

News

Did You Say *Synergies*?

All States Parties to the Mine Ban Treaty, when adopting the Cartagena Action Plan at the Cartagena Summit on a Mine-Free World in December 2009, committed to "make use of synergies with other relevant instruments of international humanitarian and human rights law." So, what could these synergies be?



Photos: Giovanni Diffidenti

Over the past three years, two new international conventions have entered into force that bear particular relevance to the mine ban community: the Convention on Cluster Munitions (1 August 2010) and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (3 May 2008.)

In this special issue of the ICBL newsletter, mine action experts, victim assistance practitioners and campaigners explore the new opportunities offered by the CRPD and CCM. They also look at how the lessons learned in over 10 years of implementation of the

Mine Ban Treaty, as well as all the structures and expertise already in place, could benefit the full and swift implementation of these younger conventions. ■

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SYNERGIES

Clearance: No Need to Reinvent the Wheel

“Clearance of landmines and cluster munition remnants have taken place side-by-side for many years as a significant number of countries experience contamination of both types. While the techniques for clearance of cluster munitions and those for demining are different, as the nature and deployment of these weapons are different, it is very important that the same structures, especially in terms of coordination and oversight, are used as far as possible, thus avoiding duplication of efforts and wasting of resources.

As an example, Albania declared itself mine- and cluster munition-free at the end of 2009, fulfilling obligations of both Article 5 of the Mine Ban Treaty and Article 4 of Convention on Cluster Munitions. Clearance of both had taken place since 2002. While technical approaches in the field were different, depending if clearance teams were dealing with mine or cluster munition contamination, the same people were cross-trained to be able to deal with both types of tasks, and one coordination body was overseeing both clearance activities.” ■

Eva Veble, DanChurchAid



Photo: Tamar Gabelnick



Photo: Giovanni Diffidenti

Victim Assistance: Enhance Existing Mechanisms

“Through my daily work, I see that landmine and cluster munition victims have similar needs. When it comes to education, vocational training, peer support, rehabilitation, access to services, and more, the demands of victims are the same. My organization provides peer support to persons with disabilities and survivors regardless of the causes that made them disabled or survivor. To me, it is essential that authorities keep the policy work consistent with the actual work that is being done on the ground. There should not be separate sets of policies, or separate mechanisms to implement the Mine Ban Treaty and the Convention on Cluster Munitions with respect to victim assistance. One focal point, one coordination body, and one monitoring and reporting system can cover both treaties.

The Cartagena Action Plan and the text of the Convention on Cluster Munitions reaffirm the importance of a rights-based approach and of inclusive development. The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities sets the applicable human rights standard for victim assistance. In order for both states and victims to benefit from synergies created by those three instruments, victim assistance should be integrated into existing mechanisms for disability, development and human rights. These mechanisms must be enhanced to cover all victim assistance obligations.” ■

Sulaiman Aminy,
Afghan Landmine Survivors’ Organization
(ALSO)

International Cooperation and Assistance: Keep the Dialogue Open

“Cooperation and assistance is not only about funding, it is also about sharing skills and lessons learned. But if I had to give a few examples of where donor states can make use of synergies, and benefit from them, I would mention the need to coordinate their assistance to ensure that all states that have communicated their needs receive the support they require. I would call on states to keep a strong focus on measuring the impact of assistance, through open and regular dialogue with affected states, through the establishment of indicators, targets and milestones, and through clear reporting. I would encourage them to consider funding mine action through broad development initiatives like the Millennium Development Goals.

I would call on states to explore management systems to look for efficiencies, with a view to keep getting more and more cost-effective. In order to make sure affected communities see results as soon as possible, and to help states plan their work, donors should also make multi-annual funding pledges.” ■

Judith Majlath,
CMC & ICBL Austrian Section



Photo: Mary Wareham

Stockpile Destruction: What Lessons Learned?

“The main lesson from the Mine Ban Treaty on stockpile destruction is: prioritization. For stockpilers, that means start early. For donors, that means don’t make it an afterthought to support for clearance and victim assistance. Given the large amount of stockpiled cluster munitions, donor states should make assistance for stockpile destruction an integral part of their overall assistance under the Convention on Cluster Munitions.

