

Statement on Risk Education

Intersessional Meetings, Mine Ban Treaty, 17-29 June 2025

Thank you, Chair.

Risk Education remains a **vital pillar of mine action**-saving lives, building resilience, and helping communities manage the threat of explosive ordnance.

As reported by the Landmine Monitor last year, **civilians made up 85% of casualties**, with **over a third being children**. This underscores the urgent need for both risk education and clearance.

Globally, risk education remains crucial, for all communities living with explosive ordnance, and especially in areas where there is limited or no clearance. Over the past five years, the sector has advanced significantly, including updating IMAS 12.10 guidance, improving understanding and implementation of behaviour change methodologies, and expanding digital outreach.

We welcome the Siem Reap Review Conference's decision to elevate **risk education as a separate agenda item to allow for focused, dedicated exchanges** on the needs, challenges, progress and remaining gaps related to risk education planning and implementation.

Yet, despite these developments, in the five-year period from 2019 – 2023, **funding for dedicated risk education represented just 1.6% of global mine action funding**. Funding for risk education is rarely separated from clearance budgets, making investment levels hard to track. **Dedicated funding is urgently needed**—especially **for national and local partners** who lead implementation under challenging circumstances, where access to vulnerable communities is limited.

We remain deeply concerned about the situation in many countries—**most notably Afghanistan** - where ongoing financial challenges since 2021 have been compounded by the suspension of U.S. funding this year, which has sharply reduced risk education, leaving communities exposed and vulnerable to the threat of mines and explosive ordnance.

As the increasing use of **explosive weapons in populated areas** pose significant threats to civilian populations, as we have seen in Gaza and Ukraine, risk education providers are faced with unprecedented challenges in terms of access, safety and security of teams, and adaptability of messaging to keep pace with rapidly changing contexts. We need to ensure that States Parties to this treaty continue to place a high emphasis on providing dedicated funding of risk education to ensure that we can respond to these new challenges.

In closing, we urge all States Parties and donors to **recognise the importance of risk education as an effective and efficient frontline intervention**, not a secondary task. Reducing casualties and building safer futures requires dedicated resources, strong coordination, and continued innovation to ensure no one at risk is left behind.

Thank you.