

Through the Lens of Survivor Researchers

Series of portraits



Contents

Foreword	3
Preface	5
Portraits of Researchers	7
The Americas	7
Chile	8
El Salvador	13
East & South Asia & the Pacific	25
Cambodia	26
Europe, the Caucasus & Central Asia	28
Albania	29
Bosnia & Herzegovina	32
Croatia	36
Serbia	38
Sub-Saharan Africa	41
Democratic Republic of Congo	42
Ethiopia	48
About us	50

Foreword



Written by Tun Channareth (ICBL Ambassador), best known by many as Reth. His creativity, courage, kindness, and passion is acknowledged worldwide where he has inspired audiences to take up the cause of disarmament, peace, and justice.

I was born in Cambodia and survived the brutal Pol Pot regime. I was a resistance fighter and lived 13 years in a refugee camp where I lost my legs to a landmine. From total despair I was called back to life by my small daughter who complained that while the other kids had a baht¹ to buy a small cake she had nothing because I just sat in a corner doing nothing. Shocked, I hopped on my wheelchair and went off to learn technical skills in the camp. Forty years later my six children have graduated from university, have jobs, are married, and I am a grandad. I work among other persons with disabilities and I am a passionate campaigner. My

life experience is my expertise along with technical skills and creative brain to solve any mechanical problem.

In my country services in the physical rehabilitation centers seem to be much less than before. We need our government to give a steady and secure budget every year, and ensure it gets spent on the care of the persons with disabilities. People talk about inclusive development so the government must make sure that the needs of persons with disabilities are addressed. Donor governments listen. Giving money for roads, agriculture, and education does help all of us but it does not put a leg on an amputee farmer or a wheelchair under a kid who will then be able to go to school on the road. We need both tracks: a sustainable future for all and a sustainable life for those with special needs.

Together we can do it. Governments and civil society can achieve the seemingly impossible together. Campaigning can be lots of fun, lots of hard work, lots of disappointments and great joy. Friendships made last forever when we work with a common purpose.

I have lost both my legs to a landmine, but I have learned so much from the courage and resilience of other survivors. Thank you for giving me hope and energy. Peer support is extremely effective and needs to be funded.

In this era when COVID-19 has poisoned our planet, I ask all governments to ban the landmines in their hearts along with the ones in the ground and stockpiles, and create a new world that includes every person and treats them with respect. Listening to the voices and aspirations of persons with disabilities can give you many creative ideas, can help you see the world from a different

¹ Baht is the monetary unit of Thailand.

perspective. It may even help you to create a new world order where everyone has enough to live with dignity, where communities have the resources to care for one another, where countries live in peace. A world without the weapons of hate, a world that dares to love one another is the world we want.

I am very happy to see this publication about survivors and their work. Many are my friends through this campaign network. We have

stood on the stage at the United Nations together and spoke to prime ministers, ambassadors, and even kings. We have visited remote villages and have spoken with some of the poorest people on earth. We can all learn so much about advocacy, service, and accompaniment of other victims. Survivors bring a special touch to campaigning and are at the heart of what we all do together. Please continue to support survivors and the work they do.

Preface

Year after year, the people behind the Monitor make the difference and represent its success. This observation has been the starting point for *Through the Lens of Survivor Researchers*. It grew from many discussions with colleagues, partners, and campaigners; and was inspired by similar initiatives from other organizations. Above all, it seeks to highlight the diversity of the individuals contributing “behind the scenes” to the Monitor, in particular those who have suffered directly or indirectly from the use of landmines, cluster munitions, and other explosive remnants of war (ERW).

Mine/ERW victims,² those who have been injured and killed, as well as their families and communities affected by such weapons, are key players in humanitarian disarmament efforts. Through their testimonies, first-hand understanding, experience and knowledge, they:

- Contribute to raising awareness on the indiscriminate and long-term impact of mines, cluster munitions, and other ERW;
- Advocate for the adoption, implementation, and monitoring of effective measures and norms to address such impact, including through victim assistance; and
- Put a “human face” on disarmament related issues, shifting the narrative from national security to human security.

The objectives of this publication are twofold:

- A platform for survivors contributing to the Monitor research to share in their own words their background, expertise, priorities, and views.

- A vehicle through which long-standing and new survivor researchers are able to share advices and thinking with regard to their research and the status of mine action work³ in their respective countries.

Survivor contributions, through the sharing of their experiences, are important to informing humanitarian disarmament related processes and mechanisms. Their inclusion and participation in such processes is not only essential, it is their right. As such, it is fundamental to ensure there continues to exist adequate and accessible spaces for promoting their diverse expertise and for their full participation in humanitarian and disarmament processes.

This publication aspires to be more than a collection of testimonies and to serve as a resource guide of survivor experts from the mine action sector. It portrays, through their lens, some of the challenges and opportunities in documenting and researching mine action efforts and on the protection and effective realization of victims’ rights. Each portrait follows the same structure, including: key findings on the landmine and cluster munition situation in the researcher’s country of origin, a brief biography, and answers to a series of questions. When possible, the portrait is available in both the native language of the researcher and in English.

In preparing and compiling the portraits, the voice and authority of each respondent was respected with as few changes as possible in order to allow the participants to characterize their expertise and describe

2 The term “survivor” refers to a person who has been injured as a result of an accident caused by a mine, cluster munition, or another explosive ordnance, and has survived; while the term “victim” includes people injured and killed, as well as their families and communities affected by such weapons. Exceptions can apply where individuals define themselves as survivors. See, Guiding principles for victim assistance. International Campaign to Ban Landmines and Cluster Munition Coalition (ICBL-CMC), bit.ly/VAGuidingPrinciples, January 2021.

3 Humanitarian mine action includes all activities aimed at significantly reducing or completely eliminating the threat and impact of landmines and ERW upon civilians and their livelihoods. This includes: survey and assessment, mapping and marking, and clearance of contaminated areas; capacity-building and coordination; risk education; victim assistance; stockpile destruction; and ban advocacy.

their story of survival using their own words, and to choose what they wanted to focus on, to include, or to keep private.

The portraits in this publication represent a tiny fraction of the many persons that have been or are involved in the Monitor research work. *Through the Lens of Survivor Researchers* has been conceived as a living document, which we expect will grow as more portraits from survivor researchers are added. Every story, every experience, every background is unique.

We hope this publication will contribute to increasing the recognition, visibility, and awareness of the role and expertise of men and women survivors in their diversity, and to facilitate linkages between these diverse and geographically disparate survivors' groups and organizations.



Marion Loddo,
Monitor Editorial Manager

We are aware that there is a lack of gender balance in the portraits included in the publication. This is far from satisfactory. This may be linked to the fact that proportionally, there are more men survivors than women. As the document is updated we will seek to reach out to more women survivors and indirect victims. We encourage readers to facilitate these linkages and we hope that this publication will also encourage some of them to directly reach out to ICBL-CMC.

We are grateful to each individual for taking the time to share their insights, and for their professionalism and generosity. We hope the portraits serve to highlight the immense value of these individual contributions to Monitor research, ICBL-CMC campaigning work, and more generally for their tireless work toward a mine- and cluster munition-free world. One where survivors, their families, and affected communities in their diversity of conditions and circumstances, can access and exercise their rights on an equal basis with others.



Diana Carolina Prado Mosquera,
ICBL-CMC Advocacy and Campaigns Manager



The Americas



Sergio Antonio Aranibar Araya

Victims of Mines and Munitions Group of Chile (GVMM)



“ I live in Chile in the city of La Serena, and I graduated in 1992, and obtained an Accounting Degree. I am a surviving victim of an unexploded device which occurred in the city of Arica in 1975, when I was nine years old, where one of my brothers died and another got injured. This accident was recognized by the Chilean

government and as a result we were included on the list of victims registered to receive benefits under the Law No. 21021, which grants compensatory benefits for victims of landmines and abandoned military ammunition in Chile.

In 2012, I joined the Victims of Mines and Munitions Group of Chile (GVMM, Spanish acronym) and I was appointed national coordinator in 2013, commencing an active participation in the processing of the current Law No. 21021. Since then, I have participated as a member of the ICBL-CMC, in various activities related to assistance of ammunition victims and seminars organized by Humanity & Inclusion. I am one of the five transitory coordinators of the Latin American Network of Mine Survivors and other Persons with Disabilities which was created in 2019.

Key Facts



Treaty Status

Convention on Cluster Munitions: State Party || Mine Ban Treaty: State Party

Extent of Contamination

Landmines: Clearance completed in 2020

Cluster munition remnants: Medium || Other ERW: Small

Support for Mine Action

No international support received in 2010–2019

ICBL-CMC Recommendation



Chile should urgently carry out survey of its military ranges and clear any identified contamination of cluster munitions

Regarding the research you carried out for the Monitor, what do you consider to be one of the major findings, and why? Did you encounter particular challenges in conducting your research?

In accordance with the research conducted for the Monitor, I was able to determine the following:

- A significant number of civilian survivors find that the quality of the prostheses delivered to them is not good and the medical attention is delayed.
- As part of medical care, psychological care should be considered. Given that the latter is not included in the benefits provided by the Law No. 21021, it is not always offered to survivors.
- There should be programmes for labor reintegration adapted to the survivors' conditions after they have suffered an accident. Many of the survivors show interest in learning a skill or specialty, but this possibility is not offered by any governmental institution.

What do you believe is missing in Chile in relation to support for survivors and persons with disabilities, and how do you think this could be improved?

