

### Victim Assistance in Palestine: then and now

| Palestine                   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
|-----------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| According to original study |   |   |   | • |   |   |
| According to LM 2002        |   | • |   | • |   |   |
| According to LM 2003        |   | • | • | • |   | • |

#### **Key Developments (LM 2002):**

Twenty landmine and UXO casualties were recorded in 2001, and another 45 casualties were recorded in just the first four and one-half months of 2002. More than 90 mine risk education activities were conducted during the reporting period.

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

##### **According to original study:**

LM 1999 reports information from a study carried out by Defense for Children International/Palestine Section in 1998 on the problem of landmines and unexploded ordnance in the Palestinian territories which indicates that since the beginning of the Israeli occupation in 1967, there have been more than 2,500 landmine and UXO victims. The UN landmine database shows that in the West Bank, an estimated thirty Palestinians have been killed and dozens more injured by landmines in the past few years.

##### **According to LM 2002:**

Defence for Children International/Palestine Section documented ten landmine and UXO incidents in 2001, resulting in twenty casualties (of which fourteen were children under the age of 18 years). Seven were killed, including six as a result of an explosive device (possibly a booby-trap) and one from a UXO found after the Israeli Army shelled the area.

This represents an increase when compared to eleven casualties recorded by DCI/PS between May 2000 and March 2001, including five deaths (four children) and six injured (four children).

In 2002, DCI/PS had recorded 45 landmine and UXO casualties by 15 May 2002, including ten deaths (nine of them children). Palestinian aid groups report that 31 of the casualties occurred in the period during and following Israeli military operations in the Jenin refugee camp.<sup>18</sup> Given the difficult situation on the ground in 2002, comprehensive figures regarding the number of landmine/UXO casualties is unavailable.

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

##### **According to original study:**

LM 2000 reports that there is currently no national body representing the disabled, but there are attempts to formulate the National Council for Disability, which would represent the disabled, NGOs and the government.

##### **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 in the absence of an effective health insurance system, the cost of medical and rehabilitation must be paid for by the landmine victim's family. In the past few years, a network of good rehabilitation services and prosthetic workshops has been established in Palestine, but these have limited capacity. LM 2000 reports most mine victims are sent for medical treatment in Israel.

##### **According to LM 2002:**

Palestinian residents of the Occupied Palestinian Territories are not eligible for medical insurance coverage under the Israeli National Insurance Services (*Bituach Leumi*). Rather medical care for Palestinian mine and UXO survivors is provided through health care providers in Palestine. The most prominent health services providers in the Occupied Palestinian Territories are the Ministry of Health, the United Nations Relief and

Works Agency, and NGOs. Private for-profit service providers (primarily involved in diagnostic services and individual or group specialized care) account for a relatively small proportion of services delivered. The Ministry of Health is responsible for a significant portion of both primary and secondary health care and some tertiary care. Moreover, the Ministry of Health purchases tertiary services from other health providers, both locally and abroad.

UNRWA plays an important role in health services delivery, providing primary health care free-of-charge, and purchasing secondary and tertiary services to for the 1,074,718 registered Palestinian refugees. UNRWA contracts services with NGOs, primarily for secondary and tertiary care, and with some Israeli facilities for limited specialized tertiary care.

**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 rehabilitation centers provide vocational training.

**According to LM 2002:**

No information available.

**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 during the last year, the General Union of Disabled Palestinians, Rights Representative and Advocacy Body in coordination with the Central National Committee of Rehabilitation, and the Rehabilitation Institutions Coordinating Body in Palestine, succeeded in passing a special law, "People with Disabilities Rights Law," in the Palestinian Legislative Council which entered into force on 10 October 1999.

**According to LM 2002:**

Law Number 4 (1999), the "People with Disability Rights Law," which entered into force in the Palestinian Territories on 10 November 1999, applies to mine and UXO survivors; while the law was officially passed, it has yet to be implemented in full. Various Palestinian ministries, including the Ministry of Education, Labor, and Health, lack guidelines for implementation. The Ministry of Social Affairs has played the primary role in developing the implementation mechanism, and the General Union of Palestinian Disabled assisted in modifying the regulations so that they met the needs of the disabled community, but the Union failed to achieve all its objectives.<sup>19</sup>

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

**According to original study:**

According to LM 2000, the General Union of Disabled Palestinians works with the Palestinian National Authority to implement the 'People With Disabilities Rights Law' passed by the Palestinian Legislative Council in 1999.

**According to LM 2002:**

The General Union of Palestinian Disabled is working with relevant ministries to formulate the implementation regulations for the law. A legal advisor of the Union said the social environment in which the law is to be implemented is the major problem because the environment stigmatizes those with disability and views them with pity.<sup>20</sup>

**Endnotes:**

<sup>18</sup> Documentation provided from Palestinian Campaign to Ban Landmine members, DCI/PS and Palestine Red Crescent Society.

<sup>19</sup> Interview with Ziad Amr, Director, Palestinian General Union of the Disabled, Ramallah, 13 January 2002.

<sup>20</sup> Interview with Ribhi Qatamesh, Legal Advisor, Palestinian General Union of the Disabled, Ramallah 11 February 2002.