MAIC Survivor Assistance Projects

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**Summary**

The article discusses the challenges and progress in landmine clearance and assistance to victims in Kurdistan. It highlights the work of IKMAA, the Iraqi Kurdistan Mine Action Agency, in clearing landmines and returning land to its owners. The article also addresses the difficulty of the deminer's job, the role of local deminers in clearance projects, and the importance of prosthetic limbs and orthopedic devices to landmine survivors.

**Key Points**

- IKMAA has cleared a total of 39.6 million square meters (0.4 square mile) of landmines and UXO.
- The organization has handed over 39 cleared minefields to landowners.
- The Education Ministry of the Kurdistan Regional Government has started a reintegration program for displaced children and the unemployed.
- Many in the mine-action/unexploded-ordnance community have trouble effectively gathering, managing, and interpreting casualty data.
- The guidebook on casualty data, survivor-assistance training, and a catalog of adaptive technologies is being developed. It will be comprised of lessons learned and identified “best practices.”
- The Polus Center assists people with disabilities in developing sustainable, person-centered communities. It is focused on developing sustainable, person-centered projects for full social integration of landmine survivors.

**Table 1: Mine and UXO victims in four Kurdish governorates from 1952 to 2003.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Governorate</th>
<th>Years of Accidents</th>
<th>Mine Accidents</th>
<th>UXO Accidents</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Duhok</td>
<td>1965-1989</td>
<td>165</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1990-2003</td>
<td>514</td>
<td>190</td>
<td>134</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Erbil</td>
<td>1963-1989</td>
<td>469</td>
<td>275</td>
<td>261</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1990-2003</td>
<td>1000</td>
<td>584</td>
<td>959</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sulaimaniyah</td>
<td>1963-1989</td>
<td>440</td>
<td>277</td>
<td>389</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1990-2003</td>
<td>2228</td>
<td>1400</td>
<td>1235</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kirkuk</td>
<td>1959-1989</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1990-2003</td>
<td>700</td>
<td>567</td>
<td>331</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>5680</td>
<td>3483</td>
<td>3441</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Adaptive Technology Catalog

The project goals for the Adaptive Technology Catalog are to assist communities and nations recovering from conflicts in providing economic security for individuals who have become disabled by landmines and other explosive remnants of war. We will do this by finding and compiling into a catalog a variety of tools to help survivors get back to work and gain independence.

The Catalog was researched with the help of the Canadian firm, Project Assistance, and will be published in September 2007. It will incorporate low-cost, low-technology products that can either be used directly off-the-shelf or can be easily modified by local vendors. It focuses primarily on the agricultural and mechanical sectors, and is designed to help landmine/RW survivors become gainfully employed using simple, inexpensive technology. There are also several products related to kitchen work, computers, personal hygiene or grooming and transportation. Most of the tools are under US$500; a few are about $1,500. With about 800 tools listed, organized by tool function—auto, agriculture, construction, kitchen, mobility, recreation, etc.—there are ideas for overcoming many disabilities. Two of the supplying company owners are active and accomplished upper-extremity amputees themselves.

It is expected that the Adaptive Technology Catalog will be an excellent resource for survivor-assistance personnel, governments and organizations planning rehabilitation projects, donors and physical trauma survivors.

There are many benefits to a catalog of this type, including that it:

• Allows people to get back to work
• Gives donors something specific to fund
• Creates survivor independence

The Mine Action Information Center staff enjoys providing useful, needed products to the mine-action community as well as partnering with like-minded organizations to develop and deliver the projects. For more information about any of these projects, please contact Dr. Susanne Fiederlein at sfiederlein@jmu.edu or Lois Carter Fay at editormaint@gmail.com.

The Adaptive Technology Catalog project was inspired by Purdue University’s Breaking New Ground Resource Center Agricultural Project, which was developed to help farm accident victims from the United States. For more information about this resource, visit: http://www.purdue. edu/1561/14825/14955.html

International Symposium Draws 170 Participants

Numerous key figures in mine action recently gathered in Croatia to attend the international symposium, “Humanitarian Demining 2007–Mechanical Demining.” The symposium featured several presentations on demining, including a live field demonstration, discussed in detail here.

by Lois Carter Fay [Mine Action Information Center]

The symposium, “Humanitarian Demining 2007–Mechanical Demining,” held in Split, Republic of Croatia, at the end of April 2007, had something for everyone. There were 170 people from 35 countries registered for the week-long conference, and each presentation drew a minimum of 100 participants. The donor, manufacturing, governmental, research and development, testing and evaluation, and user communities were represented at the symposium.

Topics covered use of demining machines in area reduction, cost-effectiveness of using demining machines, risk management, machine methods and use in combination with other demining methods, along with a few miscellaneous subjects. Everything was presented in Croatian and English using live translators and state-of-the-art audio headsets in the Congress Center of the Solaris Holiday Resort. An exhibit room housed posters and trade booths for various demining machines and the respective manufacturers.

The conference was hosted by the Croatian Mine Action Center, with assistance provided by the United Nations Mine Action Service and the Program Planning Committee. It was the fourth symposium in a series of meetings hosted by Croatia.