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Ref: APMBC

The Permanent Mission of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka to the United Nations Office in Geneva and other International Organizations in Switzerland presents its compliments to the Implementation Support Unit (ISU) of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production, and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on their Destruction (APMBC) and with reference to the Article 7 of the said Convention has the honor to submit herewith the Annual Transparency Report of Sri Lanka for the period 01 January to 31 December 2023.

The Permanent Mission of Sri Lanka would appreciate if the ISU of the APMBC could acknowledge the receipt of this report.

The Permanent Mission of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka to the United Nations Office in Geneva and other International Organizations in Switzerland avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the Implementation Support Unit (ISU) of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production, and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on their Destruction (APMBC) the assurances of its highest consideration.

Geneva, 12 June 2024



Implementation Support Unit (ISU) of the
of the Convention on the Prohibition of the
Use, Stockpiling, Production, and Transfer
of Anti-Personnel Mines and on their Destruction (APMBC)

Enclosed: Article 7 Transparency Report of Sri Lanka - 2023

**CONVENTION ON THE PROHIBITION OF THE USE, STOCKPILING,
PRODUCTION, TRANSFER OF
ANTI-PERSONNEL MINES AND ON THEIR DESTRUCTION**
Article 7 Report

State Party: *Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka*

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January 1, 2023 to December 31, 2023

1. National implementation measures

The Sri Lanka National Mine Action Completion Strategy was developed by the NMAC with the support of GICHD in collaboration with all other stakeholders. In March 2023, the Government of Sri Lanka endorsed the Sri Lanka National Mine Action Completion Strategy¹ 2023-2027, demonstrating the government's strategic commitment to completion.

The first of four strategic objectives focuses on land release and the implementation of an inclusive and transparent completion survey that facilitates Sri Lanka's Article 5 completion. This process will allow the Government of Sri Lanka to declare their administrative areas "mine free," indicating confidence that all known mined areas have been identified and cleared, with no further evidence or suspicion of mines on their land at this time. The completion survey process is being implemented throughout all Grame Niladaree Divisions (Sri Lanka's Smallest Administrative Boundary) to identify any previously unknown explosive ordnance and to declare areas free from any suspicion or presence of explosive ordnance (EO).

The second strategic objective is to maintain strong national ownership of its mine action programme by ensuring that its structures are well-equipped and resourced. This commitment aligns with Oslo 57 and Lausanne 58 Action Plans action number 1, emphasizing national ownership and financial commitments. NMAC pledges to coordinate regularly and transparently with the Sri Lankan government, international donors, operators, and other partners, organizing bi-annual coordination meetings. This effort supports OAP action number 43 on national coordination and aligns with Grand Bargain principles.

Under the third objective of the Management of Residual contamination, Sri Lanka aims to shift from proactive survey and clearance of known explosive ordnance (EO) contamination to reactively addressing reported residual contamination by 2027. IMAS 04.10 defines residual contamination as the contamination that persists after all reasonable efforts to remove it. Recognizing the importance of timely planning for this transition, Sri Lanka's previous strategy included managing residual contamination, with the SLA HDU responsible for this task. In line with OAP action #26, the GoSL will continue planning collaboratively with stakeholders. The Police Task Force will handle explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) callouts under the 2022 Prohibition of Anti-Personnel Mines Act. The SLA HDU, with its extensive experience, is well-positioned to manage future residual contamination. Ensuring the SLA HDU is well-equipped and trained in IMSMA Core is crucial for a smooth transition. Sustainable EORE structures will be strengthened to promote safe behavior and inform communities about EO risks and reporting procedures

¹ <https://www.gichd.org/publications-resources/publications/sri-lanka-national-mine-action-completion-strategy/>

With the anticipated completion of all known contaminated areas by the end of 2027, the Government of Sri Lanka is committed to ensuring that relevant plans are in place to ensure a smooth demobilization of mine action staff currently employed by four operators (MAG, HALO, DASH and SHARP), as outlined in Strategic Objective 4 “Staff Transition” of the National Mine Action Completion Strategy 2023-2027. This strategic objective draws upon the framework developed by MAG for its own workforce, with MAG assuming a leadership role in staff transition within the mine action sector in Sri Lanka. The staff transition process consists of three main phases, which are structured to be implemented before and during the gradual demobilization of staff, continuing until the completion of clearance and phase-out.

