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Humanitarian Impact Evaluation

Battlefield Area Clearance
South Lebanon (2007)

Handicap International



Aneza Pasha
MRE Technical Advisor

April 2008

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This evaluation report on the humanitarian impact of Handicap International's Battlefield Area Clearance (BAC) project in South Lebanon (2007) could not have been possible without the hard work of Handicap International's Tyre staff and the people of Al Bazuriah and Burj al Shamaly.

Thanks to the Community Liaison Officers (CLO) Dima Roumieh, Bassam Zayat and Hussein el-Hammoud for consistently collecting humanitarian data of Handicap International's BAC work, interviewing beneficiaries and writing the case studies as a record of the human life stories of the affected people. Thanks to Manal Nassour (Data Clerk / CLO Support Officer) for verifying the accuracy of the data.

Thanks to the residents of Al Bazuriah and Burj al Shamaly who provided HI with information about their land and homes, about their circumstances and hopes for the future, and in many cases, describing openly their personal trauma and tragedies since the conflict of 2006 turned their lives upside down. The report presented here cannot do full justice to their determination and resilience.

This document has been prepared to facilitate the exchange of knowledge, promote best practice and to stimulate discussion. Handicap International © 2008. All rights reserved.

1 – Summary

The aim of the report is to provide narrative and statistical data to demonstrate the humanitarian impact of Handicap International's Battlefield Area Clearance efforts in South Lebanon during the first 12 months of operations (December 2006 to December 2007). Handicap International has been conducting BAC in South Lebanon, since starting its operations in December 2006. During the first year of clearance, HI cleared:

- Private homes and gardens
- Private agricultural land,
- Public land used for grazing and natural resources,
- Public resources, such as clinics,

of cluster bomb units that presented a contamination from the 2006 conflict.

The clearance had a wide social, psychological and economic benefit which Handicap International documented through post clearance data gathering and collection of personal stories from the first 12 months of HI's BAC activities. The data summarized in this report covers the time period of clearance from December 2006 to December 2007 in the form of narrative, graphs and case studies of how people conducted their personal lives before and after clearance. This aims to present a human angle, giving a wide picture of the humanitarian impact of Battlefield Area Clearance conducted by Handicap International.

2 – General Information

2.1 Background on Handicap International

Handicap International (HI) is an international organization specialized in the field of disability. Non-governmental, non-religious, non-political and non-profit making, it works alongside people with disabilities, whatever the context, offering them assistance and supporting them in their efforts to become self-reliant. Since its creation, the organization has set up programs in approximately 60 countries and intervened in many emergency situations. It has a network of eight national associations (Belgium, Canada, France,

Germany, Luxembourg, Switzerland, United Kingdom, and USA) which provide human and financial resources, manage projects and raise awareness of Handicap International's actions and campaigns.

2.2 Handicap International's integrated mine action activities in Lebanon

Handicap International has been present in Lebanon since 1992 implementing disability-related projects. Following the 2006 conflict between Israel and Lebanon, HI expanded its assistance through the deployment of three Battlefield Area Clearance teams in South Lebanon, in order to reduce the risk caused by scattered unexploded ordnance (UXO) and release the land back to the most affected and vulnerable communities around Tyre.

Furthermore, Handicap International supported national NGOs in the field of disability through its programs based in Beirut:

- Lebanese Physical Handicapped Union (LPHU), Disability Focal Points (DFPs) pilot project in Tyre and Mashghara. The main goal of the DFPs was to provide persons with disabilities and/or injuries with information about rehabilitation services available, arrange respective referrals and the follow-up of these referrals to ensure appropriate treatment is received;
- Psychosocial support for persons affected by the 2006 conflict in Lebanon;
- Recovery Coordination Support in Lebanon - UNDP project;
- Support to Service Providers in the Nabatiyeh Area;
- Support to Service Providers in the Rashaya Area (West Beka'a);
- Emergency assistance to displaced persons from Nahr El Bared.