In Chile, we have had Law No. 21021 in place since 2017, however monitoring of the outcomes of the law on behalf of the government is needed. As of April 2021, a little less than 50% of civilian victims had gained access to their benefits, which could change if a follow-up effort was carried out in the field, especially in the rural and Andean communities of our country.

Another activity that could be carried out is to hold review meetings between the government and those who represent the survivors, which would comply with the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the Oslo Action Plan and the Sustainable Development Goals, among others.

Law No. 21021 establishes the provision of financial compensation for the survivors as a form of economic reintegration, but it does not offer financial education to manage it. So, it is commonly used to pay expenses, and not for investment, hence it is suggested to provide educational courses.

How do you think the mine action community can best support landmine/cluster munition survivors and/or mine action efforts in Chile?

The community must support the effective participation of survivors in matters related to victim assistance in Chile. To date, there are no coordinated meetings with the authorities responsible for delivering the benefits established in Law No. 21021, and less participation in civil society councils. This provision of benefits is only fulfilled at the discretion of the Ministry of Defense through the Victim Assistance Unit, and in many cases ignoring the survivors' real situation.



What advice would you give to fellow Monitor researchers?

In order to carry out effective victim assistance work that is of use to the Monitor, it is necessary that the researchers get to know as many survivors as possible and be in constant contact with them, as well as with government authorities. This way the researcher will be able to ascertain the survivors' needs, and transmit this information to the government and the Monitor.

Humanitarian demining demands that the States Parties provide integral victim assistance. Therefore, it is necessary to emphasize victim assistance, and the Landmine Monitor is a useful tool to visualize the progress of States Parties to the Ottawa treaty. Hence it is advisable for researchers to request more details on this matter based on the measurable indicators established in the Oslo Action Plan.



Sergio Antonio Aranibar Araya

Grupo de Víctimas de Minas y Municiones de Chile (GVMM)



“ Yo vivo en Chile en la ciudad de La Serena, y soy egresado de la carrera de contabilidad en el año de 1992. Soy víctima sobreviviente de accidente con artefacto no explosionado ocurrido cuando tenía nueve años en 1975 en la ciudad de Arica, donde falleció uno de mis hermanos y otro de ellos resultó también herido. Este hecho fue reconocido por el Estado chileno y por ello se nos incluyó en el listado de víctimas catastradas para beneficios de la Ley 21021.

En el año 2012 ingresé al Grupo de Víctimas de Minas y Municiones de Chile (GVMM) y en 2013 me nombraron coordinador nacional del mismo, comenzando como tal una activa participación en la tramitación de la actual Ley 21021 que otorga beneficios compensatorios para las víctimas de minas y munición militar abandonada en Chile. Desde entonces participo en diversas actividades relacionadas con la asistencia a víctimas de municiones como miembro de la ICBL-CMC y seminarios organizados por Humanity & Inclusion. En el año 2019 se creó la Red Latinoamericana de Sobrevivientes de Minas y otra personas con discapacidad y soy una de las cinco personas coordinadoras transitorias de la Red.

Datos Clave Estado de Tratados



Convención sobre Municiones en Racimo: Estado Parte
 Tratado contra la Prohibición de Minas: Estado Parte

Alcance de la Contaminación

Minas terrestres: Finalización de la destrucción de minas en áreas minadas en 2020
 Restos de municiones en racimo: Mediana || Otros explosivos de guerra: Pequeña

Apoyo a la Acción contra Minas

No recibieron ayuda internacional entre 2010 y 2019

Recomendación de la ICBL-CMC



Chile debería realizar urgentemente un estudio de sus polígonos militares y limpiar cualquier contaminación identificada de municiones en racimo

Sobre la investigación que realizaste para el Monitor ¿cuál consideras que fueron los principales hallazgos y por qué? ¿Encontraste desafíos particulares al realizar dicha investigación?

De acuerdo con la investigación realizada para el Monitor pude determinar que:

- Una cantidad importante de sobrevivientes civiles encuentra que la calidad de las prótesis que se les entrega no es buena y que las atenciones médicas están teniendo demora.
- Que dentro de las atenciones médicas debería considerarse la atención psicológica, la cual por no ser parte de los beneficios que entrega la Ley 21021 no siempre es ofrecida a las personas sobrevivientes.
- Que debería haber programas de reinserción laboral adaptados a las condiciones en las que queda la víctima sobreviviente después del accidente. Muchas de las víctimas muestran interés por aprender algún oficio o especialidad, pero esta posibilidad no la ofrece ningún organismo.

¿Qué es lo que crees que falta en tu país en relación con el apoyo a las personas sobrevivientes y las personas con discapacidad y cómo crees que esto se podría mejorar?

En Chile contamos con la Ley 21021 desde el año 2017, sin embargo, falta seguimiento a los resultados de la ley por parte del gobierno. Hasta abril de 2021, cuando se presentó este perfil, un poco menos del 50% de las víctimas civiles se encuentran sin acceder a los beneficios, cosa que podría cambiar si se realizara un trabajo de seguimiento en terreno, sobre todo en las comunidades rurales y andinas de nuestro país.

Otra de las actividades que se podría realizar son reuniones de revisión entre el gobierno y quienes representan a las personas sobrevivientes con lo que se daría

cumplimiento a la Convención de Derechos de Personas con Discapacidad, el Plan de Acción de Oslo y los Objetivos de Desarrollo Sostenible entre otros.

La ley 21021 establece la entrega de una compensación económica para las víctimas sobrevivientes como forma de reinserción económica, pero no establece educación financiera para manejar dicho monto, por lo que generalmente es utilizada en gastos y no como inversión, por ello se sugiere la habilitación de estos cursos.

¿Cómo crees que la comunidad de acción contra minas puede apoyar de mejor manera a las personas sobrevivientes de minas terrestres/municiones en racimo y/o los esfuerzos de acción contra las minas en tu país?

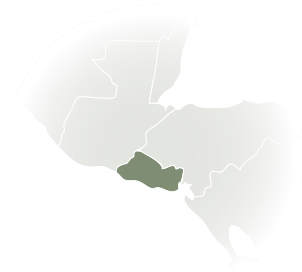
La comunidad debe apoyar la participación efectiva de las personas sobrevivientes en los asuntos que tengan relación con la asistencia a víctimas en Chile. Al día de hoy no existen reuniones coordinadas con las autoridades responsables de entregar los beneficios establecidos en la Ley 21021 y menos participación en los consejos de la sociedad civil. Esta entrega de beneficios solo se realiza al arbitrio del Ministerio de Defensa a través de la Unidad de Asistencia a Víctimas y en muchas ocasiones desconociendo la real situación de las personas sobrevivientes.



¿Qué consejo darías a las personas investigadoras del Monitor?

Para poder realizar una labor efectiva en asistencia a víctimas y de utilidad para el Monitor de Minas es necesario que la persona investigadora conozca y este en contacto permanente con el mayor número de víctimas sobrevivientes posible, así como también de actores gubernamentales pues de esta manera se puede saber de las necesidades de los primeros y transmitir las a los segundos y al mismo Monitor.

El desminado humanitario demanda a los estados parte la asistencia integral a víctimas. Por ello es necesario poner énfasis en esto y en ese sentido el Monitor de minas es una herramienta útil para visualizar el avance de los estados parte del tratado de Ottawa al respecto, por lo que sería recomendable a las personas investigadoras exigir mayor detalle sobre este tema considerando los indicadores medibles establecidos en el Plan de Acción de Oslo.



Mario Ernesto Díaz Rodríguez

Network of Survivors and Persons with Disabilities Foundation



“ During the last 17 years I have worked in actions related to the care of victims of armed conflict. I started in 2004 when I joined the work team of the American organization Landmines Survivors Network of El Salvador, which transformed into the Network of Survivors and Persons with Disabilities Foundation (*Fundación*

Red de Sobrevivientes y Personas con Discapacidad in Spanish) in 2008. Since then, I have been contributing to the implementation of the foundation’s support programmes such as healthcare, economic opportunities, and human rights.

As an institutional reference, in 2011, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2019 and 2020, I was responsible for the preparation of the Landmine Monitor country profile for El Salvador. I also participated and encouraged other survivors to contribute to the international campaign “Lend your Leg,” developed in 2012. In 2013, as part of the institutional framework, I joined the actions of the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN), coordinating various activities for the Network of Survivors, including organizing the visit of a delegation of nuclear bomb survivors of Hiroshima and Nagasaki from Japan, who were touring the world on the Peace Boat.

Most recently, in 2020 I was in charge of a research project named “Situation of the Survivors of the Armed Conflict in El Salvador during the COVID-19 pandemic and tropical storms Amanda and Cristóbal.” In 2019, I also collaborated in the preparation of a research sample on the situation of survivors of the armed conflict in El Salvador.

Regarding the research you carried out for the Monitor, what do you consider to be one of the major findings, and why? Did you encounter particular challenges in conducting your research?

Generally speaking, survivors expressed that their situation has not improved in recent years, some considered that it is the same, but most survivors stated that it has been deteriorating. Also, an emphasis was put on the lack of meaningful changes that would improve the care for survivors of armed conflict.

The healthcare system is one area that shows greater deterioration, given the limitations of providing access to this service by the government, mainly as a consequence of the pandemic. One of the biggest concerns for the survivors is that the service does not have an integral healthcare, since they receive limited care in this area as compared to other collateral health problems.

