



Completion of the mechanical demining outreach project

Over the last 18 months the mechanical demining section at the GICHD have visited all of the major implementers of mechanical demining, organisations involved in research and development, manufacturers, the UN and some major donors of humanitarian mine action. Following a range of presentations and workshops with the groups mentioned, the GICHD visited 14 mine affected countries where demining machines can or do play a significant role in humanitarian demining. These countries were Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Angola, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cambodia, Croatia, Ethiopia, Iraq, Jordan, Laos, Lebanon, Sri Lanka, Sudan and Thailand.

The country visits were coordinated with the national mine action authority or the UN, where such national bodies are not yet in place. NGOs and commercial demining organisations also played a key role in assisting the mechanical demining outreach project. Typical for a project visit, the GICHD mechanical team would spend a week in country working with the various authorities and partners involved in humanitarian mine action. The team would aim to visit as many operators and demining projects as possible and the mission would normally culminate in a one- or two day workshop on mechanical demining topics.



Mechanical demining workshop in Luanda, Angola, Sept 05.

Issues addressed would be either country specific challenges to mechanical demining activities or topics from the GICHD publication “A Study of Mechanical Application in Demining”. The most common subjects raised would be mechanical application to area reduction and technical survey, management of demining machines, risk assessment, mechanical demining systems and mechanical demining standards and accreditation.

The workshops allowed implementers and national authorities to get together in a forum where mechanical demining was put on the agenda, and created an opportunity for the participating organisations to address and solve challenges that were either common for all, or more project specific issues. For GICHD this project has assisted in distributing the know-how contained within the mechanical study as well as gathering more information on best practises and use of demining machines.

GICHD, 23 June 2006

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For more information about mechanical demining, please visit the [Mechanical Demining section](#) on our webpage, or contact Mr. Erik Tollefsen at [e.tollefsen\(at\)gichd.ch](mailto:e.tollefsen@gichd.ch)