Case Study 9 (page 17) reflects the interlock of HI's field projects in Lebanon

2.3 Information on Lebanon

Area: 10,452 km²
Population: 4,000,000 inhabitants
Language: Arabic, French, English
Literacy: 95%
Capital: Beirut

Map of Lebanon



(Source: CIA World Factbook)

2.4 UXO Contamination in Lebanon

Following the 2006 conflict, a vast number of unexploded sub munitions and other types of UXO were scattered in South Lebanon (mostly south of the Litani River). As of 22nd August 2006, a total of 226 cluster bomb unit (CBU) strike areas were already identified. The UN Mine Action Coordination Centre for Southern Lebanon (UNMACC SL), and the Lebanon Mine Action Centre (LMAC) coordinated the emergency mine action response. It was estimated by the LMAC and UN MACC SL, that some four million cluster submunitions were deployed during the conflict of summer 2006 affecting an area of up to 38,638,788 m² of land in South Lebanon (*Sources: April 2007 MACC SL Monthly Report & MACC SL Weekly Report, 11 December 2007*). There were 857 CBU strikes confined to 393 areas. These areas were allocated identification task numbers and contained in the tasking dossiers allocated to all clearance organizations. By mid-December 2007, 138,271 cluster submunitions were destroyed through the combined efforts of all BAC teams in South Lebanon.

More recent information from the LMAC and MACC SL indicate that there are 966 cluster strikes confined to 447 areas and covering 38,819,694 m². The data also shows that 16% of this estimated area has been returned to the communities as a result of actions other than clearance, 27% has been fully cleared down to a depth of 20 cm and a further 47% had been cleared of all surface threat and is subject to further evaluation as to whether it will also require to be cleared down to 20 cm. By mid-April 2008, 143,249 cluster munitions have been destroyed (*Sources: March 2008 MACC SL Monthly Report & MACC SL Weekly Report, 13 April 2008*).

The table below is a summary of all the civilian accidents that took place in contaminated areas in south Lebanon from mid-August 2006 (representing the end of the conflict) to the end of December 2007 (the end of the timeframe defined for the purposes of this report).

Table 1
Civilian Accidents in South Lebanon,
14 August 2006 – 30 December 2007

Victim status	Boys 0-12	Girls 0-12	Boys 13-18	Girls 13-18	Men	Women	TOTAL
Injured	18	2	46	5	110	14	195
Killed	4	0	1	0	20	1	26
Total	22	2	47	5	130	15	221

(Source: MACC SL Monthly Report, November-December 2007)

The data shows that the majority of accidents (death and injury) were amongst adult men (defined as being aged 19 years and above) with the highest period for accidents immediately following the end of the conflict as men tried to clear their homes and farms to be reoccupied and utilized.

A total of 78 men were injured and killed in August and September 2006 by all UXO and mines. A year later, by September 2007, there had been an additional 43 accidents among adult men, a slow down in the accident rate thanks to the clearance efforts of the Lebanese Armed Forces (LAF) and of the international community.

One example of adult men being injured in the period immediate after the conflict is given in Case Study 1 below.

Case Study 1

On 18.09.2006 two agricultural workers -Essa Wady and Abdullah Srour- of Al Bazuriah village were working in a citrus orchard. They were laying an irrigation pipe through the orchard when there was an explosion from an unseen submunition. Abdullah, a father of six children lost his hearing ability in his right ear while Essa had extensive shrapnel injuries across his torso, right leg and to his right hand. They were treated in a public hospital in Tyre. They have now both resumed their jobs but with permanent impairments.

2.5 HI Project

2.5.1 Project Objective

Handicap International established a BAC project in October 2006 (operational from December 2006) with the aim of rapidly reducing the risk and alleviating the socio-economic impact posed by UXO to the populations of South Lebanon, through surface and sub-surface clearance of affected areas.

The HI BAC project aimed to

- Release land, which has been surface and sub-surface cleared back to the population, and reduce the number of suspected or confirmed dangerous areas.
- Ensure access of key roads and tracks used either for the delivery of humanitarian assistance or by refugees / returnees.
- Inform local populations and authorities of the landmine and UXO risk in their areas.

The project was funded by ECHO.

Handicap International implemented an integrated approach to its activities in Lebanon which includes both preventive and reparative measures. Prevention in the mine action sector includes both the clearance of explosive remnants of war (ERW) and community liaison. HI's rehabilitation project aimed to support people with temporary or permanent disabilities caused by ERW as well as the conflict at large (See Case Study 9).

