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STATES PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION  
ON THE PROHIBITION OF THE USE,  
STOCKPILING, PRODUCTION AND  
TRANSFER OF ANTI-PERSONNEL MINES  
AND ON THEIR DESTRUCTION**

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**ASSISTING THE VICTIMS:  
RECOMMENDATIONS ON IMPLEMENTING THE  
CARTAGENA ACTION PLAN 2010-2014**

Submitted by Belgium and Thailand, Co-Chairs of the  
Standing Committee on Victim Assistance and Socio-Economic Reintegration<sup>1</sup>

**Introduction**

With the Second Review Conference of the AP Mine Ban Convention (The Cartagena Summit on a Mine-Free World), the States Parties have reaffirmed their understandings on victim assistance which have evolved through ten years of implementation of the Convention and new developments in other instruments of disarmament and human rights law.

One of the key developments has been the entry into force of the 2006 Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) which provides a new human rights standard concerning persons with disabilities. The comprehensive manner in which the CRPD records what is required to promote the full and effective participation and inclusion of persons with disabilities, including mine survivors, in the social, cultural, economic and political life of their communities provides a new standard by which to measure victim assistance efforts. The CRPD has linkages to the six components of victim assistance and can provide a framework for all States in meeting their responsibilities to mine survivors and their families. Whether a State is Party to the CRPD or not it can provide a more systematic, sustainable, gender-sensitive and human rights-based approach by bringing victim assistance into the broader context of policy and planning for all persons with disabilities. States Parties may also find other regional or international instruments relevant to their work on victim assistance.

The States Parties to the AP Mine Ban Convention understand that victim assistance should be integrated into broader national policies, plans and legal frameworks related to disability, health, education, employment, development and poverty reduction. However, in meeting their obligations under the Convention, a particular emphasis may be needed to ensure that mine

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<sup>1</sup> Reproduced without editing, as received by the Secretariat.

victims, in particular individuals and the families of those killed or injured, have access to specialised services when needed and can access on an equal basis services available to the wider population. The experience of 10 years of implementation of the Convention has shown the potential of victim assistance in building infrastructure and capacities to meet the rights and needs of mine survivors, other persons with disabilities, and their communities.

Victim assistance is better understood as a process involving a holistic and integrated approach rather than a series of separate actions. Each component of the process – emergency and continuing medical care, physical rehabilitation, psychological and psychosocial support, and social and economic reintegration – are of equal importance. However, each requires specific objectives to ensure high quality standards, and availability and accessibility of services to promote the ultimate aim of full and effective participation and inclusion. Survivors and the families of those killed or injured may need to access different stages of this process throughout their lifetime depending on their personal circumstances. Data collection and laws and policies are an important component of victim assistance but are not part of the process. Rather, laws and policies provide a framework for action and data collection provides a foundation on which to develop services based on identified needs.

Victim assistance should be available, affordable, accessible and sustainable. At the Cartagena Summit, the States Parties reaffirmed their understanding of the principles of equality, non-discrimination, full inclusion and participation, openness, accountability and transparency in all victim assistance efforts.

Through the Cartagena Action Plan 2010-2014, the States Parties have resolved to provide adequate age- and gender-sensitive assistance to mine victims, in accordance with applicable international humanitarian and human rights law. The States Parties have strengthened their understanding that a broad gender and diversity perspective is necessary in all victim assistance efforts to address the rights and needs of women, girls, boys and men. The circumstances and experience of all persons in vulnerable situations in affected communities, including other persons with disabilities, internally displaced persons, the elderly, people living in extreme poverty and other marginalised groups, should also be considered in victim assistance efforts.

The ultimate responsibility of meeting the rights and needs of landmine survivors within a particular State rests with that State. However, many affected States remain dependent on international agencies and non-governmental organisations for the delivery of appropriate services. Until governmental structures have the capacity to assume comprehensive service delivery it may be necessary for greater collaboration between relevant government entities and supporting organisations on resource mobilisation to ensure that appropriate services are available and accessible.

At the Cartagena Summit, the States Parties have reaffirmed their understandings and principles relating to victim assistance. These understandings and principles are in harmony with other relevant instruments of disarmament and human rights law. Victim assistance efforts that are inclusive of all persons with disabilities, regardless of the cause of disability, have a greater potential to be stronger and more sustainable in the long-term.