2. Stockpiled anti-personnel mines

NMAC reported that all stockpiled AP mines, except training purpose have been destroyed in 24 Aug 2021 almost a year earlier than the deadline set by the convention.

3. Anti-personnel mines retained or transferred for permitted purposes

As of 31 December 2023, the Sri Lanka armed forces retained 7,339 anti-personnel mines for purposes permitted under Article 3 of the Convention

Type	Quantity Remained	Lot number
P4 MARK II	3960	006,013,012,009,092,004,091,007,036,008,093,001,021,090,028,008,050,007,006,031,092,020,045,044,014,013,092,085,007,007,008,007,086,007,048,009,059,092,089,006,093,095,053,003,033,013,018,015,008,005,048,052,031,008,006,032,001,004,028,030,013,031,014,047,007,030,044,004,091,045,008,007,071,024,007,010,006,003,006,008,038,008,006,007,032,017,026,014,021,003,031,011,046,013,052,052,048,007,029,015
TYPE 72	128	51-95-652A, 40-95-652A, 51-95-652A, 51-95-652A, 48-95-652A
VS 50	393	EJD-001, EJD-001, EJD-001
TYPE 1969	62	Unknown
PRB 409	18	FMP -1-01-01-74
Mine AP (CH)	7	
Mine Anti-Personal(POF)	17	
AP Mine P4 MK - II	2701	042,039,030,060,001,034,064,019,058,057,074,034,021,002,022,006,018,019,020,022,024,025,030,038,043,044,048,050,057,058,059,060,067

Jony mine(LTTE)	04	
Rangan 99	06	
Standard APM (Factory made)	02	
Stranded APM	02	
Standed APM (Germen)	01	
Jony mine (LTTE)	12	
Rangan 96(LTTE)	25	
Anti – TANK Mine 3 APM(ORIGINAL)	01	

Source: Ministry of Defence

The Sri Lanka armed forces authorized to retain anti personnel mines for permitted purposes: the Sri Lanka Army, Sri Lanka navy, Sri Lank Airforce, and Special task force Katukurunda. It retains anti-personnel mines for training mine detection dogs, testing demining machines and studying the effect of the blast of various types of anti-personnel mines on demining equipment. During the course of 2023, authorized institutions used 2,366 anti-personnel mines for permitted purposes as follows;

Type	Quantity used	Authorized Institution	Lot Numbers	Actual use
P4MARK II	2008	Sri Lanka Army ⁵⁴	004,008,091,029,011,0 29,008,008,048,055,01 0,007,020,047,090,028, 090,020,028,014,008,0 10,008,005,058,009,02 9,017,032,029,093,048, 018,032,015,013,007,0 47,084,033,006,032,01 8,006,008,004,013,011, 004,093,004,023,017,0 05,033	2008
TYPE 72	110	Sri Lanka Army ⁵	22-95-652A,01-95- 652A	110
VS 50	98		EJD- 001	98
TYPPE 1969	77	Sri Lanka Army ⁵	Unknown	77
PRB 409	20	Sri Lanka Army ⁵	FMP – 1-01-01-74	20
AP Mine P4 MK - II	53	Sri Lanka Air Force	060,039,001,038,022,0 02,019,057,06	53

Source: Ministry of Defence

In 2024, the Government of Sri Lanka anticipates that authorized institutions will again make use of approximately 1,750 anti-personnel mines for ongoing programmes related to training mine detection dogs, testing demining machines and studying the effect of the blast of various types of anti-personnel mines on demining equipment.

4. Areas known or suspected to contain anti-personnel mines

As of 31 December 2023, there were 654 areas primarily located in the North and East, as well as other subordinate districts, known to contain anti-personnel mines, totaling 16,831,534 square meters. Additionally, there were 171 areas suspected to contain anti-personnel mines, totaling 4,743,729 square meters. These areas, whether confirmed or suspected to contain anti-personnel mines, are distributed across 11 districts within all four provinces of Sri Lanka, as outlined below:

Summary of areas known or suspected to contain anti-personnel mines as of 31 December 2023

