



Press Release

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A new study The Role of the Military in Mine Action

The most appropriate role for the military in humanitarian mine action has been the subject of debate in both military and civilian circles. The Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD) has recently completed a study to look at this issue.

For some, the military expertise in breaching minefields is not easily transposed to humanitarian demining, where nothing less than 100 per cent clearance of mines and unexploded ordnance is acceptable, if land is to be returned safely to the civilian population. For others, the command of logistics, technical knowledge and equipment make the military ideally suited to demining, where national level operational coordination, management and standing procedures are of a sufficiently high standard.

Stockpile destruction has largely been - though not exclusively - a military activity, whereas the involvement of the military in mine risk education has been more controversial.

Based on in-depth research in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cambodia, Ethiopia, Lebanon, and Nicaragua, the study looks at where military units and individuals - both local and visiting - can best be used in the context of a national mine action programme.

The study was funded by the Netherlands, through the United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS), and the United Kingdom. It is available in hardcopy, or can be accessed on the GICHD website (www.gichd.ch - cf. Publications).

For further information please contact :

Davide Orifici

Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining
Phone : + 41 22 906 16 91 - Mobile : + 41 79 747 10 57
d.orifici@gichd.ch