



HUMANITARIAN IMPACT OF LANDMINES IN BURMA/MYANMAR

REPORT PREPARED BY GENEVA CALL WITH
TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE FROM DCA MINE ACTION



GENEVA CALL

APPEL DE GENÈVE LLAMAMIENTO DE GINEBRA

DCA MINE ACTION



act alliance

MEMBER

DCA DEMINAGE

2011



COVER PHOTO - FREE BURMA RANGERS
INSIDE PHOTOS - DCA

**Humanitarian Impact of Landmines in
Burma/Myanmar
2011**

TABLE of CONTENTS

• Executive Summary	3
• List of Acronyms	4
• Names of Burma/Myanmar States and Divisions	5
• Acknowledgements	6
1. Introduction and Methodology	7
2. Background and Context	9
History of Landmine Use	9
Affected Areas	9
Affected Communities	12
Affected People	14
3. Mine Action in Burma	16
Victim Assistance	19
Mine Risk Education	21
Advocacy against Landmines	22
Mine Clearance	24
4. Potential Mine Action Providers	26
UN Mine Action Agencies, INGOs, National Authorities	26
NSAs and NSA-linked CBOs, National and Local NGOs, National Faith-Based Organizations, Civil Society Organizations, Media in Burma/Myanmar	27
5. Conclusion	28
6. Recommendations	29
7. Appendices	32

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Humanitarian Impact of Landmines in Burma/Myanmar

While the existing data available on landmine victims indicate that Burma/Myanmar¹ faces one of the most severe landmine problems in the world today, little is known about the actual extent of the problem, the impact on affected populations, communities' mine action needs and how different actors can become more involved in mine action.

The Government of Burma/Myanmar has prohibited almost all forms of mine action with the exception of a limited amount of prosthetic assistance to people with amputated limbs through general health programmes. Some Mine Risk Education (MRE) is also conducted in areas which are partly or fully under the control of armed non-State actors (NSAs) as is victim assistance and some survey work, however, without Government authorisation.

Since starting operations in 2006, Geneva Call and DCA Mine Action, like other local and international actors wishing to undertake mine action, have been struggling to identify how best to do this in the limited humanitarian space available in Burma/Myanmar. Lack of Government permission to start mine action activities and difficult access to mine-affected areas are two of the main obstacles identified by these actors. In response to this apparent conflict between interest and opportunity, Geneva Call and DCA Mine Action decided to produce a report on the landmine problem in Burma/Myanmar, which would pay particular attention to what can be done to address the identified needs. The report is based on research carried out between June and September 2010. Thirty two different stakeholders in Burma/Myanmar, Thailand, Bangladesh and China were interviewed in order to better understand the current, medium- and long-term effects of the landmine problem on affected local communities and to identify possible mine action interventions.

The problem with anti-personnel mines in Burma/Myanmar originates from decades of armed conflict, which is still ongoing in some parts of the country. Anti-personnel mines are still being used today by the armed forces of the Government of Burma/Myanmar (the Tatmadaw), by various non-State actors (NSAs), as well as by businessmen² and villagers. Ten out of Burma/Myanmar's 14 States and Divisions are mine contaminated. The eastern States and Divisions bordering Thailand are particularly contaminated with mines. Some areas bordering Bangladesh and

China are also mined, and mine accidents have occurred there. An estimated five million people live in townships that contain mine-contaminated areas, and are in need of Mine Risk Education (MRE) to reduce risky behaviour, and victim assistance for those already injured.

With estimates of mine victim numbers still unclear due to a lack of reliable data, the report finds that a significant proportion of the children affected in landmine accidents in NSA areas are child soldiers. In Karenni/Kaya State every second child is a child soldier; in Karen/Kayin State every fourth child is a child soldier.

The Government's refusal to grant permission for mine action activities and the ongoing conflict have left no real space for humanitarian demining in Burma/Myanmar. However, some demining activities are being undertaken by the Tatmadaw and by NSAs, although it is unclear whether these activities should be regarded as military or humanitarian demining. Similarly, the complicated domestic situation only leaves limited space for implementing comprehensive surveys. Those surveys that have been carried out by Community Based Organizations (CBO), show significant mine contamination. However such surveys can only be an indicator of the reality on the ground as they are limited in geographical scope.

At present, local CBOs and national NGOs have better access to mined areas than the UN and international NGOs. However, CBOs and national NGO mine action activities are limited to MRE and victim assistance-related activities because of the Government restrictions placed on other forms of mine action. These activities are only conducted on a discreet level – MRE is provided under general Risk Reduction or health programmes while victim assistance falls under general disability assistance programmes.

A national ban on anti-personnel mines and a ban by the major NSA users of landmines do not seem to be realistic in the near future. Nevertheless, the success of local/regional bans on anti-personnel mines, especially in the western part of Burma/Myanmar could serve as an inspiration and a positive harbinger of progress for this country marred by decades of internal strife and war.

¹ Since 1989, the official name of the country is Myanmar. Previously it was called Burma which is still used by some countries and groups, predominantly outside the country. In this report both names are used. This does not reflect a political position.

² A variety of actors may be involved in illegal activities including drug production, smuggling and/or trafficking. Landmines are sometimes used as "business-mines" in the context of these activities. See also chapter 2 below.

LIST of ACRONYMS

AP	Anti-Personnel Mine
ARNO	The Arakan Rohingya National Organization/Rohingya National Army
BGF	Border Guard Force
CBO	Community Based Organization
CNF/CNA	The Chin National Front/Army
DCA	DCA Mine Action
DKBA	Democratic Karen Buddhist Army
ICBL	The International Campaign to Ban Landmines
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
IDP	Internally Displaced People
IED	Improvised Explosive Device
IMAS	International Mine Action Standards
INGO	International Non-Governmental Organization
KIA	Kachin Independence Army under KIO
KIO	Kachin Independence Organization
KNLA	Karen National Liberation Army
KNPLF	Karenni National People Liberation Front
KNU	Karen National Union
LDF	Lahu Democratic Front
MAG	Mines Advisory Group
MIMU	Myanmar Information Management Unit, under UNDP
MRCS	Myanmar Red Cross Society
MRE	Mine Risk Education
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NMSP	New Mon State Party
NSA	non-State actor
NUPA	The National Unity Party of Arakan/Arakan Army
PPLO/PPLA	The Pa'O Peoples' Liberation Organization/Pa'O Peoples' Liberation Army
PWG	Protection Work Group
PSLF	The Palaung State Liberation Front
SPDC	State Peace and Development Council
TATMADAW	Government Armed Forces of Burma/Myanmar
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNMAS	United Nations Mine Action Service
UXO	Unexploded Ordnance

Names of Burma/Myanmar States and Divisions

Traditional name (often used by ethnic minority groups, NSAs, cross-border CBOs, exile media) **Official name** (used by SPDC, UN, EU, INGOs in Yangon)

Irrawaddy Division	Ayeyarwady Division
Pegu Division	Bago Division
Chin State	Chin State
Kachin State	Kachin State
Karenni State	Kaya State
Karen State	Kayin State
Magway Division	Magway Division
Mandalay Division	Mandalay Division
Mon State	Mon State
Arakan State	Rakhine State
Sagaing Division	Sagaing Division
Shan State	Shan State
Tenasserim Division (Mergue-Tavoy Division)	Thanintharyi Division
Rangoon Division	Yangon Division

Acknowledgements

Geneva Call acknowledges the Norwegian Embassy in Bangkok for its generous contribution in support of this project. Geneva Call would also like to thank all the contributors to this report who gave their valuable perspectives and information. Without them, this report would not have been possible. Finally, we would like to thank all the DCA Mine Action team, including their consultant and technical staff for their invaluable time and input. The resulting product has indeed aided Geneva Call and DCA to improve their work plans for the coming years. We look forward to using this report as a tool by which to encourage others to become more active, and better able to address mine action needs in Burma/Myanmar.

About the Authors

Geneva Call

Geneva Call is a neutral and impartial humanitarian organization¹ dedicated to engaging armed non-State actors in dialogue towards compliance with the norms of international humanitarian law (IHL) and human rights law (IHRL).² The organization focuses on NSAs that operate outside effective State control and that are primarily motivated by political goals, including armed movements, de facto authorities, and internationally non-recognized or partially recognized States.³ It conducts its activities according to the principles of neutrality, impartiality, and independence. Transparency is also a core working principle of the organization. As a standard operating practice, it informs stakeholders, including concerned governments, of its engagement efforts with NSAs.

Geneva Call celebrated its tenth anniversary in March 2010 and has accumulated ten years of valuable experience in engaging NSAs. As a pioneer in its field, it has gained recognition for its efforts and achievements from many quarters, including the UN Secretary-General,⁴ States parties to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production, Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction (hereafter the 'AP Mine Ban Convention'), the European Union (EU), and the African Union (AU).⁵ The progress made on the AP Mine ban and the trust it has built with NSAs throughout the world have encouraged Geneva Call to expand its activities to the protection of women and children and the prohibition on gender based violence during armed conflict.

Geneva Call has been working in Burma/Myanmar since 2006, engaging NSAs in the ban of anti-personnel mines. During this time it has established a good level of trust with local actors, including the leadership of numerous NSAs.

DanChurchAid

DanChurchAid (DCA) was established in 1922 and is today one of Denmark's leading humanitarian non-governmental organisations, working globally with local partners, international networks, churches and secular civil society organisations to assist the poorest of the poor. DCA has regional offices located in the Middle East, Asia, Africa and South America and works with a rights based approach and the principles of gender equality within five programmatic areas: food security, HIV/AIDS, political space, humanitarian response and mine action.

DCA Mine Action has been operational since 1999, working in countries such as Albania, Angola, Burundi, DR Congo, Eritrea, Kosovo, Iraq, Lebanon and Sudan. We are committed to national capacity building and work closely with national authorities to ensure in-country capacity remains in order to deal with the residual mine and Explosive Remnants of War (ERW) problem after we exit a country. In addition to removing mines, ERW and releasing land back to the affected population, we also strive to ensure a broader development impact. DCA Mine Action is about creating sustainability beyond clearance.

1 It is registered as a non-profit foundation under Swiss law.

2 Geneva Call also uses the term 'humanitarian norms' to refer to both IHL and those norms of IHRL which should govern the conduct of NSAs in situations of armed conflict or armed violence, regardless of their binding nature.

3 Such as, for example, the Saharawi Arab Democratic Republic and the Republic of Abkhazia.

4 UN Security Council, 'Report of the Secretary-General on the protection of civilians in armed conflict,' report number S/2009/277, (New York: 2009). Available: <http://genevacall.org/resources/official-documents/f-official-documents/2001-2010/2009-29may-uncsc.pdf>. Accessed 14 September 2010.

5 For more information, see 'Engaging Armed Non-State Actors in a Landmine Ban: The Geneva Call Progress Report (2000-2007),' (Geneva: Geneva Call, 2007), p. 10.

1 Introduction and Methodology

Anti-personnel (AP) mines pose a clear and present danger to civilians in the conflict areas of Burma/Myanmar. The most recent figures available (2008) suggest that mine accident rates are in fact amongst the highest in the world, only surpassed by Afghanistan and Colombia.¹ AP mines have been produced and used by the Government and armed non-State Actors (NSAs) in the internal conflict that has continued since independence. The results are devastating: 34 of Burma/Myanmar's 325 townships are contaminated with landmines², millions³ live in affected townships and more than ten thousand victims use or are in need of rehabilitative care.⁴

Since starting operations in 2006, Geneva Call and DCA Mine Action, like other local and international actors wishing to undertake mine action⁵, have been struggling to identify how best to do this in the limited humanitarian space available in Burma/Myanmar. Lack of Government permission to start mine action activities and challenges in accessing mine-affected areas are two of the main obstacles to action identified by these actors. In response to this apparent conflict between interest and opportunity, Geneva Call and DCA Mine Action decided to produce a report on the landmine problem in Burma/Myanmar, which would pay particular attention to what can be done to address identified needs.

An overwhelming reluctance⁶ and inability of the international community to work inside Burma/Myanmar has led to very limited donor support⁷ being given for humanitarian aid as well as mine action. Relatively little funding has been allocated to mine action in Burma/Myanmar over the years, although there has been some growth recently. For instance, in 2008 USD 1,000,000 was allocated to mine action in Burma/Myanmar,⁸ a significant increase over the USD 183,800 allocated in 2007. However, this is still very low compared to other mine-affected countries where the international community has been allowed to support mine action. Funding available for mine action in other severely landmine and/or Unexploded Ordnance (UXO) contaminated countries such as Cambodia, Laos, Iraq and Afghanistan has been consistently much higher.⁹

International non-governmental organizations (INGOs), national non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and Community Based Organizations (CBOs) have limited funding and consequently only reach a fraction of the at-risk communities with MRE and victim assistance. Such organizations can provide for no more than one in every four landmine victims in need of rehabilitation. The remaining mine victims either have to buy prosthetic limbs on the commercial markets at prohibitively high prices, produce prosthetic limbs from bamboo, wood or water-tubes or use crutches. Moreover, in addition to a lack of funding, factors such as difficulty of access and lack of permission to work in the country have limited implementation of mine action projects. This report aims to identify how the various national and international actors can provide assistance to the affected population while taking into account the limitations set by the Government and the ongoing conflict.

There is no comprehensive data on the suspected mined areas in Burma/Myanmar or on the total number of mine victims or communities in need, mainly because there is no National Mine Action Authority to collect and centralise this information. The Government's general reluctance to acknowledge the mine issue is a contributing factor as to why a National Mine Action Authority has not yet been established.

Given the constraints on obtaining data, this report is primarily based on direct interviews with a range of invested stakeholders in order to acquire the clearest possible picture of mine action activities and needs

1 ICBL. 2009. Landmine Monitor.

2 Myanmar Information Management Unit (MIMU). 2010. Townships with Known Hazards of Antipersonnel Mines.

3 DCA Mine Action estimate based on MIMU map Estimated Population Density with Townships and Urban Areas (2007).

4 ICRC Yangon estimate of prosthetic users in Burma/Myanmar.

5 Mine action, also known as humanitarian mine action, aims to reduce the social, economic and environmental impact of landmines and explosive remnants of war (ERW), including unexploded sub-munitions. International Mine Action Standards 04.10, Second Edition, 1 January 2003. Mine action includes five key activities : Mine Risk Education (MRE), humanitarian demining, i.e. mine and Explosive Remnants of War (ERW) survey, mapping, marking and clearance; victim assistance, including rehabilitation and reintegration; stockpile destruction; and advocacy against the use of AP mines.

