International CAMPAIGN TO BAN LANDMINES

LANDMINE MONITOR FACT SHEET

Prepared by Handicap International

Mine Risk Education

May 2006

"Each State Party in a position to do so shall provide assistance for … mine awareness programs." (Article 6 (3) of the Mine Ban Treaty). The Treaty also requires that States Parties report on measures taken "to provide an immediate and effective warning to the population" in relation to mined areas (Article 7 (1, i)).

Among Priorities for the period leading to the Seventh Meeting of the States Parties, the Zagreb Progress Report states that "Given the advances made in the field of mine risk education, a priority should be placed on applying the relevant International Mine Action Standards in keeping with Action #21 of the Nairobi Action Plan, **particularly by ensuring that all clearance operations have a community liaison component** as stipulated by these standards."

In the Nairobi Action Plan States Parties that have reported mined areas under their jurisdiction or control accepted that they will prioritize clearance of areas with highest human impact, provide mine risk education and increase efforts to perimeter-mark, monitor and protect mined areas awaiting clearance in order to ensure the effective exclusion of civilians, as required by Article 5 (2); and, **"ensure that mine risk education programs are made available in all communities at risk."**

Landmine Monitor includes within its reporting of mine risk education (MRE) activities focused on explosive remnants of war (ERW); ERW comprises both unexploded ordnance (UXO) and Abandoned Explosive Ordnance (AXO). **Landmine Monitor analyzed MRE operations globally by applying the following categories.**

MRE 0 No MRE is reported but Landmine Monitor suggests that it is needed.

MRE I Minimal MRE, mainly provision of warnings along with marking undertaken by security forces; at times combined with public information dissemination (TV, radio, advertisements, mass publications).

MRE II Classical lecture type MRE, mostly as stand-alone activity; at times combined with public information dissemination. Standardized MRE sessions are provided to raise awareness and to

provide basic safety messages. This type of MRE usually requires only passive participation and is not tailored to the local community and its specific mine/ERW threat, the various at-risk groups within a community and their livelihood systems.

MRE III Community-Based MRE, often with Community Liaison. At local level competency is built to provide MRE by volunteers and teachers (active participation). MRE may comprise a range of activities from house-to-house visits, targeting truck drivers, and incorporating MRE into the school curriculum to community theater and the use of mass-media. Monitoring and Quality Assurance are crucial to maintain the activities as such and the quality. MRE should sufficiently incorporate gender, age, ethnic and local threat specifics.

Findings

Note: The analysis refers to activities until end of 2005 only. The information reported here is based on Landmine Monitor Report 2005 and subsequent research which is still in progress.

MRE III In only 11 of 98 countries and areas are predominantly community-based MRE/CL programs reported. Mine clearance operators increasingly acknowledge the value of Community Liaison (see Bosnia and Herzegovina and Sri Lanka reports as examples in *Landmine Monitor Report 2005*).

MRE II In 31 cases a traditional approach is still dominant, although in 20 of these 31 community-based MRE has started to be implemented. Still, MRE efforts particularly in Colombia, Iran, Pakistan, and Vietnam need to be intensified.

MRE I 21 countries provide warnings only. In some cases this may be adequate as long as fencing and marking systems are well maintained and ammunition is properly stored so that mines/ERW do not claim new casualties. Landmine Monitor has seen no evidence that this level of MRE is adequate in countries such as India and Ukraine.

MRE 0 MRE 0 / NA: 12 countries have no MRE at all, and three do not provide any information (NA). MRE programs are definitely needed in Burma/Myanmar, Kuwait, and possibly in some northern African countries/areas including Algeria, Egypt, Libya and Western Sahara.

MRE needed? In 17 countries with a very low threat level it may be acceptable not to run MRE programs. However, proper MRE needs assessments have not been undertaken in most of these countries. Monitoring of the threat and its impact continues to be crucial.

Non-State Armed Groups in five out of six cases promote or accept the delivery of MRE in the area under their 'control'. NSAGs operating in Somalia are the exception.

Landmine Monitor editorial team invites all States Parties and operators to provide additional information to expand, clarify or correct any data reported in this Fact Sheet. New information may be incorporated in Landmine Monitor Report 2006. Thank you!

"Community Participation reduces mine/UXO risky behavior and casualties"

Text of a banner photographed in Cambodia, in:
Ruth Bottomley, Community Participation in Mine Action.
A Review and Conceptual Framework. NPA. December 2005, p.50.
[See www.npaid.org for download]

MRE is an integrated component of mine action, needed to provide warnings and advice on safe behavior but also to mobilize the community to report on dangerous areas and unexploded or abandoned ordnance for clearance/EOD. Obviously the readiness to report depends on the response time; if no action is undertaken people tend to take action into their own hands with often catastrophic consequences. MRE teams also help identify mine survivors and their needs, can provide information on the rights and options for Victim Assistance and refer the individuals to relevant institutions.

MRE along with community liaison helps to link mine action to peace making, rehabilitation and development organizations. Behavior change in dire poverty cannot be achieved through education alone. People need alternatives to make a living. Otherwise they feel forced to knowingly continue their risky behavior.

If a mine/ERW threat is very low and the areas well fenced or at least well marked with mine warning signs the provision of warnings to the population living in the vicinity of the dangerous areas may be sufficient.

Resources on Mine Risk Education and Community Liaison

Comprehensive information in the form of 12 guidebooks complementing the International Mine Action Standards for Mine Risk Education has been developed by GICHD and UNICEF.

International Mine Action Standards for Mine Risk Education

Best practice guidebooks - November 2005

1. An Introduction to Mine Risk Education
2. Data Collection and Needs Assessment
3. Planning
4. Public Information Dissemination
5. Education and Training
6. Community Mine Action Liaison
7. Monitoring
8. Evaluation
9. Emergency Mine Risk Education
10. Coordination

The guidebooks are available for download on the GICHD website (www.gichd.ch/579.0.html) or can be ordered as a CD.