Province	District	Number of areas known to contain anti personnel mines	Number of areas suspected to contain anti personnel mines	Total number of areas known or suspected to contain anti personnel mines	Amount of area known to contain anti personnel mines(square meters)	Amount of area suspected to contain anti personnel mines(square meters)	Total amount of area known or suspected to contain anti personnel mines(square metres)
Northern	Jaffna	18	2	20	814992	71,402	886,394
	Kilinochchi	84	3	87	1241898	217,207	1,459,105
	Mannar	158	39	197	1962556	604,694	2,567,250
	Mullaitivu	298	44	342	11273552	2,024,324	13,297,876
	Vavuniya	44	26	70	837996	1,043,724	1,881,720
NCP	Anuradhapura	1	0	1	12705		12,705
	Polonnaruwa	3	4	7		70,233	70,233
NWP	Puttalam			0			0
Eastern	Ampara	2	12	14	11135		11,135
	Batticaloa	26	17	43	381,018	616,135	997,153
	Trincomalee	20	24	44	295682	96,010	391,692
Total		654	171	825	16,831,534	4,743,729	21,575,263

Source: IMSMA, NMAC

Throughout the year 2023, Sri Lanka Mine Action Centre (NMAC) declared 109 areas totaling 5,316,665.4 square meters as safe zones, free from the suspected presence of anti-personnel mines and other explosive remnants of war (ERW), to be used for normal human activities. These areas, located in eight districts in three provinces were officially released for human activities. In total of 19,212 anti-personnel mines and 21,656 other explosive items, including 33 anti-vehicle mines and unexploded ordnance (UXO), were safely removed in accordance with the national mine action standards.

Province	District	In square meters				No of Items destroyed			Number of areas released
		Cancelled area	Reduced area	Cleared area	Total area released	APs	ATs	Number of Other explosives	
Northern	Jaffna	20719.5	39788.5	60,972	121,480	214		408	4
	Kilinochchi		19570	1,434,384.5	1,434,384.5	8714	28	15,635	34
	Mannar	179	4684	241,967	246,830	539		39	14
	Mullaitivu		292179	2,539,969.9	2,539,969.9	9045	2	5362	36
	Vavuniya	740	415123	341,021	756,884	382	3	137	17
NCP	Anuradhapura			24694	24,694	0		33	
	Polonnaruwa	16		34,294	34,310	70		1	2
Eastern	Ampara				0	0			
	Batticaloa		6100	120,478	126,578	231		8	1
	Trincomalee			31,535	31,535	17			1
		21,654.5	777,444.5	4,829,315.4	5,316,665.4	19,212	33	21,623	109

Source: IMSMA, NMAC

Sri Lanka’s national mine action completion strategy, based on the 15,379,942.45 square meters of CHA remaining as of September 2022, was officially endorsed by the Government of Sri Lanka in March 2023. The first of four strategic objectives focuses on land release and the implementation of an inclusive and transparent completion survey that facilitates Sri Lanka’s Article 5 completion. Sri Lanka’s completion process will allow the Government of Sri Lanka to declare their administrative areas “mine free”. This means that they are confident that all known mined areas have been identified and cleared and that there is no further evidence and/or suspicion of mines, at this time, on their land. The process formalize the mechanisms around the ongoing survey and clearance so that the Government can document the ‘completion’ of administrative areas in a consistent and transparent manner. This will enable the Government to demonstrate that All Reasonable Effort has been made to identify and clear all mined areas, as per its article 5 obligations. ‘Completion’, in the context of Sri Lanka, refers to Sri Lanka fulfilling its APMBC Article 5 obligations and identifying and clearing anti-vehicle (AV) mines and other explosive ordnance (EO).

Sri Lanka’s Completion Survey will go beyond its article 5 obligations, with the inclusion of AV mines in the completion declaration. In addition, any Explosive Remnants of War (ERW) identified during the survey shall be reported through relevant mechanisms. Given the probabilities of residual ERW contamination, these items are not included in the declaration form. The completion process standard operating procedure (SOP) outlines the process in detail and has been translated into Tamil and Sinhala.

As of 21 May 2024, the completion survey has been commenced throughout the 425 GN divisions, of which 313 have been validated. Out of these 313, survey teams concluded that there is no further evidence and/or suspicion of EO contamination in 201 GNs and recommended them for declaration. Survey teams recommended follow up visits to 224 GNs. The completion survey process includes dedicated non-technical survey (NTS) activities to identify any unidentified/unreported/unrecorded contamination. Since the inception of the completion survey process from 01 December 2023, newly identified hazardous areas by province are listed below;

Province	Number of new hazards areas	Hazard area in square meters
Northern	74	4,001,450
Eastern	19	258,322
NCP and NWP	3	33,908

