

**Republic of Sudan**

**Meeting of the Standing Committees**

**GENEVA, SWITZERLAND**

**21<sup>st</sup> May – 25<sup>th</sup> May 2012**

**Oral Statement on Victim Assistance**

**Sudan**

Ladies and Gentlemen

Post to transition and take over from the United Nations, the Victim Assistance program in Sudan has registered progress at all different areas of intervention of Victim assistance starting from data collection up to completely integration of survivors back to society . The Landmine Victims Associations were empowered and involved in implementation of victim assistance/disability projects. Mine/ERW victims and other persons with disabilities are fully involved in all the VA activities such as monthly coordination meetings, VA training courses and special events such as International day for Mine Awareness and Assistance in Mine Action, and other awareness campaigns on their rights.

In Sudan the inter-ministerial / inter-sectorial coordination mechanism is in place and is actively led by the national Mine Action Centre that coordinates all mine action activities. The National Mine Action Centre in Khartoum chairs the VA working group. There are some ministries participating in the Victim Assistance working group as members such as Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health, and Ministry of Social Welfare , Unions for Persons with Disabilities , National and international NGOs. All VA interventions are designed and coordinated with relevant governmental bodies such as National Authority for Prosthesis and Orthotics and National authority for health insurance. The monthly meetings are the main forum where all actors working in Victim Assistance meet, share information, reports and experiences. We believe that this coordination mechanism was one of the main factors which led the successful Victim Assistance program in Sudan; it avoids duplication and allow the best use of the available funds. More over NMAC, VA department is an active member in the National Disability Council.

Although the VA program was very successful one but as any other program ,the VA/disability program faced some constraints and challenges one of which is to ensure that those injured by landmines become survivors, including through strengthening emergency medical capabilities, particularly in rural and in remote areas. Although the majority of the landmine survivors are soldiers and hence covered under the umbrella of the health insurance but also still there is a gap in medical capabilities in the highly effected areas. In the remote and rural areas where normal mine accident happen , the medical facilities are not well developed and lack basic instruments and tools .Most of the injured survivors need to be evacuated to the hospitals in the nearest cities which sometimes take more than 4 hours to reach the health facilities. The absent of first aid services and qualified first aid workers at the remote and rural areas sometimes complicated the health situation of the survivor and led to bigger damage. On the other side transport and ambulances are not always available and this could shift the causality from injury to death.

NMAC had organized meetings with relevant stakeholders such as, Ministry of Health (MOH), National Authority for Health Insurance and Military hospitals. The purpose of those meeting was to ensure that medical service could be improved and well-coordinated.This challenge could be solved only if all relevant stakeholders could collaborate fully i.e government, donors , civil society , Un agencies and communities.

The second main challenge is to increase accessibility of both female and male landmine victims to quality services and to overcome physical, social, cultural, economic and political barriers, with a particular focus on rural and remote areas. Accessibility is key requirement for development or any change. The majority of services required huge funding to be available for the survivors. The physical barriers are major constrains in Sudan because it blocks all other accessible ways of developing and improving the living conditions of the survivors. Most if not all the health, rehabilitation and social center are not friendly designed and they are not accessible for survivors. The most important constrain is the accessibility to technology. Now a days all communications, education, business and other living fields are completely rely on the technology which is not accessible to survivors. This affects the possibilities and opportunities of building the capacities of the survivors and hence improves their living conditions.

Finally , the continued involvement and effective contribution in all relevant Convention-related activities by health, rehabilitation, social services, employment, gender and disability rights experts and landmine survivors, inter alia by encouraging the inclusion of such individuals on their delegations, particularly on the part of those State Parties responsible for the greatest number of landmine victims and relevant organizations, formed the last major obstacle for the VA program in Sudan .This object required sufficient funds since participation are very expensive and diversity in participant male/female is required. Inclusion of relevant actors and survivors themselves is an added value and their participation enable wider exchange of information and knowledge; however that is very expensive process and needs full commitment from different actors.

**Sudan national program for VA/disability succeeded in** Integrate victim assistance into development and poverty reduction strategies this is to ensure that appropriate services are available to facilitate the full and active participation of landmine victims on an equal basis with others. **In light of this** the national strategic plans for disability and poverty reduction are developed in light of the National Strategic Framework for Victim Assistance and National Victim Assistance Work Plan 2009-2011. This ensure that all strategic plans and policies related to disability and poverty reduction are inclusive and developed in holistic way which covers Victim assistance . However the second part of this objective which is ensuring that appropriate services are available to facilitate the full and active participation of landmine victims on an equal basis with others, is not yet achieved fully for different reasons, one of the main reasons is the high cost of the appropriate services specially in the rural and remote areas .The full and active participation required full accessibility to all services in a friendly and smooth way. Sudan, through the national mine action center and the national council for disability is working hardly towards achieving this objective. The national council for disability started the recruitment of its staff and 50% are persons with disabilities, National Mine Action Centre through Victim assistance implementing agencies is already established the national database for disability which focus on making the information and reports on disability available and comprehensive so this could help future planning , identifying the priorities and ensure that the needs of the persons with disabilities are equally met. The continuation with this objective is a priority for Victim assistance program in Sudan for the coming period and this will be enforced by the existing of the national council for disability.

On the other side to ensure that capacity building and training plans are developed and implemented to promote high quality standards and availability of age-appropriate and gender-sensitive services in all components of victim assistance, and enhance the capacity of both women and men and national institutions charged with implementing national policies, plans and legal frameworks, including through the provision of adequate resources. National capacity building is one of the main three priorities for mine action program in Sudan; Transition plans and Multiyear Work Plan for Mine Action 2009-2014 are developed in inclusive and gender sensitive approaches. All data within the national Mine Action data base is disaggregated in gender and age groups. This to ensure that the different needs of women, men, boys and girls are well addressed and equally met.

Last but not least VA/disability expand operationally to Darfur region. With the support of the office disposal ordnances within the United Nation Mission in Darfur , NMAC in collaboration and coordination with national partners launched the first VA project last month in Darfur which focus on data collection and social integration for landmine survivors and persons with disabilities. At the same time the VA projects are oon going in South Kordofan , blue Nile and Khartoum.

I thank you.