

Thematic discussion on risk education and protection 23 May

In recent years we have witnessed a growing number of landmine victims.. This development gives rise to great concern. Protecting people from the risks posed by anti-personnel mines is one of the core purposes of the APMBC. States Parties have a responsibility to ensure effective and targeted mine risk education to affected populations (local communities, internally displaced and/or refugees) to reduce the incidence of mine-related injuries and/or deaths.

In countries affected by the use of improvised mines by non-state actors, the nature of risk education to civilians has become more complex than traditional mine risk education due to the evolving nature of the risk itself. Ongoing (and long-lasting) conflicts, often in urban environments, have resulted in putting large groups of internally displaced persons and/or refugees at risk. This poses a challenge to effective risk education, but also highlights why targeted messages are sorely needed.

There is therefore an urgent need for the sector to respond to this challenge, providing messages that correspond to the threat faced by populations at risk – whether the risk arises from legacy mine-fields, the new use of improvised mines, random contamination of explosive remnants of war or any combination of these.

More could be done to improve coordination and integration of risk education on the global, regional and in-country level. Best practices when it comes to needs assessment, prioritization, coverage, age, gender and disability sensitivity, use of new technology and innovative messaging could potentially be better disseminated among practitioners. There may also be a potential for increased standardization and improvement in the overall quality and relevance of risk education. The discussion will explore these issues with a view to identifying which actions and responses should be included in the Oslo Action Plan.

Presenters

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Questions for discussion

- Action 10 in the Maputo Action Plan: *Each State Party that has reported mined areas under its jurisdiction or control will provide mine risk reduction and education programmes, as part of broader risk assessment and reduction activities targeting the most at-risk populations. These programmes shall be age-appropriate and gender-sensitive, coherent with applicable national and international standards, tailored to the needs of mine-affected communities and integrated into ongoing mine action activities, namely data gathering, clearance and victim assistance as appropriate.*
- To what degree have States Parties delivered on Action 10? What have been the obstacles to effective implementation?
- How can we ensure effective risk education to people living in areas with an ongoing conflict, especially where humanitarian space may be under pressure?
- How can we ensure that refugees considering return receive relevant and targeted explosive ordnance risk education before return?

- How can the APMBC community and the mine action sector strengthen the quality of risk education programmes to contribute to reverse casualty trends (SDG target 16.1: Significantly reduce all forms of violence and related death rates everywhere)?
- How can the APMBC community and the mine action sector support the development/update of explosive ordnance risk education curricula to also cover the threats posed by improvised mines and tailored to for example urban environments in those countries affected by such threats?
- What concrete measures can be taken to improve the gender, age and disability sensitivity of explosive risk education?
- How should we address risk education in the Oslo Action Plan? (Including concrete and measurable global indicators)