Note: NCP- North Central Province and NWP- North Western Province

Source: IMSMA, NMAC

Due to the identification of previously unknown contamination, the contamination baseline from September 2022 of 15.4 sq km has increased by another 13 sq km. Out of that, in the year 2023, 5,331,235 Square meters was released for community use as safer land, ensuring the absence of any AP mines and all other ERW. As of now, the total remaining contamination area is 23,445,611 Square meters (CHA- 17,868,150.5 / SHA- 5,577,460.5) based on reported data in IMSMA . In 2024, NMAC expects that a total number of 235 areas, , totaling 7,022,291 square meters, will be released in the Northern, Eastern, and NCP provinces. However, during the completion survey, there is a possibility of discovering additional, previously unknown contaminated areas. As a

result, the projection may vary accordingly. In June 2024, NMAC will analyse various completion scenarios together with GICHD and operators, based on the remaining contamination and available funding. This will allow Sri Lanka to determine a realistic Article 5 completion date, based on updated contamination and funding information.

Summary of projections for the number of areas and the amount of area (square metres) known or suspected to contain anti-personnel mines to be released 2024-2027.

		Northern	Eastern	NCP	NWP	Total Areas	Total Area
2024	Areas	200	32	3		235	
	Area	6,468,524	533,501	20,266			7,022,291
2025	Areas	166	27	2	1	196	
	Area	5,390,437	444,584	16,889	37,970		5,889,880
2026	Areas	166	27	2		195	
	Area	5,390,437	444,584	16,889			5,851,910
2027	Areas	133	21	1		155	
	Area	4,312,349	355,667	13,511			4,681,527

Source: IMSMA, NMAC

The Government of Sri Lanka (GOSL) expects further financial, capacity development and strategic support from the donor community and the GICHD to strengthen the demining organization and expedite the process to achieve the target as expected. In addition to donor funding, the National Mine Action Centre (NMAC) needs GOSL funds for Sri Lanka Army demining operations including MDD, as well as for NMAC and Regional Mine Action Office (RMAO) responsibilities related to clearance, survey, quality assurance, information management, capacity development, and other operational needs. GOSL can provide a detailed project proposal outlining its funding needs and expected results to those interested in supporting its efforts to complete the implementation of Article 5.

EO Risk Education and Reduction effort

Regarding EORE, Sri Lanka improved the sustainability of its risk education activities by integrating EORE into the school curriculum in the northern and eastern provinces. Additionally, EORE training materials and tools were developed and distributed in Tamil and Sinhala languages, enhancing outreach and effectiveness.

In 2023, all EORE activities were conducted by the EORE teams of respective organizations, prioritizing areas with the most urgent concerns to reduce the risk of accidents. Looking ahead, the National Mine Action Center and its implementor partners will collaborate to plan EORE risk education programs for areas where unknown contamination areas are identified during the completion survey process. As a result of best practices and the continuation of EORE efforts, mine accidents have gradually decreased over the last couple of years. Last year, only one incident was reported, resulting in two injuries caused by APs.

Number of individuals killed or injured by anti-personnel mines, 1 January-31 December 2023

	Women	Girls	boys	Men	Total
Killed	-	-	-	-	-
Injured	-		1	1	2
Total	-	-	1	1	2

5. Technical characteristics of anti-personnel mines

Not applicable as the Sri Lanka does not produce any anti-personnel mines.

6. Conversion or decommissioning of anti-personnel mine production facilities

Sri Lanka has no additional information on the technical characteristics of anti-personnel mines owned or possessed. See the report submitted in 2021 for information that has already been provided by the Sri Lanka on the technical characteristics of anti-personnel mines possessed by Sri Lanka

7. Victim Assistance

a. Data on Direct and Indirect Victims (in reference to Oslo Action #35)

Assessment

During the period 2002 – 2009, IMSMA recorded 1,765 victims of landmines and other explosive ordnances. Of these, the conflict-affected Eastern and Northern Provinces accounted for 93 percent, with 1,451 victims.

Since 2010 with the establishment of the National Mine Action Centre (NMAC), data has been available at the district level and recorded annually. Landmine accidents have significantly decreased over the past decade, dropping from a total of 55 casualties in 2010 to just 2 casualties in 2023 – please refer to the table below for a geographic and year-by-year breakdown. This substantial reduction underscores the effectiveness of ongoing mine clearance efforts, explosive ordnance risk education activities, awareness campaigns, and other preventive measures implemented in recent years. Data cleaning and verification are currently in progress to ensure the accuracy of these figures and disaggregation by age and gender, and to address any discrepancies that may have been reported in the previous year's Article 7 report.

