

GICHD Insights

MINE ACTION AND GLOBAL AGENDAS

INTRODUCTION

The impact of mine action goes beyond the immediate humanitarian goal of saving lives and limbs. This has been demonstrated by a growing body of evidence which strengthens the call to better explore and integrate broader considerations in mine action priorities and strategies.

Implementing the Conventions governing mine action¹ and, at the same time, strengthening efforts towards broader goals related to global agendas can be mutually reinforcing. To leverage this, there is a need to better define how mine action contributes to wider outcomes and how better integration can ‘speed up’ efforts to reach the goal of a mine-free world.

Given the upcoming Fifth Review Conference of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC) in November 2024, this issue brief outlines the rationale for linking the implementation of the Convention with global agendas. It presents two global agendas relevant to mine action, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (the 2030 Agenda) and the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda, to demonstrate how these frameworks can provide guidance to maximize the sector’s effectiveness over the next four years, by pursuing broader objectives such as sustainable development, climate action, human rights, or gender equality.

STRENGTHENING EFFECTIVENESS THROUGH CONNECTIONS WITH GLOBAL AGENDAS

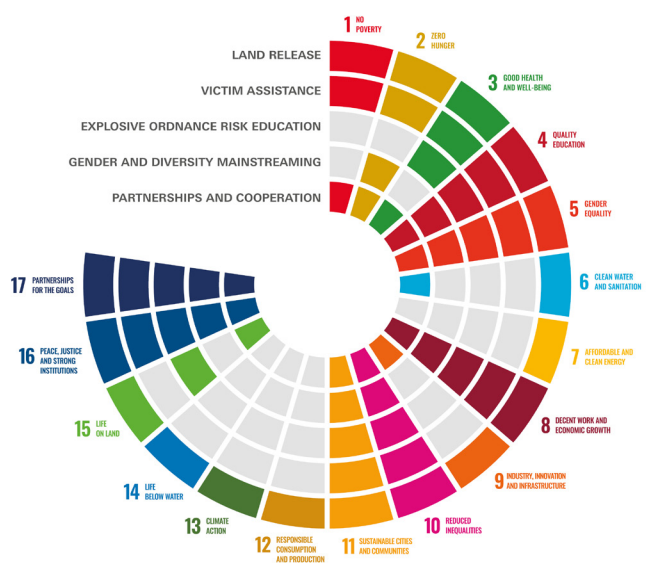
Understanding the relevance of global agendas in relation to mine action can help the sector to better align its work with broader goals and enhance the longer-term effectiveness of mine action programmes. While there is not an internationally agreed definition of a ‘global agenda,’ the term refers to a political plan of action or a shared set of goals and commitments widely accepted at international level, including specific steps taken in pursuit of a shared objective.²

2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

Adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 2015, the 2030 Agenda aims to guide countries and territories towards ending poverty, protecting the planet, and improving the lives of everyone, everywhere,³ by outlining 17 key development goals to direct progress up to 2030.⁴

The 2030 Agenda made significant progress in articulating how disarmament, peace and security contribute to development, returning the relationship between disarmament and development to the forefront of international attention.⁵

Since 2017, the GICHD, together with key partners, has explored mine action’s role as a meaningful enabler of sustainable development.⁶ Studies on the sustainable development outcomes of mine action in eight different country contexts found specific examples linking mine action to numerous targets under each of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).⁷



Contributions to sustainable development identified across eight country case studies⁸

These studies demonstrate how mine action activities have enabled sustainable development in the form of key infrastructure projects, the restoration of public services related to health and education, increased employment opportunities, environmental rehabilitation, and access to basic needs for affected communities, illustrating mine action's wider contribution beyond the removal of explosive ordnance.⁹

For instance, land release in Bosnia and Herzegovina enabled integrated flood prevention and reconstruction projects, promoting resilient food production systems (SDG 2), good water quality (SDG 6), and reduced deaths and economic losses resulting from environmental disasters (SDG 11).¹⁰ Such examples indicate the utility of analysing, demonstrating, and evaluating the impact of mine action through the framework of the 2030 Agenda.

The SDGs form a results framework which can help the sector better measure and articulate its contribution and progress towards broader goals in each context. For example, expanding safe access to arable land can enhance agricultural productivity and incomes of small-scale farmers and herders, contributing to SDG targets 2.3 and 2.4.¹¹ It is also relevant across multiple sectors, which can help make the case for sustained resourcing of mine action efforts, identify synergies, and encourage a broadening of cooperation with other relevant actors.