2.5.2 Project Structure

HI established three BAC teams to conduct surface and sub-surface clearance of cluster bomb units (CBUs) in the Tyre area. HI's BAC teams were made up of:

- 1 Technical Advisor,
- 1 BAC Team Leader,
- 10 BAC Operators,
- 1 Community Liaison Officer,
- 1 Paramedic,
- 1 Driver,
- 1 Driver/Interpreter.

By the end of the project, the training and experience gained by the team led to a reduction of expatriate Technical Advisor input by 50%, with much of the operations responsibility being passed onto Lebanese Team Leaders.

The Community Liaison Officers supported the clearance activities by carrying out a community liaison assessment prior to clearance, undertaking community liaison during

clearance and at the time of the handover, and an evaluation of the humanitarian impact after the clearance was complete.

The CLOs completed an HI “Humanitarian Impact Assessment Form”, (HIAF) which aimed to measure and record the socio-economic and psychological impact of clearance for beneficiaries as well as the numbers of beneficiaries. This process was done in participation with the direct beneficiaries and served as a final record for HI, completing the cycle of HI’s BAC intervention in each area cleared. The data presented in this report is the result of the HIAF forms and case studies that the CLOs collected.

3 – Data

3.1 General Data

3.1.1 Data Gathering Methods

The HI Community Liaison Officers assisted UNMACC SL data systems by collecting data for the Information Management Systems for Mine Action (IMSMA) via the standard ‘Town Data Sheets’, ‘Dangerous Area Forms’ and ‘Victim Reports’.

Handicap International thus contributed to the IMSMA system by collecting data on dangerous areas, recent victims of cluster bombs and other ordnance; and demographic data on towns and villages. This provided background data, including the following:

- names of significant authority figures,
- location of dangerous areas,
- demographic data of the town/village population,
- town/village socio-economic and medical resources,
- geographical structure, references and infrastructure,
- type of dangerous area,
- the use of the land that is the dangerous area and a sketch map,
- details of any injured people locally.

The CLO’s obtained further relevant background information on the affected town/villages (e.g. population size and movements, main livelihoods or sources of income and other socio-economic concerns) and information about the background to the explosive remnants of war problem in a specific community (history of local battles/conflicts). HI identified specific at-risk groups in the communities to understand the extent and underlying reasons for ongoing risk-taking in contaminated areas.

The CLOs liaised with the landowners affected, the village Mukhtars (traditional authority figures) and other authority figures as necessary to introduce HI as an organization, informed them of the clearance process and start dates, consulted with them over the precise boundaries of the affected land and essentially established a collaborative relationship for the work ahead. As much as possible, the CLO ensured that community representatives were consulted and involved in prioritizing mine action interventions.

3.1.2 Beneficiaries and Affected Population

The primary beneficiaries of the BAC project were the communities in the Area of Operation and the population resettling to those areas (approx. 1.3 Million people).

HI was deployed to Area 7 (part of the so called “Tyre pocket”), to clear a selection of tasks in the towns of Al Bazuriah and Burj al Shamaly.

- Al Bazuriah	17,000 inhabitants
- Burj al Shamaly	17,000 inhabitants
Total	34,000 inhabitants

During the 2006 conflict, the vast majority of the communities in South Lebanon were evacuated. These displaced persons returned to their villages from August 2006 on and faced a drastically increased risk from cluster munitions and UXO in their daily lives. The removal of UXO was essential for their return to normal life and for economic rehabilitation (including access to vital economic infrastructure such as tobacco plantations, olives groves and general agricultural lands), and before reconstruction of destroyed and damaged properties could commence.

3.1.3 Data on Al Bazuriah and Burj al Shamaly

In Al Bazuriah, 25 houses were totally destroyed during the conflict and a further 600 or so were damaged. Ten people were killed and a further 51 injured.

Village name	Al Bazuriah
Distance to Tyre	7 km
Total area	9,638 m ²
Population	17,000
Number of schools	6
Religious groups	Muslim Shiite 98%, Muslim Sunni and Christian 2%
Income sources	Agriculture: 40%, Private sector jobs: 20%, Overseas income: 15%, Public sector jobs: 20%, Other: 5%
Hospital	None. Nearest hospital is at a distance of 6 km

Village name	Burj al Shamaly
Distance to Tyre	5 km
Total Area	10,000 m ²
Population - Lebanese community	17,000
Population - Palestinian refugee camp	15,000
Total population	32,000
Number Of Schools	6
Religious Groups	99% Muslim Shiite, Muslim Sunni 1% in the Lebanese population. With Palestinian population considered the breakdown is 53% Shiite, and 47% Sunni
Income sources	Agriculture: 38%, Private sector jobs: 18%, Overseas income: 17%, Public sector jobs: 23%, Other: 4%
Hospital	1

(Source: MACC-SL South Lebanon Town Data Sheets)

The table below summarizes the technical data of the clearance conducted and completed by HI from December 2006 to December 2007.

