



**MEETING OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON
VICTIM ASSISTANCE, SOCIO-ECONOMIC
REINTEGRATION AND MINE AWARENESS
GENEVA, SWITZERLAND**

**UNICEF PRESENTATION
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THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE INTERNATIONAL GUIDELINES FOR LANDMINES AND UNEXPLODED ORDNANCE AWARENESS EDUCATION

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

I would like to start by thanking the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining for organising this meeting, and our co-chairs and rapporteurs, the Governments of Japan, Nicaragua, Canada and Honduras for this opportunity to present on this issue.

Most of you are aware of both the process leading up to the initiation of the creation of the Guidelines on Landmine Awareness Education and of their content. Nevertheless, as a background I would like to briefly describe that process, before describing UNICEF's experience in implementing the guidelines. I will then go on to talk briefly about UNICEF's future plans in relation to mine awareness.

Why guidelines?

By the mid-1990s, it was widely agreed that the development of landmine awareness as a humanitarian intervention had been insufficiently structured and too ad hoc. The UN Study on the Impact of Armed Conflict on Children, conducted by Ms. Graca Machel, and completed in 1996, identified the need to share the experience and information developed in different mine-affected regions of the world and among different organisations.

How were the Guidelines formulated?

In response to this need, UNICEF, as the UN focal point for landmine awareness, was asked by UNMAS to take the lead in devising Guidelines which would provide a basis for the greater professionalisation of mine awareness work. UNICEF brought together all the key actors in mine awareness at the end of 1996. One of the key recommendations of the meeting was to develop International Guidelines on Mine Awareness.

The Guidelines were developed over a three-year period involving extensive consultation with UN, NGO and IGO expertise. As you are aware, they are not intended to be a strait-jacket for organisations and individuals, but simply a guide to help programme managers to design and implement mine awareness education programmes.

What do they say?

The Guidelines recommend; 1) careful assessment and study before a mine awareness programme is initiated, including the gathering of essential baseline information to serve as the basis for regular monitoring and evaluation, and; 2) the identification of a coherent and integrated communication strategy that is appropriate to the relevant socio-cultural context and is fully integrated into ongoing mine action activities.

In order to do this the Guidelines recommend the following four steps of a programme cycle;

- **Feasibility study.** Is a mine awareness programme really called for, and if it can be achieved?
- **Needs assessment** who is at risk and why?
- The third step is **programme planning**.
- The fourth step of the cycle is **monitoring and evaluation** and will enable an assessment of how effectively objectives are being met and of the impact of the community.

One and half years have passed since the launch of the UN International Guidelines for Landmine and UXO Awareness Education at the First Meeting of States Parties to the Mine Ban Convention in Maputo in 1999

Dissemination?

Since their launch, the Guidelines have been disseminated to UN agencies, NGOs, all UNICEF Regional offices and field offices in mine affected countries. These entities in turn have disseminated them to and informed partners about the existence of the guidelines. In this day and age the electronic distribution of documents is an important and available dissemination channel and, thus, the guidelines are also available on the UNMAS and UNICEF websites in English, Russian, French and Spanish.

Experiences: How have they been used?

Needs assessment

In Kosovo, the Guidelines were a useful tool in carrying out the needs assessment in that region. The Guidelines have also encouraged the UNICEF sponsored programme in Nicaragua to gather further data and adjust the programme according to the findings. Regrettably, such assessments have not always been undertaken and the lack of data will inevitably make it more difficult to plan appropriate interventions. Both time and resources could be saved if adequate data is gathered and analysed before commencing a programme.

Programme formulation

Although already a well established programme the guidelines have assisted UNICEF Angola and its partners to better plan the programme in the short, medium and long-term and have encouraged agencies to integrate mine awareness with other mine action initiatives, and link it to other aid programmes.

In Kosovo, the Guidelines assisted the UNICEF office to develop materials and messages, in fact, in Kosovo it is a requirement that all materials be field tested, and if necessary modified, prior to use. Nicaragua's educational materials underwent an in-depth analysis and will be revised to correspond to the recommendations of the guidelines. The guidelines have also been used to re-assess and improve messages and materials in Angola, and to develop them in

Ethiopia, where the national organisation undertaking mine awareness - which is supported by UNICEF - has used the guidelines in establishing a new programme. Evaluation of messages, methodologies and materials will assist in further developing these and will apply to any geographical expansion in Ethiopia.