Regarding rehabilitation, good results have been achieved with the implementation of a prosthesis workshop as part of the services offered by the Fund for Protection of the Handicapped and Disabled as a Result of Armed Conflict (FOPROLYD, Spanish acronym) which is the governmental institution in charge of survivor care. However, many of the beneficiaries complain that the care is delayed and in some cases the devices (technical aids) offered are not always of good quality.

Regarding psychological care, survivors resent that the service has been deteriorating given that the FOPROLYD experienced a decrease in human resources related to this area of care. Workshops and/or mental health activities are no longer carried out as they once were.

In the financial area, there have been advances in the creation of a credit programme and the granting of productive modules in previous years. However, the

time frame to achieve some benefit from this type of support is sometimes prolonged. In general, survivors resent the lack of job opportunities and access to job training programmes.

Regarding the legislation for their protection, survivors state that there are several laws, but they are not enforced. In 2020, survivors had hopes for the creation of a new law—Special Law for the Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities—along with high expectations that it would respond to their needs and that it would be enforced.

These are the challenges found:

- The global pandemic situation generated a hermetic climate in the country, especially within the governmental institutions responsible for the care of the sector, leading to these hardly conceding appointments or providing guidelines or responding to surveys to expand relevant topics of the research project.
- Those who did respond to the survey gave very limited answers, not allowing space for a dialogue which would have further enriched the content of the survey. This situation forced us to be more creative and to look for mechanisms that would contribute to the objectives pursued through the surveys, such as requesting information from governmental institutions in charge of access to information, which eventually provided, albeit in a limited way, information on service to this sector.

What do you believe is missing in El Salvador in relation to support for survivors and persons with disabilities, and how do you think this could be improved?

Firstly, what is most needed is the political will on behalf of the government to grant the benefits that survivors rightfully deserve by law, in compliance with national and international treaties related to their care.

A greater unification of the sector is also necessary in order to formulate proposals that respond to their needs, act as a bloc, and gain greater prominence in the governmental institutions responsible for granting them benefits.

Advocacy and leadership capacity within survivors' organizations must also be strengthened. It would also be important to explore the establishment of alliances at the international level with like-minded organizations that support the initiatives of survivors in El Salvador.

How do you think the mine action community can best support landmine/cluster munition survivors and/or mine action efforts in El Salvador?

Creating and maintaining communication channels that allow them to obtain support or advice on certain procedures or in the development of advocacy actions on their rights, directed towards the state.

Financing nationwide campaigns or projects geared to achieving a visibility and collective

recognition of this sector, so that it can pressure the government to comply with binding treaties.

Generating links and/or exchanges with other international organizations of survivors from different countries, which have made significant progress regarding the care of victims and the fulfillment of their rights (lessons learned and good practices).



What advice would you give to fellow Monitor researchers?

We must continue to promote processes that increase the visibility of survivors of armed conflict. It is important to maintain an active communication with survivors to hear their impressions on how they perceive the attention and care provided by governmental institutions in charge, as well as to listen to their proposals and even their disagreements, giving the survivors the necessary time to better understand the situation they face, and at the same time motivate them to learn about their rights so that they strengthen their capacities to be able to claim their rights.



Mario Ernesto Díaz Rodríguez

Fundación Red de Sobrevivientes y Personas con Discapacidad



“ Durante los últimos 17 años he trabajado en acciones relacionadas a la atención a víctimas del conflicto armado. Inicié en el año 2004 cuando me uní al equipo de trabajo de la organización estadounidense Landmines Survivors Network, que en el año 2008 se transformó en la Fundación Red de Sobrevivientes y Personas con

Discapacidad de El Salvador. Desde entonces vengo contribuyendo a la implementación de los programas de apoyo de dicha Fundación orientados hacia esta población, los cuales son: salud, oportunidad económica y derechos humanos.

Como referente institucional, en los años 2011, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2019 y 2020, fui responsable de la elaboración del perfil de país del Monitor de Minas correspondiente a El Salvador. También participé y motivé a otras personas sobrevivientes a adherirse a la Campaña internacional “Arremángate” desarrollada en el año 2012. Asimismo, en el año 2013, como parte de las labores enmarcadas dentro del trabajo institucional, me sumé a las acciones de la Campaña Internacional para la Abolición de Armas Nucleares - ICAN, coordinando diversas actividades, incluyendo la organización, por parte de la Red de Sobrevivientes, de la visita en El Salvador de una delegación de sobrevivientes de las bombas nucleares de Hiroshima y Nagasaki de Japón, quienes hacían un recorrido por el mundo a través del bote de la paz.

Asimismo, como actividades más recientes, en el año 2020 tuve a mi cargo la investigación denominada: situación de las personas sobrevivientes del conflicto armado en El Salvador, durante la pandemia del COVID-19 y las tormentas tropicales Amanda y Cristóbal. En el año 2019 colaboré también en la elaboración de una muestra investigativa sobre la situación de sobrevivientes del conflicto armado en El Salvador, la cual refleja la situación en la que se encuentra dicha población.

Sobre la investigación que realizaste para el Monitor ¿cuál consideras que fueron los principales hallazgos y por qué? ¿Encontraste desafíos particulares al realizar dicha investigación?

En relación a la última investigación desarrollada en el año 2020, se destacan como principales hallazgos los siguientes.

En términos generales las personas sobrevivientes expresan que, su situación no ha mejorado en los últimos años, algunas consideran que se mantiene igual, pero la mayoría expresan que esta va en deterioro. Se enfatizó también la falta de cambios significativos que evidenciaran mejoras en la atención hacia las personas sobrevivientes del conflicto armado.

El área de salud es una de las que muestra mayor deterioro, ante las limitaciones de brindar acceso a este servicio por parte del Estado principalmente como consecuencia de la pandemia. Una de las mayores preocupaciones y a la vez molestia de las personas sobrevivientes en este servicio es que no cuentan con una atención integral en salud, pues por lo general, se les limita en la atención en esta área y no por otros problemas de salud colaterales.

En cuanto a la rehabilitación, se resalta que se han tenido buenos resultados con la implementación de un taller de prótesis como parte de los servicios que ofrece el Fondo de Protección de Lisiados y Discapacitados a Consecuencia del Conflicto Armado (FOPROLYD), que es la institución del Estado a cargo de la atención a sobrevivientes, sin embargo, muchas de las personas beneficiarias se quejan de que la atención es tardía y en algunos casos los aparatos (ayudas técnicas) que entregan no siempre son de buena calidad.

En la atención psicológica, se reciente que este servicio ha ido en deterioro, pues en el caso de FOPROLYD, hubo una disminución

de recursos humanos relacionados con este tipo de atención y se extraña que ya no se lleven a cabo talleres o actividades de salud mental como anteriormente se hacían.

En el área económica, ha habido avances en cuanto a la creación de un programa de créditos y el otorgamiento de módulos productivos en años anteriores, sin embargo, el tiempo para ser beneficiado con este tipo de apoyos, a veces es bastante prolongado. A nivel general las personas sobrevivientes recientes también la falta de oportunidades de empleo y el acceso a programas de formación laboral.

En lo relacionado a la legislación que les ampara, las personas sobrevivientes expresan que existen varias leyes, pero no se cumplen. Para el año 2020 veían con esperanza la creación de una nueva legislación denominada “Ley Especial de Inclusión de Personas con Discapacidad,” sobre la cual tienen muchas expectativas y están a la espera de que dicha ley realmente responda a sus necesidades y que en verdad se cumpla.

Como desafíos destacan los siguientes:

- La situación generada por la pandemia generó en el país un clima de hermetismo, especialmente en las instituciones del Estado responsables de la atención al sector, por lo que difícilmente concedieron citas o dieron las pautas para profundizar aún más en temas relevantes de la investigación.
- En el caso de aquellas que respondieron a la encuesta, únicamente se limitaron a contestar de forma muy limitada a las preguntas, sin generar espacios para un diálogo más profundo, que de seguro habría enriquecido aún más el contenido de esta. Esta situación nos obliga a ser más creativos y a buscar los mecanismos que contribuyeran a los objetivos perseguidos a través de las encuestas,

como por ejemplo solicitar información a las instituciones estatales de acceso a la información que de alguna manera resolvieron, aunque de manera limitada, los requerimientos de información sobre la atención al sector.

¿Qué es lo que crees que falta en tu país en relación con el apoyo a las personas sobrevivientes y las personas con discapacidad y cómo crees que esto se podría mejorar?

En primer lugar, lo que más se necesita es voluntad política de parte del Estado para realmente otorgar los beneficios que por ley merecen las personas sobrevivientes, cumpliendo los tratados nacionales e internacionales relacionados con la atención a los mismos.

Es necesaria una mayor unificación del sector para formular propuestas que respondan a sus necesidades, actuar como bloque y ganar mayor protagonismo ante las instituciones del Estado responsable de otorgarles beneficios.

Se debe fortalecer también la capacidad de incidencia y de los liderazgos al interior de las organizaciones de sobrevivientes. También sería importante explorar el establecimiento de alianzas a nivel internacional con organizaciones afines que respalden las iniciativas de las personas sobrevivientes en El Salvador.

¿Cómo crees que la comunidad de acción contra minas puede apoyar de mejor manera a las personas sobrevivientes de minas terrestres/municiones en racimo y/o los

esfuerzos de acción contra las minas en tu país?

Creando y manteniendo canales de comunicación que les permitan obtener apoyo o asesoría sobre ciertos procedimientos o en el desarrollo de acciones de incidencia sobre sus derechos, dirigidos hacia el Estado.

