

NATIONAL HUMANITARIAN MINE ACTION PROGRAMME IN GUINEA-BISSAU

VICTIM ASSISTANCE AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC REINTEGRATION



Standing Committee Meetings
JUNE 2004 - GENEVA

NATIONAL HUMANITARIAN MINE ACTION PROGRAMME IN GUINEA-BISSAU

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Guinea-Bissau's June 1998 army conflict has propelled the tiny West African State of just over one million people (33 % urban and 67 % rural) into a profound and potentially lasting humanitarian crisis. Many of landmines were laid in Guinea-Bissau, some dating back to the liberation's war (1963-1974).



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- ❑ About 0,01% of the population living in the capital and 0,06% of the population living in the rural areas of the country are affected by mines and UXO contamination.
- ❑ Almost 35% of mines/UXO victims are children.
- ❑ Among adults victims, 20% are women and 45% are men.



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- ✓ According to the countrywide survey of mine/UXO casualties launched in 2002 **the number of landmine survivors revealed until May 2004, is 616.**
- ✓ Only 9% of the landmine survivors have been treated in the unique national current physical rehabilitation capacity.

Landmine survivors are most prevalent in Northern region (35%), in Bissau capital and immediate surroundings (25%), in the Southern part of the country (19%) and in Eastern region (21%).

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Emergency and Continuing Medical Care

■ Situation

- Cost of treatment is a major hurdle for many victims, and even when they do have access to a public hospital. The hospital itself frequently suffers from inadequate resources ;

■ Objectives

- Provide first-response support to victims and their families;
- Strengthen the capacity of National Hospital and community based organizations that deal with the rehabilitation of landmine/UXO victims;

■ Request for Assistance

- Develop first response support, including training in first aid and follow up services ;

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Physical Rehabilitation/Prosthetics

■ Situation

The treatments available for such victims are scarce. The specialized Centre for Surgery and Rehabilitation of Disabled, that used to operate under Dutch funding in the early 90's, stopped working by the 1998-1999 conflict.

■ Objectives

- Improve access for Physically Disabled Persons (PDP) through the rehabilitation of the specialized Centre for Surgery to increase the national capacity in health services mainly in physiotherapy and orthopaedic section.

■ Request for Assistance

- Further improve the national organizations, care services and workshop activities of the national resources.

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Psychological and Social Support

■ Situation

-There are no special service providers in psychological and social support

■ Objectives

- Offering the victims with physical rehabilitation, psychological support and assistance to reintegrate into Guinean society.

■ Request for Assistance

-Assistance and counselling in community committee building.

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Economic Reintegration

■ Situation

-The main problem faced in the whole country is providing work for the landmine survivors and people with disability.

■ Objectives

-Promote the reintegration of mine victims and disabled persons into society by promoting sport activities and facilitating relevant income-generating projects ;

■ Request for Assistance

-Create strong solidarity among those with disabilities as well as stakeholders;

-Increase the number of artisans with landmine survivors.

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Laws and public policies

-There is a need to reinforce the article 5 of the National Constitution, in order to include the landmine/UXO victims assistance concept.

-A complete and comprehensive national plan is needed, which include awareness campaigns on the needs of people with disability.

CAAMI is facing the following challenges:

- the inclusion of mine/UXO victim in the category of “war victims”, so they can access the same rights for compensation;
- the non-discrimination between the victims of the Liberation War, and the victims of the 1998-1999 conflict;
- the non-discrimination between mine/UXO victims and other disabled or injured people.

