

Victim Assistance in Egypt: then and now

Egypt	1	2	3	4	5	6
According to original study		•		•		
According to LM 2002		•				•
According to LM 2003		•				•

Key Developments (LM 2002):

In May 2001, the Prime Minister announced that Egypt was launching a national program for the development of the northwest coast, including demining. The national committee on landmines has not met since May 2001. The United States conducted training of Egyptian deminers between May and August 2001. Eleven new mine or UXO casualties were reported in 2001.

Indicator 1: The extent to which information on mine victims' demographics and needs is available.

According to original study:

LM 2000 reports that the Ministry of Defence provides a total figure of 8,313 mine victims as of April 2000. Of that number, it reported that military casualties numbered 3,292, (of which 278 were killed), and the civilian total was estimated to be around 5,017 (of which 418 were killed and 4,599 injured). LM 2000 reports that a survey conducted by the Cairo-based Landmines Struggle Center (LSC), shows the number of mine and UXO victims in 1998 was 33 and in 1999 was 37. A 2000 UNMAS-led Assessment Mission reports that current mine information management systems do not collect information on mine victims or victim assistance and that such information is required for mine action planning.

According to LM 2002:

In 2001, 11 new casualties were reported in nine mine or UXO incidents; three people were killed and eight injured. In 2000, there were 12 new mine or UXO casualties reported.²⁰

All the new casualties in 2001 were civilians. Two casualties suffered injuries requiring an amputation in separate incidents in September and November in the eastern area (Red Sea). Six persons were reported injured in the western desert area, four required an amputation, from six incidents in January, March, June, August (two incidents), and November. The three fatalities occurred in October 2001 in El Monofia Governorate (60 kilometers from Cairo, far away from the two mine-affected areas) when three men were killed while checking a strange shell (artillery projectile) that was brought back from the Western desert.

Many mine incidents are likely to go unreported, especially amongst the nomadic Bedouin tribes in the Western desert.

Indicator 2: The extent to which a national disability coordination mechanism exists and recognizes mine victims.

According to original study:

No information available.

According to LM 2002:

No information available.

Indicator 3: The extent to which programs and services for the medical care and rehabilitation of mine victims are available.

According to original study:

LM 1999 reports that landmine victims are cared for by the state which provides first aid, medical treatment and artificial limbs. A 2000 UNMAS-led Assessment Mission reports that well-structured medical and rehabilitation services are provided through the military health care system, but that medical resources for civilians do not appear to be as comprehensive. A rehabilitation centre was identified in the Western Desert region but provision of prosthetics did not appear to be systematic. Overall, the Mission found a basic capacity to provide victim assistance in Egypt, however international assistance would enable national institutions to expand their scope of coverage.

According to LM 2002:

The manufacture of orthopedic appliances is still solely a commercial activity, except at military centers. Civilians must pay for artificial limbs.

Health services differ for civilian and military casualties. Civilians have no access to military hospitals, rehabilitation facilities, or veterans associations. The Ministry of Health, through emergency departments located in every hospital, handles emergency medical care for civilians in Egypt. These emergency services differ from the capital to the suburbs and in particular in the mined areas. In Cairo there is modern equipment and trained staff while in the mined areas it is difficult to find modern equipment or trained staff. There are no NGOs or international organizations with special programs for landmine survivors in Egypt.

At the conference on the problem of landmine on the northern coast in May 2001, the UNDP representative stated, "The Ministry of Health and the Egyptian Red Crescent are capable of offering assistance to land mine victims," however, he also called on the World Health Organization and other UN agencies to help mine survivors in Egypt.²³

Indicator 4: The extent to which programs and services for the social and economic reintegration of mine victims are available

According to original study:

LM 2000 reports that the Ministry of Social Affairs rarely provides pensions to the disabled.

According to LM 2002:

Only two of the survivors received emergency financial help from the Office of Social Affairs (part of the Ministry of Social Affairs) in Sidi Barani, Matrouh Governorate. This financial help amounted to 200 Egyptian Pounds (approximately US\$45). According to a survey conducted by the Landmines Struggle Center, none of the casualties received mine awareness or saw warning signs or fences in the incident areas. They received medical care according to the available health services in the mined areas.²¹

The rehabilitation, and social and economic reintegration facilities and services available to landmine survivors and disabled persons throughout Egypt have not changed in 2001.²² There are no vocational training or employment programs in the mine-affected areas.

Pensions received by landmine survivors differ for military personnel and civilians. The military has two systems: first, if the victim was working in a demining team and was injured or killed because of their work, the survivor or their family (according to the conditions) will receive compensation that could reach \$25,000 and a pension depending on length of service; second, if the victim is not working in demining and was injured or killed, they will receive all medical care, including care abroad if necessary, for free and a pension. A civilian might receive compensation of \$80 and no pension.

Indicator 5: The extent to which mine victims are protected and supported by effective laws and policies.

According to original study:

LM 2000 reports that Law 39/1975 (Executive Roll Number 59/1979) states that disabled should receive free medical care, and provides a structure for the care and rehabilitation of disabled people. However, limited financial resources hamper implementation of its provisions.

According to LM 2002:

No new laws or decrees regarding landmine survivors were passed in 2001. There are no pending disability laws or decrees that have been proposed or discussed by the administration during the same year. No additional funds were available in 2001 to help implement law 39/1975, which is intended to ensure the right of integration and free rehabilitation for persons with disabilities.

Indicator 6: The extent to which there is a disability community advocacy network.

According to original study:

LM 2000 reports that there is no national body representing the interests of disabled people or mine victims in Egypt.

According to LM 2002:

No information available.

Endnotes:

²⁰ For information on reported casualties prior to 2000, see *Landmine Monitor Report 2000*, p. 926.

²¹ All data in this section and the next are based on surveys by the Landmines Struggle Center (Cairo) in the two main mined areas in Egypt and other governorates next to those areas. This NGO receives news about mine or UXO incidents from media, hospitals, and other local sources. Staff then visits the accident area, interviews the victim or the victim's family, visits the hospital treating the victim, interviews witnesses, and notes other indicators such as warning signs, education, rehabilitation, and social care.

²² See *Landmine Monitor Report 2001*, pp. 1003-1004.

²³ Amin Sharqawi, UNDP Assistant Representative, cited in "UN report calls for helping landmine victims in Egypt," Arabic News.com, 7 July 2001.