

Handicap International Approach to Measuring Progress in Victim Assistance Efforts
MBT Intersessional Standing Committee Meetings
Standing Committee on Victim Assistance
24 May 2012



Thank you Madame Co-Chair.

These past few days, it has been very informative to listen to the efforts State Parties are making in order to advance victim assistance. To know whether these efforts are actually contributing to an inclusive society with equal opportunities for mines/ ERW victims, results need to be measured. But what do we need to measure exactly; and when?

During the ISC CCM meetings in April of this year, Australia encouraged State Parties to go beyond reporting on outputs. Outputs, as many of you know, are those results achieved directly following the implementation of an activity: for example, the fitting of a prosthetic leg. So what does this mean then, going beyond reporting on outputs? It means to find out whether this prosthetic leg is actually still being used, say, one year after it was fitted and whether it enabled a greater level of participation of the person. Reporting in the context of meetings such as the one being held this week generally does, however, not go beyond outputs. Whilst the notion of improved quality of life is being mentioned, states have not yet presented evidence of outcomes or impact, or how interventions actually led to a change in beneficiaries' quality of life. This begs the question to what extent results, beyond those at the level of outputs, are actually being measured by State.

Measuring results requires an understanding of *what* can be measured at *which* level and *when*. What do we mean with this? HI considers that victim assistance efforts require work at three different levels that should be measured over time. I will now explain these levels.

At the macro level, the affected government is the responsible actor to ensure that national implementation support measures are in place. These, for example, include setting up an inter-ministerial and multi stakeholder committee, developing a national action plan and collection of data on casualties. Having a plan is one, putting it to work is two! The ultimate impact of all interventions combined at the macro level ought to be the integration of victim assistance in broader disability, development and human rights frameworks. Whereas it is important to measure results at the output level, they should *also* be measured at the level of impact.

The next level is that of the meso: the system of services. Responsible actors are national and local government departments providing services, as well as national and international NGO and private organizations providing services. Efforts at this level should aim to develop an inclusive system of available and accessible quality services.

And last, there is the micro level, which is the level of interface between services and victims. Ultimately, efforts at this level should lead to improvement in victims' quality of life.

It is important to understand that all VA interventions at the macro level should assist the realization of those at the meso level and that results of interventions at these two levels combined should contribute to changes at the micro level, meaning: an improvement in victims' quality of life. In other words, all victim assistance interventions should ultimately translate into a real difference in the lives of victims.

I would now like to share an example of measuring impact on the ground i.e. at the micro level. HI has developed a tool to measure changes in quality of life in a livelihood project in Battambang, the most mine-affected province in Cambodia. This project focuses on the social and economic empowerment of mine

survivors, other persons with disabilities and their families. A total of 560 people participate, half of them being women and 70% being mine/ERW victims. The project is currently in its second phase of implementation.

In the first phase, a baseline in terms of beneficiaries' quality of life was established and complemented by an end-of-project study, which allowed us to evaluate and demonstrate the results of the project via clearly identified quality of life indicators. In addition to demonstrating clear results, this also allowed for the improvement of interventions, share them with other stakeholders and create evidence-based good practices. Results included:

- All project beneficiaries increased their quality of life by at least 64%
- Particular increase in income and community participation
- Specifically, 78% of beneficiaries increased their income
- For female beneficiaries, quality of life scores show that farming activities are especially beneficial to increasing their quality of life as these supplement not only their income but also their food resources.

Based on the results of the first phase of this project, we have now updated the quality of life tool to include the measuring of changes in three categories: basic needs (composed of: household budget, food security, education, access to health); capacities (comprised of: business and vocational skills, capacity decide how to invest, self-confidence) and participation (in family decision-making, in social and political life). This responds more widely to the understanding of "quality of life" in the specific context of mine victims in rural Battambang, builds on other livelihood, development and capability approaches, as well as on a system that sets poverty standards.

This tool has now been adapted by HI India, where it is being currently used to measure progress in a livelihood project and is one of the references for an ongoing research by UNESCAP on Disability, Livelihoods and Poverty in nine Asian countries. We will be glad to share the results of this project and look forward to further discussing this topic with you.

In closing, if there is one thing that I hope you will walk away with following this statement, it is that progress in victim assistance *is* measurable and that *each* action at *each* level should ultimately lead to changes on the ground in the lives of victims.

Thank you very much!