

The terrible toll in human lives has a devastating impact, not only in terms of personal, family and community loss, but also in the loss to the country's labour market and economic productivity.

Reconciliation and a return to normalcy are extremely difficult under these conditions. In many instances, recovery and long-term development are virtually impossible.

### **CIDA's Approach to De-mining**

Canadian assistance for mine-clearing activities in developing countries is provided mainly through the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA). One of CIDA's main program priorities is supporting the efforts of developing countries to fulfil basic human needs. De-mining is a key element in the social and economic recovery plan of many countries, both for immediate humanitarian purposes and as part of the long-term development effort.

De-mining programs, involving the United Nations (UN) and a number of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and groups of mine experts, have grown rapidly since 1988, particularly in Cambodia, Afghanistan, Angola and Mozambique. CIDA provided critical support for the de-mining programs in Cambodia and Angola during their early stages, contributing timely financial assistance and working to build up international support for these programs among other donors.

Usually part of a larger multi-sectoral humanitarian assistance program, the focus of de-mining efforts is on building the indigenous capacity of countries to deal with the problem themselves, with donors providing technical expertise, training and other support for local organizations. De-mining programs can include such activities as mapping and inventory of areas where mines are laid; management of mine-clearing operations; mine removal training for local mine clearance personnel; awareness and education programs to help the community, especially children, identify and avoid mines; medical care for victims; and emergency clearance of access roads and residential areas. Recent programs include:

#### ***International Humanitarian Assistance***

- **Afghanistan:** 1996 is the seventh year of operation for the UN Office for the Co-ordination of Humanitarian Assistance to Afghanistan's mine clearance program. Once one of the most heavily mined countries in the world, Afghanistan is steadily overcoming the problem with the assistance of the international community. Canada has contributed \$2.8 million to this program since 1993-94. The program involves mine clearance and training for de-mining NGOs; mine survey and marking; mine awareness for civilians to identify and avoid AP mines, thus increasing their individual safety; and mine education for