6 Interviews with INGOs in Yangon who stated that they felt it had been much more difficult to raise international support for Cyclone Nargis relief in 2008, than it had been for disasters in other developing countries like the earthquake in Haiti. See also Myanmar Times article, Volume 26, No. 521, at <http://www.mmmtimes.com/2010/news/521/news09.html>

7 World Bank data on net official development assistance per capita shows that Burma/Myanmar received USD 11 per person in Overseas Development Assistance (ODA) in 2008, whereas the figure for Cambodia was USD 51 and USD 80 for Laos. <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/DT.ODA.ODAT.PC.ZS>

8 ICBL. 2009. Landmine Monitor. These funds have been spent on cross-border MRE, landmine surveys and victim assistance mostly in Karen (Kayin) and Karenni (Kaya) State, but also in Tenasserim (Thanintharyi) Division, Shan State and Chin State, albeit to a lesser degree.

9 ICBL. 2009. Landmine Monitor. See also chapter 2.

in Burma/Myanmar. These stakeholders include eight NSAs, five INGOs, three local NGOs, seven CBOs, three Faith-Based Organizations (FBOs), two hospitals, one Internally Displaced Person (IDP) camp, two media bodies, four United Nations (UN) agencies and three donor governments (through their local embassies). The interviews were carried out in Burma/Myanmar, Thailand, Bangladesh and China by a DCA Mine Action consultant with input from field visits by a DCA Mine Action Technical Adviser. UN, International Campaign to Ban Landmines (ICBL),¹⁰ INGO and CBO reports on the landmine issue in Burma/Myanmar have also been consulted. For security reasons, the stakeholders interviewed will not be referred to by name or organization throughout the entirety of this report as the issue of landmines is very sensitive in Burma/Myanmar and/or because some of the stakeholders have not obtained official permission to work within the recognised pillars of mine action.

Almost all stakeholders – INGOs, CBOs, and NSAs – who have conducted MRE and/or mine victim surveys in Burma/Myanmar were interviewed. While stakeholders generally have limited access to areas with landmine problems, piecing together information from the various interviews has helped provide a good overview of the mine issue in the country today. The Burma/Myanmar Government is another important stakeholder in generating a more complete overview of the landmine issue.

However, in the process of conducting research for this report it became clear that it would not be possible to meet formally with government officials on the issue. A questionnaire was therefore submitted to the Government, but no response was received. The report therefore refers to the Government's position on landmines through analysis of the existing dialogue between the international community and the Government, and not as a result of direct interviews.

Almost half of the interviews with stakeholders were conducted inside Burma/Myanmar. The remaining interviews were conducted in Thailand, Bangladesh and China, as mine-contaminated areas are mainly located in townships in border areas. Stakeholders from both ceasefire and non-ceasefire areas have been included. Questions covered in the interviews included interviewees' experience of the impact of landmines in their areas and whether they saw opportunities for increased MRE, landmine victim assistance, advocacy and demining.

In addition, statistics from a database – also known as the CBO Database – on mine contamination in Burma/Myanmar has been included in this

research.¹¹ The CBO Database, which is funded by a mine action INGO, contains data from 166 suspected dangerous areas, but does not provide a full picture of the mine issue in the country because of limited field access for the CBOs gathering the information, ongoing armed conflict in parts of the mine-affected areas and a lack of data concerning the Burman ethnic majority as CBOs only have access to ethnic minority communities. Moreover, it should be noted that information on the database relies predominantly on interviews with ethnic minority groups linked to the CBO collecting the data, since logistical and security issues normally prevent access to other areas. Typically, the Karen CBOs interview Karen people, Chin CBO's interview Chin people, and so on according to ethnicity.

Due to the sensitive nature of the operations (which are carried out in secrecy) and the consequent security considerations of the CBOs involved, individual mined area reports, individual mine victim reports, maps of suspected mined areas and maps of estimated mine explosion spots are not included in this report, and cannot be released from the database without prior agreement from the relevant CBOs.



10 The International Campaign to Ban Landmines (ICBL) is a global network in over 90 countries that works for a world free of AP Mines and cluster munitions, where landmine and cluster munitions survivors can lead fulfilling lives. www.icbl.org

11 The CBO Database contains data on mine victims and mined areas collected since 2006 by seven CBOs in Burma/Myanmar during their interviews with mine victims (850), reports on suspected hazardous areas (166) and MRE (for 38,000 people).

2 Background and Context

The Government's armed forces (Tatmadaw) and NSAs have used mines to advance their cause throughout the conflict.¹² The oldest mine accident recorded in the CBO Database dates back to 1950. According to the database, both homemade and factory-made mines were used by the Tatmadaw prior to the mid-1990s. For their part, NSAs have used both homemade mines and some factory-made mines – brought in from Cambodia – for training purposes, to protect military bases as well as for offensive operations against opposing forces. The Tatmadaw has used mines in fighting with NSAs, and to block forcibly relocated people from returning to their villages.¹³ Mines have been placed by both the Tatmadaw and NSAs around military installations, along paths and military roads, close to borders with neighbouring countries, in and around villages, around camps for Internally Displaced People (IDP), near hydropower dams, electric power transmission lines, bridges and other infrastructure.¹⁴

Since the mid-1990s, the pattern of mine use has changed somewhat. Several ethnic groups, primarily in the northern and western parts of Burma/Myanmar, entered into ceasefire agreements with the Government, effectively reducing the use of mines, while other groups split, leading to an increase in the use of landmines – or at least an increased number of reported accidents¹⁵ – in southeast Burma/Myanmar, especially in Karen/Kayin State, Karenni/Kaya State, the southern part of Shan State, Mon State and Tenasserim/Thanintharyi Division.

The Tatmadaw typically uses factory-made mines from the army's landmine factory in Nyaung Chay Dauk in western Pegu/Bago Division, or mines imported from other countries, including China and Russia.¹⁶ NSAs, on the other hand, currently use mostly homemade mines, often referred to as Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs). For the purposes of this report, victim-activated IEDs are considered AP mines.¹⁷

In addition to being used by the military and various NSAs, landmines are also used by businessmen for commercial purposes¹⁸ and by villagers as a protection strategy against attacks or theft/looting.

Affected Areas

Thirty-four of Burma/Myanmar's 325 townships (10.5%) are affected by landmines.¹⁹ The townships are mainly located in areas dominated by ethnic minority groups, the majority along the border of Thailand. Some townships along the China and Bangladesh borders are also mine-affected (see Figure 1). The areas are often mountainous with very heavy vegetation and limited infrastructure (transport only by river boat or footpath).

There are no statistics available as to the population size of each township, so the number of mine-affected people in Burma/Myanmar referred to in this report is an estimate based on UN Food and Agriculture Organization (UNFAO) population figures. With an estimated population of 50.2 million²⁰, and given that 10.5% of townships are mine-affected it can be extrapolated that approximately 5.2 million people live in affected townships.²¹

12 ICBL. 2009. Landmine Monitor.

13 Information gathered from interviews with several CBOs.

14 CBO Database (see note 15 above and for further explanation)

15 It is not possible to ascertain if the increased number of accidents is in fact due to increased use, or if it is due to better reporting of data or an increase in internal movement of the population.

16 Information gathered from interviews with several CBOs.

17 "An IED that is victim-activated—that explodes from the contact, presence or proximity of a person—is considered an antipersonnel mine and prohibited under the Mine Ban [Convention]. An IED that is command-detonated—where the user decides when to explode it—is not prohibited by the treaty, but use of such devices is often in violation of international humanitarian law, such as when civilians are directly targeted. Command-detonated bombs and IEDs have been frequently reported by the media, militaries and governments as "landmines," ICBL, <http://www.icbl.org/index.php/icbl/Universal/MBT/Non-State-Armed-Groups>, accessed 8 December 2010.

18 A variety of actors may be involved in illegal activities including drug production, smuggling and/or trafficking. Landmines are sometimes used as "business-mines" in the context of these activities.

19 ICBL Landmine Monitor reporting on Burma/Myanmar since January 2007 and Myanmar Information Management Unit (MIMU) map dated 15 June 2010 "Townships with Known Hazard of Antipersonnel Mines" available at [http://themimu.info/MapsInfo/Hazard/MIMU195v02_Myanmar_Antipersonnel_Mine_\(Bilingual\)_100615_A4.pdf](http://themimu.info/MapsInfo/Hazard/MIMU195v02_Myanmar_Antipersonnel_Mine_(Bilingual)_100615_A4.pdf)

20 UNFAO. 2009. The size of Burma/Myanmar's population is 50,200,000. <http://www.fao.org/countryprofiles/index.asp?lang=en&iso3=MMR>

21 ICBL Landmine Monitor reporting on Burma/myanmar since January 2007 and Myanmar information in MIMU map dated 15 June 2010



MIMU

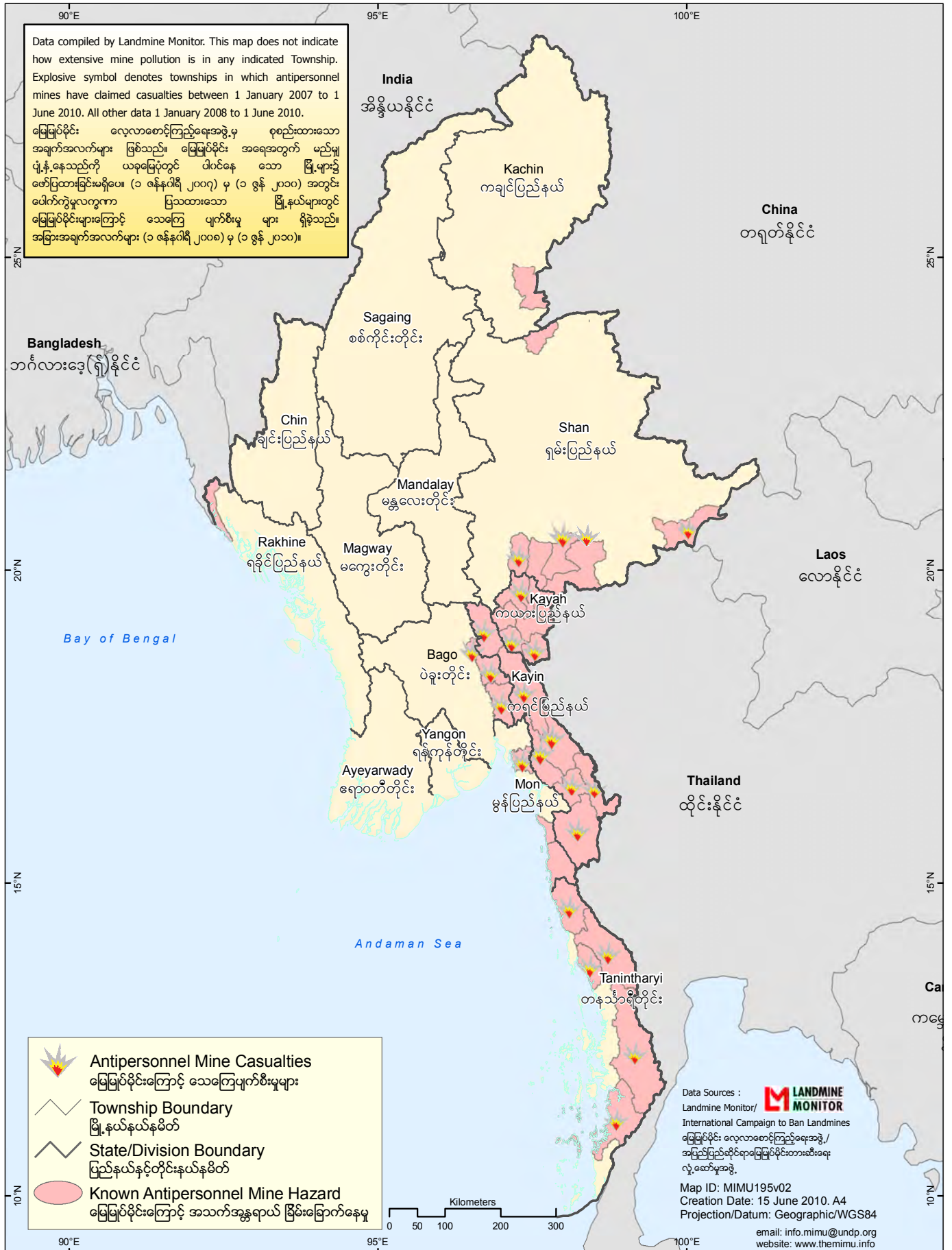
Myanmar Information Management Unit

မြန်မာနိုင်ငံသတင်းစိစစ်ခန့်မှန်းမှုယူနစ်

Townships with Known Hazard of Antipersonnel Mines

မြေမြုပ်မိုင်းအန္တရာယ်ရှိနေဆဲမြို့နယ်များ

EUROPEAN COMMISSION



Disclaimer: The names shown and the boundaries used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations. မှတ်ချက်: ဤမြေပုံပါ မြို့နယ်နယ်နိမိတ်များသည် ကုလသမဂ္ဂအဖွဲ့အစည်းမှ တာဝန်ယူခြင်းမရှိပါ။

Figure 1: Townships with Known Hazard of AP Mines

MYANMAR

Estimated Population Density 2000 with Townships & Urban Areas

Ayeyarwady Division

- 1 Bogale
- 2 Danubyu
- 3 Dedaye
- 4 Einme
- 5 Hinhada
- 6 Ingapu
- 7 Kangyidaunt
- 8 Kyaukiat
- 9 Kyangin
- 10 Kyaunggon
- 11 Kyonpyaw
- 12 Labutta
- 13 Lemyethna
- 14 Maubin
- 15 Mawlamyinegyun
- 16 Myanaung

Mandalay Division

- 17 Myaungmya
- 18 Ngapudaw
- 19 Nyaungdon
- 20 Pantanaw
- 21 Pathain
- 22 Pyapon
- 23 Thabaung
- 24 Wakema
- 25 Yegyi
- 26 Zalin

Bago East Division

- 27 Bago
- 28 Daik-U
- 29 Kawa
- 30 Kyaukkyi
- 31 Kyauktaga
- 32 Nyaunglebin
- 33 Oktwin
- 34 Phyu
- 35 Shwegyin
- 36 Tantabin
- 37 Taungoo
- 38 Thanatpin
- 39 Waw
- 40 Yedasha

Bago West Division

- 41 Gyobingauk
- 42 Letpadan
- 43 Minhla
- 44 Monyo
- 45 Nattalin
- 46 Okpho
- 47 Padaung
- 48 Pauk Kaung
- 49 Paungde
- 50 Pyay
- 51 Shwedawng
- 52 Thayarwady
- 53 Thegon
- 54 Zigon

