

ENHANCING THE APPROACH TO INCLUSIVE INFORMATION MANAGEMENT IN THE ANTI-PERSONNEL MINE BAN CONVENTION

INTRODUCTION

States rely on information to make strategic and operational decisions to reduce the risks faced by people in communities contaminated by anti-personnel mines and other explosive ordnance (EO). A clear understanding of **who** is affected by EO and **how** they are affected helps build a foundation for evidence-based decision-making which not only reduces these risks but also builds community resilience.

Disaggregated data is essential for understanding the differences in exposure to explosive ordnance risk,¹ access to risk education, ownership and control of cleared land, enjoyment of rights, and access to services for direct and indirect victims.² Without this information, States and other mine action stakeholders risk making decisions that do not address the challenges faced in their specific context.

Mine action also takes place in countries and territories where the security situation, demographic composition, and socio-political situation can change rapidly.³ This creates many legal, technical, and ethical challenges for developing and maintaining information management systems.⁴

Inclusive information management – a people-centred approach which requires the active involvement of those affected by explosive ordnance at all stages of the information management cycle – is key to ensuring that mine action responses are grounded in a solid understanding of the needs and experiences of affected communities.

Inclusive information management also helps to safeguard personal data, by giving people a voice and a choice in what data are collected, as well as how they are collected, stored, and used.⁵ A key concern is how data should be managed to prevent any negative consequences for the people whose data are being processed.⁶ This is central to building trust and cooperation, especially in conflict settings.

Whilst many good practices exist, the upcoming Fifth Review Conference of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC) and Siem Reap-Angkor Action Plan provide an important opportunity to promote inclusive information management as a best practice for Convention implementation. Against this backdrop, the issue brief presents recommendations on how this can be done.

WHAT IS THE STATUS OF INCLUSIVE INFORMATION MANAGEMENT IN MINE ACTION?

Addressing discrimination and promoting gender equality and inclusion has long been a priority of the APMBC. In the Oslo Action Plan (OAP), States Parties identified gender and diversity mainstreaming as a key best practice for Convention implementation. They committed to several practical steps to integrate gender perspectives and the diverse needs and experiences of people in affected communities in mine action programming.⁷ These included concrete actions related to risk education, victim assistance, sharing of data disaggregated by gender and age in Article 7 reporting, as well as the establishment of centralized databases that disaggregate data on people killed or injured, by gender, age, and disability.⁸

International Mine Action Standards (IMAS) further formalize minimum requirements and recommendations for the collection, analysis, and reporting of disaggregated data.⁹ Notable examples include IMAS 05.10 Information management for mine action, IMAS 12.10 Explosive ordnance risk education (EORE), and IMAS 13.10 Victim assistance in mine action. The IMAS also underline the importance of ethical rules and considerations for data sharing, as well as the need to consider any legal, regulatory, or normative requirements applicable in the national context.¹⁰

Despite the recognition that inclusive data management improves the effectiveness, efficiency, and safety of mine action, the process of moving from operationally oriented practices to more people-centric approaches has introduced new complexities and challenges.¹¹ Whilst good practices exist, a recent study by the GICHD identified several shortcomings:

- ▶ An oversimplified understanding of affected communities that only focuses on gender and age hinders the sector's ability to cater to other diverse needs, vulnerabilities, and capacities.

- ▶ Rigid data collection formats leave little space to adapt the information gathering to cultural diversity, gender considerations, as well as shifting security, demographic, and socio-political contexts.
- ▶ Data subjects often have a limited voice and choice in what data are collected, how they will be used, what mine action activities will be carried out, and how they can influence or benefit from these activities.
- ▶ In some contexts, lack of trust, security concerns, fear of stigmatization, and misuse of personal data significantly hamper data collection.
- ▶ Data on direct victims, which are key to understanding vulnerabilities, are not consistently incorporated into mine action information management systems.¹²

OPPORTUNITIES FOR ENHANCING INCLUSIVE INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AT THE SIEM REAP-ANGKOR SUMMIT ON A MINE-FREE WORLD

The Siem Reap-Angkor Summit on a Mine-Free World, and in particular the Siem Reap-Angkor Action Plan, represent a critical opportunity to ensure that recognized good practices on inclusive information management are maintained or enhanced in APMBBC implementation. Key elements for consideration include:

Reaffirming gender mainstreaming as a best practice for Convention implementation, and broadening the focus to include different aspects of diversity

Gender mainstreaming must remain a best practice for Convention implementation. There has been significant progress towards gender equality under the OAP and in the sector overall¹³ which must be maintained. The increase in women employed by international operators, from just under 20% in 2019 to just under 30% in 2023,¹⁴ is an example of tangible progress in this respect.

