Handicap International

**Presence World Wide**

Officially started August 3, 1982, Handicap International (HI) works to provide rapid intervention on behalf of the handicapped and the most vulnerable populations when armed conflict upsets existing systems of assistance and solidarity. In countries where the economic problem is severe or where their expertise in prevention and socioeconomic development is requested, HI also steps in to assist. Technicians in the association offer expertise in prostheses, physical therapy, psychomotor therapy, psychology, and landmine action. HI presently conducts over 160 projects in rehabilitation, communication and by encouraging an active role of their families.

**Treatment, Prevention, Integration**

HI describes its three-pronged approach as "multi-disciplinary programs designed to improve the living conditions of individuals faced with handicap or vulnerability." Real solutions will happen when the communities of the Third World derive technical support from local opportunities and then put these into practice in cooperation with the handicapped communities. HI acts on its specific commitment to ban anti-personnel mines. The Mines Coordination Unit organizes workshops for HI integrates all of these priorities: integration of the handicapped and other persons with disabilities; education for those communities and countries with widespread, especially in internal conflicts.

**Landmines are indiscriminate and permit no opportunity to the victim.**

Many countries have to had to treat large numbers of landmine victims, attesting to the fact that the use of this low technology weapon is becoming more widespread, especially in internal conflicts.

**Current Activities**

In June 1999 the ICRC launched an appeal for 105 million Swiss francs (U.S. $69 million) to fund its activities for mine victims over the next five years. The financial appeal covers all of the ICRC's activities related to landmines.

**Goals**

- To reduce the risk of mine-related incidents through mine awareness programs currently being conducted by the ICRC in six countries.
- To provide mine victims with treatment and physical rehabilitation in 23 limbfitting centers that the ICRC is running in 11 countries, and to continue its support for similar centers run by ministries of health.
Landmine Survivors Network

Landmine Survivors Network (LSN) works to help mine victims and their families recover through an integrated program of peer counseling, sports, social and economic reintegration into their communities. In countries in the developing world where landmines are prevalent, survivors lose more than a leg or arm: they often lose their place as a valued and respected member of their society. LSN works with survivors and their families to support their efforts to retrace their place and become productive members of their communities. For example, landmine survivors play a crucial role in landmine education, particularly for children within communities at risk.

Since its inception, LSN has been building a worldwide network to link landmine survivors with the resources available to help them. LSN is developing the first comprehensive database designed to track the rehabilitation needs of mine victims and the organizations that can channel urgently needed assistance to the impoverished survivors who need it most.

Today, the network is concentrating its efforts on the mine-polluted countries where most survivors live, including Afghanistan, Angola, Bosnia, Cambodia and Mozambique. In each country, we are working to bring medical supplies, education and employment opportunities to thousands of survivors. LSN is on the steering committee of the International Campaign to Ban Landmines (ICBL), a coalition of more than 1,000 humanitarian, religious and development groups, that was a co-recipient of the 1997 Nobel Peace Prize.

Jerry White

Jerry White, co-founder and director of LSN, stepped on a mine in Israel in 1984 while hiking with friends. He has 10 years experience tracking the spread of weapons of mass destruction. A graduate of Brown University, White worked at the Brookings Institution prior to becoming assistant director of the Wisconsin Project on Nuclear Arms Control in Washington, D.C. He has testified before Congress and published numerous articles in the New York Times, though many continue to receive financial and technical support from the ICRC. In a number of countries, the National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, supported by their International Federations, care for mine-injured people through health, rehabilitation and social welfare programs.

In addition to these activities, the ICRC and national societies are conducting mine awareness programs in several countries in order to reduce the number of landmine incidents in mine-affected areas. The ICRC is currently running 25 limbs-fitting and rehabilitation programs in 13 countries: Afghanistan, Angola, Azerbaijan, Cambodia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Uganda. It also provides direct medical assistance to health facilities and appropriate training for nurses, doctors and surgeons treating mine victims.

In cooperation with a number of National Red Cross or Red Crescent Societies, the ICRC currently runs mine awareness programs in Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Bosnia-Herzegovina and Croatia. Similar programs are being drawn up in Angola, Georgia and Sudan. They aim to reduce the risk of mine-related death or injury by providing people in mine-affected areas with information on the precautions to be taken until the mines can be cleared.

Since February 1994, the ICRC and the entire International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement have been actively involved in the drive to impose a total ban on anti-personnel mines, running public awareness campaigns and encouraging diplomatic and military circles to support their efforts. These efforts will continue in order to achieve universal acceptance of the Ottawa Treaty, to coordinate assistance in the case given to victims, and to extend preventive mine awareness programs.

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