However, for many mine survivors the past five years has brought no measurable change in their lives. Progress has been made since the First Review Conference. Nevertheless, the persistent challenge remains of turning increased understandings on victim assistance into measurable improvement in the daily lives of mine survivors, their families, and communities. Additional effort will be needed to enhance national ownership and raise the priority of disability-related issues in the policies, plans and programmes of relevant government ministries and agencies.

Some States have already developed a national plan or are implementing specific actions to meet their obligations to mine victims. The victim assistance-related actions in the Cartagena Action Plan could be an opportunity to review existing national plans with a view to strengthen existing activities or provide a useful framework for States Parties to take concrete steps to address the rights and needs of mine victims.

This document is primarily intended to provide recommendations to States Parties on each action related to victim assistance in such a way as to facilitate a holistic and integrated approach to addressing the rights and needs of mine victims. The recommendations are not intended to replace existing plans, but rather, should be considered as ideas for enhancing the implementation of the Cartagena Action Plan in the period 2010 to 2014. The recommendations were developed in collaboration with experts from affected States Parties, survivors, international agencies, non governmental organisations, and other experts. It is not expected that a State will implement every recommendation but rather will undertake relevant activities that will facilitate measurable progress. Moreover, the recommendations can be implemented or modified depending on the national context. These recommendations may also be relevant to States with responsibility for victims of other ERW.

The full implementation of the Cartagena Action Plan 2010-2014 in relation to assisting the victims will facilitate progress in achieving the ultimate aim of the full and effective participation and inclusion of mine survivors and the families of those killed or injured in the social, cultural, economic and political life of their communities.

### **Cartagena Action Plan 2010-2014: Assisting the victims**

#### **Inclusion**

The inclusion of mine survivors and other persons with disabilities in all aspects of planning, coordination, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of activities that affect their lives is essential. Mine survivors and other persons with disabilities have a unique perspective on their own situation and needs. Survivors can and should be constructive partners in victim assistance when given the opportunity. Inclusion is a central element in all actions to address the rights and needs of mine victims.

**Action #23: Ensure the inclusion and full and active participation of mine victims and their representative organisations as well as other relevant stakeholders in victim assistance related activities, in particular as regards the national action plan, legal frameworks and policies, implementation mechanisms, monitoring and evaluation.**

- Develop and implement a mechanism to ensure the active, effective and ongoing participation of survivors from different regions and backgrounds in the planning, dissemination, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of plans, policies, legislation and programmes.
- Facilitate the development and implementation of a programme to strengthen the technical and financial capacity of associations of mine survivors and organisations of persons with disabilities (DPOs), at all levels.

### **Coordination**

To ensure a holistic and integrated approach to assisting mine victims it is essential that there is a functional mechanism to enhance coordination, collaboration and cooperation between relevant government ministries, organisations of persons with disabilities, international agencies, and non governmental organisations. An effective coordination mechanism is needed for planning, implementation, monitoring, evaluation and reporting and will also serve to avoid duplication or gaps in service provision. Article 33 of the CRPD, for example, can provide guidance to States on establishing coordination mechanisms.

**Action #24: Establish, if they have not yet done so, an inter-ministerial / inter-sectoral coordination mechanism for the development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of relevant national policies, plans and legal frameworks, and ensure that this focal entity has the authority and resources to carry out its task.**

- Establish or strengthen a functional disability coordination mechanism, led by the ministry or national agency with responsibility for disability-related issues, which includes the active participation of relevant ministries, agencies, local authorities, mine survivors and other persons with disabilities and their representative organisations, international agencies and NGOs working in the disability sector.
- Designate a functioning focal entity with a clear mandate and authority for coordination, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of victim assistance-related activities.
- Establish, as appropriate, a victim assistance sub-committee within an existing coordination mechanism to facilitate the inclusion of victim assistance efforts into broader policies, plans and programmes.
- Ensure official recognition of the coordination mechanism, specifying selection criteria, funding, members, roles, responsibilities and meeting schedule.
- Utilise the provisions of relevant instruments, such as the CRPD, as guidance for the coordination, planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of relevant policies, plans and legal frameworks.
- Utilise the coordination mechanism to facilitate dissemination and implementation of the Cartagena Action Plan within relevant ministries and at different levels within the country.

### **Understanding the extent of the challenges faced**

Accurate and up-to-date data on casualties, needs of mine victims and other persons with disabilities, capacities and available services are essential in order to use limited resources most effectively to formulate and implement policies, plans and programmes. It is essential that data

collection mechanisms comply with internationally accepted norms to protect human rights and fundamental freedoms and ethical principles in the collection and the use of statistics, including ensuring confidentiality and respect for privacy.