Mon State

- 55 Bala
- 56 Hakha
- 57 Htantlang
- 58 Kanpetlet
- 59 Madupi
- 60 Mindat
- 61 Paletwa
- 62 Tiddim
- 63 Tonzang
- 64 Bhamo
- 65 Chipwi
- 66 Hpakan
- 67 Injyangyang
- 68 Kawnglanghpu
- 69 Machanbaw
- 70 Mansi
- 71 Mogauing
- 72 Mohyinyi
- 73 Momaik
- 74 Myitkinya
- 75 Nongmung
- 76 Puta-O
- 77 Shwegu
- 78 Sunprabrum
- 79 Tanai
- 80 Tsawlaw
- 81 Waingmaw

Chin State

- 55 Falam
- 56 Hakha
- 57 Htantlang
- 58 Kanpetlet
- 59 Madupi
- 60 Mindat
- 61 Paletwa
- 62 Tiddim
- 63 Tonzang
- 64 Bhamo
- 65 Chipwi
- 66 Hpakan
- 67 Injyangyang
- 68 Kawnglanghpu
- 69 Machanbaw
- 70 Mansi
- 71 Mogauing
- 72 Mohyinyi
- 73 Momaik
- 74 Myitkinya
- 75 Nongmung
- 76 Puta-O
- 77 Shwegu
- 78 Sunprabrum
- 79 Tanai
- 80 Tsawlaw
- 81 Waingmaw

Kachin State

- 64 Bhamo
- 65 Chipwi
- 66 Hpakan
- 67 Injyangyang
- 68 Kawnglanghpu
- 69 Machanbaw
- 70 Mansi
- 71 Mogauing
- 72 Mohyinyi
- 73 Momaik
- 74 Myitkinya
- 75 Nongmung
- 76 Puta-O
- 77 Shwegu
- 78 Sunprabrum
- 79 Tanai
- 80 Tsawlaw
- 81 Waingmaw

Kayah State

- 82 Bawlaikhe
- 83 Demoso
- 84 Hpasawng
- 85 Hpruso
- 86 Loikaw
- 87 Mese
- 88 Shadaw
- 89 Hlaingbwe
- 90 Hpa-An
- 91 Hpapun
- 92 Kawkareik
- 93 Kyain Seikgyi
- 94 Myawaddy
- 95 Thandaung

Kayin State

- 89 Hlaingbwe
- 90 Hpa-An
- 91 Hpapun
- 92 Kawkareik
- 93 Kyain Seikgyi
- 94 Myawaddy
- 95 Thandaung
- 96 Aunglan
- 97 Chauk
- 98 Gangaw
- 99 Kamma
- 100 Magway
- 101 Minbu
- 102 Mindon
- 103 Minhla
- 104 Myaing
- 105 Myothit
- 106 Natmauk
- 107 Ngape
- 108 Pakokku
- 109 Pauk

Magway Division

- 96 Aunglan
- 97 Chauk
- 98 Gangaw
- 99 Kamma
- 100 Magway
- 101 Minbu
- 102 Mindon
- 103 Minhla
- 104 Myaing
- 105 Myothit
- 106 Natmauk
- 107 Ngape
- 108 Pakokku
- 109 Pauk
- 110 Pwintbyu
- 111 Salin
- 112 Saw
- 113 Seikphyu
- 114 Sidoktaya
- 115 Sinbaungwe
- 116 Taungdwingyi
- 117 Thayet
- 118 Tilin
- 119 Yenangyaung
- 120 Yesagyo

Shan State (East)

- 216 Kengtung
- 217 Matman
- 218 Monghpyak
- 219 Monghsat
- 220 Mongkhet
- 221 Mongla
- 222 Mongping
- 223 Mongton
- 224 Mongyang
- 225 Mongyayng
- 226 Tachileik

Shan State (North)

- 227 Hopang
- 228 Hseni
- 229 Hsipaw
- 230 Konkyan
- 231 Kunlong
- 232 Kutkai
- 233 Kyaukme
- 234 Lashio
- 235 Laukkaing
- 236 Mabein
- 237 Manton
- 238 Mongmao
- 239 Mongmit
- 240 Mongyai
- 241 Muse
- 242 Namhsan
- 243 Namphan
- 244 Namtu
- 245 Nanhkan
- 246 Nawngkhio
- 247 Pangsang
- 248 Pangwaun
- 249 Tangyan

Sagaing Division

- 179 Ayadaw
- 180 Banmauk
- 181 Budalin
- 182 Chaung-U
- 183 Hkamti
- 184 Homalin
- 185 Indaw
- 186 Kale
- 187 Kalewa
- 188 kanbalu
- 189 Kani
- 190 Katha
- 191 Kawlin
- 192 Khin-U
- 193 Kyunhla
- 194 Lahe
- 195 Lay Shi
- 196 Mawlaik
- 197 Mingin
- 198 Monywa
- 199 Myaung
- 200 Myitmu
- 201 Nanyun
- 202 Pale
- 203 Paungbyin
- 204 Pinlebu
- 205 Sagaing
- 206 Salingyi
- 207 Shwebo
- 208 Tabayin
- 209 Tamu
- 210 Taze
- 211 Tigyaing
- 212 Wetlet
- 213 Wuntho
- 214 Ye-U
- 215 Yinmabin

Shan State (South)

- 250 Hopong
- 251 Hsihseng
- 252 Kalaw
- 253 Kunhing
- 254 Kyethi
- 255 Laihka
- 256 Langkho
- 257 Lawksawk
- 258 Loilen
- 259 Mawkmai
- 260 Monghsu
- 261 Mongkaung
- 262 Mongnai
- 263 Mongpan
- 264 Nansang
- 265 Nyaungshwe
- 266 Pekon
- 267 Pindaya
- 268 Pinaung
- 269 Taunggyi
- 270 Ywangan

Tanintharyi Division

- 271 Bokpyin
- 272 Dawei
- 273 Kawthoung
- 274 Kyunsu
- 275 Launglon
- 276 Myeik
- 277 Palaw
- 278 Tanintharyi
- 279 Thayetchaung
- 280 Yebuy

Yangon Division

- 281 Ahlone
- 282 Bahan
- 283 Botahtaung
- 284 Cocokyun
- 285 Dagon
- 286 Dagon Myothit(East)
- 287 Dagon Myothit(North)
- 288 Dagon Myothit(Seikkan)
- 289 Dagon Myothit(South)
- 290 Dala
- 291 Dawbon
- 292 Hlaing
- 293 Hlaingtharya
- 294 Hlegu
- 295 Hmawbi
- 296 Hlantabin
- 297 Insein
- 298 Kamaryut
- 299 Kawhmu
- 300 Kayan
- 301 Kungyangon
- 302 Kyauktada
- 303 Kyauktan
- 304 Kyeemyindaing
- 305 Lamadaw
- 306 Latha
- 307 Mayangone
- 308 Mingaladon
- 309 Mingalartaungnyunt
- 310 North Okkalapa
- 311 Pabedan
- 312 Pazundaung
- 313 Sanchaung
- 314 Seikgyikanaungto
- 315 Seikkan
- 316 Shwepyithar
- 317 South Okkalapa
- 318 Taikkyi
- 319 Tamwe
- 320 Thaketa
- 321 Thanlyin
- 322 Thingangkuon
- 323 Thongwa
- 324 Twantay
- 325 Yankin

Source:

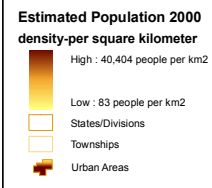
Socioeconomic Data and Applications Center (SEDAC) Center for International Earth Science Information Network (CIESIN) Columbia University, Global Population of the World 3 using "The Socialist Republic of the Union of Burma, 1983 Population Census, Ministry of Home and Religious Affairs, Immigration and Manpower Department, October 1987."

Note:

"Although the State (administrative 1 level) population data for 1985 and 1990-1997 were based on the 1983 census, the 1983 census was not directly used for computing growth rates. It is believed that artificially high rates are produced when the 1983 census is incorporated into the calculations. This is partially because the state of Kawthuei (Karen) had a population that doubled from 1983 (633,000) to 1985 (1,109,000), but from 1985 the increase in population is gradual. Also, it was reported that there were approximately 1,183,005 persons residing in inaccessible areas during the 1983 census. Kawthuei may have been one of these areas. Thus growth rate at level 1 from 1985 to 1997 were applied to 1983 level 2 (township) population to estimate 1990, 1995 and 2000."

National Population Estimates

Last Year of Reference	1997
NSO-Based Estimated Population, 1990 ('000)	38,942
NSO-Based Estimated Population, 1995 ('000)	42,770
NSO-Based Estimated Population, 2000 ('000)	46,979
UN FAO adjusted Population, 1990 ('000)	40,517
UN FAO adjusted Population, 1995 ('000)	44,352
UN FAO adjusted Population, 2000 ('000)	47,749



1:5,500,000

2007, Map prepared by the IASC Information Management Unit (MMR001, Estpop_2000.pdf)

Figure 2: Estimated Population Density 2000 with Townships and Urban Areas

However, in reality, the figure is probably slightly lower as mine-affected townships depicted on the Myanmar Information Management Unit (MIMU) map have a smaller population per square kilometre than non-mine affected townships.²² Interviews with CBOs and INGOs as well as reports from various agencies prior to 2007 mention other townships with suspected mined areas and mine accidents, including townships in Chin State and Kachin State. These townships are not included in the MIMU map on mine-affected townships.²³

The CBO Database shows 166 suspected dangerous areas. Sixteen of these are located in Shan State (all mined areas), and the rest (134 suspected mined areas and 16 suspected UXO areas) are in Karen/Kayin State, in parts of Pegu/Bago Division and Mon State. The reports include an estimation of the size of the suspected areas, but based on lessons learned in other countries from using non-technical staff to conduct surveys of this sort, the size of the suspected area is usually over-estimated and thus not included in this report. The contamination size can only be further qualified if and when a second - technical - survey is conducted.

Affected Communities

There is no comprehensive set of socio-economic data available on the impact of mines on communities in Burma/Myanmar. However, using what limited information is available, the impact of landmines on communities can be viewed either through a “direct impact” lens or through a “political impact” lens.

The “direct impact” lens addresses the impact from a communal point of view. Mines have prevented civilians from accessing their fields during planting and harvesting season and have endangered lives when people have been forced to flee from the ongoing conflicts, travelling as porters²⁴ through the jungle or attempting to return to their homes during quieter times. Considering that mine victims registered in the CBO Database are predominantly farmers, this suggests a high impact on food security. The ability of mine victims to work their fields is – at times substantially – decreased after an incident, and they may thereby become an unintended and additional burden on the family and community. During interviews with MRE surveyors, victims have expressed that they are ashamed that they are no longer able to work the fields as part of the community effort.²⁵ The psychological burden on mine victims and families is compounded by the traditional belief that mine accidents are not only victim triggered, but are also somehow seen as a ‘moral punishment’ – either because the mine victim has bad karma from a previous existence or as a religious or spiritually-based punishment for some wrongdoing in their current life.²⁶

Interestingly enough, communities located either inside the country or along the borders consider the use of landmines as both a “major problem” and a source of protection (even if they are the cause of significant civilian casualties). In Thailand Burma Border Consortium’s (TBBC) IDP report from 2009²⁷, military patrols and landmines were identified as the major threat to safety and security by 40 percent of the households surveyed, an increase of 29 percent over 2007 figures. No other threats reach the same level in the survey in 2007 and 2009. And, yet, as a Karen CBO employee expressed it, “Landmines are a barrier against invasion, and the landmines actually give less killings in the community. If we did not have the landmines, the assassination (from government-allied armies) would kill a lot.”²⁸

In ceasefire areas and areas with less armed conflict, however, civilians often have a much lower tolerance for landmines. As a CBO employee from eastern Burma/Myanmar stated, “I do not think that even one single civilian in the entire Tenasserim/Thanintharyi Division sees the landmines as a protection tool for them”.²⁹ As this shows, there is a breadth of opinion within the civilian population as to whether landmines are a legitimate tool of protection or not. The idea of landmines being one of several protection mechanisms is also described in the reports “Conflict and Survival: Self-protection in south-east Burma” (Chatham House)³⁰

22 Based on DCA Mine Action assumption on the map dated 15 June 2010 “Townships with Known Hazard of Antipersonnel Mines” available at [http://themimu.info/MapsInfo/Hazard/MIMU195v02_Myanmar_Antipersonnel_Mine_\(Bilingual\)_100615_A4.pdf](http://themimu.info/MapsInfo/Hazard/MIMU195v02_Myanmar_Antipersonnel_Mine_(Bilingual)_100615_A4.pdf) and the map entitled “Estimated Population Density 2000 with Townships and Urban Areas” accessed 8 December 2010 at http://www.themimu.info/MapsInfo/Population/MIMU002_EstPop2000_A3.pdf

23 Information prior to 2007 is either not available on the township level (only on state- or division level) or not comprehensive enough to be inserted onto a national map of mine affected townships.

24 Civilians who are forced to carry provisions for the military in areas where there is a mine hazard are known as porters.

25 Interview with MRE survey team leaders in June 2010.

26 Interview with CBO MRE Coordinator, 14 June 2010.

27 Thailand Burma Border Consortium, November 2009. www.tbcc.org

28 Interview conducted with CBO in Thailand, 12 June 2010.

29 Ibid.

30 Conflict and Survival : Self-protection in south-east Burma, Chatham House, September 2010. The full report is available at <http://www.chathamhouse.org>

and “Self-protection under strain: Targeting of civilians and local responses in northern Karen (Kayin) State” (KHRG).³¹

In areas where ethnic NSAs and the government entered into fragile ceasefires in the 1990s (northern and western Burma/Myanmar), the number of landmine incidents decreased according to both the interviews and the data from the CBO Database. This decrease in incidents can in part be explained by the perceived expiration date of homemade mines or IEDs. Whereas factory-made mines can retain their explosive power for several decades, homemade mines become inert six months after being laid.³² However, according to DCA and the Mines Advisory Group (MAG),³³ even if the landmine’s detonator ceases to function as designed after six months, the mine can still explode under certain circumstances, for example due to heat, friction or crystallisation of the explosives which can make it unstable.³⁴ In sum, even if all NSAs stopped using homemade mines this would not necessarily entirely eliminate the risk of future accidents caused by these devices. Other reasons for the decrease in victim numbers might be linked to the fact that in ceasefire areas there is much less movement of populations fleeing conflict. Likewise, in ceasefire areas villagers will try to avoid certain areas that are perceived as dangerous. This holds true at least until such time as community knowledge is lost and villagers forget the reason for avoiding the area, or the situation on the ground changes to one in which they feel forced to enter the area for their survival.

