Funding Mine Risk Education: Saving Lives Around the Globe

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on food and fuel supplies, but more broadly on success in rehabilitating affected areas—particularly irrigation systems—seeds and fertilizers.16

Desperate farmers ran to their lands with the smell of rain, only to be blown to pieces by anti-personnel mines. Around 30 million landmines dot Afghanistan—50,000 landmines per square kilometer—making it the world's most densely mined area, according to UN Secretary General Kofi Annan. And this is just a minor determinant for the revival of agriculture and animal husbandry, which accounts for 95 percent of the population's livelihood.

If the peacebuilding communication tool used between communities is the need for mobile clinics and equipment to stock them, then opportunities for collaboration between health professionals and psychologists, home care and job training. In developed countries, many professional agencies have long had workshops (Terry Fox mobile, Red Cross Blood mobile and CAT, MRI and PET scanning).

Each clinic could make "mill runs," offering a monthly rotation of services determined by greatest need. As communities can afford to build their own infrastructure of medical buildings and staff, services can be re-routed. Where simple community health care facilities exist, the design dimensions of the loading dock of both building and vehicle could align to allow for expansion to duplicate adjacent rooms to optimize the clinical flow.

Industries and their professionals can help by applying answers to problems already solved in developed countries and sponsoring faculties and associations in line with their expertise. Farming and demining injuries are not limited to war-time, but also extend to farms, heating loss, vertigo, visual, sensory and communication impairment, and head and neck injuries.

In poor countries, technical difficulties within business decision support structures (e.g., trade associations and ministries) inhibit resource across and through industry value chains. The same reasoning and staffing deficiencies exist across population health, agriculture and job-related rehabilitation. It is often possible to benefit both the firm and suppliers by influencing the consumption of suppliers' value chains to jointly optimize the performance of activities, or by improving coordination between a firm and suppliers' chains. Support linkages mean that the relationship is not so a zero sum game in which one gains at the expense of the other, but a relationship in which both can gain.17

So many micro-enterprise opportunities exist for both the able-bodied and disabled—welding, machining, tailoring, manufacturing and mechanical. These skill sets are also required in a revived rural economy. Ideally, training at the college and university level is needed to ensure competency and the ability to "train the trainers." The trainer can then assist and support for less able-bodied workers. The ability to develop capacity jobs and community-sustaining contracts to ensure the long-term personal development of the community.

Care Canada's tools for Development, an excellent example, has a simple but powerful premise: Make second-hand equipment (hard goods, laptops and sewing machines) available to poor communities at an affordable price. There are no handouts. The entrepreneur pays for the tools either on credit or with immediate pay, slightly lower than the banks offer. Under Roy Mokhai has bigger ideas as well. He would like to up US corporations for tools. And he makes it clear again, "this is not charity, We're fostering entrepreneurship."18

There are good times and hard times for investing in a country's efforts. A new report has contended that immediate post-conflict intervention provides the appropriate moment of greatest opportunity to change the dynamic for international community to become involved. There are few disciplines that are not touched on in this "cross-functional" industry of demining and victim assistance. Most think of the logistics of the mechanics of demining, few think of the human resource, legal, soil science, agriculture, agro-forestry, information technology, education. The list is truly endless.19

Endnotes
5. For discussion with field expansion service supervisor of the fragmentations of field core. 6. Three-Pronged Adapts to Abashiri Landmine Experience U.S. Department of State, Mine Demining Network. 1 July, 2002
15. Contact Information

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Funding Mine Risk Education: Saving Lives Around the Globe

Funding MRE

Mine risk education is an important tool in preventing mine-related injuries and deaths. The U.S. State Department has provided funding to many mine risk education programs in several different countries, giving mine-affected communities the knowledge necessary to live their daily lives with more caution and less fear.

by Jenny Lange, U.S. State Department Fellow

Background

The United States has been involved in humanitarian demining since 1988 when the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) sent a team to Afghanistan to assess the landmine situation there. In 1989, USAID established the Patrick J. Leahy War Victims Fund, which provides support to people living with disabilities, primarily those who suffer from mobility-related injuries caused by unexploded ordnance, including amputated limb survivors and other direct and indirect causes of physical disability. While USAID continued to support mine action in Afghanistan and elsewhere, in 1993, the United States established a broad-based program of humanitarian demining support that included the Department of State, the Department of Defense, and USAID. As the saying goes, "We've come a long way since then. Since then, the U.S. has provided more than $600 million (U.S.) to 43 countries and is committed to continue to support mine action around the world.

