

Reducing mine casualties and delivering mine awareness education

In the mid-1990s rough estimates indicated that AP mines claimed approximately 26,000 new victims a year. The International Campaign to Ban Landmines now suggests that the number of new mine victims is 15,000 to 20,000 per year. This is still too many human tragedies, but clearly progress is being made in the global effort to address the suffering cause by AP mines.

In the majority of the most mine-affected countries and areas, casualty rates continue to decline:

- In Afghanistan, one-third fewer new casualties were recorded in 2000 than in 1999.
- In Albania, 25 casualties were recorded in 2000, down from 191 in 1999.
- In Cambodia, where the casualty rate has steadily declined since 1996, there were 20 percent fewer new mine victims in 2000 than in 1999.
- In Kosovo, 95 new casualties were noted in 2000, down from 342 recorded in 1999.
- In Croatia, the casualty rate in 2000 was less than half the rate in 1999.

One of the principal means for reducing mine casualties is the delivery of mine awareness education. Mine awareness education seeks to reduce high risk behaviour in mine-affected areas by increasing knowledge of the dangers of landmines and teaching mine-smart behaviour.

In 2000, advances continued to be made in the field of mine awareness. Building upon the development of its *International Guidelines for Landmine and Unexploded Ordnance Awareness Education*, UNICEF has announced its intention to develop

guidelines for monitoring and evaluating mine awareness programs. Handicap International, a pioneer in the development of mine awareness education, published the highly useful *Mine Risk Education Implementation Guide*. And, the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining undertook an in-depth multi-country study examining the effectiveness of high-cost media and materials used in mine awareness education programs.

Mine awareness programming took place in more than 45 countries in 2000. This indicates that states are responding to their obligation under Article 6 of the Ottawa Convention to provide assistance for mine awareness programs. Canada continued to do its part through assistance to the mine awareness education programs of NGOs and international and multilateral organizations.

Angola

The CIDA Tapping Canadian Creativity Program provided \$250,000 to UNICEF Canada for mine awareness education in Angola as part of a three-year, \$750,000 contribution. The project delivered mine awareness education aimed at reducing mine injuries in Angola's most mine-