**Action #25: Collect all necessary data, disaggregated by sex and age, in order to develop, implement, monitor and evaluate adequate national policies, plans and legal frameworks including by assessing the needs and priorities of mine victims and the availability and quality of relevant services, make such data available to all relevant stakeholders and ensure that such efforts contribute to national injury surveillance and other relevant data collection systems for use in programme planning.**

- Conduct a needs assessment of survivors and other persons with disabilities to enhance planning and programming, with a particular focus on affected communities.
- Carry out a mapping of all relevant service providers in the country (location, type of services, cost of services if any, etc), and of all governmental initiatives that could be available for persons with disabilities (to ensure access to services, to affordable transportation, etc).
- Include the category of mine casualty and/or mine survivor in existing data collection mechanisms, for example, hospital records, injury surveillance, rehabilitation and social services monitoring, country surveys on disability and health, and the national census.
- Establish and implement a centralised body to coordinate, develop national statistic reporting forms for all types of services, collect, analyse, share and disseminate information among all relevant government agencies, national and international organisations and other actors in an accessible format.
- Develop and utilise a disability monitoring template using existing standard tools that have been tested for validity and reliability, including cross-cultural applicability.
- Develop and implement a mechanism to collect data on mine victims and other persons with disabilities not normally reached through data collection efforts, for example in remote areas.
- Develop and implement a training programme in data collection and analysis to increase human and technical capacities.
- Include questions on disability in the national census, using existing standard questions as a guide.

### **Legislation and policies**

Appropriate legislation and policy frameworks promote the rights, accessibility, quality medical treatment, adequate healthcare, social protection and non-discrimination for all citizens with disability, including mine survivors. In many States, relevant laws and policies exist but are not fully implemented or their effectiveness or comprehensiveness is inadequate. The CRPD, for example, provides guidance to States on developing or modifying laws and policies. Article 4 of the CRPD outlines general obligations “to ensure and promote the full realisation of all human rights and fundamental freedoms for all persons with disabilities without discrimination of any kind on the basis of disability.” Other national, regional, or international instruments may also be applicable to improve victim assistance. Addressing the rights of mine victims does not require the development of separate legislation and policies. However, positive steps should be taken to ensure the equalisation of opportunities and access to services for mine victims.

**Action #26: Develop, or review and modify if necessary, implement, monitor and evaluate national policies, plans and legal frameworks with a view to meet the needs and human rights of mine victims.**

- Undertake an assessment of national legal and policy frameworks to determine if existing frameworks effectively address the needs and fundamental human rights of persons with disabilities, including mine survivors.
- Enact national legislation and policies that promote and guarantee the rights of persons with disabilities, including mine survivors.
- Modify or abolish existing laws, regulations, customs and practices that discriminate against persons with disabilities, including survivors, to promote equality and protection from discrimination in all areas of life.
- Ratify or accede to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) and its Optional Protocol.
- Utilise the provisions of relevant instruments, such as the CRPD, as guidance for the development, implementation and monitoring of relevant legislation and policies.

**Planning**

A comprehensive and integrated approach to addressing the rights and needs of mine survivors and the families of those killed or injured requires a national plan of action to coordinate and implement activities. When strategies and plans already exist for healthcare, education, employment, disability or for poverty reduction more generally, States should ensure that mine victims have access to the services and benefits enshrined within those plans. In some cases, this may involve expanding target areas for implementation of programmes to affected communities. In other States, it may be necessary to engage all relevant ministries and other actors in the process of developing a plan to address the rights and needs of persons with disabilities, including mine survivors.

**Action #27: Develop and implement, if they have not yet done so, a comprehensive plan of action and budget that addresses the rights and needs of mine victims through objectives that are specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time bound, ensuring that such a plan is integrated into broader relevant national policies, plans, and legal frameworks.**

- Undertake a review of existing national plans in relevant areas such as health, education, employment, development, poverty reduction and human rights to identify gaps and/or opportunities to address the rights and needs of mine victims.
- Based on the outcomes of the review, undertake a broad consultative process, involving persons with disabilities including mine survivors and all other relevant actors, to define SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-bound) objectives that will integrate the rights and needs of mine victims into existing frameworks.
- Develop a plan of action, as appropriate, detailing the strategies, activities, and the ministry/agency with responsibility/oversight, that will be undertaken to change/improve the current situation to reach the stated objectives.