Goals of the Program

The goals of the U.S. Humanitarian Demining Program are to reduce the loss of life and limbs of innocents, to create conditions for the safe return of refugees and internally displaced persons, and to afford opportunity for economic and social reintegration. Fortunately, there has been much success in reaching these goals due to the commitment of the United States and other donor countries to put their energy, professionalism and dedication of implementing partners and affiliates. Hundreds of thousands of refugees and internally displaced persons return to their homes. Thousands of acres of land formerly contaminated with mines and landmines are being made safe for farming conditions are in use and are producing agricultural commodities necessary to sustain life. Portable water is available; roads are open and in use; schools that were once shut down due to the danger of mines are now open and continuing education. Landmine survivors are being integrated back into their communities and are resuming their lives. And most importantly, the amount of reported landmine casualties is greatly declining.

While some of these successes can be attributed to the clearance of landmines and unexploded ordnance, including demining and other direct and indirect causes of physical disability. While USAID continued to support mine action in Afghanistan and elsewhere, in 1993, the United States established a broad-based program of humanitarian demining support that included the Department of State, the Department of Defense and USAID. As the saying goes, "We've come a long way since then. Since then, the U.S. has provided more than $600 million (U.S.) to 43 countries and is committed to continue to support mine action around the world.

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FEATURE

Mine Awareness Education

Grants (HDP), is the lead agency in coordinating and implementing programs worldwide and oversees the daily management of bilateral demining assistance programs. The Nonproliferation, Antiterrorism, Demining and Related (NADR) programs appropriation funds mine action operations around the world, having provided nearly $180 million since 1993. The following countries currently receive NADR support for mine risk education programs: Afghanistan, Armenia, Guatemala, Lao Peoples’ Democratic Republic, Mozambique, Rwanda, Senegal, Vietnam and Yemen. Countries that have received such assistance in the past include: Macedonia, Namibia, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Oman, Thailand, Zimbabwe, Argelia, China, Ecuador, Ethiopia, Haiti, Jordan, Lebanon and Nicaragua.

The Department of Defense also funds mine action activities through the Overseas Humanitarian, Disaster and Civic Aid (OHIDACA) appropriation fund. Other U.S. Government agencies funding mine action are the USAID Patrick J. Leahy War Victims Fund, and the Center for Disease Control. In addition, the United States channels all of its mine action support for Balkan states through the Slovenian International Trust Fund (ITF).

Current Activities

Mine risk education activities funded by the U.S. government are carried out by the Special Operation Forces, the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) and its implementing partners and other non-governmental organizations (NGOs) such as HALO Trust, CARE and Norwegian People’s Aid (NPA). The U.S. Department of Defense’s Special Operations Forces (SOF) provide mine risk education training in many different contexts. SOF personnel are fluent in the languages of mine-affected countries and undergo country-specific cultural training prior to engagement in any of these countries in order to be more successful and efficient in their training.

UNICEF is involved in implementing many State Department funded programs around the world spread among mine-risk education specifically to women and children. Their current activities include programs in Afghanistan, Colombia, Eritrea, Vietnam and Ethiopia.

Afghanistan

The State Department of current funds a complex mine risk education program in Afghanistan through UNICEF. After more than two decades of war, Afghanistan is one of the last landmine-affected countries in the world.

These activities will expand and improve Afghanistan’s mine risk education program and will effectively distribute information to civilians, including women and children, in order to dynamically reduce the number of casualties due to landmines.

Colombia

Colombia’s mine risk education activities are carried out by UNICEF and are funded by the U.S. Department of Defense. The program is estimated at $152,000. The current project is being implemented in three phases, with each phase increasing the project’s total geographic coverage in order to educate as many people as possible. Objectives of the project include initiating institutions in 15 affected communities and sensitizing government and local authorities, communities and public opinion about the risks of landmines and related issues through communication campaigns. Activities include the training of at least 200 community-based leaders to act as trainers, developing a mass media campaign, organizing mine risk education training sessions, and disseminating mine risk education materials for children, educators and adults.