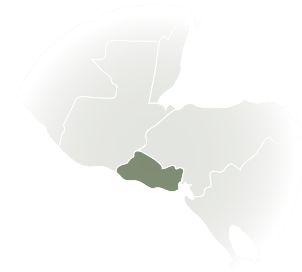
Financiando campañas o proyectos a nivel nacional que permitan lograr una visibilización y reconocimiento de este colectivo, de tal forma que esto pueda generar presión para el cumplimiento de los tratados firmados por el país.

Generando enlaces y/o intercambios con otras organizaciones internacionales de sobrevivientes de diferentes países, que han logrado avances significativos respecto a la atención a la víctimas y el cumplimiento de sus derechos (lecciones aprendidas y buenas prácticas).



¿Qué consejo darías a las personas investigadoras del Monitor?

Debemos continuar promoviendo procesos que visibilicen a las personas sobrevivientes del conflicto armado. Es importante mantener una comunicación activa con estas personas para conocer sus impresiones sobre cómo perciben la atención de parte de las instituciones del Estado a cargo de esa labor, saber escuchar sus propuestas e incluso sus inconformidades, dándoles el tiempo que se considere necesario para poder entender de mejor manera la situación que enfrentan y a la vez motivarles a que conozcan sus derechos para que fortalezcan sus capacidades que redunden en una mejor exigencia de estos.



Amilcar Antonio Durán

Network of Survivors and Persons with Disabilities Foundation



“ I am a person with a disability, a victim of armed violence and a wheelchair user. My educational background is in business administration. I am a leader in the defense of human rights of the civil society with disabilities, with training in human rights, strategic litigation, community organization, gender and inclusion. I

am a promoter of social and labor inclusion programmes for persons with disabilities, independent living, violence prevention, and I have participated in conferences at the United Nations (UN) and the Organization for American States (OAS), more specifically in thematic hearings before the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights.

In 2015, I joined the Network of Survivors and Persons with Disabilities Foundation (*Fundación Red de Sobrevivientes y Personas con Discapacidad* in Spanish) as Executive Director, an organization that works with different groups, including survivors of the armed conflict in El Salvador. The Foundation has three intervention programmes under the methodology of “peer-to-peer support” and the “Recovery Vector.” At the international level, apart from having done research for the Monitor, I have also conducted research on the situation of survivors of the armed conflict in El Salvador, during the COVID-19 pandemic and tropical storms Amanda and Cristóbal. I was also a co-researcher in the research project “Perception of armed violence in eight Latin American countries” (Humanity & Inclusion, Colombia, 2020).

Likewise, I participated as a speaker in the “International Seminar on the socioeconomic inclusion of persons with disabilities, including people from armed conflict”, held in Colombia in 2018. That same year, I participated in the Sixth International course specialized in Human Rights organized by the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, the Catholic University Luis Amigó, and the Colombian Institute of Human Rights in Medellín, Colombia.

In February 2021, I also participated as a speaker at the “National Dialogue: Strengthening the Participation and Inclusion of Victims of Antipersonnel Mines (APM) and other Unexploded Ordnance (UXO),” organized by the government of Colombia and the European Union.

Key Facts



Treaty Status

Convention on Cluster Munitions: State Party || Mine Ban Treaty: State Party

Extent of Contamination

Landmines: Clearance completed in 1994

Support for Mine Action

Has not received new international funding for mine action since 2012

ICBL-CMC Recommendation



El Salvador should continue providing assistance to all survivors and victims of mines and explosive remnants of war

Note: All facts are from Landmine and Cluster Munition Monitor 2020 reports. For details, see the Monitor country profile on El Salvador at: bit.ly/MonitorCountryProfileELSalvador.

Regarding the research you carried out for the Monitor, what do you consider to be one of the major findings, and why? Did you encounter particular challenges in conducting your research?

One of the main findings was that during the COVID-19 pandemic, persons with disabilities resent the abandonment by the governing institutions as much as those that deal with disability issues, such as the National Council for the Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities, as well as the Fund for Protection of the Handicapped and Disabled as a Result of Armed Conflict (FOPROLYD, Spanish acronym). The FOPROLYD froze for several months the provision of economic pensions, medicines, and technical aids to persons with disabilities. In light of this, the Legislative Assembly has drawn up decrees that seek to protect the rights of this important group.

What do you believe is missing in El Salvador in relation to support for survivors and persons with disabilities, and how do you think this could be improved?

It is indispensable to unify the organizational efforts from the sector of persons with disabilities as a whole, including those organizations of persons with disabilities as a result of the armed conflict. So as to persuade the government to create a comprehensive social protection system through the National Policy for social inclusion, in which authorities could address the different needs of the sector, but also allow the full and effective participation of persons with disabilities in society.

We need organizations to dissociate themselves from political parties and to have a clear agenda when claiming their rights. But, from the human rights and dignity perspective, the organizations must abandon the welfare approach that places them as a prey of populism in the hands of the political class which has only taken palliative actions that do not improve their living conditions and divides them organizationally.

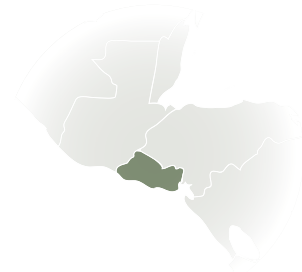
How do you think the mine action community can best support landmine/cluster munition survivors and/or mine action efforts in El Salvador?

El Salvador, like other countries that have experienced internal and international armed conflicts, should serve as a model for current armed conflicts. So that these countries seek to reach a prompt peace agreement, where integral care for the victims of these conflicts is guaranteed. It is important that the mine action community does not forget the victims of armed conflicts, as they have valuable information that could help avoid repeating mistakes already made by states in the past.



What advice would you give to fellow Monitor researchers?

Before starting an interview with survivors of conflict and armed violence, it is important to detail and clarify the objectives sought by the research, as many people go with the interest of achieving some direct benefit through these interviews.



Amilcar Antonio Durán

Fundación Red de Sobrevivientes y Personas con Discapacidad



“ Soy una persona con discapacidad víctima de la violencia armada y usuario de silla de ruedas. Mi formación académica es en administración de empresas. Soy líder defensor de los derechos humanos de la sociedad civil con discapacidad, con formación en derechos humanos, litigio estratégico, organización comunitaria,

género e inclusión. Soy impulsor de programas de inclusión socio laboral de personas con discapacidad, vida independiente, prevención de la violencia, y he participado en conferencias ante las Naciones Unidas y la Organización para los Estados Americanos, más específicamente en audiencias temáticas ante la Comisión Interamericana de Derechos Humanos.

Desde 2015, me incorporé como director ejecutivo de la Fundación Red de Sobrevivientes y Personas con Discapacidad, organización que trabaja con diferentes colectivos, incluidas las personas sobrevivientes del conflicto armado salvadoreño. La Fundación cuenta con tres programas de intervención bajo la metodología de “Apoyo entre Iguales” y el “Vector de Recuperación.” A nivel internacional a parte de haber hecho investigación para el Monitor, también he realizado investigaciones sobre la situación de las personas sobrevivientes del conflicto armado en El Salvador, durante la pandemia del COVID-19 y las tormentas tropicales Amanda y Cristóbal. También, participé como coinvestigador en la investigación: percepción sobre la violencia armada en ocho países de América Latina (Humanity & Incusion, Colombia - 2020).

Asimismo, participé como ponente en el “Seminario Internacional sobre la inclusión socioeconómica de personas con discapacidad, incluyendo personas del conflicto armado”, desarrollado en Colombia en 2018. En ese mismo año, participé en el sexto curso internacional especializado en derechos humanos organizado por la Comisión Interamericana de Derechos Humanos, la Universidad Católica Luis Amigó y El Instituto

Colombiano de Derechos Humanos en: Derechos Humanos, en Medellín, Colombia. En febrero de 2021, participé como ponente en el “Diálogo Nacional: Fortaleciendo la Participación e Inclusión de Víctimas de Minas Antipersonal (MAP) y otras Municiones sin Explosionar (MUSE)”, organizado por el Gobierno de Colombia y la Unión Europea.

Datos Clave



Estado de Tratados

Convención sobre Municiones en Racimo: Estado Parte
Tratado contra la Prohibición de Minas: Estado Parte

Alcance de la Contaminación

Minas terrestres: Finalización de la destrucción de minas en áreas minadas en 1994

Apoyo a la Acción contra Minas

Desde 2012 no ha recibido nueva financiación internacional para la acción contra minas

Recomendación de la ICBL-CMC



El Salvador debería seguir prestando asistencia a todas las personas sobrevivientes y víctimas de minas y otros explosivos de guerra

Nota: Todos los datos proceden de los informes del Monitor de Minas Terrestres y Municiones en Racimo 2020. Para más detalles, vea el perfil de país del Monitor sobre El Salvador en: bit.ly/MonitorCountryProfileELSalvador.

Sobre la investigación que realizaste para el Monitor ¿cuál consideras que fueron los principales hallazgos y por qué? ¿Encontraste desafíos particulares al realizar dicha investigación?

Uno de los principales hallazgos, fue que durante la pandemia del COVID-19, las personas con discapacidad recientes el abandono de las instituciones rectoras tanto de aquellas entidades que tratan los temas de discapacidad, tales como el Consejo Nacional para la Inclusión de las Personas con Discapacidad, así como el rector de la Ley de Protección de Ley de Beneficios para la Protección de los Lisiados y Discapacitados a Consecuencia del Conflicto Armado (FOPROLYD). El FOPROLYD congeló por varios meses la entrega de la pensión económica, medicinas y ayudas técnicas a personas con discapacidad. Ante esto, la Asamblea Legislativa ha elaborado decretos que buscan proteger los derechos de este importante colectivo.