Viewed through the “political impact” lens it is necessary to consider the political and military situation in Burma/Myanmar. During the writing of this report there were no signs of a decrease in the conflict between the government and NSAs in the short term. In fact, the opposite seems more likely; that is, resumed fighting on the part of some NSAs which had had ceasefires in place since the 1990s. Many of the ceasefire NSAs, particularly the strongest, have refused the Government’s request to join the proposed Border Guard Force (BGF),³⁵ as this would place the NSA armies under the control of the Government’s armed forces. Any attempt to force the issue runs the risk of renewed hostilities. In the case of Burma/Myanmar, experience shows that armed conflict is

chathamhouse.org.uk/files/17343_0910pp_burma_es.pdf

31 “Self-protection under strain: Targeting of civilians and local responses in northern Karen (Kayin) State”, Karen Human Rights Group, August 2010. The report is available at <http://www.khrg.org/khrg2010/khrg1004>

32 According to the NSAs interviewed, the detonator used in the homemade mines is powered by cheap Chinese-made AA-batteries, which, after half a year in the jungle, are not able to spark the ignition in the detonator.

33 Mines Advisory Group (MAG) is a British mine action NGO. www.maginternational.org

34 According to MAG briefing document “Residual hazards of improvised landmines” prepared specifically for Geneva Call, and to DCA Mine Action Technical Adviser field visit.

35 The Border Guard Force (BGF) is intended to integrate the armed wings of the NSAs under the control of the Tatmadaw.

often linked to new mine use and, consequently is likely to produce further casualties.

In 2009-2010, especially in Kachin State, but also in Shan State, some NSAs have started preparing for a possible resumption of conflict. They have laid AP mines or started preparations for mine laying. Reports from four different sources indicate that at least 10 people (nine soldiers from the Kachin Independence Army (KIA)³⁶ and one civilian) have been injured by newly planted mines in Kachin State over the last year.³⁷ The Tatmadaw too is preparing for possible conflict, and for the first time in 16 years, the Government, as quoted in state-controlled media, has referred to the Kachin Independence Organization (KIO) and its army the KIA as an “insurgent group” rather than a ceasefire group.³⁸ Media outlets are also reporting that other ceasefire groups may change into “insurgent groups”. A “federal army” was agreed between the ceasefire groups Kachin Independence Organization (KIO), New Mon State Party (NMSP)³⁹ and Shan State Army North (SSA-N) together with the non-ceasefire groups Karen National Union (KNU),⁴⁰ Karenni National Progressive Party (KNPP) and Chin National Front (CNF). Splinter groups from the ceasefire-group Democratic Karen Buddhist Army (DKBA)⁴¹ have already started fighting Government troops, and the United Wa State Army (UWSA) may also resume fighting.⁴²

Finally, the use of so-called ‘business mines’ (mines used to protect extraction of natural resources, hydropower dams, electricity pylons and bridges even in ceasefire areas) is an additional concern for communities. “The mines laid in Karen/Kayin State in 2009 were only for business purposes”, stated a CBO worker from the ceasefire area during the research phase of this report. He blames both ceasefire and non-ceasefire NSAs for laying mines to protect their income from natural resources.

Many observers disagree with this, however, and argue that NSA mines are actually more frequently used as a tool to protect ethnic minority people. Landmines have also been distributed recently by

36 Kachin Independence Organization (KIO) is a ceasefire group that refused to join the BGF in 2010.

37 According to interview with INGO working in Kachin State, May 2010.

38 “The Burmese junta described the Kachin Independence Army (KIA), a cease-fire group which operates on the Sino-Burmese border, as “insurgents” in state-run newspapers on Friday, ceasing to call them a cease-fire group which they have done since signing a cease-fire agreement with the KIA in 1994” quoted from The Irrawaddy, October 15, 2010. For the full article, see http://www.irrawaddy.org/highlight.php?art_id=19743

39 New Mon State Party (NMSP) is a ceasefire group that in 2010 refused to sign the BGF.

40 Karen National Union (KNU) is a non-ceasefire group.

41 Democratic Karen Buddhist Army (DKBA) is a splinter group formed in 1994 from the Karen National Liberation Army (KNLA). No coordinated leadership. Part of DKBA joined the BGF.

42 “Karen rebels go on offensive in Myanmar”, Asia Times, 16 November 2010. The full article can be viewed at http://www.atimes.com/atimes/Southeast_Asia/LK16Ae02.html

one NSA to villagers in northern Karen/Kayin State for the purposes of self-protection. This new development in the use of landmines – distributing explosives to inexperienced civilians (who acknowledge that some of these mines have inflicted injuries) – is obviously worrying.⁴³

Since NSAs will probably continue to use some mines even after a ceasefire is agreed upon, and since NSAs in areas with the highest number of reported accidents are also the most reluctant to stop laying AP mines, the mine accident rate in Burma/Myanmar is likely to remain high in the coming years.

Affected People

There are no national statistics on mine-affected people. ICBL Landmine Monitor 2009 mentions 2,325 casualties from 1999 to 2008 (175 killed, 2002 injured and 148 unknown). The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) estimates the total number of amputees in Burma/Myanmar at 12,000, of whom the majority are probably mine victims.⁴⁴

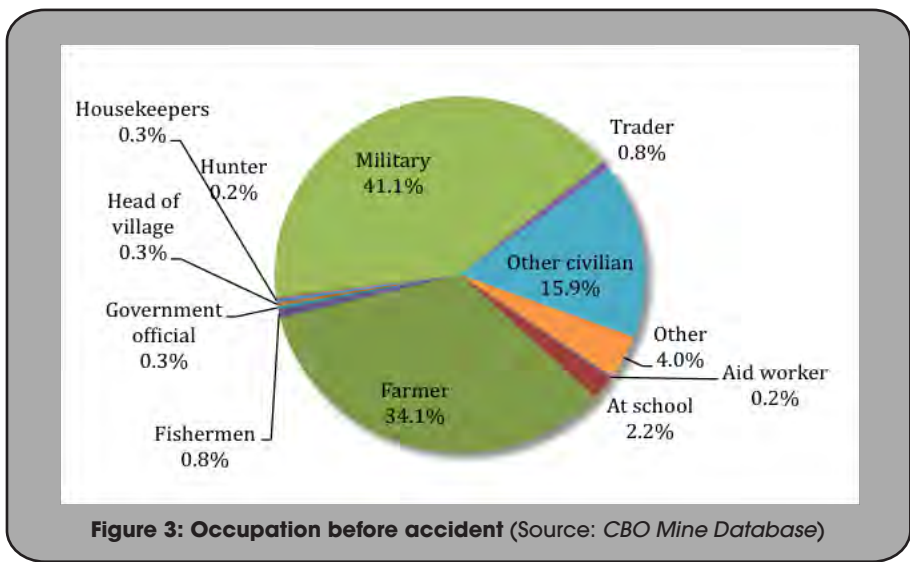


Figure 3: Occupation before accident (Source: CBO Mine Database)

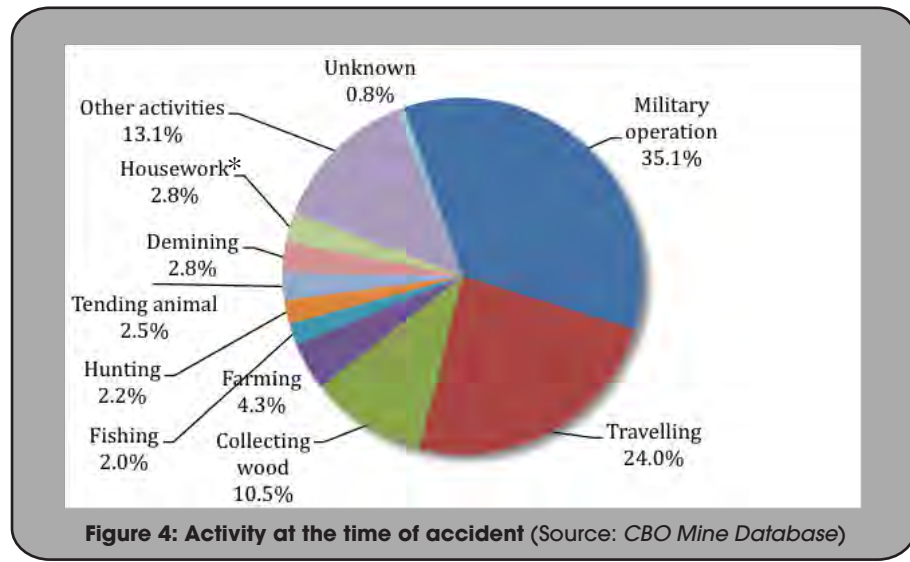


Figure 4: Activity at the time of accident (Source: CBO Mine Database)

43 See also “Self-protection under strain: Targeting of civilians and local responses in northern Karen (Kayin) State”, Karen Human Rights Group, August 2010. <http://www.khrg.org/khrg2010/khrg1004>

44 According to interview conducted with ICRC in Yangon on 29 June 2010, 67% of the amputees who received a prosthetic limb at MRCS prosthetic clinic in Hpa-an in 2008 were mine victims. Two other prosthetic clinics in eastern Burma/Myanmar report that almost all amputees they treat are mine victims.

* Demining accidents may be more serious than in other contexts because the deminer would not have the benefit of protective equipment.

The CBO Database is an additional source of information on victims. Thus far the database has collected information on 850 mine victims through interviews in Burma/Myanmar and in the refugee camps in Thailand. The database contains data on affected people particularly in Karen/Kayin State, Karenni/Kaya State and Tenasserim/Thanintharyi Division as these were the accessible areas. The main findings of the database include:

- Many accidents occur as a result of landmines planted by government troops, but a significant proportion of accidents also occur with landmines planted by NSAs or other local actors⁴⁵ (NSAs are both pro- and opposition government forces).
- At least half of the accidents in the database for eastern Burma/Myanmar affected civilians, the other half affected soldiers/combatants who had been involved in military activity at the time of the accident (see Figure 2).
- The majority of mine victims are adult men who traditionally undertake activities that are more at risk in a mined environment, for example travelling to areas not known to them.
- Military activities account for 35.1% of accidents according to the database statistics. Other high-risk activities include travelling at 24.0%, wood collecting (often for cooking) at 10.5 %, and food gathering at 11.0 % (including farming, fishing, hunting and tending animals).
- A significant proportion of the children affected in landmine accidents in NSA areas are child soldiers. In Karenni/Kaya State every second child is a child soldier; in Karen/Kayin State every fourth child is a child soldier.
- Landmine accidents in Karen/Kayin State, Karenni/Kaya State and part of Mon State and Pegu/Bago Division have increased significantly since the mid-1990s.



⁴⁵ According to the CBO Database , which includes 293 victims from mine accidents in the period 2000-2008, in Karen/Kayin State, Tenasserim/ Thanintharyi Division and part of Pegu/Bago Division and Mon State, 37% of these victims claim the accident was caused by a homemade mine, 25% claim the accident was due to a factory-made mine, whereas the remaining 38% could not specify whether the accident was due to a factory-made or a homemade mine.

3 Mine Action in Burma/Myanmar

Since 2004, the Burma/Myanmar Government has refused to allow mine action activities by the UN, INGOs or any other outside actors. In the preceding years, the authorities allowed prosthetic clinics for mine victims and MRE, however few INGOs made use of these openings.⁴⁶

In 2009, at the suggestion of the UN High Commissioner on Refugees (UNHCR), the Protection Working Group (PWG) of the UN mission in Burma/Myanmar initiated a sub-group on landmines. The establishment of this sub-group allowed for a dialogue on the landmine issue to open between UNHCR and the Government. However, even though contact has been made with five different ministries and government institutions, the national authorities have not yet granted permission to start mine action operations.⁴⁷ Attempts by other actors to obtain permission from the national authorities for MRE and demining have also proven unsuccessful so far. Moreover, the landmine issue has been overshadowed to a great extent by the overall dire humanitarian situation in the country.

Lack of permission has deepened concerns over humanitarian assistance, which has left both donors and INGOs searching for ways to assist affected communities either from inside the country or through cross-border activities. The prospects for international mine action assistance - especially to mine victims and for MRE - looked relatively bright until the period 2005-2006. At that time, the ICRC operated one prosthetic clinic and also provided materials and technical assistance to six other government-owned clinics inside Burma/Myanmar. The ICRC had access to some of the mine-affected communities through five field offices, and an ICRC MRE programme based on a field assessment and with approval from the Burma/Myanmar authorities was about to be launched in eastern Burma/Myanmar. However, in 2005, the Burma/Myanmar authorities withdrew permission for the MRE programme and, in 2006, ordered the ICRC to close all of its field offices. The ICRC Hpa-an prosthetic clinic was handed over to the Myanmar Red Cross Society (MRCS) where production of prostheses continues to this day.

The shake-up within the government structure on 18 October 2004 is one possible reason for this change of direction on the part of the Burma/Myanmar government. Prime Minister Khin Nyunt, who was perceived as being fairly tolerant towards INGOs, was removed from office by executive leader Senior General Than Shwe. The vice-chairman of the SPDC, Maung Aye, is also thought to be hostile to INGOs. The deterioration of mine action since 2005 can also be regarded as a reflection of the Government's refusal to address the landmine problem in the country until all armed groups return to the "legal fold" and there is peace in the country.⁴⁸

International actors thus face an operational dilemma. On the one hand, Burma/Myanmar only reluctantly receives assistance from INGOs based in countries which have imposed sanctions on the military government. This is partly rooted in the sanctions issue and partly in the Government's approach to the Tatmadaw "culture." According to interviews in Yangon, the Government regards the Tatmadaw as more than just an army: it is also an institution based on volunteer service, which should assist people during natural disasters for example. Assistance from foreign INGOs may therefore be perceived as more of a threat than a positive contribution with fears on the Government side that civilians might come to regard this external support as a viable alternative to the Tatmadaw model. In sum, the space for mine action activities by INGOs is fairly limited when operating from inside the country as they are not able to actually reach mine-affected communities. On the other hand, NSAs and CBOs are able to reach mine victims in the east through cross-border assistance programmes with funding from INGOs/foreign sources. Cross-border assistance makes sense from a purely logistical point of view, in particular for MRE and surveys, as suspected mined areas are all located in townships bordering neighbouring countries.