Women, Peace and Security

The WPS agenda originates from a series of United Nations Security Council Resolutions (UNSCRs) which delineate the specific impacts of conflict on women and girls and highlight the important role of women in peacebuilding and conflict resolution.¹² This is led by UNSCR 1325 which notes the importance of accounting for the special needs of women and girls in mine action.¹³

The WPS objectives address underlying conditions driving conflict as well as processes to promote the empowerment and protection of women in conflict prevention, resolution, and post-conflict reconstruction efforts.¹⁴ These are increasingly reflected in the approaches taken by actors involved in humanitarian response, including mine action, primarily through gender mainstreaming and targeted actions.¹⁵ Gender mainstreaming in mine action has strengthened the participation of women and girls through inclusive approaches to survey and prioritization activities as well as an increase in the employment of women in the sector.¹⁶ These efforts extend women's access to decision-making at both the community and organizational levels.

Inclusive approaches in mine action can also create lasting change in affected communities, helping to transform root causes, generate greater community resilience, and contribute towards conflict prevention in the longer term. In

Colombia, for instance, members of affected communities reported empowerment for women and a reduction in aggressive male behaviour as a positive impact of mine action efforts in their community.¹⁷

Incorporating the WPS agenda can help the sector to uphold current best practices in gender mainstreaming and to demonstrate its positive contribution towards this agenda. It presents a complementary framework to better support post-conflict reconstruction and recovery efforts for all members of affected communities, ensuring women and girls benefit equally from mine action interventions, and strengthening the meaningful participation of women at different levels.

EXISTING INTEGRATION WITH THE CONVENTION

From its outset, the APMBC recognized the multidimensional impact of explosive ordnance contamination and the potential of mine action to promote confidence-building efforts¹⁸ as a basis for the ban on the use, stockpiling, production and transfer of anti-personnel mines. Concretely, it acknowledges that mines not only kill or maim people but also obstruct development and reconstruction, inhibit the return of refugees and internally displaced persons, and have other severe consequences in the long term.¹⁹

By establishing these connections, the Convention places mine action as a key enabler for broader objectives relating to humanitarian response, peace, and sustainable development efforts.

More recently, the Oslo Action Plan reiterated that the implementation of the Convention contributes to the prevention of human suffering, advancing the achievement of the SDGs.²⁰ It also recognizes that convention implementation activities should be integrated into broader national policies, plans, and legal frameworks such as national development plans, poverty reduction strategies, humanitarian response plans, and national strategies for the inclusion of persons with disabilities.²¹

The Fifth Review Conference presents an opportunity for the sector to collectively identify its contribution to, and operationalize synergies with, existing broader efforts and global agendas related to sustainable development but also disarmament, environment and climate resilience, human rights, or gender equality.

LEVERAGING THE CONNECTION WITH GLOBAL AGENDAS

Given the potential contribution of global agendas for the implementation of the Convention, further exploration should be undertaken over the upcoming review period, including of the impact of global agendas for strengthening collective outcomes across the humanitarian, development, and peace sectors.

For instance, whilst the Oslo Action Plan reflects the mainstreaming of gender- and diversity-sensitive approaches as relevant considerations for the effectiveness of mine action operations,²² integration of the WPS agenda in the Siem Reap-Angkor Action Plan would further align these efforts to broader peacebuilding and conflict reduction objectives. In doing so, the agenda would re- envision gender-sensitive approaches as a means of transformative change in conflict-affected areas.

Whilst the relevance of the 2030 Agenda is already acknowledged, a greater commitment would strengthen the use of its results framework as a means of analysing and evaluating the impact of mine action. Systematic consideration of linkages with global agendas could help to ensure that mine action objectives are set based on clear humanitarian and development criteria and promote stronger collaboration with other sectors. For instance, humanitarian and development criteria could inform the prioritization of land release efforts. Embracing these broader considerations, ranging from environmental to gender and other diversity factors, can help the sector to set better objectives and deliver more impactful results while advancing wider goals. Ensuring this integration can also help the mine action sector to access funds and resources from other sectors, new donors and partners.

CONCLUSION

Through its action plans, the Convention has begun to integrate new ideas into its language and objectives, aligning its implementation with broader goals whilst maintaining its commitment to the primary objective of protecting lives and ending suffering caused by mines.

The Fifth Review Conference is an appropriate setting to further define mine action's enabling role for wider collective efforts and contribution to global agendas. The 2030 Agenda and the WPS are two significant agendas which have been considered in this issue brief with the aim of demonstrating how broader efforts may inform and influence mine action in a mutually beneficial manner. Considering and integrating these, as well as other global agendas, in mine action can enhance the effectiveness of the sector within the nexus of humanitarian, development, and peace efforts.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- ▶ Ensure mine action **objectives** are set **based** on clear **humanitarian** and **development** criteria, utilizing international frameworks and ensuring these are reflected in the design, implementation and evaluation of mine action programmes.
- ▶ Explore and **maximize** the potential **contribution** of global agendas for the implementation of the **Convention** and its impact towards strengthening **collective outcomes** across the humanitarian, development, and peace sectors.
- ▶ Leverage **connections** between mine action and other sectors to generate new sources of **funding** and provide more holistic responses through **cross-sectoral partnerships**.