Table 2
Summary of HI BAC Clearance and Completion Data

CBU Strike #	Village/Location	# Direct Beneficiaries	Total size cleared area (m²)	Team	Status
100	Al Bazuriah 7-001	150	27,161	Alpha	Handed over 13-06-07
403	Al Bazuriah 7-001	176		Alpha	Handed over 13-06-07
322	Al Bazuriah 7-001	742	43,000	Bravo	Handed over 26-02-07
554	Al Bazuriah 7-001	451	40,804	Charlie	Handed over 06-06-07
040	Al Bazuriah 7-001	7,364	76,395	Bravo	Operations suspended 22-06-07
531	Al Bazuriah 7-001	2,829	47,702	Alpha	Handed over 02-10-07
534	Al Bazuriah 7-001	652		Alpha	Handed over 02-10-07
041	Al Bazuriah 7-001	2,089	76,386	Alpha	Handed over 07-08-07
472	Al Bazuriah 7-001	1,877	14,852	Alpha	Handed over 23-08-07
1047	Al Bazuriah 7-001	1,392	43,553	Alpha	Handed over 09-11-07
144	Burj al Shamaly 7-001	3,606	42,369	Alpha	Handed over 13-06-07
361	Burj al Shamaly 7-001	1,100	28,019	Alpha	Handed over 06-06-07
421	Burj al Shamaly 7-001	1,280	51,465	Charlie	Handed over 19-07-07
420	Burj al Shamaly 7-001	1,456	51,063	Charlie	Handed over 05-09-07
341	Burj al Shamaly 7-001	1,450	65,800	Bravo	Handed over 23-11-07
621	Burj al Shamaly 7-001	1,094		Bravo	Handed over 23-11-07
Total		27,708	608,569 m²		

Table 2 does not give details of the tasks ongoing or commenced during December 2007 but only those completed and handed over to beneficiaries for resumption of use. Handicap International cleared land of cluster bomb units (CBUs) in the villages of Al Bazuriah and Burj Al Shamaly in 2007. The areas cleared included private home areas, public land, private agricultural land and land used for health or governmental facilities.

Table 3 describe what type of areas HI cleared during the reporting period. Tables 4 and 5 give a breakdown of the areas cleared by village.

Table 3: Number and Type of Areas Cleared by HI BAC

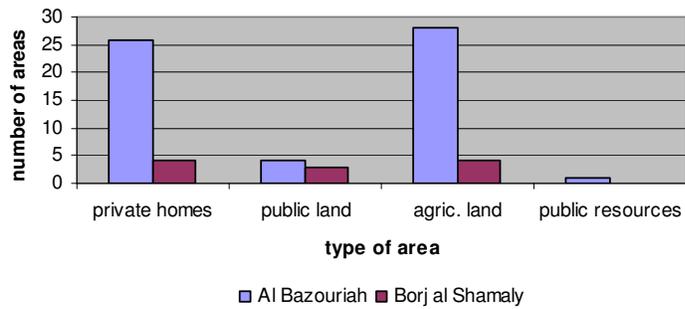


Table 4: Type of Areas Cleared in Al Bazouriah

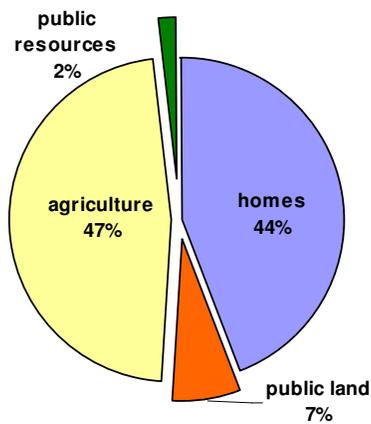
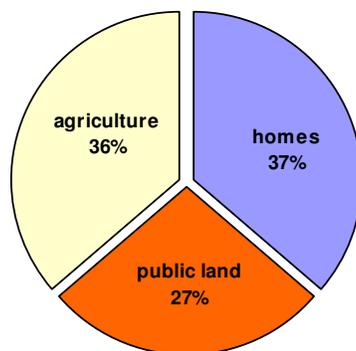