46 ICRC was the only organization at that time which provided a prosthetic clinic and carried out a field assessment for MRE. Mines Advisory Group (MAG) also provided limited MRE training inside the country.

47 The ministries involved were the Ministry of Social Welfare, the Ministry of Home Affairs, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry for the Progress of Border Areas and National Races and Development Affairs (Natala) and the Ministry of Defence. Several interviewees indicated the Ministry of Defence as primary mine action contact.

48 Interview with ICBL Research Coordinator, October 2010.

While they are currently the only real option for providing assistance to mine victims, cross-border activities are faced with the following limitations/challenges:

- Difficulty of access due to ongoing armed conflict, thus sometimes requiring an armed escort by an NSA, which therefore has an impact on which populations are reached, i.e. primarily those who favour that particular NSA.⁴⁹
- Areas under non-ceasefire NSAs with cross-border assistance CBOs have decreased since 2006 – at least for some of the mine action activities. In Karen State, for example, NSAs like Democratic Karen Buddhist Army (DKBA), who are generally more restrictive to cross-border assistance, have taken over areas previously controlled by NSAs like Karen National Union (KNU), which were more open to cross-border assistance.⁵⁰
- The UN, the European Union and most donor countries do not allow public funds for cross-border activities to Burma/Myanmar. The USA and a few European countries are still strong supporters of cross-border aid⁵¹ – funding for cross-border activities actually increased between 2007 and 2009 – but there seems to be increasing reluctance by most European countries to fund cross-border assistance.⁵²

Things are equally complex in terms of funding. Difficult access to mined areas and mine victims also affects how current aid streams reach the mine-affected communities in the eastern parts of the country. Currently, while aid per capita in Burma/Myanmar is USD 11 per person/per year, which is very low compared to other developing countries in Southeast Asia,⁵³ assistance for most of the mine-affected States and Divisions in Burma/Myanmar is even lower. According to the MIMU map “INGO Expenditures Per Capita in 2009” (see Figure 4) aid per person/per year is only USD 0.680 in Mon State, USD 0.117 in Karen/Kayin State and USD 0.005 in Pegu/Bago Division. Contributing to this gross assistance gap are the limitations placed on INGOs by the Government which effectively restrict INGOs to working only in uncontaminated States and Divisions, meaning that the actual mine victims in contaminated areas remain unassisted. One explanation for this restriction could be that mine-contaminated land is located in areas with armed conflict where the Government would prefer INGOs not to be involved.

Not surprisingly, there is far less funding available for mine action in Burma/Myanmar than for other heavily mine- or UXO-affected countries. According to the ICBL Landmine Monitor 2009, Burma/Myanmar only received USD 1,000,000 in total mine action assistance in 2008, even though, as previously mentioned, the country is afflicted with the third highest number of mine victims (721 in 2008).⁵⁴ For other countries facing a similarly severe landmine problem, funding has been much higher: USD 105,000,000 for Afghanistan (992 victims in 2008), USD 35,000,000 for Iraq (263 victims in 2008), USD 28,000,000 for Cambodia (269 victims in 2008) and USD 13,000,000 for Laos (100 victims in 2008).

This enormous discrepancy in funding can be explained by the Government’s refusal to permit demining activities. This report encourages increased funding for mine action activities in Burma/Myanmar that will have a positive impact in saving lives and improving conditions for mine victims. Actors should be encouraged to co-ordinate their mine action activities wherever possible, ensuring that proper international standards are followed until such time as a national co-ordination body comes into existence.

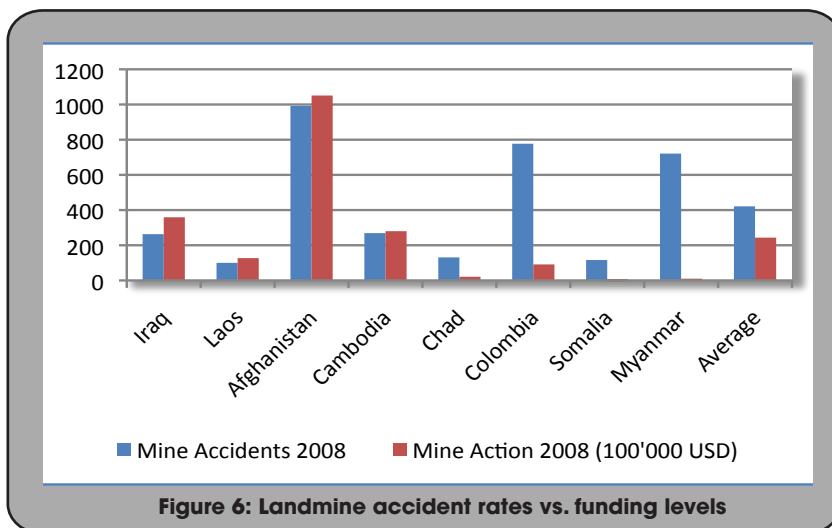


Figure 6: Landmine accident rates vs. funding levels

49 The Chatham House report Conflict and Survival: Self-protection in south-east Burma also considers a number of options and challenges for cross-border work. http://www.chathamhouse.org.uk/files/17343_0910pp_burma_es.pdf

50 Two out of six MRE teams in a CBO in Karen/Kayin State had to stop activities due to lack of access, and the amount of MRE done in Karenni /Kaya State during the missions varies greatly depending on the armed conflict situation.

51 Among the few countries that allow public funds for cross-border work are the USA, the United Kingdom, Norway, Denmark, Czech Republic, Spain and Canada.

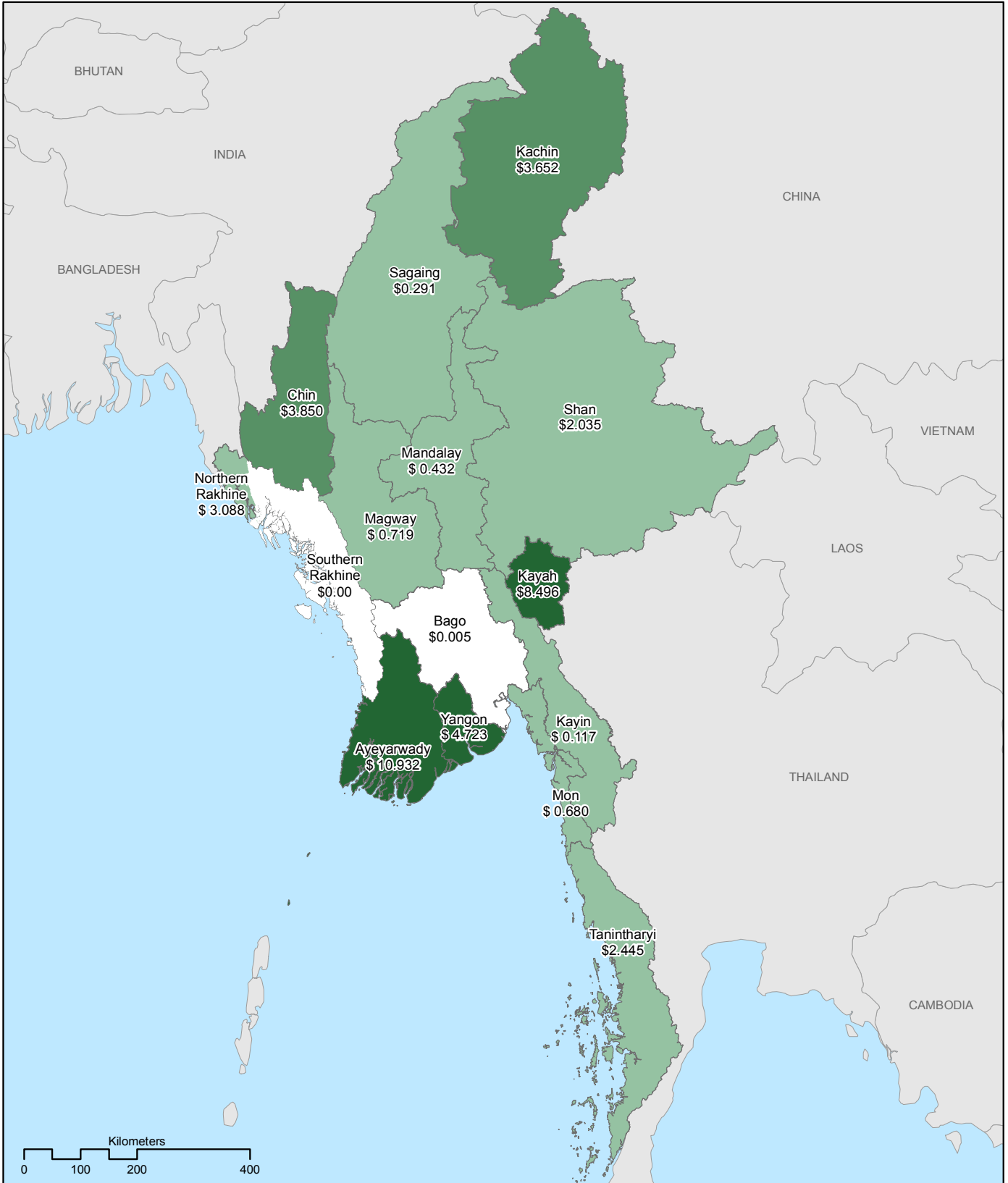
52 According to interviews conducted with donor countries.


53 World Bank data on net official development assistance per capita at <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/DT.ODA.ODAT.PC.ZS>

54 ICBL. 2009. Landmine Monitor.



INGO Expenditures Per Capita in 2009



<p>Map ID: MIMU288v04</p> <p>Creation Date 16 November 2009, A4</p> <p>Projection/Datum: Geographic/WGS84</p> <p>Map produced by the MIMU - info.mimu@undp.org</p>	<p>\$Per_Person</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$0.00 - \$0.05 \$0.06 - \$3.09 \$3.10 - \$4.71 \$4.72 - \$10.95 	<p>Data Sources : GAD 2009 (M. of Home Affairs) ACF, ACTED, Alliance, AMI, AN, CARE, CESVI, Danish Red Cross, EMDH, Green Care, HelpAge, IRC, Maltheser, MDM, MERLIN, MRCS-FRC, MSF-CH, MSF-Holland, NPA, NRC, OXFAM, RI, SC, Solidarites, TDH-IT TGH, Trocaire, WC, WHH, WV</p> <p style="text-align: right;">  EUROPEAN COMMISSION Humanitarian Aid </p>
--	---	---

Disclaimer: The names shown and the boundaries used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.

Figure 5: INGO - Expenditure Per Capita in 2009

Despite these challenges, at least 15 local or national organizations have conducted mine action in Burma/ Myanmar since 2006. For many, the effort has been rather limited and/or only carried out for a limited period of time. The table below provides an overview of the types of organization involved in mine action as well as the activities which were carried out.

	Victim Survey	MRE	Dangerous Area Survey	Prosthetic production	Victim income generating activity / Vocational training	Marking	Victim counselling	Victim cash assistance	Victim medical assistance	Demining
Through Yangon										
1 (CBO/NGO)	X	X		X			X	X		
2 (CBO/NGO)	X	(X)								
3 (CBO/NGO)							X	X		
4 (CBO/NGO)					X					
Cross-border ceasefire NSA areas⁵⁹										
5 (CBO/NSA)	X	(X)	X							
6 (CBO/NSA)	X	X	X							
7 (CBO/NSA)				X						
Cross-border non-ceasefire NSA areas⁶⁰										
8 (CBO/NSA)	X	X	X		X	X				
9 (CBO/NSA)	X	X	(X)							
10 (CBO/NSA)				X	X					
11 (CBO/NSA)	X	X	X	X		X				X
12 (CBO/NSA)	X	X	X			X				
13 (CBO/NSA)									X	
14 (CBO/NSA)									X	
In neighbouring countries										
15 (Hospital)				X						

X = The organization has been trained in the discipline, and has executed it in the field.

(X) = The organization has been trained in the discipline, but was unable to execute it in the field due to restrictions imposed by unforeseen security concerns.

Assistance to people in refugee camps in neighbouring countries is not included. The list may not comprise all mine action activities implemented in Burma/Myanmar since 2006.

Victim Assistance

As previously noted, there is no comprehensive information available on landmine victims or on their specific needs. In response to this apparent knowledge deficit a group of CBOs has started collecting information on victims as part of their work registering contaminated areas for the CBO Database. This data gathering/ surveying of ceasefire and non-ceasefire areas has been conducted both through cross-border and inside activities. It should be noted, however, that mine victim surveys of ceasefire areas 'from the inside' have had to be conducted very discretely as the Burma/Myanmar authorities do not accept surveys specifically on mine victims. Additionally, surveys on the cause of accidents may not be allowed by the authorities – something which INGOs should be prepared for.⁵⁵

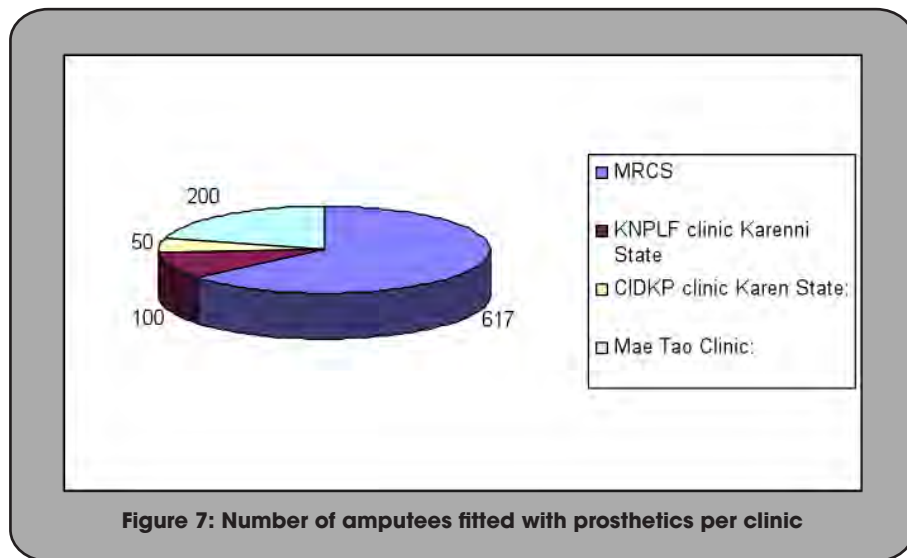
⁵⁵ Interview with a national organization for disabled people in Burma/Myanmar, 25 October 2010.

