in accordance with action 38's commitments.

**Access to psychological and psychosocial services including peer-to-peer support (Action #38)**

12. The Committee would welcome information on availability or access to psychological and psychosocial services including information on the provision of peer to peer support in meeting the psychological needs of mine victims in Iraq.

**Access to social and economic inclusion services, including in rural and remote areas (Action #39)**

13. The Committee observed that Iraq reported on the status of mechanisms in place to meet social and economic needs of mine victims for the past two years.
14. The Committee would welcome further information on progress made to ensure access to social and economic services in 2020 including information on progress achieved to include the needs of mine victims in national Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of Iraq.

**Taking measure for safety and protection of mine survivors in situations of risks and emergencies (Action #40)**

15. The Committee observed that Iraq reported that in accordance with Law 38, specific measures have been taken by various national ministries to ensure the safety and protection of mine survivors.
16. The Committee would welcome information on the specific measures undertaken by Iraq to ensure the safety and protection of mine survivors in situations of risks and humanitarian emergencies, including during health crisis such as the COVID -19 pandemic.

**Strengthening inclusion and participation of mine victims and their representative organisations in all matters that affect them (Action #41 and also Action #4)**

17. The Committee observed that Iraq reported that mine victims and their organisations' representatives participate in relevant policies and programmes through their membership with the CPWDSN.

**CROSS - CUTTING ACTIONS:**

**Demonstrate high levels of national ownership, including [...] by making financial and other commitments to implementation (Action #1)**

18. The Committee observed that Iraq reported on commitments by the government to fulfil Iraq's obligations under the Convention, and the Committee would welcome information on financial commitments Iraq has made to address the needs of mine victims.

**Ensure that the different needs and perspectives of women, girls, boys and men are considered (Action #3)**

19. The Committee observed that Iraq reported that despite disruptions caused by COVID-19 pandemic, activities such as meetings, workshops and an assessment were carried out in relation to gender and diversity aspects of the mine action programme in the country.
20. The Committee would welcome further information on policies or measures that address the different needs and perspectives of mine victims including women, girls, boys and men in Iraq.

**Challenges in implementation of Victim Assistance Commitments (Action #8)**

21. The Committee observed that Iraq reported that first aid is not available in mine affected/contaminated communities and that the community rehabilitation unit across governorates has not been activated due to lack of financial constraints and conflict situations.
22. The Committee would welcome information on how the international community could be of further support to Iraq's efforts in fulfilling its victim assistance commitments under the Convention and the OAP.