As a State Party that ratifies the UNCRPD in 2016, the Government of Sri Lanka assured its commitment with the submission of the initial state party report as per Article 35(1) of the UNCRPD in 2019² where information on persons with disabilities, including landmine victims, was provided.

² GoSL initial state party report para 201. Accessed at https://www.stateminsamurdhi.gov.lk/web/images/content_image/notices/CRPD_initial_report.pdf

As the country approaches the final stages of mine clearance operations, it is important to monitor potential injuries that may occur beyond the scope of data collected by the mine action sector through NMAC, and therefore integrate data collection efforts into mainstream government practices.

In line with the commitments outlined in the National Mine Action Completion Strategy 2023-2027, NMAC acknowledges that its responsibilities with regards to victim assistance primarily entails a facilitating role, ensuring that accurate information on victims of landmines and other explosive ordnances is readily available for coordination and support efforts aimed at addressing their specific needs.

Districts	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Grand Total
Ampara			2												2
Batticaloa	2						1								3
Jaffna	22	13	7	1	2	3			1	5	1				55
Kilinochchi	13	6	6		5		5	2	2	4	3	1	4		51
Mannar	6		7			3					2				18
Mullaitivu	4	8	24		11				2			4	1	2	56
Polonnaruwa			2												2
Puttalam	1														1
Trincomalee	5		1					1	1			2			10
Vavuniya	2	3	1												6
Grand Total	55	30	50	1	18	6	6	3	6	9	6	7	5	2	204

Source: IMSMA, NMAC

Objectives

- By the end of 2024, accidents related to landmines and other explosive ordnances will be included as a cause of disability in the national injury surveillance system forms and database managed by the Ministry of Health to monitor potential injuries in the future, as outlined in Strategic Objective 2 “Coordination and National Ownership” – Outcome 2.2 of the National Mine Action Completion Strategy 2023-2027.
- By the end of 2025, the Ministry of Health and Ministry of Women, Child Affairs and Social Empowerment will formally integrate IMSMA data shared by NMAC on victims of landmines and other explosive ordnances into their existing databases, disaggregated by age, gender and disability, as outlined in Strategic Objective 2 “Coordination and National Ownership” – Outcome 2.2 of the National Mine Action Completion Strategy 2023-2027.

Enhancements made / to be made to pertinent legislation, policies and plans:

- By the end of 2024, the Ministry of Health will appoint a dedicated Victim Assistance focal person, who will have a clear set of responsibilities, to improve inter-ministerial coordination and facilitate the inclusion of accidents related to landmines and other explosive ordnances as a cause of disability in the national injury surveillance system forms, aligning with Strategic Objective 2 of the National Mine Action Completion Strategy 2023-2027.

- By the end of 2024, the Department of Social Services and the National Secretariat for Persons with Disabilities will appoint a dedicated Victim Assistance focal person, who will be assigned a clear set of responsibilities, to support inter-ministerial coordination and improve data centralization efforts that are inclusive of victims of landmines and other explosive ordnances.
- By the end of 2025, improved coordination will take place with the Ministry of Health, Ministry of Women, Child Affairs and Social Empowerment and other relevant government and non-government stakeholders to ensure that both existing data and future data collection related to disability does include information on victims of landmines and other explosive ordnances.

b. Medical Care (in reference to Oslo Actions #34 and #36)

Assessment

Sri Lanka has a well-established healthcare delivery system, built on the foundation of providing free healthcare to its citizens. The Ministry of Health and the Provincial Health Services provide a wide range of promotive, preventive, curative, and rehabilitative healthcare, through its extensive network of healthcare institutions across the island. The curative arm of the provincial health directorates operates through District General, Base, Divisional hospitals, and Primary Health Care units, which come under the purview of provincial health authorities. However, the financial and resource constraints, worsened by the current economic crisis, put enormous pressure on policymakers and health authorities. And people, including landmine victims, may still have to make direct payments for other services such as transportation costs of seeking healthcare or opportunity costs such as lost wages in seeking healthcare. These factors often result in high out-of-pocket expenditure or delays in receiving necessary medical care, a situation exacerbated by the current cost of living and inflation.

