

Moving Forward

Survey Needed for the Road Ahead

"Ottawa" was not a signpost at the end of the road; Rather, it was a marker signaling the construction of a road through previously-uncharted territory. An accurate survey is required before any road can be properly built.

A comprehensive survey program is required to address questions such as: Where are the mines? What impact are they having? Why should we expend resources there? How much is required to solve the problem?

The Survey Contact Group (SCG) concentrates experienced survey experts and policy-makers in a series of workshops in order to develop a survey mechanism. The Survey Working Group (SWG) comprises:

- the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (Switzerland);
- Handicap International (Belgium and France);
- Mine Clearance Planning Agency (Afghanistan);
- United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS);
- Vietnam Veterans of America Foundation / Veterans International (USA);
- Landmine Survivors Network (USA);
- Medico International (Germany);
- Norwegian Peoples' Aid (Norway); and
- Mines Advisory Group (UK).

Ottawa 11 Mar 98

Survey Contact Group (SCG) is formed. SCG commitments include establishing a survey mechanism.



Brussels 1 Apr 98

Survey Working Group (SWG) is established. Survey Principles and Standards are developed and accepted.



Brussels 11 June 98

Survey Task Force (STF) is created. Survey Action Centre (SAC) is formed to expedite survey action. WAF/VI is appointed to manage the SAC.

The SWG has succeeded in developing enhanced principles and standards for Level One General Mine/Unexploded Ordinate (UXO) Surveys, and in creating a Survey Task Force (STF) with implementing mechanisms based on experience and available survey resources.

This survey process creates a blueprint for recognized professional groups to conduct standardized surveys under the co-ordination of the United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS). This will ensure systematic information collection and processing, transparently distributed in a quality-assurance structure.

Survey Working Group
GICHD, HI, LSN, MAG, MCPA, NPA, UNMAS, WAF/VI
Group focused on Survey Policies, Issues and Formats



Survey Contact Group
Broad-based interest groups (i.e., Donor Community, NGOs, International Organizations, the UN, etc.)



Survey Task Force
Survey Executive
HI, LSN, MCPA, NPA, WAF/VI
Committee overseeing Survey Action assuring adherence to principles and standards
Survey Action Centre
Facilitates implementation of surveys through various mechanisms

Informed decisions based on good information will give mine action planners quantifiable indicators in order to set priorities and mobilize resources.

The survey mechanism allows for expedited Level One General Mine/UXO Surveys to be carried out globally. Furnishing a wide base of quantifiable indicators — such as socio-economic and mine victim assessments — will provide baseline data for the international community to measure progress. 

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Budapest Conference: Anti-personnel Mines are Weapons of the Past

A three-day regional conference on anti-personnel landmines was hosted by the Hungarian government in Budapest in March 1998. The conference, sponsored by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), brought together representatives of governments and non-governmental organizations from nineteen Central and Eastern European countries. It ended with a declaration by ICRC President Cornelio Sommaruga that mines were "weapons of the past, not of the future."

A major focus of part of the conference was the human cost and military utility of anti-personnel mines. The participants, many from the region's ministries of defence and foreign affairs, adopted a very strong final declaration stating that the human cost of anti-personnel mines far outweighed their military utility, and that early adherence to the Ottawa Convention should be urged.

Ten governments in the region had already signed the Ottawa Convention and, during the conference, Hungarian President Arpad Goncz signed his country's instrument of ratification. 

Canada's Mine Action Team

Since September 4, 1998, the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD) has a website at:

www.isn.ethz.ch/gichd.

This site, currently under construction, contains general information on activities and the present and future organization of the GICHD.

The HansenCycle Appropriate Technology for Mine Victims

From the original "Man in Motion World Tour", — Rick Hansen's around the world in a wheelchair odyssey — to the recent creation of the Rick Hansen Institute, Mr. Hansen, a Canadian, has dedicated his life to initiatives that have a significant impact on the health and quality of life of persons with disabilities. It is with this goal in mind that Rick Hansen has pursued the development of a handcycle which will greatly aid the victims of landmine disasters.

The HansenCycle was developed by Rick Hansen Enterprises specifically to address the needs of

those people in the developing world who have mobility impairments. Designed as a utility vehicle, this rugged and durable handcycle enables persons with disabilities to transport themselves and their cargo through all types of terrain, making the HansenCycle an ideal product for the victims of landmine disasters. It provides its users with independence, as well as opportunities for employment and full participation in their respective communities.

For more information on the HansenCycle, please contact Mike Reid of Rick Hansen Enterprises at (604) 822-9079. 

Mike Reid
Rick Hansen Enterprises