- Develop a budget for the implementation of the plan and/or integrate activities into the budgets and work plans of relevant ministries and agencies.
- Develop and/or implement a programme to ensure sufficient national and international resources including by diversifying funding sources and mainstreaming activities into general development frameworks and budgets.
- Develop and implement plans to ensure the long-term sustainability of services for persons with disabilities, including mine survivors.
- Disseminate the plan of action to all relevant stakeholders.

### **Monitoring and evaluation**

Monitoring and evaluation of policies, plans and legal frameworks is essential to ensure that activities are having a tangible impact on the quality of daily life of mine victims and other persons with disabilities. States should establish clear and measurable objectives, indicators, baselines and targets against which results can be measured and evaluated. Article 33 of the CRPD, for example, can provide guidance to States on establishing mechanisms to monitor and evaluate their plans, policies legislation and programmes.

**Action #28: Monitor and evaluate progress regarding victim assistance within broader national policies, plans and legal frameworks on an ongoing basis, encourage relevant States Parties to report on the progress made, including resources allocated to implementation and challenges in achieving their objectives, and encourage States Parties in a position to do so also report on how they are responding to efforts to address the rights and needs of mine victims.**

- Utilise existing monitoring and reporting tools, including those developed in the framework of other humanitarian law and human rights instruments, for example, the CRPD.
- Develop and implement a mechanism to monitor and evaluate the implementation of the policies, plans and legal frameworks and assign responsibility for monitoring and evaluation.
- Develop and implement a reporting format to enable all relevant actors to report to the coordination body on progress in the implementation of the plan of action, on a regular basis, including resources allocated to implementation and challenges in achieving the objectives.
- Disseminate nationally and internationally an annual progress report detailing progress made against each objective/action in the national plan and/or the Cartagena Action Plan.
- Develop and implement a programme to ensure sufficient financial, human and technical resources, through national and international mechanisms, to ensure adequate monitoring, evaluation and reporting systems and procedures.
- Undertake a mid-term evaluation of implementation, and if necessary adapt national policies, plans and legal frameworks.

### **Involvement of relevant actors**

Significant progress has been made to facilitate improved understanding of victim assistance within ministries working on disability-related issues at the national level. Appropriate experts from relevant State entities are now participating in the work of the Convention. The potential

for meaningful, measurable or sustainable difference in the lives of mine victims would be limited without the full involvement of the appropriate governmental actors.

**Action #29: Ensure the continued involvement and effective contribution in all relevant convention related activities by health, rehabilitation, social services, education, employment, gender and disability rights experts, including mine survivors, inter alia by supporting the inclusion of such expertise in their delegations.**

- Develop or strengthen existing mechanisms to ensure the effective and on-going participation of relevant experts, including survivors and their organisations, and officials in Convention-related activities at the regional and international level.

### **Capacity building**

National ownership, adequate infrastructure, and human, technical, and financial resources are essential for the long term sustainability of programmes and services. Weak capacity to address disability issues at all levels including within the governmental and non governmental sector has been identified as a significant challenge. Many States report inadequate resources to build government capacity to provide services in rural areas and to implement legal obligations, due in part to the absence of budget lines for disability-related activities. In many States, appropriate, accessible and affordable services are not meeting the needs in terms of both quantity and quality especially due to a lack of capacity of personnel and the migration of capacities to the capital or outside the country. When international organisations are involved in the delivery of services, national authorities should take steps to prepare for the takeover of activities by developing the necessary technical, human and financial resources.

**Action #30: Strengthen national ownership as well as develop and implement capacity building and training plans to promote and enhance the capacity of the women, men and associations of victims, other organisations and national institutions charged with delivering services and implementing relevant national policies, plans and legal frameworks.**

- Strengthen ownership by allocating national resources, including financial and human resources, to the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of plans of action and services for persons with disabilities, including mine survivors, by relevant ministries and agencies.
- Facilitate a programme to assess the capacities, competencies and training needs of all relevant stakeholders, including government, DPOs, local NGOs and other service providers.
- Facilitate the development and/or implementation of a programme to build the capacities, knowledge and skills of all relevant ministries, agencies, service providers and other partners to respect the rights of survivors and consider disability as a cross-cutting issue in all plans, policies and programmes.
- Use existing standards to define the number of trained-human resources needed to ensure adequate service provision.
- For each group of professionals, develop and implement a human resources development plan (including where the training will be done, by whom, the budget, funding available, etc).



