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Landmine Casualty Database Workshop

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Landmine Casualty Database Workshop

Harrisonburg, VA / USA
13-14 May 2002

Executive Summary

JMU's Mine Action Information Center (MAIC) held a workshop on May 13-14, 2002 to examine issues related to landmine victim data collection. The U.S. Department of State, Office of Humanitarian Demining Programs was the sponsor of the two-year long casualty database project conducted by the MAIC, of which the workshop was the culminating phase. Based on its research and the workshop activities, the MAIC has developed a list of "action items" which it recommends to improve the collection and management of landmine casualty data. That list immediately follows this executive summary.

In preparation for the workshop, participants were asked to read the report "[Managing Landmine Casualty Data](#)" issued by the MAIC in January 2002. This report presented the findings of the MAIC study to date, which included a comparative analysis of nine landmine casualty database systems in use in mine-affected countries and the results of a survey of mine action database operators and victim assistance experts. Based on this research, the MAIC was able to identify a list of data fields that victim assistance practitioners considered "essential" or "important to include" in a landmine casualty database system. The working group was tasked to build upon the findings of the report and to make specific recommendations for the development of a global landmine casualty database system.

One specific task was to recommend a common core of data fields that could guide future revisions of the Information Management System for Mine Action (IMSMA), which clearly has become the most widely used information management system in mine action. These data fields also are of interest to the developers of maXML, an information specification that will allow different mine action database systems to more easily exchange data with one another and with systems in other domains.

Other tasks before the working group were to make recommendations on data collection methodology and training that would improve the scope and quality of data gathering on landmine victims and to recommend measures to facilitate the implementation of data collection systems and the sharing of information.

On the first day the workshop participants viewed presentations by the IMSMA development team at the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology Zurich (ETHZ) on the incident victim functionality of IMSMA and by the developers of maXML, FGM Inc. Once acquainted with these two existing programs, the workshop participants engaged in plenary discussions of the issues before them: landmine casualty data collection, management and dissemination. On the second day, the working group broke into three sub-groups, each tasked to draft specific recommendations that the entire group would review and approve.

The outcome of the workshop was a list of recommendations agreed by the working group as a result of its deliberations during the workshop and in an exchange of e-mail messages during the ten days following its completion. This report presents these recommendations in the context of the multiphase casualty database project conducted by the MAIC, including the workshop. It contains a summary of the presentations and discussion of the first day of the workshop. The first day's activities included all workshop participants and served to generate ideas and identify issues of most concern or interest among the group. The second day's work required the participants to make specific recommendations, drawing on the discussion of the previous day and the continuing discussion within the sub-groups. The report contains these recommendations in the form to which the workshop participants agreed them.

The working group's recommendations were taken to the Intersessional Programme of the Standing Committee on Victim Assistance and Socio-Economic Integration of the Mine Ban Treaty held in Geneva, Switzerland on May 27-28, 2002. The report also includes comments received during the discussion in Geneva about the project, as well as comments about the project contributed by persons invited to participate in the workshop but who were unable to attend.