¿Qué es lo que crees que falta en tu país en relación con el apoyo a las personas sobrevivientes y las personas con discapacidad y cómo crees que esto se podría mejorar?

Hace falta la unificación de los esfuerzos organizativos desde el sector de personas con discapacidad en su conjunto, incluidas aquellas organizaciones de personas con discapacidad a consecuencia del conflicto armado, en la lucha por incidir ante el Estado la creación de un sistema de protección social amplio a través de la Política Nacional para la inclusión social, en la cual se atiendan desde las instancias estatales las diferentes necesidades del sector, pero además les permita una participación plena y efectiva en la sociedad.

Se requiere que las organizaciones se desvinculen de los partidos políticos y tengan una agenda clara en la reivindicación de sus derechos, pero desde la búsqueda de la dignificación del sector desde la perspectiva de los derechos humanos, deben abandonar sus planteamientos desde el asistencialismo que los pone como presa ante el populismo de la clase política que ha puesto solamente acciones paliativas que no mejoran sus condiciones de vida y los divide organizativamente.

¿Cómo crees que la comunidad de acción contra minas puede apoyar de mejor manera a las personas sobrevivientes de minas terrestres/municiones en racimo y/o los esfuerzos de acción contra las minas en tu país?

El Salvador, al igual que otros países que han vivido conflictos internos e internacionales, debe servir de modelo para los conflictos actuales y para que estos países en conflicto lleguen a un pronto acuerdo de paz, donde se garantice la atención integral de las víctimas de estos fenómenos. Es importante que la comunidad de acción contra minas, no olvide también a las víctimas de los conflictos armados, porque cuentan con información valiosa para la no repetición de errores que han sido cometidos por los estados en el pasado.



¿Qué consejo darías a las personas investigadoras del Monitor?

Antes de iniciar una intervención con personas sobrevivientes del conflicto y violencia armada, es importante detallar y clarificar los objetivos que busca la investigación, ya que muchas personas van con el interés de lograr algún beneficio directo a través de estas intervenciones.



East & South Asia & the Pacific



Chan Men

Jesuit Refugee Service Cambodia



“ I work on doing outreach to persons with disabilities and migrant children “left behind.” I work on campaigning for disarmament and against landmines and I am a researcher for the Monitor. As a small nine-year old boy, in 1996, I was wounded by an explosive and lost one leg. After I finished high-school I went to university and graduated from hospitality and general management.

So Not

Jesuit Refugee Service Cambodia

“ I am an artist, a musician, a video maker, a father of three, and a community campaigner for peace. I was born in a refugee camp and returned to Cambodia when I was 12 years old. Though I left school in ninth grade, I have studied many things. I learned animation, video making, and news reporting. I work very hard along other persons with disabilities and I am extremely interested in getting people to care for the environment, to be good parents. I have an artificial leg myself and I really want all survivors of landmine to have a good quality of life.



Key Facts



Treaty Status

Convention on Cluster Munitions: State not party || Mine Ban Treaty: State Party

Extent of Contamination

Cluster munition remnants: Large || Landmines: Massive || Other ERW: Large

Support for Mine Action

Fourth largest recipient of international mine action funding in 2010–2019 (US\$254 million received)

ICBL-CMC Recommendation



Cambodia should join the Convention on Cluster Munitions without delay and urgently increase its demining capacity and step up efforts to become mine-free by 2025

Answers from Chan Men

Regarding the research you carried out for the Monitor, what do you consider to be one of the major findings, and why? Did you encounter particular challenges in conducting your research?

From my research I found that it was of upmost importance to ask people what they clearly have and what they need. The most challenging part were the land roads and the long distances that I had to travel in order to meet with people.

What do you believe is missing in Cambodia in relation to support for survivors and persons with disabilities, and how do you think this could be improved?

Some of them have nothing to eat and no home to live in. A partial solution could be to have a home, a school garden for children, access to learning and other income-generating opportunities.

How do you think the mine action community can best support landmine/cluster munition survivors and/or mine action efforts in Cambodia?

Finish clearing the land by 2025. Provide people with disabilities with land to do farming and promote disability rights.



What advice would you give to fellow Monitor researchers?

Many persons with disabilities need help, “a leg up,” so if you have hopes please work and do research that would support them.

Answers from So Not

Regarding the research you carried out for the Monitor, what do you consider to be one of the major findings, and why? Did you encounter particular challenges in conducting your research?

Those who receive some types of pensions from the government or those who have a piece of land can do very well. However, many of those who do not have access to most of these things have a miserable life. Sometimes people have to travel very far to go to their daily work and it is sometimes very challenging to find and interview them.

What do you believe is missing in Cambodia in relation to support for survivors and persons with disabilities, and how do you think this could be improved?

In some cases, access to the physical rehabilitation center is closed due to the lack of budget. This situation makes it difficult to obtain prosthetics. The COVID-19 pandemic has made this worse.

How do you think the mine action community can best support landmine/cluster munition survivors and/or mine action efforts in Cambodia?

Clear the land, ensure those affected get access to land. Implement disability rights. Use the abilities of survivors.



What advice would you give to fellow Monitor researchers?

Develop good relationships with persons with disabilities. Do not think of them as a box you have to tick off. Each person is special and different.



Europe, the Caucasus & Central Asia

Izet Ademaj

ALB-AID Association



“ I am the co-founder and chairperson of the Albanian Assistance for Integration and Development (former VMA-Victims of Mines and Arms), ALB-AID Association.

ALB-AID promotes rehabilitation and integration of victims, fights against the threat of mines and munitions and informs the population on the risks posed by landmines in Albania. ALB-AID also represents, protects and promotes the rights of survivors and their interests in Albania and helps them with their social-economic and physical re-integration through the victim assistance program. ALB-AID is gradually linking mine action and support for mine/unexploded ordnance (UXO) survivors of Albania with economic development initiatives. ALB-AID identified at least 1,006 UXO casualties recorded all over Albania during the period from 1997 until the end of December 2020.

I lost my right leg in a mine accident in May 1999 while patrolling the border during the Kosovo War in 1999. I was a police officer at the time of the accident. After the accident I joined the initiative of a group of local people from Kukes to create the Victims of Mines and Arms organization (now ALB-AID) to bring to the attention of the public and government the rights of landmine and UXO survivors in Albania. I was part of the teams of many rehabilitation projects for mine survivors. I grew up with the organization and helped to amplify the voice of survivors of Albania before the national and international community.

With the ICBL-CMC, I represented Albania's mine survivors, in several meetings of States Parties to the Mine Ban Treaty and the Convention on Cluster Munitions. I was part of the mine survivors advocacy team from Albania, who urged the Albanian government to include mine and UXO survivors in the government plans and policies. As a result, mine survivors

were recognized as persons with disabilities in Albania. I also have undertaken diverse actions and activities to push the Albanian Government to implement ICBL-CMC recommendations on victim assistance.

As a result of my advocacy work, Albania ratified the Convention on Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) and also adopted a law for persons with disabilities that was in compliance with the CRPD. Additionally, a National Action Plan for Mine Survivors was prepared.

Key Facts



Treaty Status

Convention on Cluster Munitions: State Party || Mine Ban Treaty: State Party

Extent of Contamination

Cluster munition remnants and mine clearance completed in 2009

Support for Mine Action

Approximately US\$9.5 million received in 2010–2019

ICBL-CMC Recommendation



Albania should continue providing assistance to all survivors and victims of mines and cluster munitions, in particular with efforts focused on rural and remote areas

Regarding the research you carried out for the Monitor, what do you consider to be one of the major findings, and why? Did you encounter particular challenges in conducting your research?

During my previous research with the Monitor the major finding was that the COVID-19 pandemic made it difficult for us to gather information through the traditional channels. I had to rely on virtual interviews which was different to what we have done in the past.

What do you believe is missing in Albania in relation to support for survivors and persons with disabilities, and how do you think this could be improved?

Mine survivors are not considered as a separate group from persons with disabilities, although the government has acknowledged and has approved laws to support persons with disabilities. However, the reality is different, as they don't get services such as: regular maintenance of prosthesis, equip/change of old prosthesis according to the standards (no standards apply for the replacement of old torn prosthesis). The Ortho Prosthetic Centre of Kukes is not equipped with materials, there is a lack of budgeting from the hospitals and Ministry of Health and access to public services is not adapted for persons with disabilities.

How can things be improved? Law enforcement is a real challenge. Since 2015, almost nothing has been done by the government. In 2015, ALB-AID prepared a detailed General Study on "Victims of Mines and Munitions." There should be more international pressure for the government to apply the approved laws for persons with disabilities, including mine survivors. Any research done on this, should clearly point out the shortcomings of the Albanian government to implement and enforce the approved laws.

How do you think the mine action community can best support landmine/cluster munition survivors and/or mine action efforts in Albania?

- By continuing to include mine survivors of Albania in their programs and projects;
- Supporting Albania to implement approved laws, because they might seem great when you look at them, but they are only on paper; in practice survivors have many problems; and
- More direct projects for survivors with survivors.



What advice would you give to fellow Monitor researchers?

Keep in touch with survivors in order to realize how the "perfect" laws and promises of the government and institutions are realized and what the mine survivors get as a real benefit.