Table 5: Type of Areas Cleared in Burj al Shamaly



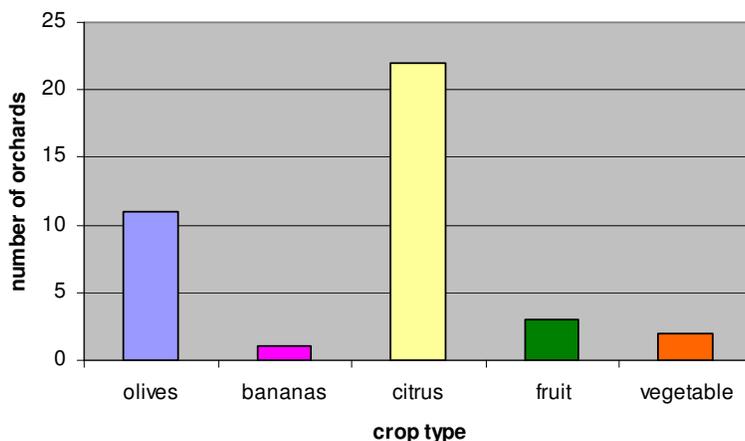
During 2007, the majority of clearance work focused on Al Bazouriah with greater number of areas cleared for the purpose of private homes and private agricultural land allowing people to resettle and restart their economic livelihood (agriculture forming the basis of

40% of the economy for Al Bazuriah). Hence, the lower figures given for areas cleared in Burj al Shamaly in Table 3.

3.2 Impact on Agricultural Land

The second most commonly cleared area by Handicap International was local agricultural land. The numbers of orchards HI cleared were utilised for the crops shown in Table 6 (most commonly cleared orchards in 2007 were for citrus trees). This is also reflected in the profit as demonstrated in Table 7.

Table 6: Number and Type of Orchards Cleared



Handicap International calculated the number of landowners, farm workers and their dependants as the beneficiaries of agricultural land cleared. The number of farm workers including both owners of the land and the farm worker employees totalled 2,679

Based on the average family size of six people (*Samidoun*), the dependants of the land owners and farmers totalled 13,710 (*Village assessment south lebanon, Samidoun, September 2006*).

Therefore, the total numbers of beneficiaries from cleared agricultural land = **16,389 people.**

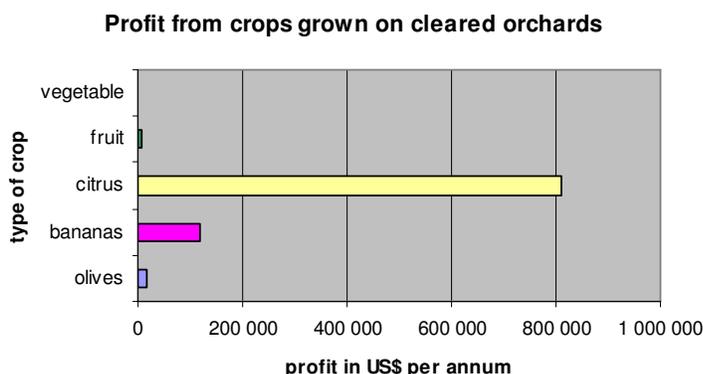
The total area of agricultural land cleared by HI was 233,269 m².



HI BAC operator clearing a banana plantation

Handicap International liaised with landowners to project an estimated income that would have been gained from the crop grown on the cleared land, the expected harvest and the selling price per kilo. The figures in Table 7 below are *estimations* made by the farmers and are not *actual* income from the crop grown on the cleared agricultural land.

Table 7
Profits from Crops in Post-Clearance Orchard



Case Study 2 illustrates a personal account of a farmer who benefited from Handicap International BAC activities.

Case Study 2

Ali Mahmood Nisr is a landowner of an olive orchard and employs 8 farm workers. The olive orchard of 4,500 m² can expect to produce a harvest of 1,800 kg of olives in the months of September and October. The olives would be sold to the local oil press to be processed for cooking oil.