Objectives

- By the end of 2025, necessary improvements will be made in referral systems to ensure landmine victims receive the support they need in terms of healthcare, rehabilitation, psychological support and socio-economic inclusion, especially in the Northern and Eastern Provinces, as outlined in Strategic Objective 2 “Coordination and National Ownership” – Outcome 2.2 of the National Mine Action Completion Strategy 2023-2027, and in compliance with Oslo Action Point 35.

Enhancements made / to be made to pertinent legislation, policies and plans:

- By the end of 2024, survey findings from 20% of landmine victims identified by NMAC in its IMSMA will be shared with appointed Victim Assistance focal persons at the Ministry of Health and Ministry of Women, Child Affairs and Social Empowerment and other relevant stakeholders for targeted action.
- By the end of 2025, improved coordination will be established with provincial health authorities and social service officers to better identify, refer, and address the specific needs of landmine victims. This initiative will primarily target the Northern and Eastern Provinces of Sri Lanka, where the prevalence of landmine victims is higher.

c. Physical Rehabilitation (in reference to Oslo Actions #34 and #38)

Assessment

The Jaffna Jaipur Centre for Disability Rehabilitation (JJCDR) serves as the primary prosthetics and orthotics center in the North and East of Sri Lanka. Additionally, physical rehabilitation centers are operational at government hospitals and NGO-run facilities, as outlined in last year's Article 7 report. However, significant challenges persist, especially in the Northern and Eastern Provinces³, including the lack of awareness among landmine survivors and other persons with disabilities regarding the availability and importance of physical rehabilitation services. Factors such as transportation costs and the absence of long-term follow-up at home and community levels contribute to the risk of individuals discontinuing their rehabilitation or ceasing the use of assistive devices. According to the National Health Strategic Master Plan 2016 – 2025 (Rehabilitative Services)⁴, initiatives are in progress to gradually enhance access to disability care and physical rehabilitation services across the island, including in the North and East.

Objectives

- By mid-2024, the Ministry of Health will publish the National Rehabilitation Guidelines which contain an explicit reference to landmine victims, aiming to improving the quality, accessibility and effectiveness of rehabilitation services across the island, including in the Northern and Eastern Provinces.
- By the end of 2025, accurate and up-to-date data about the situation of landmine victims is made available to identify gaps in access to physical rehabilitation services, as outlined in Strategic Objective 2 “Coordination and National Ownership” – Outcome 2.2 of the National Mine Action Completion Strategy 2023-2027, and in compliance with Oslo Action Point 35.

Enhancements made / to be made to pertinent legislation, policies and plans:

- (Supply side) By the end of 2024, a qualitative survey will be conducted among rehabilitation centers in the North and East regions to understand the profile of their patients and the extent of inclusion of landmine victims within their services.
- (Demand side) By the end of 2024, survey findings from 20% of landmine victims identified by NMAC in its IMSMA will be shared with appointed Victim Assistance focal persons at the Ministry of Health and physical rehabilitation centers for targeted action.

d. Psychological and Psycho-Social Support (in reference to Oslo Actions #34 and #38)

Assessment

Sri Lanka has reported that mental health services are available in the Northern and Eastern Provinces and the mental health network has improved. Basic counselling services are available and are being further developed.

³ GoSL initial state party report para 132-134 & 137.

⁴ <https://www.health.gov.lk/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/Rehabilitative-Services.pdf>

The revised National Mental Health Policy 2020-2030⁵ outlines significant commitments in mental health promotion and services across the island. At provincial and district levels, Mental Health Committees chaired by Provincial Directors of Health Services and Regional Directors of Health Services are tasked with ensuring the comprehensive and timely implementation of various strategies and activities as outlined by the National Mental Health Policy.

One of the challenges in providing mental healthcare in Sri Lanka is the low level of mental health literacy, especially in rural areas, and the reluctance to seek help due to stigma,

Objectives

- By the end of 2025, coordination will be established with the Directorate of Mental Health under the Ministry of Health to ensure that commitments towards the provision of “services for trauma-affected individuals” explicitly encompass victims of landmines and other explosive ordnances, especially in the context of Northern and Eastern Provinces, , as outlined in Strategic Objective 2 “Coordination and National Ownership” – Outcome 2.2 of the National Mine Action Completion Strategy 2023-2027 (VA obligations being integrated into relevant plans and policies).
- By the end of 2025, necessary improvements will be made in referral systems to ensure landmine victims receive the support they need in terms of psychological support, subject to meeting the pre-conditions in data collection enhancement and sharing among relevant stakeholders, as outlined in the sections above.

