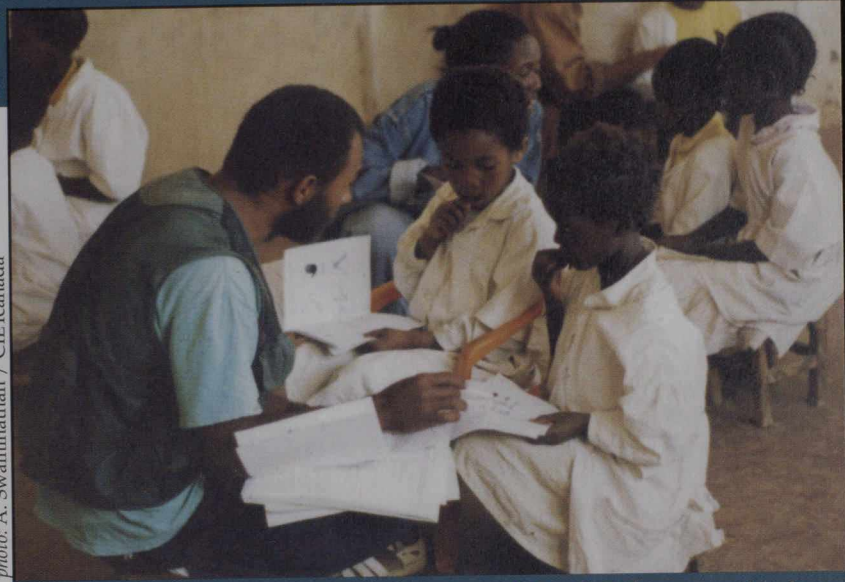




A mine awareness educator in Cambodia teaches a community about the dangers of anti-personnel mines.

photo: A. Swaminathan / CIETcanada



Interviewers administer a pictorial questionnaire to children in Huila province, Angola, as part of CIETcanada's evaluation of mine awareness education in that country.

Translated into several languages and widely distributed throughout the global mine action community, the *Guidelines* promote the effective planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of mine awareness programs. With the help of this manual, mine awareness education is being better designed and delivered, in a way that is more sensitive to culture, age and literacy levels—and is more effective.

### Canada's support

Most mine-affected countries now have mine awareness activities. Comprehensive programs are in place in almost all of the world's most seriously affected states. Of course it is difficult to draw a causal link between mine awareness education and casualty rates; but wherever mine awareness education is delivered in a comprehensive manner, casualty rates are declining.

Through the five-year, \$100 million Canadian Landmine Fund, Canada has supported a wide range of mine awareness education programs in over a dozen countries. Here are some examples:

- Child-to-child and teacher training approaches: Canada has supported the Mines Advisory Group teacher training and child-to-child mine awareness training in northern Iraq.
- Use of the media: In Afghanistan, Canada has supported an International Centre for Humanitarian Reporting radio education initiative. This makes it possible to reach children who may not have been included in more formal sessions.
- Distribution of mine awareness materials: As part of a World Bank program in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Canada is supporting the distribution of mine awareness posters and handbooks.

- Emergency situations: After the flooding that hit Mozambique in early 2000, Canada supported the United Nations Mine Action Service emergency mine awareness program. The aim was to prevent landmine accidents among displaced populations returning to their communities after the floodwaters had receded.
- Popular education: In Angola, Canada supported UNICEF Canada's mine awareness by popular education program, which used theatre and children's games to convey its message.
- Evaluation: Canada also provided support for an evaluation of UNICEF Canada's Angola program by CIETcanada, an organization that conducts community-based research. The findings: some of the methods used in the program could be improved, and increasing children's knowledge about mines does not necessarily lead to a change in high-risk behaviour.

### An ongoing struggle

UNICEF's *International Guidelines* set the standard for effective programs. Using the manual, efforts will continue to deliver mine awareness education. This is part of the wider effort to achieve universal adherence to the Ottawa Convention and implementation of the treaty in order to counter the global threat of anti-personnel mines. As the struggle goes on, the international community must keep striving to protect children from the multitude of AP mines that have been planted and that still remain hidden. We must take steps so that children can step forth without fear or danger. ●—