

PRELIMINARY OBSERVATION

SOUTH SUDAN

STATUS OF IMPLEMENTATION – VICTIM ASSISTANCE

COMMITTEE ON VICTIM ASSISTANCE

(Italy, Slovenia, Uganda (Chair) and Zambia)

Intersessional Meetings

19-21 June 2023

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

Mine casualties

3. South Sudan reported 40 casualties in 2022 including 11 killed and 29 injured, higher than the 38 casualties reported in 2021. South Sudan reported a total of 694 victims registered between 2011 and 2022 in addition to 5,145 victims that were recorded prior to 2011.
4. The Committee welcomes South Sudan disaggregating recent data on mine victims and would welcome disaggregation of all casualties by gender, age, and disability. The Committee would also welcome information on indirect victims, such as affected families.

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)

5. South Sudan reported that the Ministry of Gender Child and Social Welfare (MGCSW) is the lead government agency in coordinating victim assistance efforts in the country. Following a one year gap in staffing the position, the MGCSW has hired a new director for its social affair department, who leads efforts related to victim assistance.

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

6. South Sudan reported that MGCSW, in collaboration with stakeholders, implements a national disability action plan that focuses on advocacy, education, health, rehabilitation, psychosocial support and livelihood.

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

7. The Committee recalls that South_Sudan had reported that an assessment was conducted by Humanity & Inclusion (HI) in 2021 to identify barriers to accessing services for persons with

disabilities, specifically in accessing reproductive health services, food and livelihood opportunities. South Sudan further reported that , following the assessment, HI supported national partners in developing action plans to remove identified barriers. Additionally, South Sudan reported that HI supported three health facilities in strengthening their accessibility by installing ramps, handrails, widening entrances and paths for wheelchair users in Kator Melekia and Munuki healthcare centres.

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)

8. South Sudan reported applying a multi-sectoral approach, with the MGCSW working in close partnerships with relevant stakeholders including and especially the Union of Persons with Disabilities (UPD). South Sudan further reports that for the first time, the private sector – Zain Mobile – supported training and capacity building of organisations of persons with disabilities on the use of technologies.

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

9. South Sudan reported that the MGCSW is seeking funds to establish one centralised database to record information on disability, including mine survivors.
10. South Sudan reported that the National Mine Action Authority (NMAA) with support of the UN Mine Action Service (UNMAS) continued to collect data on casualties by mines and other explosive ordnances.
11. The Committee encourages the NMAA to ensure the availability of mine victims data to relevant ministries and other stakeholders to assist with effective victim assistance implementation.

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

12. South Sudan reported that the National Ministry of Health developed a national health policy (NHP) 2016-2026 to strengthen the health system and tackle barriers that hinder delivery of the basic package of health and nutrition services (BPHNS) as well as to improve healthcare efforts in the country. South Sudan reported a number of challenges in this regard including the fact that most health infrastructures are dilapidated or destroyed and that essential medical and surgical equipment is outdated or lacking in most health facilities.
13. South Sudan's partners such as international NGOs provide the majority of healthcare services, with the ICRC Mobile Surgical Teams delivering emergency healthcare including first aid and evacuation. In Juba, the ICRC supports the Military Hospital running an operating theatre and providing training, surgical materials and medicines, among other assistance the ICRC and other organisations provide.
14. The Committee encourages South Sudan to prioritise provision of first aid and other pre-hospital care, given the level of ongoing casualties, to reduce fatalities among new casualties.

Developing national referral mechanism (Action #37)

15. South Sudan reported that the MOH has a national referral mechanism which includes referral to services outside of the country, if necessary, although the funding is limited and only available to a few individuals.
16. The Committee would welcome further information on referral mechanisms that are in place in South Sudan to facilitate access for mine victims to available services.
17. The Committee recalls that South Sudan had reported that, with support of HI, a service directory for persons with disabilities was under development, targeting Juba, Bentiu and Yei clusters specifically focussing on access to social and reproductive health services. The Committee would welcome an update in this regard.

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

18. South Sudan reported on the availability of rehabilitation services which provide various types of rehabilitation services including prostheses, orthoses and mobility devices to hundreds of persons with disabilities including mine victims. South Sudan reported that this support is provided with the support of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), Humanity & Inclusion (HI) and OVCI.
19. South Sudan reported that the ICRC and HI have reach out to 27 individuals living in rural and hard-to-reach areas such as Mankien, Yambio, Maridi, Aweil, Raja, Akobo, Leer, Yirol, Pibor and Panyijar, to provide them with rehabilitation services.

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

20. South Sudan reported that the Union of Persons with Disabilities, jointly with organisations of persons with disabilities, conducted a pilot assessment on psycho-social impairments to understand the situation in Juba city. South Sudan reported that through this assessment they discovered a lot of cases within the community and provided psychosocial support to the caregivers and referred them for further counselling to the OVCI Rehabilitation Centre, Juba Teaching Hospital and Military Hospital.
21. The Committee recalls that South Sudan had reported that HI provided MHPSS, including peer to peer support, to persons with disabilities in South Sudan. The Committee further recalls that South Sudan had reported that psychological counselling is provided by the three rehabilitation centres and some public hospitals in the capital and regions.
22. The Committee encourages South Sudan to integrate peer to peer support in MHPSS efforts and into overall rehabilitation policies and programmes.