Enhancements made / to be made to pertinent legislation, policies and plans:

- By the end of 2024, the Ministry of Health will appoint a dedicated Victim Assistance focal person at the national level, who will be actively involved in coordinating and including landmine victims into relevant mental health and psychosocial support services and programmes administered by the Ministry and its partners.
- By the end of 2024, efforts will be made to clarify the availability and accessibility of peer-to-peer support services for landmine victims in the Northern and Eastern Provinces.

e. Socio-Economic Inclusion (in reference to Oslo Actions #34 and #39)

Assessment

Socio-economic inclusion encompasses inclusive education, social and economic inclusion and social protection. Government services and NGO-run programs focusing on the needs of people with disabilities often overlook landmine victims, leading to a lack of data within disability-related initiatives. This hampers awareness of the unique challenges faced by landmine victims and impedes targeted support. Bridging this gap requires enhanced collaboration between government agencies, advocacy groups, and stakeholders to recognize, document, and address the specific needs of landmine victims within disability-focused policies and programs.

Objectives

- By the end of 2024, the Government of Sri Lanka will publish the new Disability Act to replace

⁵ https://mentalhealth.health.gov.lk/images/2022/NationalMentalHealthPolicy_Final_12.10.2021PRINT-1.pdf page 50

the existing No. 28 of 1996 on the Protection of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, ensuring compliance with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCPRD) which sets standards for victim assistance. This will allow explicit reference to assisting survivors and victims of landmines and other explosive ordnances.

Enhancements made / to be made to pertinent legislation, policies and plans:

- By mid-2024, enhanced coordination will occur with the Department of Social Services, the National Council for Persons with Disabilities, the National Secretariat for Persons with Disabilities and the Ministry of Justice to discuss the integration of victim assistance in the new Act. This includes effectively addressing the needs and rights of victims, including their socio-economic needs and rights, as committed under Strategic Objective 2 of the National Mine Action Completion Strategy 2023-2027.
- By the end of 2025, the Victim Assistance focal persons at the Department of Social Services and the National Secretariat for Persons with Disabilities will facilitate the referral of IMSMA recorded victims to community-based rehabilitation, socio-economic support and vocational training services that are under their purview, based on individual needs.

f. Safety and Protection (in reference to Oslo Action #40)

Assessment

The Sri Lanka Disaster Management Act, No. 13 of 2005, along with the Disaster Risk Management Roadmaps Vol I and II titled “Towards a Safer Sri Lanka” and the National Policy on Disaster Management of Sri Lanka of 2013, expressly prioritizes support for vulnerable groups, including children, persons with disabilities, senior citizens, and women, during disasters. These policies underscore the importance of ensuring equity in the distribution of resources based on the severity of the disaster and the vulnerability of affected populations.

The National Disaster Management Plan 2023-2030 recognizes persons with disabilities as one of the key vulnerable categories who are affected by disasters disproportionately and the level of resilience and ability to recover is uneven due to the varied types of disabilities. Lack of access to early warnings and evacuation notifications, scarcity of suitable emergency transportation facilities and needed medical equipment, communication difficulties, etc. are some of the challenges experienced by people with disabilities when affected by disasters.

Objectives

- By the end of 2024, a national early warning dissemination programme will be designed and implemented, with the participation of vulnerable groups such as women, children, elderly and people with disabilities, to ensure that early warnings reach the last-mile communities, as outlined in the Pillar 4 of the National Disaster Management Plan 2023-2030 (Action 4.4.1).

Enhancements made / to be made to pertinent legislation, policies and plans:

- By the end of 2024, enhanced coordination will take place between the Disaster Management Centre, District and Divisional Secretariats, Local Government and other relevant stakeholders to co-develop a national early warning dissemination programme that is inclusive of all vulnerable and marginalized groups, including people with disabilities.
- By the end of 2024, IMSMA data on landmine victims will be shared with the Disaster Management Centre for further consideration and action.

g. Coordination (in reference to Oslo Actions #33, #34 and #37)

Assessment

As per the National Mine Action Completion Strategy 2023-2027, Sri Lanka aligns with the principle that specialized victim assistance (VA) efforts should be transitional, ultimately integrating into broader frameworks. The National Mine Action Center (NMAC) assumes a facilitating role in VA, prioritizing activities such as awareness campaigns, coordination, and information dissemination. Efforts are underway to tackle strategic challenges concerning information management, coordination, and awareness raising.