Eritrea

Since 2000, UNICEF has achieved goals in many areas of mine risk education in Eritrea. These goals include launching critical emergency awareness activities in high-risk areas, assigning a full-time officer to the UNMEE-MAC, and the mobilization of financial and human resources to conduct mine risk education. Even though these goals have been reached, landmine casualties continue to rise, with 90% of the victims being children. In order to reduce casualties among children, current activities, with a grant of $120,000 from the U.S. Department of State, are focusing on education among communities, specifically designing school-based mine risk education training. Between December 2001 and January 2002, UNICEF, laying the foundation for in-school mine risk education, trained 270 schoolteachers. Specific objectives include ensuring that 100 percent of schoolchildren are taught in schools in the Temporary Security Zone (TSZ) have access to information on landmines, developing peer educators on mine risk education through formal education systems and integrating landmine awareness into school curriculums. Through this community-based program, a mixture of strategies and activities will reduce casualties among children dramatically.

Vietnam

Vietnam is one of the most heavily mined countries in the world, with 3.5 million landmines and 3.5 million landmines. In the past, mine risk education programs among communities have been very limited, therefore the need for present activities is demanding.

UNICEF, with $717,000 from the U.S. Department of State, has developed current activities, which include a multi-media awareness campaign, information dissemination, UXO/mine warning signs, child-to-child peer education groups and an in-school mine risk education curriculum. These programs will help children and adults have a better baseline understanding of the threats that landmines pose and will help them ensure mine safety. Because there was very little knowledge of the mine situation among residents before these programs, it is anticipated that the community participation in the development of sustainable solutions to the problem will rapidly rise, and the threat of casualties will decline.

Nambia

A mine risk education project was established in late 1999 by UNICEF due to the increasing vulnerability of children and women to landmines placed during Nambia’s border war with Eritrea. U.S. Department of Defense funds ($150,000) will support training for the Rehabilitation and Development Organization (RDO) and the Ethiopian Mine Action Office (EMAO) staff and the development of materials and information management. The project has developed two generations of materials, including posters, leaflets, t-shirts, banners, pamphlets and training materials. These activities will help fulfill the project goal by reducing the number of casualties among civilians. Due to achievements already made, the number of landmine casualties drastically reduced between 2000 and 2001 from 149 to 49.

Successful Past Projects

Finishing

Namibian children in Namibia, between 2000 and 2001, there was a significant decrease in landmine-related casualties. The mine risk education program funded by the U.S. Department of State helped contribute to the dramatic reduction. The 2001 mine action campaign reached over 400,000 people. Included was the production of two eight-page newspaper inserts about mine risk education published by the Republican Daily Paper. Over 500,000 copies were printed in four indigenuous languages and were distributed in mine-affected areas. One of the inserts included instructions for a contest that called upon students to draw a picture of "Namibia Without Landmines." More than 25,000 drawings were chosen as the winners and were made into posters and distributed among schools. This project was an effective way to make community awareness

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Youth learn mine awareness from their teacher.

Kosovo
UNICEF, with a grant of $800,000 from the Department of State and with the support of other donors, initiated a mine action campaign in Kosovo in June 1999. Many different types of media were employed as part of the UNICEF effort. Since then, hundreds of thousands of posters have been distributed to schools, hospitals and public places throughout Kosovo. Fourteen television spots and 11 radio messages have been produced and broadcast in the languages of Albanian, Serbian and Turkish through local media outlets. Testing the messages evaluated the impact of the television and radio messages and revealed that they are powerful and effective.

In a different approach, refugees from Kosovo were informed of the landmine situation before arriving home to cut back on the number of immediate casualties. This was a watershed project due to the fact people had never before been informed of the situation before returning home to mine-infested land. To ensure that refugees returned to Kosovo were informed of the dangers of landmines, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) provided information on the dangers of landmines and how to seek help after finding one. UNICEF and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) organized training for IOM escorts and supplied a variety of mine risk education materials including videos to be shown on airplanes and audiotapes to be played on buses transporting refugees back home.