In Cambodia, the general reaction to the guidelines was that, although good, they are of limited use in a well established programme. It is felt in Cambodia that the Guidelines are more useful for countries initiating programmes as they to a great extent focus on mine awareness to populations who have little or no awareness of mines.

In Cambodia, the programmes are now moving in new directions on which the Guidelines do not elaborate to a greater extent, such as risk reduction via community development, and integration with minefield marking and clearance. On the other hand, in Lao PDR, also a well established programme, the Guidelines have been used as a training tool, and have encouraged implementing partners to build monitoring and evaluation into their programmes.

Accreditation

The MACC in Kosovo has established a form of accreditation for organisations wishing to conduct mine and UXO awareness education. One requirement for organisations wishing to undertake mine awareness activities is that they are guided by the guidelines in all aspects of the mine awareness programmes. This example has been followed by the MACC in Bosnia and Herzegovina and could be useful to other programmes.

Monitoring and Evaluation

In Kosovo, the process of accreditation demands that the proposal for mine awareness is registered with the UNMACC together with, inter alia, a monitoring and evaluation plan. The importance of monitoring and evaluation is stressed in the Guidelines and has served to make programmes more aware of the importance of monitoring and evaluation, an area most programmes, and indeed this forum, recognise as weak. This will be addressed in the coming year.

Lessons learnt

Translation of the Guidelines into the local languages is of course crucial to their usefulness. The guidelines are currently available in English, French, Spanish, Russian, Serbian, Albanian, Portuguese and Vietnamese, and will be translated to Laotian in 2001. It has also been recommended that the Guidelines be translated to Arabic and Azeri.

The Portuguese version has been used in Angola to give workshops for national counterparts in order to further promote their use and to ensure that due note is taken of the lessons learned through the existing programme. In the near future, a country specific annex will be added to the Angolan version.

Local language versions of the Guidelines is also of importance in building sustainable local mine action capacities, and handing over to local authorities.

In summary, we have learnt three major lessons from our experiences in implementing the International Guidelines:

1. The inclusive process of formulating the Guidelines helped ensure the high quality of the Guidelines.
2. The input of UN agencies, NGOs and others was crucial and helped to promote a broad sense of ownership, and thus led to more widespread use of the final version than would have otherwise been the case.
3. The process has demonstrated the importance of a well-thought out dissemination strategy, especially in an area involving so many actors. What we have learnt is that it is not sufficient merely to distribute a document such as this: it is crucial to train people on its content and use. UNICEF recognises that the dissemination strategy may not have been as well planned as required and will address this in future initiatives.

Way forward?

The Guidelines were the first step in a process aimed at promoting commonality and professionalism in mine awareness. In an effort to promote the effective implementation at field level of the International Guidelines and also to offer practical tools for mine awareness education, UNICEF, under the co-ordination of UNMAS, and with input from relevant UN, NGO and other international agencies, has built upon the guidelines to develop the United Nations International Training Modules for Mine Awareness Programme Managers and Community Facilitators.

As you are aware, these Training Modules were presented at the Second Meeting of States Parties to the Mine Ban Convention in September of this year.

Over the **next two years**, as part of its capacity building efforts, UNICEF will undertake **regionally based training** workshops for programme managers and implementing partners. The modules will be available for the broader aid community to adapt to their needs.

International Standards for Mine and UXO Awareness Education

Though a solid first step, the Mine Awareness guidelines do not provide a direct basis for minimum standards in the conduct of mine awareness education. In order to bring mine awareness in line with the professional criteria of other mine action disciplines, detailed and comprehensive UN Standards will be developed in 2001 in coordination with UNMAS and GICHD.

Guidelines for the Monitoring and Evaluation of Mine awareness Programmes

Following a request by the Standing Committee of Experts of the Ottawa Treaty in March 2000, UNICEF, under the auspices of UNMAS, will, in 2001, initiate the process of developing guidelines for monitoring and evaluation specific to mine awareness.

The International Guidelines and the International Training Modules for Mine Awareness Education have been widely appreciated both for the quality of the products and for the openness and inclusiveness of the process. A similar process is envisaged for the development of the International Standards, and the Guidelines for the Monitoring and Evaluation of Mine Awareness Programmes and expertise will be sought from UN agencies, NGOs and International organisations at both field and headquarters level, and an opportunity given to all partners to provide input to, and comment on these documents as they are being developed.

UNICEF is looking forward to continue working with our UN partners, NGOs, ICBL, governments, the International Committee of the Red Cross and the donor community to assist mine-affected communities by better meeting their needs.

Thank you.