Ali would expect to gain a profit of US\$ 2,400 from the harvest and pay his workers and support his own family. Ali has 12 dependant family members who rely on the income from the orchard and on his small income as a teacher.

The approximate number of dependants of the farm workers is 72 people.

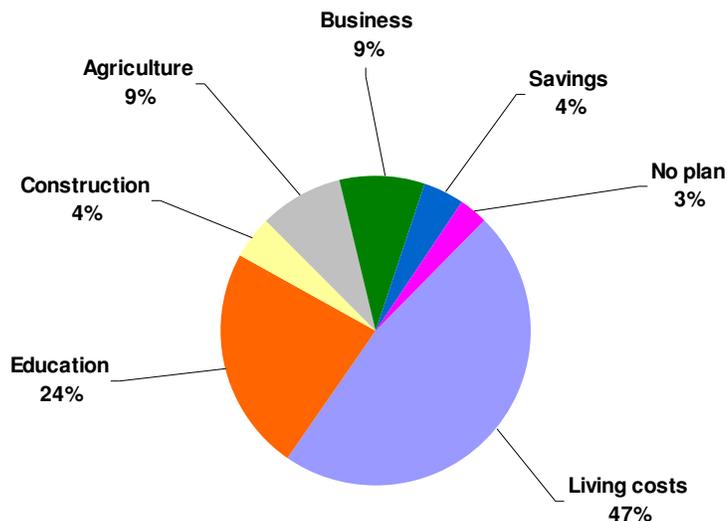
Handicap International cleared the orchard, enabling work for 13 people to resume work and a total of 84 dependants to benefit from it.

Handicap International asked all the farmers (12 in total), how they planned to use their income and for what purpose (respondents could give more than 1 category). The categories given were:

- General living costs, 32 responses
- Education costs of their children 16
- Business investment 6
- Reinvestment into the agricultural business 6
- General savings 3
- Home construction 3
- No plans 2

Table 8
Planned Crop Profit Investments

How beneficiaries plan to invest profit from crops



The majority of landowners and farmers intended to use their income from the land to support primarily their general daily living costs. It was for many of them their essential source of income for their families. This indicates that the agricultural land was the main revenue for many households in order to meet basic living costs at a time when they were most financially vulnerable and insecure after the 2006 conflict.

Case Study 3

Khalil Srour is a landowner of an orange orchard in Al Bazuriah. He earned an income from renting out the 80 m² orchards to farmers. However, 30% of the orchard was destroyed in the 2006 conflict and the remaining land was covered with CBUs, meaning that no one was prepared to rent it out. With the clearance by HI, Khalil was able to regain his income once again.

3.3 Impact on Private Homes

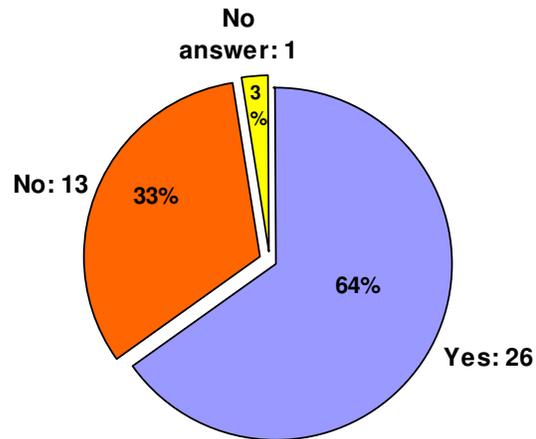
A total of 40 residential homes were cleared.

The total numbers of beneficiaries residing in those homes were 462 people.

Of those 40 households, 26 stated they had no alternative accommodation, 13 stated they did have alternative accommodation and 1 made no statement (See Table 9).

Therefore, more than half of the households who were assisted by HI's BAC activities had been living in precariously dangerous environments, with children and extended family members in contaminated homes and gardens. Case Studies 4 and 5 describe some of the personal circumstances that people experienced while their property was contaminated and before BAC clearance.

Table 9
Access to Alternative Housing



Case Study 4

Niamey Waft is a head of household whose home was heavily contaminated by CBUs from the 2006 conflict. During the conflict, the family of 6 people evacuated their home to stay with relatives in Battolieh village. On returning she found their home with its 1,000 m² garden heavily contaminated with 40 CBUs and the roof of the house badly damaged. The garden which was used to grow fruit trees was now inaccessible because of the contamination. With the clearance of the CBUs by Handicap International, the family was able to resume some sort of normality and harvest their trees.