- Develop and implement an on-going education programme for those already working in the disability sector to increase their skills and knowledge.
- Provide appropriate professional recognition for all types of professionals working in the disability sector, including status and salary.
- Facilitate the development and implementation of a programme to train mine survivors and other persons with disabilities to become advocates and leaders for change.

### **Accessibility**

Accessibility is about enabling mine survivors and other persons with disabilities to live independently and participate fully in all aspects of life, by ensuring equal access to the physical environment, services, communications and information, and identifying and eliminating obstacles and barriers to accessibility. To ensure high quality standards, availability and accessibility of services it is essential that specific programmes are implemented in the areas of emergency and continuing medical care, physical rehabilitation, psychological and psychosocial support, education and socio-economic reintegration to facilitate a holistic approach.

**Action #31: Increase availability of and accessibility to appropriate services for female and male mine victims, by removing physical, social, cultural, economic, political and other barriers, including by expanding quality services in rural and remote areas and paying particular attention to vulnerable groups.**

- Assess the physical accessibility of the physical environment (public places, hospitals, clinics, schools, airports, train stations, universities, libraries, ministries, roads, side walks, religious buildings, etc.)
- Develop and implement a programme, based on international standards to adapt inaccessible construction to become fully accessible.
- Create, disseminate and maintain a directory of all relevant services in or near affected areas in formats that are accessible for different types of disabilities and education levels.
- Develop and/or implement a programme to ensure that victims know their rights and available services.
- Develop and/or implement a programme to ensure that mine victims and other persons with disabilities have access to affordable transportation to available services and/or accommodation while accessing services if required.
- Develop and/or activate a referral network between service users and service providers to ensure that appropriate services are available and accessible to all on an equal basis.
- Develop and implement a plan to decentralise the provision of services to facilitate access to service providers.
- Include accessibility in all laws and policies related to infrastructure and information.
- Develop and/or implement, as appropriate, a community based rehabilitation programme in affected communities to promote a holistic approach to assistance and to promote full and effective participation and inclusion of mine survivors and other persons with disabilities.
- Develop and/or implement a programme to mobilise and engage capacities and resources available in local communities, including survivors, families, community workers, volunteers, local organisations and authorities to improve access to services.

### ➤ **Emergency and continuing medical care**

Emergency and continuing medical care includes first-aid, emergency evacuation, and medical care including surgery, pain management, and other health services. The provision of appropriate emergency and continuing medical care, or the lack of it, has a profound impact on the immediate and long-term recovery of mine victims. Many affected countries continue to report a lack of trained staff, medicines, blood, equipment and infrastructure to adequately respond to mine and other traumatic injuries.

- Develop and/or implement a programme to strengthen emergency response capacities in affected communities to respond to landmine and other traumatic injuries through the provision of basic supplies and appropriate training of lay-persons and other healthcare workers.
- Develop and/or implement a programme to train local community workers in the provision of primary assistance and referral to appropriate health facilities.
- Develop and implement a programme to establish and/or improve healthcare infrastructure in affected areas ensuring that facilities have adequate equipment, supplies and medicines necessary to meet basic standards.
- Establish and/or implement a mechanism to ensure that healthcare services are affordable.
- Develop and/or implement a programme to ensure that orthopaedic surgery and physiotherapy are available as soon as possible after an accident to prevent complications, to prepare for rehabilitation and to facilitate the use of proper assistive devices.
- Develop and/or implement a programme to increase the number of trained healthcare workers (including trauma surgeons and nurses) in hospitals in, or accessible to, affected areas.

### ➤ **Physical and functional rehabilitation**

Physical rehabilitation involves the provision of services in rehabilitation and physiotherapy and the supply of assistive devices such as prostheses, orthoses, walking aids and wheelchairs to promote the physical well-being of mine survivors. Physical rehabilitation is focused on helping a person regain or improve the capacities of his/her body, with physical mobility as the primary goal. Functional rehabilitation includes all measures taken to lead a person with disability to be able to engage in activities or fulfil roles that she/he considers important, useful, or necessary. Functional rehabilitation targets issues beyond the physical ones, such as sight and hearing. These issues may also include: psychosocial (adjusting to a changed body-image, handling other people's reactions), pain management, self-care, returning to work or school, and performing complex activities such as driving, or cooking. Rehabilitation services should apply a multidisciplinary approach involving a team working together including a medical doctor, a physiotherapist, a prosthetic/orthotic professional, an occupational therapist, a social worker and other relevant specialists. The person with disability and his/her family have an important role in this team.