Zoran Ješić

UDAS Organization



“ I was born in 1973 in Bosanski Novi, Republic of Srpska, Bosnia and Herzegovina. I have a Master of Economics. I am married and a father of two children with the third on the way. My disability occurred as a result of traumatic injury sustained during the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina after stepping on an antipersonnel

mine in 1994, and which led to the amputation of my right leg below the knee. For more than 20 years, I have been actively advocating for the rights of mine survivors and other persons with disabilities. I am the coordinator for mine victim assistance in the Organization of Amputees (UDAS). As part of my work with the organization, I participated in and contributed to projects on the impact of landmines in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the reintegration of war veterans with amputations into the community, improving mine survivors access to human rights, the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), or strengthening the economic situation of mine survivors and their families. I also contributed to advocacy efforts for better policies and legislation for mine survivors and persons with disabilities, generally through the inclusion of strategies to improve their social status. I have been part of a project aiming at creating a network of mine survivor advocates in Bosnia and Herzegovina as well as a network of women with disabilities, while contributing to individual and group peer support to the mine survivors and their families. Last but not least, I have developed projects of rehabilitation of war veterans with disabilities through sport and recreational activities.

In parallel with my involvement with UDAS, I have also been active in the field of sport for more than 20 years. Sport is one of the social activities that I consider as the most effective way of peer support. I am a founder and player of the first sitting volleyball club in the Republic of Srpska—Volleyball Club for Disabled “Banja Luka”—and one of the founders of the Sitting Volleyball Federation. In 2005, I was rewarded with the Gold

Medallion by the European Committee of Volleyball for Disabled (known now as Paravolley Europe) for my contribution to the development of sitting volleyball. In 2020, I became a member of a sort of volleyball for persons with disabilities “Hall of Fame” after the decision of World Paravolley—the world organization of volleyball for persons with disabilities—recognizing my skills as a player, a referee, and a manager.

Besides sitting volleyball I am an active player of badminton and also tried my hand at ice-hockey, scuba diving, and sport shooting. From my experience, sport has a very important role, and in some cases, the most important one in rehabilitation and social reintegration of persons with disabilities. Adequate, professional, and systemic help of society, together with a faith and willpower, can drastically increase the level of self-confidence of persons with disabilities. It also transforms something that first looked like a disability into great abilities and a bright future. I like to say that my example is the best proof for this, because the most beautiful things in my life happened after I became a person with a disability.

Željko Volaš

UDAS Organization



“ Željko Volaš: I am a graduated ecologist. I survived a mine incident 27 years ago. I have been active for 22 years in advocating for the rights of mine survivors and other persons with disabilities. Along with my fellow survivors and organizations of persons with disabilities, I was a member of a joint advocacy initiative. As such, I advocated for the adoption and ratification of the Convention on the right of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) by Bosnia and Herzegovina authorities, and the elaboration of a national legislation and strategic documents on the rights of persons with disabilities and mine survivors.

I am the president of the organization that was established by mine survivors in Bosnia and Herzegovina to support other mine survivors in their recovery and reintegration. We are committed to the creation of a network of mine survivor advocates in the country as well as a network of women with disabilities.

I am an active hiker and badminton player.

Key Facts



Treaty Status

Convention on Cluster Munitions: State Party || Mine Ban Treaty: State Party

Extent of Contamination

Cluster munition remnants: Small || Landmines: Massive || Other ERW: Heavily contaminated

Support for Mine Action

Approximately US\$103 million received in 2010–2019

ICBL-CMC Recommendation



Bosnia and Herzegovina should step up clearance efforts to become cluster munition free by its 2022 deadline; and urgently undertake all necessary steps (developing a comprehensive mine action plan, updating its mine action strategy, and making full use of the country coalition platform) to achieve mine completion within its 2027 or by the aspirational deadline of 2025

Bosnia and Herzegovina

Zoran Ješić and Željko Volaš collectively responded to the series of questions below.

Regarding the research you carried out for the Monitor, what do you consider to be one of the major findings, and why? Did you encounter particular challenges in conducting your research?

There were no special challenges in the research as all relevant institutions were cooperative enough. However, the impact of mines, cluster munitions, and explosive remnants of war (ERW) is a low-profile issue and is not a priority agenda item nor part of development initiatives from the relevant authorities in Bosnia and Herzegovina. As a result, we have a situation where relevant authorities have already announced that Bosnia and Herzegovina will not be able to fulfill the remaining obligations from the Mine Ban Treaty by 2025 and will have to extend its deadline to complete remaining obligations.

What do you believe is missing in Bosnia and Herzegovina in relation to support for survivors and persons with disabilities, and how do you think this could be improved?

Adequate needs-based, rather than status-based, support programs for mine survivors and persons with disabilities are missing to ensure that available funds are used in a more efficient way and contribute to the integration of more beneficiaries. Also missing are an equal access to rehabilitation and health care, with special emphasis on access to physical rehabilitation and ortho-prosthetic service, and an adequate program of economic empowerment and employment of mine survivors and other persons with disabilities. Some of these challenges could be overcome by securing additional funding by the relevant authorities, priority rehabilitation programs, and/or economic empowerment.

How do you think the mine action community can best support landmine/cluster munition

survivors and/or mine action efforts in Bosnia and Herzegovina?

There is a need to strictly monitor the implementation of the international treaties that Bosnia and Herzegovina has ratified and committed to implement by certain deadlines. There is also a need for additional support for mine clearance to prevent new mine incidents and casualties. Victim assistance efforts should focus on mine survivors in rural areas who lack resources and information on available support. In this regard, the establishment of an adequate and up-to-date database would be a useful tool in ensuring a more even distribution of support amongst mine survivors and victims. Advocacy capacity of mine survivors also has to be improved to support their integration into the disability rights movement which would give a new impetus for a broader understanding and support of the rights-based approach to disability. There is a need to create additional opportunities for empowerment, employment, and peer support counseling of mine survivors, their family members, and other persons with disabilities.



What advice would you give to fellow Monitor researchers?

Disarmament treaties have gained a significant humanitarian, social, economic, and political dimension since the adoption of the Mine Ban Treaty, thus researchers need to keep in mind the comprehensive impact of such agreements, especially if they are advocates for the implementation of the treaty at national level. Researchers should also have a detailed knowledge of relevant national strategies and policies that are essential for the integration and daily lives of mine survivors and other persons with disabilities, such as accessibility, education, employment, family life, public policy, and social security. Consequently, they should also make sure to report on the challenges in implementing these policies.



Mirsad Tokić

MineAid



“ I am the Monitor researcher for Croatia. I am a qualified transport infrastructure specialist who has also worked as a deminer. Due to this engagement, I have specific insights into the relative standards of security, working methods, and education in mine clearance and the impact of contamination on communities. In

2008, about a year after I lost a leg while clearing a minefield, I became a survivor peer-to-peer support worker for the Croatian ICBL-CMC national member, MineAid, providing psychological assistance to new survivors and victims who lost their loved ones. I have worked on social reintegration of survivors, family members, and persons with disabilities and economic empowerment of affected communities. I was a participant in the First Southeast Europe Regional Workshop on Victim Assistance and Peer Support in 2009. More recently, I have also worked on online peer support. I promote fitness and sports and I am an avid walker and cyclist. I was featured in the publication “Stumps and Cranks: An Introduction to Amputee Cycling” by Sonia Sanghani (2016).

I am a father of two twin girls and a son, while my wife works in the main hospital in Zagreb, addressing the COVID-19 pandemic.

Key Facts



Treaty Status

Convention on Cluster Munitions: State Party || Mine Ban Treaty: State Party

Extent of Contamination

Cluster munition remnants: Clearance completed in 2020

Landmines: Massive || Other ERW: Unknown but considered to be heavy

Support for Mine Action

Seventh largest recipient of international funding for mine action in 2010–2019 (US\$201 million received)

ICBL-CMC Recommendation



Croatia should enhance its survey and clearance capacity to meet its 2026 mine clearance deadline and make all possible efforts to achieve completion by the 2025 aspirational deadline

Croatia

Regarding the research you carried out for the Monitor, what do you consider to be one of the major findings, and why? Did you encounter particular challenges in conducting your research?

Many survivors felt that the international mine action community has neglected them and their concerns in recent years. Through conversations with my colleagues and fellow survivors from Croatia as well as from other countries, we have found that we often face identical challenges. Physical, economic, social, and legal barriers still block the full participation of survivors while most survivors still lack the information and skills to enable them to participate effectively.

Recently, challenging factors included the COVID-19 pandemic, and also for Croatia, a number of devastating earthquakes: in Zagreb in March 2020 during the first wave of the pandemic, and in late December 2020 there were several earthquakes with the epicenter in Petrinja. Petrinja was one of the most heavily mines areas with many survivors still living in the disaster areas where buildings were destroyed, and power and public services were interrupted for long periods.

What do you believe is missing in Croatia in relation to support for survivors and persons with disabilities, and how do you think this could be improved?

Survivors should be much better connected with each other's. Also, there needs to be a database of all survivors, including information on their needs.

How do you think the mine action community can best support landmine/cluster munition survivors and/or mine action efforts in Croatia?

By awakening self-conscience of the people affected by mines and cluster munitions and by overcoming barriers and discrimination. That means bringing survivors and persons with disabilities together to resolve the problems that they face in their everyday lives.



What advice would you give to fellow Monitor researchers?

Using the opportunity of research to discover the real experiences of survivors and persons with disabilities beyond the official reporting.

