



## **IMPLEMENTING AN INTEGRATED APPROACH IN AFGHANISTAN**

### **ICRC Presentation for the Standing Committee on mine clearance, mine awareness and mine action technologies January 29 - 30, 2002**

- In December 2001 and January 2002, daily accidents - AT, AP, UXO and cluster munition accidents
- Direct interventions from clearance agencies were carried out following accidents (through requests coming from ICRC or other organisations) i.e.:
  - AT mine accident in Bamyan area ⇒ ICRC relief operations had to be stopped; MCPA survey teams was sent to the area
  - AP accident 30 metres from the road, on the former front-line area, when ICRC team was passing by ⇒ HALO Trust was immediately contacted and one team sent on the spot. Unfortunately the teenager involved in the accident died soon after the accident, before HALO Trust had time to rescue him.
- Through information collection, ICRC focus is on establishing direct links with clearance and awareness agencies so that immediate needs of affected communities are responded to:
  - ✓ Through the improvement of the ICRC data collection system
    - . Up to now, casualty data is being collected from 300 health facilities all over Afghanistan. Dangerous areas are reported by communities to data collection and mine awareness teams and the information is forwarded to Regional Mine Action Centres (RMAC) and/or directly to clearance agencies (i.e. Mazar where RMAC did not reopen yet)
    - ❖ Since November 2001, one ICRC regional mine action field officer was appointed in each ICRC office (Herat, Jalalabad, Kandahar, Mazar and Kabul). The mine action field officers are in direct and ongoing contact with RMACs and other mine action agencies. They are responsible for data collection and mine awareness activities in their respective area.
    - ❖ Community-based data collection was initiated in order to have access to information on deaths and minor injuries. A list of the most affected villages was established and those villages are being visited so that community leaders get involved in data collection. Monitoring is ensured by the ICRC field-officers.
    - ❖ The mine awareness teams have also been trained in collecting information on victims and dangerous areas
    - ❖ An in-depth investigation on cluster munition accidents is taking place through visits of all concerned villages and IDP camps located nearby cluster bomb strikes.
  - ✓ Through better exchange of information with RMACs and clearance agencies at regional level
    - information on accidents to be reported on a daily basis
    - information on dangerous areas/UXO to be reported according to situation
- Better links established within the RC/RC Movement between mine awareness - conducted by the Afghan Red Crescent Society (ARCS) - and data collection activities

- ✓ 2 ARCS mine awareness quick response teams established ⇒ direct interventions according to information collected by data collection teams
- ✓ all mine awareness and data collection team members were trained on the new cluster munition threat
- A better integration of mine awareness and data collection activities will permit a better integration with clearance as well. However the ICRC/ARCS mine awareness approach must be adapted to the new threat.
- ✓ The mine awareness approach is moving from a direct presentation methodology to establishing a real dialogue with affected communities in order to respond to their needs
- ❖ ADAPTATION TO THE NEW THREAT must be done through a retraining of ICRC/ARCS staff members. A community-based programme must be implemented.
  - example of Jalalabad* - in December 2001, 22 accidents in 3 provinces including 17 children injured/killed by UXO (10) CBU (7) - those types of accidents can be prevented by mine awareness if the information given to children is adapted: a 3 hour presentation including 2 hours on mine recognition will be useless. An appropriate methodology is also needed so that children are involved and understand what the threat is about. Parents and local authorities must be involved too so that the messages are reinforced through the adults.
  - example of shepherds in a minefield*
- ❖ The training course will start on 10 February and will involve ARCS, ICRC and HALO Trust staff members

## CONCLUSIONS

- **Comprehensive information collection is essential.**
- **Regular and immediate exchange of information must be established with RMACs and clearance/awareness agencies so that community priorities are taken into consideration.**
- **A community-based mine awareness approach in Afghanistan is a MUST to respond to communities' needs as well as to integrate with clearance, survey and marking operations.**