- Develop and/or implement a multi-sector rehabilitation plan or strategy that includes training and takes into account all types of disability.

- Develop and/or implement a programme to ensure the provision of assistive devices and equipment by using, as much as possible, local material and resources.
- Develop and/or implement a programme to promote knowledge and use of assistive devices among survivors and their families.
- Develop and/or implement a programme to improve access to physical rehabilitation services in affected communities, including for the maintenance, repair and replacement of devices, through the provision of services at the community level through outreach activities, mobile clinics, and/or establishment of small repair centres.
- Allocate a specific budget line to meet the physical and functional rehabilitation needs of all persons with disabilities, regardless of the cause of disability.
- Develop and/or implement a training programme to ensure a sufficient number and quality of rehabilitation professionals in accordance with the needs and geographical coverage.

➤ **Psychological and psychosocial support**

Psychological and psychosocial support can assist mine victims to overcome the trauma of a landmine explosion and promote social well-being, self-reliance and independence. Activities include community-based peer support groups, associations of persons with disabilities, sporting and related activities, and where necessary, professional counselling. Appropriate psychological and psychosocial support has the potential to make a significant difference in the lives of mine survivors, and the families of those killed or injured. Psychological and psychosocial support is necessary in the immediate aftermath of the accident and may be needed at different times throughout their lifetime.

- Develop and/or implement a programme to provide psychological support in healthcare and rehabilitation facilities.
- Develop and/or implement a programme to establish peer support networks in affected areas.
- Develop and/or implement a programme to promote sport and recreational activities for persons with disabilities and their families.
- Develop and/or implement a programme to ensure access for mine survivors on an equal basis with others in cultural life, recreation, leisure, and sport activities.
- Implement a programme to train service providers on issues of protection of privacy, disability rights and codes of ethics in treatment.

➤ **Social and economic reintegration/inclusion**

Social and economic reintegration/inclusion includes activities that improve the social and economic status of survivors and the families of those killed or injured through education, vocational training, access to micro-credit, income generation and employment opportunities, and the economic development of the community infrastructure. Economic empowerment is essential to promote self-sufficiency and independence. The challenge for many States is to build and develop sustainable economic activities in affected areas that would benefit not only those individuals directly impacted by mines, but their communities.

- Assess the needs, experience, capacities and economic opportunities in affected communities.

- Develop and/or implement a programme to facilitate the socio-economic inclusion of mine survivors and the families of those killed or injured, including by improving access to education and vocational training, micro-credit, and sustainable income generation and employment opportunities, on an equal basis with others, in affected communities.
- Monitor the implementation of national legislation on the employment of persons with disabilities.
- Develop and/or implement a programme to promote inclusive education at all levels, including primary, secondary, tertiary, vocational training and adult education, and lifelong learning, as part of the national education plans, policies and programmes.
- Develop and/or implement a programme to facilitate access to education for girls and boys injured by the landmines or the children of those killed or injured in a landmine explosion.

### **Good practice**

Victim assistance does not require the development of new fields or disciplines but rather should be integrated into existing healthcare, rehabilitation and social service systems, and legislative and policy frameworks. Considerable effort has gone into the development of standards, guidelines, and lessons learnt by various actors including the WHO, UNDP, ICRC, and other international agencies and non government organisations that are relevant to all aspects of victim assistance. Existing standards, guidelines and good practice can be adapted, as appropriate, to the national context.

**Action #32: Ensure that appropriate services are accessible through the development, dissemination and application of existing relevant standards, accessibility guidelines and of good practices to enhance victim assistance efforts.**

- Develop, disseminate and monitor the implementation of minimum standards and accessibility guidelines for facilities and services open or provided to the public to guarantee access for women, girls, boys and men with disabilities.
- Collate and disseminate examples of good practice in the provision of services and in addressing the rights and needs of mine victims and other persons with disabilities.

### **Awareness raising**

Mine survivors and other persons with disabilities often face stigma, discrimination and misunderstanding from their families and communities. Social and economic inclusion and participation in the social, cultural, economic and political life of their communities is hindered by a lack of understanding based on stereotypes and misperceptions among the general population of the rights, needs and capacities of persons with disabilities. In many societies, persons with disabilities are still seen as objects of charity and not as subjects of rights, able to make decisions and participate in society. Persons with disabilities are often unaware of their rights and lack the capacity to advocate for themselves.