UNICEF strives to make teaching people about the risk of landmines more than just a transfer of information; they attempt to make the population active partners in promoting mine awareness in their communities. It has been found that the child-to-child approach is an effective means of teaching mine risk education because it encourages children to create their own means of communication which has maximum impact when passing the information on. UNICEF works with a number of partners in schools throughout Kosovo, one of which is the Vietnam Veterans of America Foundation (VVAF). Children between the ages of 10 and 14 are trained as educators on mine risk education and are actively involved in developing games, plays, songs and interactive sessions with other children. UNICEF and VVAF trained five teams of educators, and the teams conducted a series of sessions for children, and recruited over 600 volunteers between the ages of 15 and 24 to form youth Mine Action Education Teams. The volunteers are in charge of designing and implementing activities to raise awareness among peers and children in their communities. During October and November of 1999, VVAF, along with UNICEF organized "the spirit of soccer," a program that combined soccer and mine risk education. More than 500 young players became involved, UNICEF also supported local drama groups and a puppet theatre program to perform shows in a dramatic sense. A series of mine risk education days were held in July and August 2000 where the topic was integrated into a day of sports, competitions, workshops and games. UNICEF supplied over 3,556 exercise books with covers displaying mine messages.

UNICEF also brought mine risk education into the classroom in Kosovo. In August 2000, over 1,500 teachers were trained to teach the subject, which passed the message on to thousands of children.

Conclusion
Mine risk education is vital to communities whose lands are plagued with landmines. Without the benefit of this information, the world would continue to experience casualties at an unacceptable rate. With the support of the U.S. government and other donors, and with the efforts of a host of implementing partners, mine risk education is a main component to mine action around the globe. Many programs have been implemented with successful results, and efforts will continue until people are able to walk the earth in safety.

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Need To Know?
Mine Action Education Resources

This article reports on a U.S. Department of State (DOS) supported programme to gather and share mine action knowledge in parts of southern Africa.

Information was gathered during 2000 with help from Programa Acelerado de Desminagem (PADO), formerly UNAMID, People Against Landmines (MGM), Mines Advisory Group (MAG), the HALO Trust and Norwegian People’s Aid (NPA).
Training resources packs for Mozambique and Angola were then produced.

by Andy Smith, for Golden West
Humanitarian Foundation (GWHF)

Mine Action and Demining - "Black-Arts"?

Surveyors and deminers practice a profession that is often represented as being both brave and mysterious. This myth may seem harmless, but it is not. It is a form of intimidation. You, the public, are supposed to accept that demining is dangerous, macho-man stuff and you should shut up and trust us. That’s fine if you live in Washington, D.C., but not if you live in a mined area.

If you live in a mined area, you usually cannot learn what you need to know by simply getting hold of a training course. Practical mine action training courses for deminers, surveyors and the general public are often no more than a list of topics that must be covered. Training is often limited to cover what the trainers must do, not what they may want to understand. Training of the public is usually limited to admonitions not to do things, with no real attempt to explain why or offer alternatives.

Information, Not Intimidation

Most of the information needed for training is available. There is an encyclopaedic range of technical data on mines and ordnance (fancising if sometimes contradictory). There are many works on training methods and cross-cultural communication, adult learning and competence building. What are not as often available are technically correct training resources for use with the courses that are already being run throughout the humanitarian mine action industry.

I recognize the need for training resources two years ago and set out to produce some with the GWHF. Colin King advised and was the technical editor. I began by producing a pilot for field review. The pilot was widely applauded and is still in demand. Based on the success of the pilot, we were able to gain U.S. DOS support to produce two country-specific packs. The training resource pack for Mozambique is in the field, and the resource pack for Angola is ready for release.

Each resource pack is a large format ring-binder containing 55 plastic-laminated sheets (A3, or USB). One side shows a photograph or photographs. The other side has text in Portuguese and English explaining the pictures and suggesting teaching uses. Pages can be separated for sharing or folded into the wall. The pictures illustrate a generic mine action education course, covering information needs of the surveyor, deminer and general public in that country.

The training resources are not designed as complete courses but are intended to enhance existing ones. However, where no course exists, the resource provides a comprehensive starting template.

The photographs show real devices in a relevant context and include varied levels of technical detail that the teacher can choose to stress or gloss over depending on the needs of the audience. When possible, aged mines and UXO are featured. These can look very different from the same item direct from the stores. Photographs taken in the region are used to give the images a more immediate relevance to people who have not travelled far. They are also proving compelling to ex-pat visitors.

Golden West Humanitarian Foundation

Lubnaid Trainers with PADO in Maputo Mozambique, helped in the production of the Mozambique training resource and have been using it for more than six months, right.

All The Mozambique and Angola training resources.