



Department of Disability Affairs





Presentation outline

- ▶ VICTIM ASSISTANCE UPDATE (ZIMBABWE)



INTRODUCTION



- Zimbabwe as a State Party to the Convention on the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban implements the Victim Assistance through the Ministry of Public Service, Labour and Social Welfare. The Disability Affairs Department in the Ministry of Public Service, Labour and Social Welfare coordinates all programmes related to the welfare and rights of persons with disabilities, including landmine survivors. This is in fulfilment of the requirement of Action #33 of the Oslo Action Plan which calls for State Parties to ensure that a relevant government entity oversees the integration of Victim Assistance into broader national policies, plans and legal frameworks.

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- Following the launch of the National Disability Policy in 2021, by his Excellency the President of the Republic of Zimbabwe, the country has taken strides in the implementation of Victim Assistance. Before, land mine survivors were not particularized, they were assisted like any other persons with disabilities, however Zimbabwe has begun to pay particular attention to land mine survivors. To note is the establishment of the National Technical Committee on the implementation of the National Disability Policy which also involve the implementation of Victim Assistance. The technical Committee was established and launched in July 2022 by the then Minister of Public Service, Labour and Social Welfare, Honorable Professor Paul Mavima. The committee comprises of all Government Ministries and representatives from organisations of persons with disabilities.



ACTION 34

- The National Technical Committee on the implementation of the National Disability Policy also looks into victim assistance. As such, the Ministry has managed to have disability focal persons in every Ministry and they also look on gender issues. This means that every sector, health, education, employment etc, is represented, this fulfils the requirements of Action 34.



ACTION 35

- This is work in progress, the needs assessment programme also seeks to establish a database of landmine survivors and their families. The 3 districts done by Voluntary organisation have had landmine survivors profiled (Buhera, Mt Darwin and Nyamapanda)



ACTION 36

- Medical health care facilities are still difficult to access but we would like to give gratitude to partners doing mine clearance as they have first aid kits and ambulances that are assisting victims in areas they are operating in.



ACTION 37

- It is still work in progress and hopefully the directorate will be in place soon given that there is a technical committee established to deliberate on such issues



ACTION 38

- This is being done through the needs assessment programmes where services are being brought to land mine survivors even in rural areas. The Ministry of Public Service Labour and Social Welfare in partnership with Ministry of Information, Publicity and Broadcasting services did a documentary on the lived experiences of land mine victims in Mudzi District, Mashonaland East Province. This then provides room for needs-based interventions.



ACTION 39

- Land mine survivors are being included in all the social protection programmes. To note is the case of Mudzi where 8 members were registered for empowerment initiatives. Most of them highlighted the need for support to start piggery projects and they have been registered with the Department of Disability Affairs



ACTION 40

- The Civil Protection Unit in Zimbabwe which coordinated the implementation of disaster risk preparedness and plans also prioritise vulnerable groups like the elderly, children and persons with disabilities. The Ministry is also represented in all the committee's from District to National level.

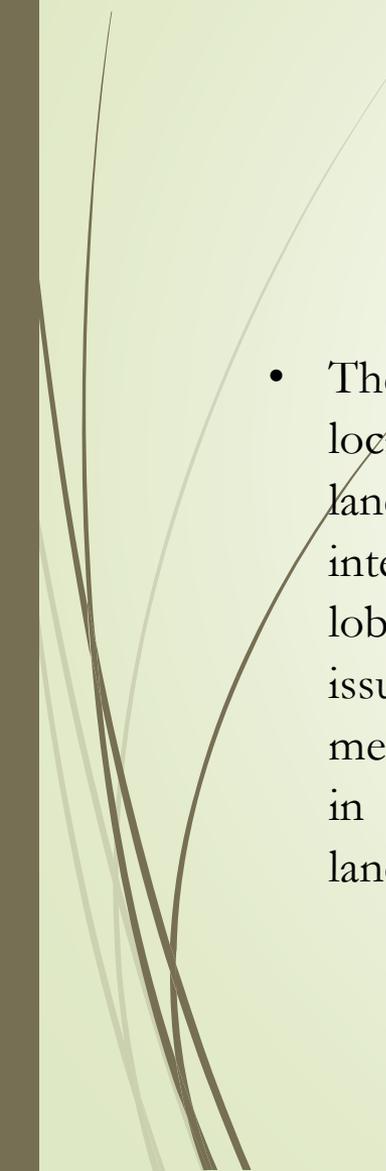


ACTION 41

- Zimbabwe has registered and accredited an organisation (Mine victims Assistance of Zimbabwe) on Victim Assistance in March 2023. This will ensure effective participation of land mine survivors since the organisation was formed by land mine victims



CHALLENGES



- The absence of a biometric database disaggregated by age, gender and location has compromised quality of service provision specific to landmine victims. It is impossible to come up with needs-based interventions where there is no data. However, Zimbabwe will continue to lobby for resources to conduct a disability survey which will address the issues of statistics as landmine survivors are also included. In the meantime, scaling up of the needs assessment activities will go a long way in providing statistics and information on the living conditions of landmine survivors.



Challenges...cont

- Location of medical facilities remains a hindrance in responding to emergencies and access to medical services particularly for landmine victims. Most landmine infested areas are located in hard-to-reach remote areas of the country. However, Zimbabwe Mine Action (ZIMAC) and other development partners doing mine clearance are providing transport support to ferry landmine survivors to nearby medical facilities in areas they are working on.
- Landmine survivors need assistive devices and this is an additional challenge due to lack of funds.



CONCLUSION

The information from needs assessment activities will contribute to appropriate needs-based interventions which will then allow the effective implementation of victim assistance. Through the implementation of the National Disability Policy, Zimbabwe remains committed to providing appropriate, affordable and accessible services to mine survivors and their families on an equal basis with others. It is also anticipated that the needs assessment exercise will be expanded to cover all the affected areas in Zimbabwe. The exercise will assist in coming up with national statistics on land mine victims and survivors across the whole nation and their specific needs.

Thank you