At the national level, consultations have occurred with key stakeholders including the National Secretariat for Persons with Disabilities (NSPD), Department of Social Services, and the Directorate for Youth, Elderly, and Persons with Disabilities (YED) within the Ministry of Health. While exchanges are positive, formalization is pending to ensure consistency and sustainability of ongoing mainstreaming actions.

Objectives

- By the end of 2024, the appointment of Victim Assistance focal persons will facilitate better coordination between different government agencies, NGOs, and other stakeholders involved in providing assistance to persons with disabilities and other vulnerable groups.
- By the end of 2025, a comprehensive directory of services will be compiled and disseminated to facilitate the referral process for landmine victims across the country, with a focus on the North and East. This directory will encompass a wide range of support services, including medical care, rehabilitation, psychological support, socio-economic assistance, and vocational training programs.

Enhancements made / to be made to pertinent legislation, policies and plans:

- By the end of 2024, Victim Assistance focal persons will be appointed at the Ministry of Social Services and Ministry of Health. These appointees will operate with agreed Terms of Reference and will be fully operational.
- By the end of 2025, an inter-ministerial coordination body will be established to advance the agenda of victim assistance, prevent duplication of efforts and ensure accurate information on victims.
- By the end of 2024, NMAC will leverage expertise and resources from external stakeholders from the civil society to strengthen its capacity in effectively coordinating efforts across various sectors and stakeholders to ensure implementation of agreed actions.

h. Participation (in reference to Oslo Action #41)

Assessment

Sri Lanka has established a network of self-help organizations (SHOs) at the divisional level, which has been expanded to the district level. These SHOs serve as a social empowerment initiative under the guidance of social service officers. Additionally, Organizations of Persons with Disabilities (OPDs) and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) supporting people with disabilities have been established at the divisional, district, and national levels. However, their operational activities have been significantly affected by financial constraints and reduced donor funding,

further exacerbated by the Covid-19 Pandemic and the economic crisis.

At national level, the Disability Organizations Joint Front (DOJF), acting as an umbrella body of OPDs, CSOs, and service providers, actively engages in national-level policy dialogues advocating for the inclusion of persons with disabilities, including landmine victims. The Sri Lanka Foundation for the Rehabilitation of the Disabled (SLFRD) and DOJF were active members of the Sri Lanka Campaign to Ban Landmines (SLCBL). Currently, the Forum on Disarmament & Development serves as the Secretariat for SLCBL.

The parliamentary caucus on disability inclusion has intervened to incorporate Article 33 of the UNCPRD into the draft Disability Act, currently under final review by the Ministry of Justice. And on the basis of the National Action Plan on Disability developed in 2014, a review is underway to develop a new plan. This entails potential for the inclusion of victims of armed conflict, including landmine victims, while also addressing the state's obligation to provide lifelong support for these individuals.

Objectives

- By the end of 2025, the new National Disability Action Plan will be published and address the needs of people with disabilities, including landmine victims.

Enhancements made / to be made to pertinent legislation, policies and plans:

- By the end of 2025, the National Secretariat for Persons with Disabilities will consult relevant organisations of persons with disabilities, including landmine victims, during the development process of the new National Action Plan on Disability.
- By the end of 2025, landmine victims recorded in IMSMA will be referred to relevant stakeholders to participate in the consultation process at local level.

8. Cooperation and Assistance

The Government of Sri Lanka has provided significant in-kind contributions to its national mine action program, covering salaries and monthly allowances for Operations and QA Officers. Additionally, the government has provided office space for the Mine Action Center and logistical support for operations, amounting to approximately USD \$300,000 per year.

The Sri Lanka Defence Forces maintain the capability to survey, search for, detect, clear, and destroy landmines. This capability includes various types of detection equipment, mechanical clearance assets, disposal experts, and specialized search and clearance teams.

To strengthen national coordination and ensure regular dialogue among stakeholders to discuss progress, challenges, and identify areas for development in the mine action program, the NMAC, in collaboration with the GICHD, organized various activities such as workshops, technical workgroup discussions, and donor coordination meetings for mine action stakeholders. In 2023, the NMAC conducted two donor coordination meetings and two completion survey workshops in order to strengthen the Sri Lanka Mine Action programme.