Medical care for mine victims in Burma/Myanmar is limited. Currently, two organizations based in Yangon provide medical care indirectly through cash assistance to mine victims in eastern Burma/Myanmar. One of them provides a flat-rate USD 100 for each victim in support of medical treatment. The other organization provides some financial assistance for medical care to mine victims, but the amount varies on a case-by-case basis.⁵⁶ Two additional cross-border organizations in non-ceasefire areas provide medical assistance to mine victims, which normally consists of first aid services following mine accidents and medical treatment after amputation.

Assistance by INGOs, national NGOs and CBOs to amputees only covers about 24% of those in need of prosthetic devices according to current estimates.⁵⁷ The rest of this group either has to use crutches (some delivered by NGOs/CBOs), buy prosthetic limbs on the commercial market (at prices which often exceed their means) or produce their own homemade prosthetic limbs from bamboo, wood or plastic water pipe combined with pieces of cloth, leather and/or parts of bicycle tyres.

Civilian mine victims are charged a relatively high price for prosthetic limbs at Government and private hospitals in Burma/Myanmar, which for the purpose of this report are considered part of the commercial sector. Of the INGO-supported clinics that assist amputees in general, irrespective of the cause or type of injury, two are located in Government and ceasefire areas (the MRCS clinic in Hpa-an, Karen State and the Karenni National Peoples' Liberation Front (KNPLF)⁵⁸ clinic in Loikaw, Karenni State respectively), one in a non-ceasefire area near the Thai border (Committee for Internally Displaced Karen People (CIDKP) clinic in Papun district, Karen State), and one in Thailand near the Burma/Myanmar border (Mae Tao Clinic in Mae Sot).

The total number of people receiving prosthetics through these CBOs/INGOs is 967 annually. Figure 6 shows the breakdown of people fitted with prosthetics per clinic.



The Burma/Myanmar authorities consider all disabilities equally in terms of receiving priority and care, and thus promote and support help to all disabled people within the country. As a result, INGOs willing to support clinics targeting all Burmese in need of prosthetic limbs, whether as a result of a landmine accident, snakebite, car accident or diabetes will be more likely to receive permission for this type of work.

The geographical location of a prosthetic clinic is also important to consider because of the restrictions imposed on travel, lack of good infrastructure and locals' fear of being interrogated while travelling.⁵⁹ Travel costs are also prohibitively expensive, in part due to checkpoints located in both government and NSA-controlled areas, where a fee for passage is imposed. All in all, these conditions on the ground block access for mine victims to the few prosthetic clinics that exist. This is particularly true for mine victims from non-ceasefire areas who are often unable to visit prosthetic clinics located in Government controlled areas.

⁵⁶ It should be noted that cash assistance in Burma/Myanmar is a sensitive issue, especially in the run up to the national election(s). The Burma/Myanmar authorities had asked one of these organizations to stop cash assistance to mine victims, at least until the 7 November 2010 election was over.

⁵⁷ According to ICRC, there are an estimated 12,000 amputees. A user of a prosthetic limb on average needs a new prosthetic limb every three years (i.e. approximately 4,000 a year). The current production of prosthetic limbs for people residing in Burma/Myanmar (including one clinic Mae Sot) is 967, which only covers 24% of the estimated number of landmine amputees.

⁵⁸ Karenni National People Liberation Front (KNPLF) is a ceasefire group that joined the BGF in 2010.

⁵⁹ They express fear of being questioned about how the accident happened, e.g. during military service for a NSA army.

Finally, it should be noted that there is an unmet need for assistance for mine victims who have lost their hands or sight. While it is possible to construct an artificial hand (resembling a hook), which can grip or release an item (for example a cup or a fork), it is very rare for these to be produced in Burma/Myanmar both because of a lack of funding and the limited number of prosthetic clinics. For blind mine victims in Burma/Myanmar, appropriate solutions also need to be sought. Some of the stakeholders interviewed criticised the INGOs for focussing on mine victims in need of prosthetic legs over the blind or those in need of prosthetic hands.⁶⁰

Two additional FBOs provided counselling for mine victims. Both work from inside the country. One of the organizations was trained in MRE and mine victim survey in 2007 and the other, which deals with mine victims in their community, asked for more counselling to be made available for mine victims. They both asked for “trauma training”, since they did not have sufficient knowledge or training to handle psychological impacts displayed by mine victims.

Mine victims exhibit a wide array of reactions to their post-accident life. Some hide in shame over their handicap, others end up as beggars and at worst some are known to have committed suicide. On the other end of the spectrum there are mine victims who want to tell a different story of continued strength and fitness, they draw tigers or scorpions or write “no pain” on their prosthetic legs and continue working.⁶¹

The majority of mine victims in ethnic minority areas are farmers, working either part- or full time in the rice fields. Recognising that such work is physically highly demanding, some CBOs and NGOs have initiated vocational training activities for mine victims in professions which require less walking and carrying of heavy loads, for example fish farming (fish-ponds), pig farming and mushroom farming. However, these jobs also require more planning and risk-taking than traditional farming, as one backer of a vocational training project expressed. “You need penicillin for the pigs, the fish either die or don’t grow if food is not accurate, and there is a risk that the jobs will not provide sufficient income to cover the costs”.⁶² These potential difficulties must be given careful consideration if/when planning to start up similar projects in the future.⁶³

60 Interview with a group of migrant workers in Mae Sot, 14 June 2010.

61 In fact, a group of mine victims constructed a prosthetic clinic in Papun District, which involved carrying concrete and rocks despite the fact that they had all had below-knee amputations. A volleyball player refused to stop playing even after he had lost a foot in a mine accident. As one of his friends expressed, “He even increased his volleyball playing after the accident – even he got more and more pain in his leg-stump under the games. It was as if, as long as he played, he could better handle the psychological burden of being handicapped”. Interview with CBO staff in Thailand, 24 July 2010.

62 Interview with MRE and Mine Victim Assistance Coordinator from a Karen State CBO 14 June 2010.

63 According to DCA Mine Action calculations (based on CBO project proposal and interview with CBO), the budget for a project such as this would be USD 2,000 to cover the investment per mine victim for the

Additionally, there may be potential to tap previously unused re-integration opportunities for mine victims through national handicap organizations in Burma/Myanmar. These organizations fight for the rights of Burma/Myanmar’s 1.3 million disabled people and often have signed Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) with the Government, making their activities and status legal.⁶⁴

A Disability Working Group has been established under the auspices of the Myanmar Ministry of Social Welfare. The Group members include local NGOs, national NGOs, INGOs, the UN and the media. In September 2010, this Working Group presented to a number of donors for Burma/Myanmar, a “Statement of Common Position on Disability Inclusive Development” (see Appendix A) based on the Convention on Rights of persons with Disabilities.^{65a} By signing this statement, the signatories commit to only supporting projects in Burma/Myanmar that include addressing the disability issue. This is in line with the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. “It is like existing programmes normally include the gender issue as mandatory– we want the programme also to include the people with disability issues,” a consultant for a national disability group explained.^{65b} As of December 2010, the Working Group had had further correspondence with these donors but none had yet signed the statement.

Mine Risk Education

Every stakeholder interviewed expressed the need for MRE to be conducted in the communities. “We need to do MRE not only for civilians, but also for armed groups,” expressed a migrant worker from Tenasserim/Thanintharyi Division.⁶⁶ At least six different ethnic minority CBOs have performed MRE both in ceasefire and non-ceasefire areas in Burma/Myanmar since 2006. Their activities have reached 38,000 people in total.

As MRE is not officially permitted by the national authorities the activities have to be performed discretely and in cooperation with local ethnic minority authorities, typically non-ceasefire NSAs. Most of the MRE activities have been carried out cross-border, partly for logistical reasons: many mine affected communities – especially in non-ceasefire areas – are more easily accessible from the border area than from Yangon. Cross-border MRE to non-ceasefire areas yielded better results measured in

income-generating activities.

64 Interview with The Leprosy Mission International (TLMi), 22 October 2010.

65a Email from Dr. Mike Griffiths, Consultant, Disability Working Group. 15 December 2010

65b Interview with The Leprosy Mission International (TLMi), 22 October 2010.

66 Interview with migrant worker education organization in Thailand, 14 June 2010.

terms of community participation than cross-border MRE to ceasefire areas, with only a few MRE sessions performed in the latter circumstances. The performance discrepancy can be explained against the backdrop of the CBOs' fear of authorities in ceasefire areas, which has proved an obstacle to group-participation in MRE sessions. The MRE message in those areas was mainly delivered on a one-to-one basis in private homes, where results are more difficult to measure.

The optimal way to deliver MRE would be to work in parallel in ceasefire- and non-ceasefire areas, both through inside and cross-border activities, thereby reaching the maximum number of beneficiaries, and to expand and improve the scope of MRE activities as much as possible. For security reasons and to avoid problems with the national authorities, MRE should be incorporated into other health or risk reduction programmes in ceasefire and Government-controlled areas, and not be launched as a stand-alone programme given the sensitivity of the landmines issue for the Burma/Myanmar authorities.⁶⁷

When MRE is incorporated into existing programmes in ceasefire- or Government-controlled areas, consideration should be given to the type of activities that are acceptable to the national authorities, and the type of activities that are not: the terminology used to describe the programmes is a significant consideration. After Cyclone Nargis in 2008, it became clear to the national authorities that the country was not sufficiently secured against natural disasters. The terms "disaster risk reduction" or just "risk reduction" became positive expressions for the national authorities. Therefore, describing programme activities as "risk reduction" or "harm reduction" for returning farmers to stabilised areas may be more acceptable than a "MRE programme".

With regards to the means of delivering MRE in ceasefire areas, it has been suggested that one responsible person from each village should be trained in MRE and thereafter take responsibility for risk reduction in their community. This method appears preferable to the use of MRE teams, which travel from community to community, as is being done in non-ceasefire areas. If INGO expatriate staff is to educate local community leaders in MRE, stakeholders in ceasefire areas also advise that the training should not take place in the affected areas (in the mine-contaminated townships in Burma/Myanmar), but in a more neutral area, for example in Yangon. This advice is based on "lessons learned" from other INGO programmes, and interviews with CBOs and FBOs. It has been reported that the appearance of western expatriates in sensitive areas has created problems for the relevant programmes and unwarranted suspicion of local staff by the authorities.

Advocacy Against Landmines

The Burma/Myanmar government has not acceded to the Mine Ban Convention. Burma/Myanmar is one of 18 countries which, since 1997, have consistently abstained from voting on UN General Assembly resolutions calling for the universalization of the Mine Ban Convention. The Government has rarely participated in Mine Ban Convention-related meetings, but attended as an observer at the Meeting of States Parties related to the Mine Ban Convention in 2003 in Bangkok and in 2006 in Geneva. It also participated in a preparatory meeting in April 2009 in Bangkok for the 2nd Review Conference of the Mine Ban Convention. However, it did not provide any indication of its intention to accede to the Treaty, although it did refer to the use of landmines by NSAs in the country.

From 2000, ICBL member organization Nonviolence International⁶⁸ campaigned for a ban on AP mines in Burma/Myanmar. Nonviolence International also provided the Mine Ban Convention text and an ICRC explanatory document in Burmese to NSAs, and provided statistics on the numbers of mine victims in the country. The ICBL has also engaged the SPDC⁶⁹ at its foreign missions and in meetings with Ministries in Yangon. ICBL's national campaign in Thailand has also engaged with the KNLA⁷⁰ and the SPDC urging both sides to take action on landmines within the context of any agreement on the cessation of hostilities.

For the past 12 years, the Burma/Myanmar chapter of the ICBL's annual Landmine Monitor has been published in the Burmese language and distributed within the country, including to leaders of SPDC.

The opposition National League for Democracy and the Committee Representing the People's Parliament have both called for the country's accession to the Mine Ban Convention at the earliest possible time.⁷¹

67 This recommendation is made by UN and registered INGOs interviewed in Yangon.

68 For information about Nonviolence International's South-East Asia programme, see http://nonviolenceinternational.net/?page_id=114

69 State Peace and Development Council (SPDC) is the official name for the Burma/Myanmar military government.

70 The Karen National Liberation Army (KNLA) is the armed wing of the KNU, a non-ceasefire NSA.

71 From an email from ICBL Landmine Monitor Research Coordinator for Ban/Policy (Asia) to DCA Mine Action, 7 December 2010

At the local level, advocacy has been quite successful. Since 2003, the following six NSAs have signed the Deed of Commitment under Geneva Call for Adherence to a Total Ban on Anti-Personnel Mines and for Cooperation in Mine Action (Geneva Call's Deed of Commitment),⁷² thus declaring their intent to abandon the use of landmines and implement mine action:

- The Arakan Rohingya National Organization/Rohingya National Army (ARNO), 2003.
- The National Unity Party of Arakan/Arakan Army (NUPA), 2003.
- The Chin National Front/Army (CNF/CNA), 2006.
- Lahu Democratic Front (LDF), 2007.
- The Pa'O Peoples' Liberation Organization/Pa'O Peoples' Liberation Army (PPLO/PPLA), 2007.
- The Palaung State Liberation Front (PSLF), 2007.

All of these were non-ceasefire NSAs when they signed the Deed of Commitment. Some of them have later voluntarily demobilised,⁷³ some continue as non-ceasefire groups today and some no longer exist. One was dissolved and reorganised under a different name.

During interviews for this report, two diverging trends were revealed as having occurred after the groups had signed the Deed of Commitment. Firstly, in the eastern part of Burma/Myanmar, where PSLF is based, and where LDF and PPLO/PPLA were based (LDF has dissolved and reorganised under the Lahu Democratic Union (LDU), and PPLO/PPLA fused with another organization), there is still use of landmines because of the armed activities of larger stakeholders including the Tatmadaw and larger NSAs which have not signed the Deed of Commitment. The signatory organizations themselves are not engaging in mine laying activities, however. While mine laying continues by other actors, the remaining Deed of Commitment signatories have implemented MRE to protect the population in their respective areas of operation. Secondly, a decrease in the use of landmines in western Burma/Myanmar after the Deed of Commitment was signed has been observed. As expected, the signatories located in the area (ARNO, NUPA and CNF/CNA) stopped laying mines, but interestingly, the Tatmadaw also stopped using mines. It may be that this decrease in the use of mines by both sides is a direct result of the signing of the Geneva Call's Deed of Commitment by the respective NSAs, but other factors too may have influenced the situation, such as decreased armed conflict and other changes in military operations.