Dejan Ivanović

Assistance Advocacy Access-Serbia (AAAS)



“ I am a former member of the Yugoslav Army, a veteran with disabilities from the war of 1998–1999. During the armed conflict I lost my leg due to an antipersonnel mine. After the war ended and I recuperated, we founded together with the group of veterans with disabilities from Krusevac the association of the veterans with

disabilities, to fight for our rights in an organized and coordinated way, but also to support each other. We have worked on solving many problems that the veterans with disabilities and civil war victims encounter on a daily basis, such as: the lack of psychosocial support, unemployment, lack of housing, rehabilitation, medical treatment, procurement of orthopedic devices, and education for the child victims.

I became a full-time member of the Assistance Advocacy Access-Serbia (AAAS) in 2009. It only seemed natural to join and contribute to the work of the organization that is involved in the work against landmines and cluster bombs, as my country is affected by these weapons. I have participated in mine risk education activities in various places in Serbia where cluster bombs were dropped, promoted in the media and spoken in various contexts and official meetings on the importance of the Convention on Cluster Munitions. As a researcher, I conducted surveys and other types of research about the needs of victims. I have been the director of AAAS since 2015.

I founded the Sport's association of persons with disabilities in Krusevac in 2013, with the objective to improve the recreational engagement of persons with disabilities in our area. I have, in the meantime, acquired the sports trainer education and the certificate of the University in Nis. My main focus is to work with the visually impaired children and youth. In 2017, I introduced goalball in our region, and that same year, I was elected as the sports trainer of the year. For the last two years I have been involved

in the development of wheelchair basketball in Serbia and, starting 2021, I started training this sport.

I have participated in the activities of peace building and reconciliation in our region as a part of the initiative by Center for Nonviolent Action based in Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Key Facts



Treaty Status

Convention on Cluster Munitions: State not party || Mine Ban Treaty: State Party

Extent of Contamination

Cluster munition remnants: Small || Landmines: Small || Other ERW: Medium

Support for Mine Action

Approximately US\$17 million received in 2010–2019

ICBL-CMC Recommendation



Serbia should accede without delay to the Convention on Cluster Munitions and boost its survey and clearance capacity in order to complete mine clearance by its 2023 deadline

Regarding the research you carried out for the Monitor, what do you consider to be one of the major findings, and why? Did you encounter particular challenges in conducting your research?

Last year was particularly challenging in so many ways: apart from the lockdowns and the risks imposed by the pandemic, organizing the interviews in a safe, but still inclusive and respectful way was quite a challenge.

The major factor I have to put above any other is the spirit and the courage of the survivors, who despite all the difficulties wanted to give their contributions. I would like to honor our great friend and colleague, a fellow veteran with disabilities Novica Kostic who had, as always, contributed to last year's Monitor survey with data and analysis. A relentless fighter against injustice and a champion of peace work in the region, Novica recently lost his battle to COVID-19. He will be greatly missed, but we will also remember his kindness and unique empathy. May he rest in peace.

What do you believe is missing in Serbia in relation to support for survivors and persons with disabilities, and how do you think this could be improved?

A good law would solve the problems in the area of protection of persons with disabilities.

Personally, I believe that such a law is lacking in our country, a law that would regulate matters such as accessibility, quality of orthopedic devices, rehabilitation services, professional training and education of person with disabilities.

How do you think the mine action community can best support landmine/cluster munition survivors and/or mine action efforts in Serbia?

The biggest problem for so many survivors is the loss of employment or the loss of ability to perform the same work tasks as before the accident. This is where the mine action community should step in and promote and insist on the employment of survivors. Supporting professional training and psychosocial support programs is also something that could be achieved with moderate investments.



What advice would you give to fellow Monitor researchers?

One advice: this is not just some desk research. Your data and your subjects are people. Even if your research seems technical, it is ultimately about people's lives. Keep in mind that your research could contribute to some improvement in those lives and do it responsibly and respectfully.

Sub-Saharan Africa





Christiane Matabaro Ntakwinja

National Association of Survivors of Mines and Defense of the Interests of Victims (ANASDIV)



“ I was born in Bukavu in South Kivu province in the Democratic Republic of Congo. I am a widow, my husband succumbed to his mine injuries in 2013. I am the mother of seven children for whom I fought hard for their survival after my husband was injured by a mine. Following his accident, my ordeal began. I had to

be permanently in the intensive care unit of the hospital as a care attendant, to find money to pay for my husband’s care, and to take care of my children, the youngest of whom was only two years old at the time.

The suffering and pain caused by mines was my first experience of mine action work, and it prompted me to create the Development Association for the Promotion of Women and Children (ADPFE) in order to provide for the needs of women victims of landmines, sexual violence, and displaced persons of war, as well as to protect the interests of children marginalized by the atrocities of war. Mines not only destroy health but also access to financial resources, leading to malnutrition and school drop-out.

In 2010, with my husband, we created the National Association of Survivors of Mines and Defense of the Interests of Victims (ANASDIV) in order to bring together mine victims, raise awareness of their rights and relevant international conventions, and carry out advocacy activities so that our country adheres to them and implements a structure for mine victim assistance. Since 2013, I have been the national coordinator of ANASDIV, and through my work I have participated in many awareness and advocacy activities.

I have also attended several training sessions on the protection of the rights of persons with disabilities and their social inclusion, as well as on inclusive education. I participated in projects in partnership with Handicap

International (now Humanity & Inclusion), in particular on raising awareness about the discrimination against pregnant women with disabilities and on inclusive education to make parents aware of the importance of education of children with disabilities.

Key Facts



Treaty Status

Convention on Cluster Munitions: Signatory || Mine Ban Treaty: State Party

Extent of Contamination

Cluster munition remnants: Residual contamination || Landmines: Small || Other ERW: Small

Support for Mine Action

Approximately US\$98 million received in 2010–2019

ICBL-CMC Recommendation



The Democratic Republic of Congo should ratify the Convention of Cluster Munitions without delay; prioritize mine action; and speed up the work to become mine-free before 2025

Regarding the research you carried out for the Monitor, what do you consider to be one of the major findings, and why? Did you encounter particular challenges in conducting your research?

The main findings of my past research for the Monitor included the need for better management and coordination of mine action work, greater involvement of victims in coordination efforts, and improved victim assistance planning. These improvements would allow victims and their organizations to be actively included in policy- and decision-making and ensure that their participation is sustainable and meaningful.

Among the challenges encountered during my research was a sort of mistrust from state agents who at times ascribed false intentions to the research. Lack of resources to cover expenses is also a challenge. Lastly, the distance of some 3,000km that separates me from the site of the atrocities in the east of the country, where there are many victims and where demining and survey work is taking place, is a challenge. I am based in Kinshasa, where I fled the war, and I communicate with ANASDIV members and mine action associations in other parts of the country. In Kinshasa, the country's capital, all the governmental institutions are there but their representatives are not always available.

What do you believe is missing in the Democratic Republic of Congo in relation to support for survivors and persons with disabilities, and how do you think this could be improved?

In the Democratic Republic of Congo, mine victims and persons with disabilities lack everything, except for physical rehabilitation which has been supported for some time by the International Committee of the Red

Cross (ICRC). Generally, they are left to fend for themselves. The Democratic Republic of Congo has shown little political will and has experienced several years of instability, wars, seizures of power, and the destruction of several institutions. There are therefore many challenges to be taken up. We must not give up; we must continue to carry out advocacy actions. As the country rebuilds itself, we hope there will be a return to thinking about assistance for mine victims.

How do you think the mine action community can best support landmine/cluster munition survivors and/or mine action efforts in the Republic Democratic of Congo?

Mine action in the Democratic Republic of Congo is very limited. Support from the international community is mostly limited to mine clearance, and national non-governmental organizations (NGOs) are taking care of risk education, non-technical survey, and advocacy. To better support mine survivors, the community must also address their social inclusion, economic integration, physical rehabilitation, and health care. So far no one really does.



What advice would you give to fellow Monitor researchers?

With regard to the Democratic Republic of Congo, my advice to future researchers is to use the research to raise awareness among donors at the national and international levels about the importance of investing in mine victim assistance and expanding advocacy activities among all institutions in order to initiate the adoption of binding measures.

Doing this would contribute to ensuring that all countries at war, or which have known wars, adhere unconditionally to all relevant conventions.

Christiane Matabaro Ntakwinja

Association Nationale des Survivants de mines et Défenses des Intérêts des Victimes (ANASDIV)



“ Je suis née à Bukavu dans la province du Sud-Kivu en République démocratique du Congo (RDC). Veuve de mon état, mon mari ayant succombé aux séquelles de ses blessures causées par une mine en 2013. Je suis mère de sept enfants pour lesquels je me suis fortement battue pour leur survie quand mon mari a été

blessé par une mine. Suite à son accident, mon calvaire a commencé, car je devais être en permanence aux soins intensifs de l'hôpital comme garde malade, chercher de l'argent pour payer ses soins, et m'occuper de mes enfants dont le plus jeune n'avait que 2 ans à l'époque.

Les souffrances et douleurs engendrées par les mines ont été ma première expérience dans le travail de l'action contre les mines, et cela m'a poussée à créer l'Association de Développement pour la Promotion de la Femme et de l'Enfant (ADPFE) dans le but de subvenir aux besoins de la femme victime de mine, de violences sexuelles, et déplacée de guerre, ainsi que de protéger les intérêts des enfants marginalisés par les atrocités de la guerre. Les mines détruisent non seulement la santé mais aussi les finances, entraînant malnutrition et déscolarisation.