**Action #33: Raise awareness among mine victims about their rights and available services, as well as within government authorities, service providers and the general public to foster respect for the rights and dignity of persons with disabilities including mine survivors.**

- Facilitate the development and/or implementation of a system to disseminate, on a regular basis, information on the availability of services and the rights of persons with disabilities.
- Facilitate the development and implementation of a training package on the role of social and attitudinal barriers in preventing the participation of survivors and other persons with disabilities in society, and on obligations to remove these barriers.
- Facilitate the development and implementation of a programme to raise awareness on the rights and contributions of persons with disabilities, including survivors, to their communities among survivors and their families, communities, professionals and authorities at all levels to promote inclusion.
- Develop and implement a programme to train teachers on the rights and capacities of persons with disabilities and their special needs.
- Include awareness about the rights and capacities of persons with disabilities in the school curriculum.
- Include disability awareness in mine risk education programmes.

## **Cartagena Action Plan 2010-2014: International Cooperation and Assistance**

### **Resource mobilisation**

Addressing the rights and needs of mine victims is a long-term commitment which requires sustained political, financial and material commitments, provided both through national commitments and international, regional and bilateral cooperation and assistance, in accordance with the obligations under Article 6.3. No progress in improving the quality of daily life of mine victims and other persons with disabilities will be possible without adequate resources to implement policies and programmes.

**Action #39: Support the national efforts of those States Parties with clearly demonstrated needs to develop their capacities to provide assistance to mine victims and other persons with disabilities by providing where possible multi-year financial, material or technical assistance in response to the priorities of the affected State to facilitate long-term planning, implementation and monitoring of victim assistance-related activities.**

- Affected States: Identify gaps in resources available to implement national plans of action and seek specific support from the international community to address the gaps.
- States in a position to assist: Provide financial and other resources that will support the building of national capacities in the areas that will promote implementation of the recipient State's plan of action.
- Take steps to coordinate links between financial and other support mechanisms and actions that will facilitate progress in achieving the aims of national policies and plans.

### **Inclusive development**

The concept of *inclusive development* is as an appropriate mechanism to ensure that landmine victims and other persons with disabilities have access to the same opportunities in life as every other sector of a society. However, a "twin-track approach" is essential and while integrating

victim assistance into development programmes is may also be necessary to provide specialised services to ensure that mine survivors and other persons with disabilities are empowered to participate on an equal basis with others. Development efforts that benefit mine victims and other persons with disabilities will in turn contribute to achieving a country's development objectives, including the UN's Millennium Development Goals, through their full participation in social, economic and political spheres.

**Action #41: Ensure that international cooperation and assistance, including development cooperation, is age-appropriate and gender-sensitive and inclusive of, and accessible to, persons with disabilities, including mine survivors.**

- Develop and/or implement poverty reduction strategies, policies and programmes that are inclusive of issues concerning women, girls, boys and men with disabilities.
- Take affirmative action to ensure that women, girls, boys and men with disabilities have access to all activities within poverty reduction and development programmes in their communities.
- Develop and disseminate common terminology and concepts to enable stakeholders working in the areas of disability and/or victim assistance to engage fully in development processes.
- Include the issue of disability/victim assistance in bilateral development cooperation discussions involving affected States.
- Document and disseminate examples of good practice in international cooperation and inclusive development that promote victim assistance and the full participation of persons with disabilities, including survivors, in society.

### **Regional and bilateral cooperation**

Prior to 2009 there were only limited opportunities at the regional level for States Parties to develop partnerships, strengthen regional cooperation and share good practice in relation to victim assistance. Through regional workshops in Bangkok, Dushanbe, Managua and Tirana the need to strengthen bilateral and regional cooperation was identified.

**Action #46: Develop and promote regional and bilateral cooperation in sharing and effectively using national experiences and good practices, resources, technology and expertise in addressing the rights and needs of mine victims and other persons with disabilities, to implement the Convention and to engage the cooperation of regional organisations.**

- Identify and utilise opportunities to enhance bilateral exchanges to share national experiences and good practices to promote victim assistance.
- Identify and utilise opportunities to integrate victim assistance into existing relevant regional frameworks and the work of regional organisations.