While the signatories of Geneva Call's Deed of Commitment in western Burma/Myanmar have shown the positive outcome/effect of a ban, it would be premature to imagine that the Burma/Myanmar Government and major NSA users of landmines in eastern Burma/Myanmar will sign a ban on landmines in the short term. Some NSAs argue against signing the ban on landmines because they regard their homemade landmines as necessary for the protection of IDP camps or their own military bases. Yet some of the same NSAs are aware of the impact of their use of mines on the civilian population and, as a result, are open to trying to minimise the impact of their use through creating stricter guidelines on use or through supporting/facilitating mine action.

In the current context, it seems more likely that localized bans on landmines – whether official or unofficial – will achieve more rapid positive outcomes in relation to the protection of civilians in the short term while awaiting further national action to ban mines. Both civilians and armies – Tatmadaw or NSA – are often exasperated by the continued use of landmines in the ongoing conflict within the country but cannot express their views freely since the issue of landmines is so sensitive. As a civilian from Karen (Kayin) State expresses it, “When people want the armies to stop the use of landmines, they do not say “stop the use of landmines”, but “stop the fighting””.

The best case scenario is that there would be an official position to halt the use of landmines – at least at the local level, even where the local area concerned might be, for example, in a part of a State or Division under mixed control by the Tatmadaw and different NSAs. Another option is that a mutual agreement to stop the use of landmines could be agreed upon locally on an unofficial basis. Attempts to have such mutual local agreements have been seen for example between ceasefire and non-ceasefire NSAs from the same ethnic minority,⁷⁴ although it has been observed that ceasefire NSAs are reluctant to declare these agreements with a non-ceasefire NSA as the Burma/Myanmar authorities could then view the ceasefire NSA as being too close to the non-ceasefire NSA.⁷⁵

72 The Deed of Commitment Under Geneva Call for Adherence to a Total Ban on Anti-Personnel Mines and for Cooperation in Mine Action is a treaty-like instrument, by which the NSA formally pledges to respect humanitarian norms laid down in the Deed, and publicly assumes responsibility for implementing its obligations. <http://genevacall.org/Asia/Burma-Myanmar/burma-myanmar.htm> See Appendix B

73 One of the signatories stated during the interview that they had agreed a ceasefire with SPDC in 2008.

74 There are secret agreements between KNLA and DKBA to stop fighting in some areas, including no longer planting landmines which would target Karen soldiers of both sides. Source: Committee for Internally Displaced Karen People (CIDKP).

75 Observation based on interview with MRE CBOs in June-July 2010.

Mine Clearance

Surveys of suspected mine areas have only been conducted as cross-border activities in predominantly non-ceasefire areas. Reports of suspected mine areas in ceasefire areas have been limited. Since surveys normally include the utilisation of GPS equipment and mapping, surveys from the inside have not been conducted as they could be misconstrued as a military activity. Even mine surveys with no GPS component are considered too dangerous since geographical positioning of mined areas could be regarded as classified military information. Therefore, stakeholders from inside have neither been trained nor equipped in the survey of suspected mined areas. In addition to the CBOs, at least some NSAs in Karen/Kayin State and Karenni/Kaya State map suspected mined areas. However, this data is classified and not shared.

Limited marking of suspected mined areas with painted warning signs has been carried out by three organizations all working in non-ceasefire areas. CBOs and NSAs do not fence mined areas where NSAs operate. In addition, the Tatmadaw has carried out some marking and fencing. The ICBL Landmine Monitor Research Coordinator for Ban/Policy (Asia) and non-State Armed Groups (Global) has observed an increase in marking and fencing by the Tatmadaw over the last five years (2006-2010). However, the ICBL was not able to conclude if this change accounts for a real increase in marking and fencing or if it is only due to the fact that ICBL sources acquired increased access to the mine-contaminated townships and were therefore able to observe fenced areas.

No explicit humanitarian demining is taking place in Burma/Myanmar at present, but some demining by the Tatmadaw and NSAs has been implemented,⁷⁶ however with no apparent distinction made between its military or humanitarian purposes⁷⁷. Only one organization (in non-ceasefire areas) had a demining programme, and did not specify whether the demining was military or humanitarian. This programme is no longer active today and funds for demining though this programme have been re-directed by the ethnic authority to fund MRE.

One type of demining that does take place is when armed NSAs clear a path in the jungle to enable the movement of IDPs and humanitarian aid agencies between one area and another. However, NSA clearance methods do not meet the International Mine Action Standards (IMAS), and mines may be replanted by the NSA in other areas. "Humanitarian demining" is therefore an inaccurate term to describe this form of clearance activity performed by NSAs. In eastern Burma/Myanmar, metal rakes on long bamboo shafts are the most common method used by the armed wings of NSAs as well as by the Tatmadaw. A fishing rod with a fishing line is also used by NSAs in eastern Burma/Myanmar to detect tripwires across footpaths. In a few cases, metal detectors of a lower quality than those prescribed in IMAS have been used. In western Burma/Myanmar, none of the stakeholders interviewed knew of these kinds of demining methods, but could not specify which demining methods were being used in those areas.

Protective equipment is not being used, and when accidents happen during demining, the "deminer" loses not only his hand(s) but often also his eyesight due to the lack of protective goggles or visor. Interviews suggest that the use of prodding as a mine detection technique is unsafe. This is due to the prevalence of unstable and homemade mines of diverse design which may have been laid in the same area as factory-made mines. INGOs have been approached by both ceasefire- and non-ceasefire NSAs through a CBO and an NGO respectively with requests for training in demining and appropriate equipment. In at least one case, an MoU has been offered from the NSA side undertaking to ensure that the demining is only for humanitarian purposes, and that mines cleared are destroyed and not re-used.

However, it might be premature to train NSAs or CBOs in demining since a range of questions remain unresolved:

- Mine laying continues, and it is hard to imagine at this stage how to guarantee that the cleared mines are not re-planted elsewhere. This difficulty is compounded as there are multiple actors in the area who are not all bound by the Deed of Commitment or by an MoU signed by other parties.
- Even in cease-fire areas the tension between ceasefire groups and the Tatmadaw or even between the different ceasefire-groups could render the situation unstable, thus introducing a risk of re-mining.

⁷⁶ According to interview with one MRE CBO, 7 July 2010.

⁷⁷ "The term 'humanitarian demining' is used to denote mine clearance for humanitarian purposes and to distinguish it clearly from the military activity of 'breaching', which clears paths through minefields to attain military mission objectives during combat operations. They include activities which lead to the removal of mine and Explosive Remnants of War (ERW) hazards, including technical survey, mapping, clearance, marking, post-clearance documentation, community mine action liaison and the handover of cleared land." Guide to Mine Action, 4th ed., GICHD 2010.

- Local authorities in affected areas need to have the full agreement of all actors in support of demining activities – not only as bilateral agreements with one of several groups in the area. Other groups active in the same area may not agree with a given demining agreement, and could then create security risks for the deminers or disrupt or block the work if they do not have the same interest in releasing cleared land.
- Both Government troops and some of the ceasefire groups may be involved in illegal activities, which include drug production, smuggling and/or trafficking. Landmines are sometimes also used as “business-mines” for these activities.

The best case scenario would be for the Government to acknowledge that the country has a landmine problem and that demining should take place. However, there are no indications that the Government will acknowledge the problem and establish a National Mine Action Authority or ask the UN to coordinate such activities (as has been the case in other countries) in the near future. The latter is also very unlikely due to the current relationship between the UN and the Government.

A likely scenario for future demining could be:

- The Government may open its own demining office under the Ministry of Defence and allow demining in areas that have become stable whether controlled by the Government or by NSAs who have agreed to join the BGF.
- According to the Government’s view on the “Tatmadaw culture,” they may prefer that only the Government army, the Tatmadaw, implement the demining – possibly together with those NSAs who joined the BGF, and possibly with training and funding from outside.
- The national authorities may prefer assistance from Asian countries such as China which has been less critical of the regime rather than from western nations.
- The Government is likely to take a negative approach to possible demining training for non-ceasefire groups or for ceasefire groups that did not join the BGF.

It would be important in any event to work closely with the Government (to the extent possible) to ensure that it learns about the implementation of clearance activities in other mine-affected countries, and to find country-appropriate solutions to ensure that the population receives the assistance it needs to prevent future casualties.



4 Potential Mine Action Providers

A common challenge for the UN and INGOs – whether they have chosen to work cross-border or from the inside – is that both Government armed forces and NSAs in areas with most cross-border relief still use landmines.

The best case scenario for mine action in Burma/Myanmar in the future would be for the national authorities to allow the UN, INGOs, NGOs, CBOs and Burma/Myanmar's many civil society groups and FBOs to access the mine-affected areas freely and implement mine action. However, based on INGO access to the areas for the last several years, this is unlikely to happen in the near future.

UN Mine Action Agencies

The UN as an actor has very limited space for mine action in Burma/Myanmar and was relatively quiet in regards to the landmine problem in Burma/Myanmar during the period 2004 to November 2009.⁷⁸

However, since November 2009, UNHCR through the Protection Working Group has raised the profile of the landmine issue once again – and the UN has been a focal point for both national NGOs and INGOs to identify possible connections and funding for potential mine action activities. This includes victim assistance and MRE (but not demining). UNICEF has offices in the countryside in Burma/Myanmar, and could – as seen in other mine-affected countries – be part of the MRE efforts by working with its partners. UNICEF is involved in Child Protection work and the large number of children affected by landmines in the country justifies UNICEF's involvement in mine action.

INGOs

Since 2005, at least seven INGOs have tried to start up mine action activities in Myanmar/Burma, but only three of them succeeded in getting work off the ground – all of which is being performed through local organizations (victim assistance, MRE and survey). Other mine action INGOs are potential partners for future mine action in Myanmar/Burma.

A few years ago, mine action INGOs formed a network with regular meetings to investigate opportunities to start up mine action in Burma/Myanmar. However, this network is currently inactive.

Once the Burma/Myanmar authorities officially allow mine action activities, in particular demining, the investment by INGOs will be multiplied and their engagement is anticipated to be as committed as can be seen today in Cambodia and Laos for example.

National Authorities

Since 2004/2005, the Burma/Myanmar national authorities have not been interested in mine action activities and have even gone as far as to block some of the ongoing mine action activities such as INGO-supported prosthetic clinics⁷⁹.

A direct approach today to the national authorities with a request to start up MRE, establish prosthetic clinics or to start demining may have little chance of success. However, it might be possible to start a programme if the approach to mine victims can be integrated into the general approach to disabled people in Burma/Myanmar – in this case through the Disability Working Group under the Ministry of Social Welfare. The Ministry of Defence has also been mentioned by some stakeholders interviewed as a possible future entry-point for mine action in Burma/Myanmar.

In terms of demining, the national authorities should be encouraged to start setting up coordinating mechanisms and allow the start of clearance activities, at least in areas with no ongoing conflict. Authorities should use examples from other mine-affected states in adopting appropriate solutions to establish such mechanisms.

⁷⁸ Interview with ICBL Research Coordinator, October 2010.

⁷⁹ ICBL. 2009. Landmine Monitor, chapter 2.2.4. "The conditions for current Mine Action in Burma/Myanmar"

NSAs and NSA-linked CBOs

NSAs from all but one mine-affected State and Division and CBOs working in close collaboration with these NSAs, have shown an interest in implementing mine action in their areas. Some NSAs in mine-affected States and Divisions have refused to allow mine surveys, while remaining open to MRE and mine victim assistance activities.⁸⁰

The experience from the six NSAs that have signed Geneva Call's Deed of Commitment should be shared with other NSAs that are still reluctant to stop using landmines. NSAs often have departments for health and education which could take responsibility for care for mine victims and MRE messages to the community through local clinics and schools in areas under NSA control.

National and Local NGOs

Burma/Myanmar has 85 registered national or local NGOs.⁸¹ During interviews, some of the national and local NGOs expressed an interest in implementing mine action, especially MRE and mine victim assistance. Often the national NGOs have more access to the mine affected areas than the UN or INGOs. National and local disability organizations can be a link not only to assist mine victims but also to risk reduction activities. Cooperation with the disability organizations in Burma/Myanmar can therefore be one approach that brings MRE and victim assistance into the country. Mine victim assistance will probably need to be integrated into assistance to other people with disabilities and MRE integrated into broader harm reduction programmes.

National Faith-Based Organizations

Although the majority of Burma/Myanmar's population is Buddhist, Christian FBOs are relatively strong and have access deep into the mine-affected areas of Burma/Myanmar. The Christian FBOs, of which at least one already deals with mine victims and another was trained in MRE and mine victim survey work in 2007, have shown strong interest in being involved in mine action activities. During the interviews, they also expressed an interest in MRE, mine victim trauma training and, in one case, mine victim prosthetic clinics as well. Likewise, in predominately Buddhist areas, Buddhist monasteries may be unexplored resources for MRE and other mine action activities.

Civil Society Organizations

Burma/Myanmar has thousands of small civil society organizations, and this number has been growing since the Cyclone Nargis relief effort. The country has a tradition of providing volunteer civil assistance when natural disaster hits the country. The many small civil society organizations for women, youth, students, environment, farmers, fishermen and other such organizations could be involved in mine action work. There are networks both in Yangon and along the borders which can facilitate contact with these civil society organizations.

Media in Burma/Myanmar

During the last ten years, the media landscape of Burma/Myanmar has changed. Although the national authorities still control the editorial content of the radio and newspapers, the huge influx of different media now available has made it impossible for the authorities to implement the same strict control on the media as they did in the 1990s. Many in Burma/Myanmar still listen to news in their own language broadcast on short-wave radio channels (SW) by stations in western countries.

Recent increases in the radio audience seem mainly due to the growing number of FM-stations in Burma/Myanmar.⁸² MRE through the radio, for example included in the highly popular "soap opera" programmes, is an interesting option for alternative MRE delivery. Providing MRE through outside radio stations has also been investigated, however due to the distances involved, only AM (and SW) are viable options, although the numbers of AM listeners are limited in Burma/Myanmar.⁸³

⁸⁰ Based on INGO interviews since 2006 with NSA authorities in six different mine affected states and divisions.

⁸¹ According to interviews conducted with INGOs in Yangon between 25 June and 6 July 2010.

⁸² Interview conducted with media organizations and observations from Yangon between 25 June and 6 July 2010.

⁸³ According to interviews with communities living in mine affected areas in eastern Burma/Myanmar on 13 June 2010.

5 Conclusion

There is a very real need for mine action in Burma/Myanmar which is currently not being met, not only because the national authorities refuse to grant permission for direct mine action activities and because there are significant difficulties accessing mine affected areas due to the ongoing armed conflict in many of the mine affected townships, but also due to the fact that new mines are still being laid by the army and by NSAs.