The Siem Reap-Angkor Summit also presents an opportunity to promote a broader approach that includes various aspects of diversity, treating them as significant as gender.¹⁵ This will help mine action organizations to better tailor interventions and mitigate the unintended effect of creating hierarchies in terms of what or who is included in mine action responses.¹⁶

Mainstreaming gender, age, and disability as well as other diversity factors, to ensure that the different needs and experiences of affected populations inform all aspects of mine action programming, should therefore be included as a best practice for Convention implementation and integrated into related actions.

Promoting inclusive information management as a best practice for Convention implementation

The Siem Reap-Angkor Summit is an opportunity to reinforce a more people-centred and inclusive approach to information management, giving data subjects more agency in how their information is collected, stored, used, and shared.¹⁷ The Summit is also the occasion to emphasize the importance of conformity with data protection laws, data ethics and protection principles, including confidentiality, informed consent, and security.¹⁸

In the Siem Reap-Angkor Action Plan, States should commit to **establishing an information management system that contains accurate, inclusive, and up-to-date information.** This will help to uphold the rights and well-being of the people directly and indirectly involved in mine action.¹⁹

Enhancing the way that the different needs, vulnerabilities, and capacities of diverse populations inform all areas of Convention implementation

The OAP helped to codify a people-centred approach for inclusive information management, by committing States Parties to tailoring risk education and victim assistance activities to the diverse needs and experiences of people in affected communities.²⁰ However, the OAP text on survey and clearance of mined areas is lacking any reference to people's different needs, vulnerabilities, and capacities.²¹

The Siem Reap-Angkor Summit is therefore a timely opportunity to enhance political commitments to **establish evidence-based, accurate baselines of contamination based on information collected in an inclusive manner from all relevant sources.** States Parties should also develop national work plans for survey and clearance, to include consideration of the different needs, vulnerabilities, and capacities of affected populations.

Strengthening the reporting of data disaggregated by age, disability, and gender, and other relevant diversity aspects

The OAP created a strong framework for the reporting of data disaggregated by age, disability, and gender in some areas of Convention implementation. This has positively impacted States Parties' ability to share information on measures in place and progress achieved with regard to considerations of gender, age, disability, and/or other diversity dimensions.²²

Despite the proven positive impact of employment in mine action for addressing inequality, there is a lack of data available for monitoring the percentage of women employed in the sector. The Siem Reap-Angkor Summit is therefore an opportunity to encourage States Parties to report on the **ratio of men/women employed in national mine action programmes**. The reporting of further disaggregated data should be determined according to national laws, cultural norms, and safety considerations.

CONCLUSION

Inclusive information management is the cornerstone of mine action that saves lives, upholds the principle of Do No Harm, and helps to ensure that no-one is left behind.²³ States Parties to the APMBBC are therefore encouraged to build upon progress in the OAP by committing to:

- ▶ Mainstreaming gender, age, and disability as well as other diversity factors to ensure the different needs and experiences of affected populations inform all aspects of mine action programming;
- ▶ Establishing an information management system that contains accurate, inclusive, and up-to-date information;
- ▶ Enhancing the way that the different needs, vulnerabilities, and capacities of diverse populations inform all areas of Convention implementation;
- ▶ Strengthening the reporting of data disaggregated by age, disability, and gender, and other relevant diversity aspects.

This issue brief was authored by Abigail Jones.

Endnotes

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- 3 Maysa Hajjaj, Lauren Burrows, Teia Rogers, Natalia Lozano, Sarah Kamal Elias, and Samban Seng, "Inclusive Data Management: Reporting, Storing, and Sharing of Information on Beneficiaries in the Mine Action Sector", *The Journal of Conventional Weapons Destruction*, Vol. 28, Iss. 1, (2024), [Inclusive Data Management](#)
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- 8 Oslo Action Plan, adopted on 29 November 2019, [Oslo Action Plan](#)
- 9 IMAS 05.10, Second Edition, "Information management for mine action", Amendment 2, 6 March 2023, [IMAS 5.10](#)
- 10 IMAS 07.40 "Monitoring of mine action organisations", IMAS 12.10 "Explosive ordnance risk education (EORE)", IMAS 13.10 "Victim assistance in mine action", IMAS 05.10 "Information management for mine action", and Technical Note for Mine Action 05.10/01 (TNMA) "Measurement and reporting of beneficiaries".
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The GICHD works to reduce risks to communities stemming from explosive ordnance, with a focus on landmines, cluster munitions, explosive remnants of war, and unsafely and insecurely managed conventional ammunition. As an internationally recognized centre of expertise and knowledge, the GICHD helps national authorities, international and regional organizations, NGOs and operators in around 40 affected countries and territories to develop and professionalize mine action and ammunition management.

Through its work, the GICHD strives for the fulfilment of international obligations, for national targets to be reached, and communities' protection from and resilience to explosive harm to be enhanced. These efforts support sustainable livelihoods, gender equality and inclusion. They save lives, facilitate the safe return of displaced populations, and promote peace and sustainable development.



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