HI BAC operator testing a detector before clearing a house

Case Study 5

Mohammed Karaouni is the head of a household based in Al Bazuriah. His household numbers seven people living in a single house while its garden was contaminated with CBUs until HI cleared it. Mohammed saw 27 CBUs in his 600 m² garden.

While the clearance was ongoing, Mohammed was obliged to move his family to live with other relatives. The clearance of his home was a tremendous relief to him and his family as one of Mohamed's daughters is blind and she had been restricted from playing in the garden for her own safety until they could move back into a cleared home.

3.4 Impact on Public Land

Handicap International cleared publicly owned or communal land. Some were open wild areas that provided economic usage for the population. HI BAC project returned to the population the options for undertaking usual activities such as:

- Shepherding,
- Collecting wild fruits,
- Hunting
- Collecting firewood

Some public land was locally used for specific social reasons. Through its clearance work, HI returned to the population the possibilities of using the public land as:

- Picnic areas
- Play areas
- Sports grounds
- Camping sites
- Cemeteries

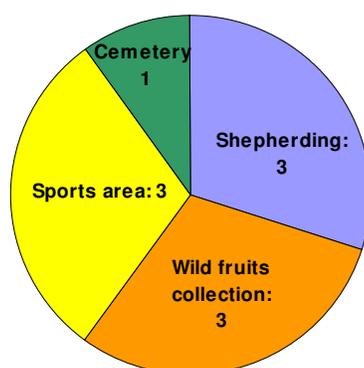
In total, HI cleared seven areas that were publicly owned land; three in the village of Burj Al Shamaly and four in Al Bazuriah. Some of these were used for more than one purpose. A total of 87,305 m² of public land was cleared. HI estimated the beneficiaries of this clearance to be the total resident and refugee populations of Al Bazuriah (17,000 people) and Burj al Shamaly (32,000 people).

Case Study 6

In South Lebanon, it is customary for people to visit the graves of their dead relatives on a weekly basis and read the Quran at the graveside. In Al Bazuriah, there are 4 graveyards, one of which was contaminated by cluster bomb units. Visitors who continued to enter the contaminated graveyard following the war put themselves at risk until it was cleared by HI BAC teams.

The details of how the cleared public land was used are in Table 10.

Table 10
Use of Cleared Public Land



Case Study 7

One of the public areas that HI cleared of CBUs in Al Bazuriah was a public football ground. The grounds were used by three local teams

- Al Nasr
- Al Ajyal
- Al Ahly

There were a total of 400 players in the three teams together, a quarter of them under 15 years of age. Every summer the village holds two tournaments (one for the local village teams in July and the second for the all the surrounding villages in August). The spectators would reach up to 1,000 people.

Once the area was cleared it was immediately used for practice and matches that drew large crowds, including HI national staff members themselves.



Children playing on cleared football grounds



Public land clearance

Public land can be used in South Lebanon for varied social and economic reasons. This is reflected in the kind of areas HI was requested to clear. The beneficiaries of the public land can be in the hundreds for sports grounds or dozens for shepherding areas.

3.5 Impact on Public Resources

Case Study 8

HI BAC teams cleared a Lebanese Red Cross clinic in Al Bazuriah, which served a geographical coverage area of 70 kilometers radius. Sub-munitions' blasts had left several holes in the clinic roof, making it unsuitable for use, especially in winter that followed the end of the conflict. After clearance of unexploded sub-munitions, the clinic roof was renovated.

At the time of clearance, the clinic had 480 patients in its beds and 5 medical staff.

The clinic is the only medical centre that delivers health services related to women only. Their services include mammography, echography, osteo-densitometry (i.e. medical matters relating to thinning of bone density) and smear tests, with consultation for gynecology and pregnant women.

The public pay 20 per cent of the actual cost of the treatment. The closest alternative clinic offering similar treatment is in Beirut, 90 km away.

3.6 Summary Data on Number of Beneficiaries

As of 14th of December 2007, a total of **608,569 m²** of land had been cleared by HI BAC teams.

The direct beneficiaries of the cleared areas are described in Table 10 (this number is higher than that of Table 2 since it involves direct beneficiaries from outside the 2 towns in which HI worked; e.g. children going to schools but not living in village, agricultural workers employed in Al Bazuriah but residing in other villages/towns).