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Endnotes

- 1 These include the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction (APMBC), the Convention on Cluster Munitions (CCM), and the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW).
- 2 As it is difficult to define an agenda versus another relevant global political issue, for the purpose of this publication, we include frameworks for which i) there is sufficient usage and acceptance of the term 'agenda' in relation to the specific issue addressed and ii) there is clear guidance on the particular approaches, measures or activities that should be undertaken in pursuit of a shared objective.
- 3 A/RES/70/1, Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, 21 October 2015. https://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/migration/generalassembly/docs/globalcompact/A_RES_70_1_E.pdf
- 4 A/RES/70/1, Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, 21 October 2015. https://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/migration/generalassembly/docs/globalcompact/A_RES_70_1_E.pdf
- 5 United Nations Office for Disarmament affairs. *Securing Our Common Future: An Agenda for Disarmament*. New York, 2018, p. 7, <https://disarmament.unoda.org/publications/more/securing-our-common-future/>
- 6 GICHD and UNDP, "Leaving No One Behind: Mine action and the Sustainable Development Goals", 8 June 2017.
- 7 See these studies on the sustainable development outcomes of mine action, in Angola, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cambodia, Colombia, Iraq, Jordan, Somalia, and South Sudan, at <https://www.gichd.org/publications-resources/publications>
- 8 Studies on the sustainable development outcomes of mine action: <https://www.gichd.org/publications-resources/publications>
- 9 Studies on the sustainable development outcomes of mine action: <https://www.gichd.org/publications-resources/publications>
- 10 GICHD and UNDP, "The Sustainable Development Outcomes of Mine Action in Bosnia and Herzegovina", 2 June 2022.
- 11 GICHD and UNDP, "The Sustainable Development Outcomes of Mine Action in Jordan", 30 March 2021, p. 50.
- 12 S/RES/1325. UN Security Council Resolution on women and peace and security, 31 October 2000, <https://documents.un.org/doc/undoc/gen/n00/720/18/pdf/n0072018.pdf>
- 13 S/RES/1325. UN Security Council Resolution on women and peace and security, 31 October 2000, p. 2, <https://documents.un.org/doc/undoc/gen/n00/720/18/pdf/n0072018.pdf>
- 14 S/2023/725. UN Security Council. Report of the UN Secretary-General: Women and peace and security, 28 September 2023, <https://www.securitycouncilreport.org/un-documents/document/s-2023-725.php>
- 15 IASC (2018). "The Gender Handbook for Humanitarian Action", IASC Reference Group on Gender and Humanitarian Action, February 2018, https://interagencystandingcommittee.org/sites/default/files/migrated/2019-02/2018-iasc_gender_handbook_for_humanitarian_action_eng_0.pdf
- 16 Mines Action Canada, "Gender and Employment in Mine Action by the Numbers: An Update, 2023". https://backend.icblcmc.org/assets/reports/other/Gender_and_Employment_in_Mine_Action_by_the_Numbers_2023.pdf
- 17 GICHD, "Contribuciones de la acción integral contra minas al desarrollo sostenible en Colombia", 4 April 2022, p. 147.
- 18 APMBC, "Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction". Preamble, fourth paragraph, https://www.apminebanconvention.org/fileadmin/_APMBC_SITE/Images/Brochure-OsloActionPlan.pdf
- 19 ABMBC, Preamble, first paragraph.
- 20 APLC/CONF/2019/5/Add.1, *Oslo Action Plan 2020–2024*, Oslo Review Conference on a Mine-Free World (Fourth Review Conference of the States Parties to the APMBC), November 2019, Introduction, third paragraph, <https://documents.un.org/doc/undoc/gen/g20/016/27/pdf/g2001627.pdf>
- 21 APLC/CONF/2019/5/Add.1, *Oslo Action Plan 2020–2024*, Action #1 p. 5
- 22 APLC/CONF/2019/5/Add.1, *Oslo Action Plan 2020–2024*, Oslo Review Conference on a Mine-Free World (Fourth Review Conference of the States Parties to the APMBC), November 2019, <https://www.osloreviewconference.org/fileadmin/APMBC-RC4/Fourth-Review-Conference/Oslo-action-plan-en.pdf>

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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