All states with stockpiles should, at a minimum, within one year or less of entry into force, have a plan in place for the destruction of stocks that includes a timeline and budget. Any financial or technical problems should be disclosed in a timely manner in situations where assistance is required. Again, the key is to start early and report progress annually. As with the Mine Ban Treaty, it is mostly a matter of political will.” ■

Mark Hiznay,
Human Rights Watch



Photo: DanChurchAid/Jawad Metni

Transparency Reporting: Make Use of Similar Data



“Finding synergies among reporting requirements may help States Parties to fulfill their transparency obligations more efficiently, since states can use similar data for different reports. For example, states providing assistance to both landmine and cluster munition victims should not need to develop separate accounts of their efforts for different types of victims. As well, a state clearing both landmines and cluster munition remnants could report on all types of clearance as long as the information is disaggregated by type of munition. Nonetheless, let’s keep in mind the Convention on Cluster Munitions provides the highest reporting standard in almost all areas where there is overlap with the Mine Ban Treaty, so states reporting on both treaties should be encouraged to use its more detailed structure.” ■

Tamar Gabelnick, ICBL



SYNERGIES

Universalization: Renounce Similar Weapons

“Not only can states make use of synergies in the implementation of the Mine Ban Treaty and Convention on Cluster Munitions -- they should also explore ways to do so in their universalization. Both treaties were inspired by the need to put people’s lives before any political or military considerations. Given the complementary nature of the two instruments in terms of humanitarian principle and practical implementation, joining

the Convention on Cluster Munitions should be a natural step for all States Parties to the Mine Ban Treaty, and vice versa. Once one agrees that weapons causing unacceptable harm to civilians must be banned, the same reasoning applies to both landmines and cluster munitions.” ■

Habbouba Aoun,
Landmines Resource Center
(Lebanon)

Photo: Mary Wareham



National Implementation Measures: Make the Most Out of Adoption Processes

“Enacting national implementation laws and policies, including penal sanctions for violations, is an obligation under both the Mine Ban Treaty and the Convention on Cluster Munitions. States that already have national measures implementing the Mine Ban Treaty could use this template, improve

upon it based on lessons learned during the past decade, and ensure that the higher standards found in many provisions in the Convention on Cluster Munitions are respected. States Parties to the Mine Ban Treaty that have not yet enacted implementation legislation should seize the opportunity of joining the

Convention on Cluster Munitions to begin working on such legislation now, in order to meet this key obligation under both treaties.” ■

Gustavo Oliveira Vieira,
Brazilian Campaign Against Landmines

ICBL CAST AND CREW

In each newsletter issue, this new section will introduce campaign members from throughout the world.

Pacific Foundation for the Advancement of Women

The Pacific Foundation for the Advancement of Women (PACFAW), ICBL member in **Fiji**, is an advocacy organization working for the empowerment of women through five thematic programs: peace and security, health, economic empowerment, environment, and good governance. It engages with governments in the Pacific to promote observance and implementation of international human rights and humanitarian agreements such as the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women, the Convention on the Rights of the Child,

the UN Program of Action on Small Arms and Light Weapons, the Mine Ban Treaty and the Convention on Cluster Munitions. Its membership includes the national councils of women of Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), Fiji, Kiribati, Nauru, Papua New Guinea, Tonga and Tuvalu. Contact: Ema G. Tagicakibau pacfaw@connect.com.fj ■

THE MONITOR

Stay Informed: Sign up for Monitor Email Notifications

Landmine and Cluster Munition Monitor launched the new Country Profile section of the Monitor website in June 2010, which features dedicated web pages for every country in the world with information about landmines and cluster munitions. Many Country Profiles are already available online, and new profiles continue to be uploaded daily.

In order to keep up-to-date, users may sign up to receive email notifications whenever Country Profiles are updated. The email notifications are country specific, allowing you to only receive updates on the countries that you are interested in.

Please sign up today to receive email notifications on updates to the country where

you campaign, live, and work. To do so, visit www.the-monitor.org/cp, and click on the name of the country/area of interest to you.

At the top right hand side of the page you will find an option to "Receive notifications when this Country Profile is updated." Once you have clicked this option, you will be prompted to provide your email address. This page also provides the option to cancel the email notifications at any time. If you have any questions, please contact monitor@icbl.org ■

Fundación Red de Sobrevivientes

The Fundación Red de Sobrevivientes y Personas con Discapacidad was founded in **El Salvador** in 2008 to take over from US NGO Landmine Survivors' Network operations in the country. The Fundación has provided support to over 2,500 persons with disabilities including mine and explosive remnants or war survivors, through individual visits, donation of mobility devices, capacity-building on health issues and the creation of support groups within national

hospitals. It contributes to income-generation projects through training on the management of small shops. The Fundación has also contributed to the creation of 30 local associations across the country, which advocate for local authorities to respect the rights of persons with disabilities, including by facilitating access to public spaces. The Fundación works closely with a wide network of partners throughout El Salvador. Contact: Jesús Martínez, jmartinez@reddesobrevivientes.org ■

Algerian Disabled and Mine Victims Solidarity Association (ASHVM)