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

23. South Sudan reported that the ICRC, Light for the World and Norwegian Church Aid have been partnering with South Sudan in providing activities that assist persons with disabilities and mine survivors with their social and economic inclusion. South Sudan reported that a significant number of people were provided with various types of assistance, including 1,000 persons with disabilities provided with unconditional grants by the ICRC to set up small businesses.

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

24. South Sudan reported that it has continued to ensure the safety and protection of all persons with disabilities in situations of risk such as armed conflicts and natural disasters. South Sudan indicated that according to South Sudan's humanitarian response plan 2022 and South Sudan Humanitarian Needs Overview 2022, persons with disabilities are considered key stakeholders, support the identification of needs and participate in decision making.

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

25. South Sudan reported that the Union of Persons with Disabilities was launched in 2020 by the Vice President of South Sudan and includes memberships from 10 states of South Sudan and the eight Organizations of Persons with Disabilities. South Sudan further indicated that the Union of Persons with Disabilities is a key stakeholder and continues to participate in relevant policies and programmes.

CROSS-CUTTING ACTIONS:

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

26. The Committee would welcome South Sudan to provide information on national financial commitments made to assist mine victims.

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

27. The Committee recalls that in the past South Sudan reported that gender is included in the national development plan for South Sudan and it takes into consideration the diverse needs of girls, women, boys and men. The MGCSW is mandated to mainstream gender in accordance with the National Gender Policy Strategic Plan (NAP). South Sudan reported several other efforts concerning gender equality in the country.

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

28. South Sudan reported facing challenges in implementing victim assistance, including the followings:

- Most activities are still concentrated within Juba
- Shortages of resources to address all needs of persons with disabilities and mine survivors
- Public awareness on disabilities and on the rights of persons with disabilities still inadequate to rural areas
- Majority of persons with disabilities including survivors live in hard-to-reach places according
- Limited campaign to strengthen an integrated approach
- MGCSW lacks comprehensive needs assessment/survey data on disability
- Continuous insecurity, conflicts and natural disasters that continued to expatriate persons with disability from their community in South Sudan.

29. The Committee would welcome information on how the international community could be of further support to South Sudan's efforts in fulfilling its victim assistance commitments under the Convention and the OAP.

The Oslo Action Plan country reporting tracker
Victim Assistance
South Sudan

Actions	Indicators	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	Additional information request by the Committee
#33	# States Parties that have designated a government entity to coordinate victim assistance activities						
	# States Parties that have national action plans in place containing specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time-bound objectives and related indicators						
#34	# States Parties that report that they include mine victims in relevant national policy and support frameworks						
#35	# States Parties that include victims of anti-personnel mines in disability data systems						The Committee encourages NMAA to disseminate mine victims data with relevant ministries and other stakeholders to assist with effective victim assistance implementation.
	# States Parties that disaggregate victim data by gender, age and disability						
#36	# States Parties reporting on efforts to ensure an efficient and effective emergency response to mine accidents						The Committee encourages South Sudan to prioritise provision of first aid and other pre-hospital care, given the level of ongoing casualties, to reduce fatalities among new casualties.
#37	# States Parties that report having a national referral mechanism						The Committee would welcome further information on referral mechanisms that are in place in South Sudan to facilitate access for mine victims to available services.
	# States Parties that report having a directory of services in place						The Committee recalls that South Sudan had reported that, with support of HI, a service directory for persons with disabilities was under development, targeting Juba, Bentiu and Yei clusters specifically focussing on access to social and reproductive health services. The Committee would welcome an update in this regard.
#38	# States Parties reporting on efforts to increase the availability and accessibility of comprehensive rehabilitation services						
	# States Parties reporting on efforts to increase the availability of psychological and psychosocial support services						
	# States Parties that have established peer-to-peer services within their national healthcare system						The Committee encourages South Sudan to integrate peer to peer support in MHPSS efforts and into overall rehabilitation policies and programmes.

#39	# States Parties reporting on efforts to remove barriers to the social and economic inclusion of mine victims						The Committee would welcome further information on specific efforts made to enhance social and economic inclusion of mine victims, including in rural and remote areas in South Sudan.
#40	# States Parties that report integrating protection of mine survivors in their humanitarian response and preparedness plans						The Committee would welcome further information on the number and types of humanitarian services mine survivors have received in 2020 and 2021. The Committee would also welcome further information on disaster mitigation preparedness and management policy in relation to safety and protection of mine survivors.
#41	# States Parties that report that they include victim representatives or their organizations in victim assistance planning at the national and local level						
CROSS-CUTTING ACTIONS							
#1	# States Parties that report, having included Convention implementation activities in national development plans, poverty reduction strategies, humanitarian response plans and national strategies for the inclusion of persons with disabilities, where appropriate						The Committee encourages South Sudan to step up efforts by providing national financial commitments to assist mine victims.
	% mine-affected States Parties that report making national financial commitments to the implementation of their obligations under the Convention						
#3	# mine-affected States Parties that report having evidence-based, costed and time-bound national strategies and work plans in place						
	# women in States Parties' delegations attending Convention meetings						
#8	# States Parties that prepare their Article 7 reports using the Guide to Reporting						
	# States Parties that report on progress and challenges during formal and informal meetings						The Committee would welcome information on how the international community could be of further support to South Sudan's efforts in fulfilling its victim assistance commitments under the Convention and the OAP.