The UN and INGOs based in Yangon have limited direct access to the mine-affected areas due to strict regulations enforced by the national authorities. In addition, organizations working cross-border from neighbouring countries have experienced a decrease in reachable areas over the last few years. While this may suggest that mine action is currently at a very low point in the country, our research has in fact identified several possible openings which may increase the possibility of mine action activities in Burma/Myanmar in the coming years:

- A range of national and local organizations and communities both inside and cross-border have shown a strong interest in getting involved in mine action activities, particularly MRE and mine victim assistance. Some of them have already undertaken these activities.
- There is a need for marking of mined areas since this has mostly not occurred, particularly in NSA-controlled areas where mine laying continues. The marking should be done by the party using mines. Until the conflict is resolved this may be a difficult task to undertake for civilian organizations as many mined areas retain a military purpose, meaning that marking is unacceptable or highly suspicious. When conflict and mine laying stop, the focus should be on marking linked to mine clearance activities and not as a stand-alone activity.
- There is a need for a more complete survey of mine contamination. The CBO Database is currently the only existing database of suspected mine areas but it is limited in scope. The Database only depicts the mine problem for some ethnic minority groups in a limited area of the country. The data has only been collected through cross-border efforts since data gathering is, at this time, too dangerous for mine action actors operating from inside the country given the strict national regulations.
- The enormous need for demining remains a continued challenge as a result of the lack of Government approval and the ongoing conflict which poses a high risk of re-mining. Mine clearance training for NSAs in ceasefire areas is a possibility, and some NSAs have made requests for support in this area. However, since several ceasefires are still fragile and as official access for international personnel and equipment for a demining programme is currently unobtainable, mine clearance according to IMAS standards is virtually impossible to imagine in the near future. Humanitarian demining activities, when eventually implemented in Burma/Myanmar, should be based on the experience and lessons learned during almost two decades of successful mine action activities in other countries, and should incorporate best practice in the implementation of survey and land release.
- The research has also shown that in order to reach the entire mine-affected population and to ensure that humanitarian needs are met, both cross-border work and inside-initiated actions should be undertaken and supported. Those who can reach the field are not the UN or INGOs directly, but a wide range of local actors – from NSA-linked CBOs, disability organizations, FBOs, some of the growing number of civil society organizations, local ethnic minority schools, local clinics and NSAs.
- The likelihood of a national ban on mines and thereby a legal framework for mine action activities in Burma/Myanmar through the signing of the Mine Ban Convention by the Government is very slim in the near future. However, a localized ban providing a space for limited mine action may be possible. In this regard a ray of hope is the signing of the Geneva Call's Deed of Commitment by six NSAs, which has already been followed up by a halt in the use of mines, at least in the western part of Burma/Myanmar. This gives some hope for the future: that a similar reduction in the use of mines could be achieved elsewhere in the country if this experience can serve as an inspiration to stakeholders in other mine affected areas.

6 Recommendations

To the Government of Burma/Myanmar

- Many citizens in Burma/Myanmar suffer as a direct result of the landmines planted by a variety of actors. It is recommended that the Government grant appropriate permissions and support to facilitate the implementation of mine action activities.
- The Government should allow at least some mine action activities to be mainstreamed into other humanitarian work such as assisting people with disabilities and risk reduction education.
- The Government should set up a National Mine Action Authority to collect information and prioritise Mine Action activities. The Government should draw from experience of other mine-affected countries and their lessons learned when establishing such a Mine Action Authority. This Authority could also serve as a centre for coordinating future mine action activities.
- The Government should work with disability organizations to provide assistance to disabled persons, including mine victims, in order to reach as many disabled as possible. Moreover, the Government is strongly encouraged to accede to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities as a sign of this strong commitment.
- The marking of mined areas with warning signs currently observed being carried out by Tatmadaw should continue and be encouraged as a part of their responsibilities to civilians under humanitarian law. The warning signs should ideally be erected by the Tatmadaw and not by civilians with limited knowledge of necessary safety measures near mined areas.
- The Burma/Myanmar army is one of the only Government armies that still uses landmines. It is recommended that the use of mines be stopped with immediate effect. The Government of Burma/Myanmar is urged to take the necessary steps to accede to the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention as soon as possible, announcing a timeline to this end.

To the UN

- The UN has re-engaged with the landmine issue in Burma/Myanmar since 2009, and is in dialogue with the Burma/Myanmar authorities on the possibility of allowing mine action activities, initially victim assistance and MRE. It is recommended that this effort be not only sustained but strengthened.
- The UN should continue its ongoing advocacy with the national authorities to ban landmines and stop mine laying bearing in mind that an overly aggressive approach could limit other humanitarian activities.
- All UN agencies should continue to advocate that it is important for mine action work to include demining as a pre-condition for other humanitarian and development activities to take place.
- UNICEF, which plays a key role in MRE in other countries and also has offices in the mine-affected States and Divisions in Burma/Myanmar, should continue dialogue with the Burma/Myanmar Government to start MRE, possibly incorporating it into other risk reduction work.
- If the UN is officially requested by the Burma/Myanmar Government to coordinate mine action activities it should seek to set up a coordination body based on experience and lessons learned from other mine-affected countries, and ensure the implementation of appropriate solutions according to the specific circumstances of the country.

To the International Community

- Many donor countries have been reluctant to aid activities in Burma/Myanmar. Based on the current humanitarian situation and very limited assistance to people in Burma/Myanmar, it is recommended that donor countries increase general aid as well as aid for well-planned and practically achievable mine action activities inside Burma/Myanmar.
- Some European donor countries have shown increased reluctance to fund cross-border assistance. However, cross-border assistance is essential for mine action to Burma/Myanmar since most townships with landmine contamination border neighbouring countries. Donors should include cross-border elements in their mine action assistance.
- The international community should strive for a reduction or ban on the use of landmines in Burma/Myanmar by all parties to the conflict. If it cannot be achieved through a national ban, advocacy for regional bans should be supported.
- The international community is urged to sign the Disability Working Group's "Statement of Common Position on Disability Inclusive Development".
- The international community provides prosthesis support to one quarter of persons in need of support in Burma/Myanmar. Assistance to victims should be increased, including additional prosthetic clinics, innovative income-generating activities and financial support for the most severely disabled mine victims. Non-amputee mine victims should also receive assistance.
- Some of the countries neighbouring Burma/Myanmar already accept limited cross-border humanitarian assistance. As the mine-affected communities in Burma/Myanmar are located in townships near the borders, neighbouring countries are encouraged to allow mine action provision to people from these areas, particularly assistance related to mine victims.
- As Burma/Myanmar is a member of the Organization of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), other ASEAN countries (particularly those that have signed the Mine Ban Treaty) are encouraged to engage Burma/Myanmar in a dialogue on the issues of landmines and the benefits of a full ban. Moreover, ASEAN countries are encouraged to organise regional conferences on landmines to further engage the Burma/Myanmar Government on the issue.

To NSAs

- NSAs have been helpful and supportive in facilitating MRE, survey work and mine victim assistance teams in their areas; it is recommended that this approach be continued and expanded.
- As landmines are not only used by Government forces, but also NSAs, it is recommended that the use of mines be stopped, and that all NSAs that have not yet done so sign Geneva Call's Deed of Commitment. The symbolic value of such an act and commitment could serve as an inspiration for other actors.
- For NSAs that still use mines, the experience of other NSAs that have stopped the use of mines should be shared. The signatories could be encouraged to meet and join workshops and seminars together with the non-signatories.
- As very few mined areas are marked in NSA areas, it is recommended that all mine areas be marked and mapped.

To INGOs, NGOs, CBOs, and Civil Society Groups

- As INGOs often do not have access to mine-affected areas, they are urged to support national and regional NGOs, CBOs and civil society groups with capacity building and funding. Wherever possible, INGOs should also provide support to establish effective and efficient response mechanisms for mine action activities.
- Mine action INGOs interested in operating in the area are encouraged to re-start the INGO network and meet regularly to investigate opportunities to enhance mine action in Burma/Myanmar, linking where possible with the UN sub-group formed by the Protection Working Group (PWG) of the UN mission in Burma/Myanmar.
- As mine victims are spread over wide areas of Burma/Myanmar, and the existing prosthetic clinics are few and far between, it is advisable to also have smaller and possibly mobile prosthetic clinics that could reach the most mine-affected communities. These can better assist mine victims near their home area.
- CBOs and civil society groups have access to mine-affected communities and some of them already provide mine action assistance. It is recommended that this effort be expanded and strengthened.
- At least until mine clearance activities become possible, MRE to civilians in both ceasefire- and non-ceasefire areas should be increased substantially. For security reasons, MRE should not be a stand-alone activity, particularly through Yangon, but rather integrated into existing community development programmes for risk reduction or preventive health.
- CBOs and national FBOs have the advantage of enjoying close contact with the mine-affected communities and are therefore urged to train community leaders and villagers directly about risks as well as to disseminate information on assistance options for mine victims and their families.
- When training for prosthetic clinics and MRE is provided with input from outside sources, this should be done in a manner that does not endanger the local CBOs: the training must be non-political and should take place in “neutral” areas like Yangon rather than in sensitive areas like mine-affected townships.
- Advocacy concerning landmines, and the promotion of positive examples such as the ban on landmines by some NSAs and the consequent reduction in landmine use in areas under the control or influence of these NSAs should be a part of the overall mine action efforts.

APPENDICES

A. Statement of Common Position on Disability Inclusive Development

The undersigned agencies agree that:

- according to existing international conventions (in particular article 32 of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities) Persons with Disabilities (PwD) have the right to inclusion in the process of development as equal right holders with those who are non-disabled.
- in accordance with the Bratislava declaration and other more recent statements, the Millennium Development Goals will not be reached without the full participation of Persons with disabilities.
- agents of international assistance thus have a clear duty to ensure that programmes supported are made fully inclusive of persons with disabilities.
- that in accordance with current best practice recommendations, such agencies shall provide technical and financial support to ensure such inclusion.
- failure to ensure inclusion will result in exclusion by omission, with the result that PwDs are likely to be excluded from the process and benefits of development, and thus not be able to contribute to their own development, and the development of their communities and States.

Therefore, the undersigned will undertake to:

- ensure that implementing organizations requesting assistance from these agencies shall demonstrate an understanding of disability inclusive programming.
- ensure that project proposals above shall be examined for evidence of disability inclusive programming.
- allocate specific budget to enable mainstreaming of disability inclusion (note that this is not ring fenced funding for disability specific projects) which is likely to amount to 5% of total expenditure.

The undersigned shall work in cooperation with the Disability Working Group to further develop policy, training and monitoring instruments and processes for building capacity for inclusive practice.

B. Deed of Commitment for Adherence to a Total Ban on Anti-Personnel Mines and for Cooperation in Mine Action

WE, the (NAME OF THE NON-STATE ACTOR), through our duly authorized representative(s),

Recognising the global scourge of anti-personnel mines which indiscriminately and inhumanely kill and maim combatants and civilians, mostly innocent and defenceless people, especially women and children, even after the armed conflict is over;

Realising that the limited military utility of anti-personnel mines is far outweighed by their appalling humanitarian, socio-economic and environmental consequences, including on post-conflict reconciliation and reconstruction;

Rejecting the notion that revolutionary ends or just causes justify inhumane means and methods of warfare of a nature to cause unnecessary suffering;

Accepting that international humanitarian law and human rights apply to and oblige all parties to armed conflicts;

Reaffirming our determination to protect the civilian population from the effects or dangers of military actions, and to respect their rights to life, to human dignity, and to development;

Resolved to play our role not only as actors in armed conflicts but also as participants in the practice and development of legal and normative standards for such conflicts, starting with a contribution to the overall humanitarian effort to solve the global landmine problem for the sake of its victims;

Acknowledging the norm of a total ban on anti-personnel mines established by the 1997 Ottawa Treaty, which is an important step toward the total eradication of landmines;

NOW, THEREFORE, hereby solemnly commit ourselves to the following terms:

1. TO ADHERE to a total ban on anti-personnel mines. By anti-personnel mines, we refer to those devices which effectively explode by the presence, proximity or contact of a person, including other victim-activated explosive devices and anti-vehicle mines with the same effect whether with or without anti-handling devices. By total ban, we refer to a complete prohibition on all use, development, production, acquisition, stockpiling, retention, and transfer of such mines, under any circumstances. This includes an undertaking on the destruction of all such mines.
2. TO COOPERATE IN AND UNDERTAKE stockpile destruction, mine clearance, victim assistance, mine awareness, and various other forms of mine action, especially where these programs are being implemented by independent international and national organisations.
3. TO ALLOW AND COOPERATE in the monitoring and verification of our commitment to a total ban on anti-personnel mines by Geneva Call and other independent international and national organisations associated for this purpose with Geneva Call. Such monitoring and verification include visits and inspections in all areas where anti-personnel mines may be present, and the provision of the necessary information and reports, as may be required for such purposes in the spirit of transparency and accountability.
4. TO ISSUE the necessary orders and directives to our commanders and fighters for the implementation and enforcement of our commitment under the foregoing paragraphs, including measures for information dissemination and training, as well as disciplinary sanctions in case of non-compliance.
5. TO TREAT this commitment as one step or part of a broader commitment in principle to the ideal of humanitarian norms, particularly of international humanitarian law and human rights, and to contribute to their respect in field practice as well as to the further development of humanitarian norms for armed conflicts.
6. This Deed of Commitment shall not affect our legal status, pursuant to the relevant clause in common article 3 of the Geneva Conventions of August 12, 1949.

7. We understand that Geneva Call may publicize our compliance or non-compliance with this Deed of Commitment.
8. We see the desirability of attracting the adherence of other armed groups to this Deed of Commitment and will do our part to promote it.
9. This Deed of Commitment complements or supercedes, as the case may be, any existing unilateral declaration of ours on anti-personnel mines.
10. This Deed of Commitment shall take effect immediately upon its signing and receipt by the Government of the Republic and Canton of Geneva which receives it as the custodian of such deeds and similar unilateral declarations.

APPEL DE GENÈVE LLAMAMIENTO DE GINEBRA

GENEVA CALL

P.O. BOX 334
1211 GENEVA 4
SWITZERLAND
TEL: +41 22 879 1050
FAX: +41 22 879 1051

E-MAIL: info@genevacall.org
WEBSITE: www.genevacall.org



DCA MINE ACTION
NØRREGADE 15
DK-1165 COPENHAGEN K

TEL: +45 3315 2800
FAX: +45 3318 7816
E-MAIL: mail@dca.dk
WEBSITE: www.dcamineaction.org