Table 11
Summary Data on the Number of Beneficiaries

Type of beneficiaries	Total beneficiaries as of Dec 07
Farm workers and dependants	21,826
Owner and/or user of open land and dependants	609
Shepherds and dependants	63
Herb collectors and dependants	1,062
School children and students	1,256
Teachers, educational admin. and dependants	696
Owner and/or user of residential houses and dependants	728
Construction workers and dependants	3,288
Sports players and spectators	2,300
Religious worshippers, cemeteries	4,000
Health workers and admin, and dependants	42
Users of health facilities	480
People depending on associated businesses	820
Owners and workers of a factory and their dependants	1,750
TOTAL	38,920

Case Study 9

Ali al-Numayri lives in Al-Bazuriah. Ali is 40 years old and single. His health is bad and he has speech difficulties. He lives with his sister whom he is responsible for financially. He works as a shepherd and his 20 goats are his only source income. His daily income is 25,000 Lebanese Pounds (16.7 \$USD)



On 11th September 2006 and while Ali was herding his goats between the two villages of Al-Bazuriah and Burj al Shamaly, he stepped on a cluster bomb and it exploded. As a result, he suffered from physical disability in his injured right leg and multiple superficial injuries in the face and abdomen.

Due to the accident and the resulting injuries, Ali had to cease working as a shepherd, making life for him and his sister very precarious and vulnerable

A few months later, Ali, refusing to surrender to his new health conditions, decided to herd new goats again, but with the aid of two crutches. It is a daily struggle for him to regain his autonomy and physical strength.



This case was reported and documented to the Disability Focal Point, Handicap International in Tyre (South Lebanon).

Ali expressed his relief that HI had completed the clearance in his village, which allows peoples to work in their lands with a renewed sense of security and safety.

4. Concluding Remarks

Battlefield Area Clearance activities conducted by Handicap International in the villages of Al Bazuriah and Burj al Shamaly during 2007 had direct humanitarian benefits for the residents and local communities in general. The end use of the cleared land was primarily for agricultural activities by small farmers and for private residence. Handicap International cleared land for public resources (including a clinic) and cleared public land used for a variety of reasons (cemetery, sports, shepherding and natural resources).

The process of Battlefield Area Clearance is time consuming and conducted under difficult physical circumstances, a fact appreciated by the affected communities. However it achieved the final result of returning land to local people who could trust in its safety and enabled affected communities to resume their life as closely as possible to the way they had lived it prior to the 2006 conflict.

Before conducting clearance operations on any land, Handicap International makes efforts to form relations with land owners and authorities in order to gain access and clear identified CBU strike areas, identify new dangerous areas, and ensure cooperation and consultations at each stage of the clearance process.

This was not always straightforward in South Lebanon as rural communities were under significant pressure to resume their daily agricultural activity and to return to their homes after the bombings ceased in August 2006 – the ongoing insecurity (both economic and psychological) was a great stress for ordinary people in the region. Their desire was to resume economic activity despite the dangers with which they were all too familiar.

The personal stories told through the case studies highlight impact of cluster sub-munitions had on the lives of people; preventing them from occupying homes, reaping the orchard harvests and gain an income for basic living costs, shepherding their flocks and preventing children from playing freely.

Handicap International continues to operate in the south conducting Battlefield Area Clearance for humanitarian purposes. Since December 2007 HI has been clearing contaminated land in the villages of Aytit, As Sawanah, and Deir Amis and is committed to further clearance of Lebanon from explosive remnants of war.

Acronyms

AO	Area of Operation
BAC	Battle Area Clearance
CBU	Cluster Bomb Unit
CLO	Community Liaison Officer
DFP	Disability Focal Points
ECHO	European Commission Humanitarian aid Office
ERW	Explosive Remnants of War
HAIF	Humanitarian Impact Assessment Forms
HI	Handicap International
IMSMA	International Management System for Mine Action
LAF	Lebanese Armed Forces
LMAC	Lebanese Mine Action Centre
LPHU	Lebanese Physical Handicapped Union
MRE	Mine Risk Education
NGO	Non Governmental Organization
TA	Technical Advisor
UNMACC SL	United Nations Mine Action Coordination Centre, South Lebanon
UXO	Unexploded Ordnance