En 2010, avec mon mari, nous avons créé l'Association Nationale des Survivants de Mines et Défense des Intérêts de Victimes (ANASDIV) dans le but de regrouper les victimes de mines, conscientiser leurs droits, vulgariser les conventions internationales relatives à ces questions, et mener des activités de plaidoyer pour que notre pays adhère à ces dernières et de rendre ainsi opérationnel la structure d'assistance aux victimes de mines. Depuis 2013, je suis la coordonnatrice nationale de l'ANASDIV, et au travers de ma position j'ai participé à de nombreuses activités de sensibilisation et plaidoyer.

J'ai également suivi plusieurs formations sur la protection des droits des personnes handicapées et de leur insertion sociale, et sur l'éducation inclusive. J'ai participé à des projets en partenariat avec Handicap International (maintenant Humanity & Inclusion), notamment sur la sensibilisation à la discrimination de la femme handicapée enceinte et sur l'éducation inclusive pour sensibiliser les parents à l'importance de la scolarisation des enfants handicapés.

Informations Principales



Statut des Traités

Convention sur les armes à sous-munitions : Signataire || Traité d'interdiction des mines : État Partie

Étendue de la Contamination

Restes d'armes à sous-munitions : Contamination résiduelle || Mines antipersonnel : Faible

Autres restes explosifs de guerre : Faible

Financement de l'Action contre les Mines

Environ US\$98 millions reçus en 2010–2019

Recommandation de L'ICBL-CMC



La République démocratique du Congo devrait ratifier la Convention sur les armes à sous-munitions sans délai ; prioriser l'action contre les mines ; et accélérer les efforts pour devenir exempt de mines avant 2025

Concernant les recherches que vous avez menées pour le Monitor, quelle est selon vous l'une des principales conclusions, et pourquoi ? Avez-vous rencontré des difficultés particulières dans la conduite de vos recherches ?

Les principales conclusions de mes recherches passées pour le Monitor ont été le besoin d'une meilleure gestion et coordination de l'action contre les mines, d'une plus grande implication des victimes dans les efforts de coordination, et d'une meilleure planification de l'assistance aux victimes des mines.

Cela permettrait d'inclure activement les victimes et leurs organisations dans la politique et les décisions pour que leur participation soit rendue durable et significative.

Parmi les défis rencontrés pendant la recherche, il y a eu une certaine méfiance de la part des agents de l'État qui m'ont parfois prêté des fausses intentions. Le manque de ressources pour couvrir les dépenses est également un défi. Enfin, la distance de 3 000km qui me sépare du lieu des atrocités à l'est du pays, où se trouve de nombreuses victimes et se passe les opérations de déminage et d'enquêtes. Je suis basée à Kinshasa, où j'ai fui la guerre. Jusqu'à présent je communique toujours avec les membres d'ANASDIV et les associations de l'action antimine. A Kinshasa, la capitale du pays, toutes les institutions sont là mais leurs représentants ne sont parfois pas disponibles au moment voulu.

Selon vous, qu'est-ce qui manque en République démocratique du Congo concernant le soutien aux survivants et aux personnes avec handicap, et comment pensez-vous que cela pourrait être amélioré ?

En RDC, les victimes de mine et personnes handicapées manquent de tout, à l'exception de la réadaptation physique qui a été soutenue

un certain temps par le Comité International de la Croix Rouge (CICR). Mais généralement, ils sont abandonnés à eux-mêmes. La RDC a fait preuve d'une faible volonté politique et a connu plusieurs années d'instabilité, des guerres, de conquête de pouvoir, et de destruction de plusieurs institutions. Les défis à relever sont donc nombreux. Mais nous ne devons pas nous fatiguer et devons continuer de mener des actions de plaidoyer. Au fur et à mesure que le pays se reconstruit, penser aussi aux victimes de mines devrait redevenir possible.

Comment pensez-vous que la communauté de l'action contre les mines peut mieux soutenir les survivants des mines terrestres et d'armes à sous-munitions et/ou les efforts d'action contre les mines en République démocratique du Congo ?

L'action contre les mines en RDC est très limitée. Le soutien de la communauté internationale se limite au déminage, et les organisations non-gouvernementales (ONG) nationales s'occupent de l'éducation aux risques, des enquêtes non-techniques, et du plaidoyer. Pour mieux soutenir les survivants des mines, il faut aussi que la communauté s'occupe de leur insertion sociale, intégration économique, réadaptation physique, et des soins de santé. Jusqu'à présent personne ne le fait.



Quels conseils donneriez-vous à vos collègues chercheurs pour Monitor ?

En ce qui concerne la RDC, le conseil que je dois donner aux futurs chercheurs est d'utiliser la recherche pour sensibiliser les bailleurs de fonds aux niveaux national et international d'investir dans l'assistance aux victimes des mines, et pour étendre le plaidoyer au niveau de toutes les institutions afin d'initier des mesures contraignantes pour que tous les pays en guerre ou qui ont connu des guerres adhèrent sans condition à toutes les conventions pertinentes.



Bekele Gonfa Oba

Survivors Recovery and Rehabilitation Organization (SRaRO)



“ I am a landmine survivor wearing a prosthesis. I have lived with it for over 40 years. Despite many challenges, there is not much that I am limited from doing because of my disabilities. I have served in different public and private organizations in different capacities. I was also the country director for the former Landmine

Survivor Network (LSN) for almost seven years. I attended the negotiations of the Convention on the Right of Persons with Disabilities in 2004–2006 at the United Nations headquarters, in New York and made an intervention.

I am the co-founder and Executive Director of the Survivors Recovery and Rehabilitation Organization (SRaRO)—a legally registered organization operating in Ethiopia, and a member of the ICBL-CMC and International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN). I have been a board member, many for of them as a chairperson, for 10 organizations (including the ICBL-CMC). I have also been serving as the Landmine and Cluster Munition Monitor country researcher for over 13 years.

My assistance and support to my fellow survivors of landmines and explosive remnants of war for over 18 years is my greatest achievement. As a campaigner for victims of landmines and other explosive remnants of war, I had the honor to receive the 2015 Survivors Award from the Marshall Legacy Institute, for my inspirational work on behalf of survivors worldwide.

My academic qualifications include a Bachelor of Science degree in Statistics, high diploma in Business Administration and another high diploma in Marketing Management, and many certificates, particularly in advocacy.

Regarding the research you carried out for the Monitor, what do you consider to be one of the major findings, and why? Did you encounter particular challenges in conducting your research?

It has been a long time since I had started conducting the research, for me, all of them have been important and relevant.

There are many challenges in gathering information from different sources. I had to persistently call, visit and push the organizations in order to collect the necessary information. Some organizations may not respond as per our questionnaire, so they provide only the already compiled data for their internal use, and this is often a challenge.

What do you believe is missing in Ethiopia in relation to support for survivors and persons with disabilities, and how do you think this could be improved?

I have always been disappointed and felt bad about the lack of funding for victim assistance components, when a huge amount is allocated for clearance operations. The quality and quantity of assistive devices for survivors and persons with disabilities is not adequate enough and should be seriously improved.

As a researcher, it is not easy to get information in the mine action sector (mine clearance,

stockpile destruction, etc.) since the sector is exclusively run by the government. So, in order to improve this, campaigning and lobbying the relevant government body is essential.

How do you think the mine action community can best support landmine/cluster munition survivors and/or mine action efforts in Ethiopia?

The fund/budget for assistance to survivors should be reasonably allocated, because this is about striving to improve human lives. Mine clearance is ultimately to reduce or completely avoid casualties. However, even if mines are cleared within a given time, victims will be there for years even after land is released. On the other hand, the government should develop a close partnership with the international community in order to generate support both for mine action efforts and victim assistance.

Another advice is that the mine clearance components should be taken up by a non-government body in order to enhance clearance and also receive funds directly from donors.



What advice would you give to fellow Monitor researchers?

The monitor researchers should develop a very good partnership with the government as it is a key partner for conducting the research.

Key Facts



Treaty Status

Convention on Cluster Munitions: State not party || Mine Ban Treaty: State Party

Extent of Contamination

Cluster munition remnants: None || Landmines: Massive* || Other ERW: Extent unknown

Support for Mine Action

Approximately US\$18 million received in 2010–2013, no new international contributions since 2013

ICBL-CMC Recommendation



Ethiopia should join the Convention on Cluster Munitions and urgently undertake all necessary steps (establishing an accurate baseline of contamination, securing all necessary assistance, and liaising with Eritrea on the border clearance) to achieve completion of its Mine Ban Treaty obligations by its 2025 deadline

* It is expected that Ethiopia's estimated contamination will be significantly reduced through survey. Note: All facts are from Landmine and Cluster Munition Monitor 2020 reports. For details, see the Monitor country profile on Ethiopia at: bit.ly/MonitorCountryProfileEthiopia.

About us

The International Campaign to Ban Landmines (ICBL, est. 1992) and the Cluster Munition Coalition (CMC, est. 2003) – today the ICBL-CMC – bring together non-governmental organizations from some 100 countries, working to end the suffering caused by landmines and cluster munitions. The ICBL received the 1997 Nobel Peace Prize for its role in the adoption of the Mine Ban Treaty.

The Landmine and Cluster Munition Monitor (the Monitor) is the research and monitoring arm of the ICBL-CMC. It has been documenting the humanitarian response to the global landmine and cluster munition problem since 1999 and 2010 respectively. A broad-based network of individuals, campaigns, and organizations from around the world contribute to the Monitor research work.

For more information visit www.icblcmc.org or email info@icblcmc.org.

About this publication

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