Bringing together some 600 persons with disabilities and mine or explosive remnants of war survivors from the El Tarf district in North-East **Algeria**, the ASHVM is an advocacy and assistance organization. Founded in 1997, it advocates for the rights of survivors through one-on-one meetings with authorities and the organization of awareness-raising events such as workshops and conferences. It leads an initiative

of income-generation cooperative groups for persons with disabilities and survivors. The ASHVM also currently conducts mine risk education programs, including a capacity-building component, in partnership with Handicap International, the UNDP and the Algerian government, which aims at recruiting and training mine risk education facilitators at the community level. Contact: Youcef Rafai, ashvm2005@yahoo.fr ■

CAMPAIGN NEWS

Youth Campaigners to Gather in Lao PDR

The Youth Leaders Forum, organized by Mines Action Canada (MAC), will be held in Lao PDR from 8-12 November in conjunction with the First Meeting of the States Parties to the Convention on Cluster Munitions. Bringing together youth civil society advocates from across the world, the Forum will focus on skills- and knowledge-building sessions for topics such as lobbying and advocacy, fundraising and grant management, media relations, and volunteer management. It will use a participatory peer-to-peer learning model and real-

time practice opportunities. Participants will also look at how to take next steps on the two-year Youth Action Plan developed at the Cartagena Summit on a Mine-Free World, aimed at advancing the universalization and implementation of the Mine Ban Treaty and Convention on Cluster Munitions. MAC is currently looking for colleagues and partners who are interested in acting as a mentor or facilitating sessions. If you are interested, please contact ylf@minesactioncanada.org ■

CAMPAIGN NEWS

Mine Action at Denmark's Roskilde Music Festival

In July 2010, visitors at the Roskilde Festival – the largest North European music and culture festival – engaged in mine action through mine awareness and fundraising activities organized by Denmark Against Landmines. The anti-landmine "UXO Bar" and its fresh-made organic cocktails were immensely popular, enabling DAL to engage in a pilot project testing Apopo's mine-sniffing rats' ability to work efficiently in minefields in Angola. Around 500 people also decided to join DAL's membership, adding weight

to the organization's push for Denmark to step up its engagement in eradicating landmines and cluster bombs. "The voice of each new supporter has immediate political impact in our struggle to make Denmark prohibit all investments in cluster munitions," said DAL Chairman Rune Saugmann. The message sent from festival-goers in Roskilde will be heard in parliament this fall."

Contact: runesaugmann@landminer.dk ■

Photo: Eeva-Liisa Puhakka



Support the ICBL through the Combined Federal Campaign

From September to December 2010, U.S. Federal employees can donate through the Combined Federal Campaign (CFC), the world's largest workplace charity campaign. The ICBL has been admitted to the 2010 CFC as a member of

Peace and Reconciliation Charities. Charities that apply to receive funds through the CFC are required to submit to extensive review of their financial and governance practices prior to acceptance. To support the ICBL, enter code 55130. ■

Survivors and Operators Present Afghan Government with Recommendations

The Afghan Landmine Survivors' Organization in collaboration with civil society organizations held a conference on 1 August 2010, aimed at promoting the integration of physical accessibility and peer support for survivors and persons with disabilities into ministerial plans of action. The detailed and pragmatic recommendations developed by civil society organizations were well received by the

deputy ministers participating in the event. They committed to appoint two task forces by the 1st meeting of the Disability Stakeholders Coordination Group which took place in late August 2010. The organization of a workshop for all provincial mayors was suggested, in order to raise awareness about physical accessibility. Contact: sulimanaminy@gmail.com ■

Taiwan: Forum Reviews Demining Progress

On 22 June 2010, the Eden Social Welfare Foundation organized the "Anti-Landmines and Anti-Cluster Munitions Human Rights Forum" in Taipei, Taiwan. The screening of a documentary on the rehabilitation of Cambodian landmine survivors was followed by a seminar on landmines and -for the first time in Taiwan- cluster munitions. Presentations covered progress in mine clearance since the adoption of the Anti-Personnel Landmine Regulation Act in 2006, which requires the military to

complete demining by 2013; an overview of the mine ban movement; an introduction to the cluster munitions issue; and a discussion on the development of the local campaign, which successfully advocated for mine ban legislation (since Taiwan is prevented by its international status from joining international treaties) and is hoping to do the same with cluster munitions. More than 40 people participated in the event, including several press reporters. Contact: ieden.info@gmail.com ■



Photo: Eden Social Welfare Foundation

The ICBL is a global network in over 90 countries, working for a ban on landmines and cluster munitions.

We welcome any comments and questions about ICBL News.

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LANDMINES

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