



Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan

REPORT  
OF  
**SECOND NATIONAL  
VICTIM ASSISTANCE-DISABILITY WORKSHOP**



Hosted by

**Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs, Martyrs and Disabled**

**KABUL, AFGHANISTAN**

**23-25 October 2007**



# SECOND NATIONAL VICTIM ASSISTANCE-DISABILITY WORKSHOP REPORT

## Table of Contents

<b>Acknowledgements</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Background</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Second National Victim Assistance-Disability Workshop</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Workshop Objectives</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Opening of Second National Victim Assistance-Disability Workshop</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The Framework: Victim Assistance in the Context of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Components of Victim Assistance</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Progress in Victim Assistance in Afghanistan</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Working Groups</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Closing remarks</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Workshop Outcomes and Key Recommendations</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Annexes:</b>	
<b>Annex A – Workshop Agenda</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Annex B – Workshop Participants</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Annex C – Opening address – H.E. Noor Mohammad Qarqin, Minister of Labour, Social Affairs, Martyrs and Disabled</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>Annex D – General remarks – Khalid Ahmad Zekriya, Assistant Secretary, Fifth Political Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>Annex E – General remarks – Susan Helseth, Deputy Programme Director, Mine Action Centre for Afghanistan</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>Annex F – Kabul Report: What &amp; Why – Sheree Bailey, AP Mine Ban Convention Implementation Support Unit, Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>Annex G – Message from the 2006 Co-Chairs of the Standing Committee on Victim Assistance and Socio-Economic Reintegration</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>Annex H – Closing address – H.E. Wasil Noor Mohmand, Deputy Minister of Labour, Social Affairs, Martyrs and Disabled</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>Annex I – Inclusive Education</b>	<b>29</b>

**Acknowledgements:**

The Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs, Martyrs and Disabled is grateful to Susan Helseth and her team at MACA for their efforts in the organization of the workshop, and the US Department of State's Weapons Removal and Abatement (WRA) for the financial support that made the workshop possible. Thanks also to AAR-Japan for their creative addition to the workshop with the signage and folders.

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**Background:**

The 2006 National Disability Survey in Afghanistan reported that 2.7 percent of the population has a disability, or about 800,000 people; including around 60,000 landmine survivors. Addressing the rights and needs of persons with disabilities is a complex issue. In Afghanistan, the complexities are exacerbated by the lack of or low quality of services within all areas of assistance including health care, social services, education and human rights.

Lack of access to emergency services and health facilities in remote areas together with the lack of equipment, medicines, and adequately trained health and rehabilitation personnel, and insufficient levels of funding often prevent mine victims and other persons with disabilities from receiving the care and rehabilitation services they need to survive and reintegrate into Afghan society.

At the First Review Conference of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction (AP Mine Ban Convention), in Nairobi, Kenya, from 29 November to 3 December 2004, Afghanistan was one of 24 States Parties<sup>1</sup> that reported responsibility for significant numbers of mine survivors and the “the greatest responsibility to act, but also the greatest needs and expectations for assistance” in providing adequate services for their care, rehabilitation and reintegration.<sup>2</sup> As a result, Afghanistan has become “a more focused challenge” for States Parties in the period up to the Second Review Conference in 2009.<sup>3</sup>

In August 2006, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs convened the First National Victim Assistance Workshop with the aim of elaborating a plan of action for the period 2006-2009 to address the rights and needs of landmine survivors and other persons with disabilities as a first step towards meeting Afghanistan’s obligations under the AP Mine Ban Convention, in relation to assisting the victims.

**The Second National Victim Assistance-Disability Workshop:**

On 23-25 October 2007, the Second National Victim Assistance-Disability Workshop in Afghanistan was convened and hosted by the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs, Martyrs and Disabled (MoLSAMD) at the Hotel Intercontinental in Kabul to review, revise and enhance the Kabul Report; the plan of action developed at the First National Victim Assistance Workshop in 2006. The 2007 workshop brought together over 220 stakeholders – more than double the participation in 2006 – including representatives from nine ministries: Defence; Education; Foreign Affairs; Information and Culture; Labour, Social Affairs, Martyrs and Disabled; Public Health; Rural Rehabilitation and Development; Transport; and Women’s Affairs. Ministerial colleagues came from Balkh, Gardiz, Herat, Jelalabad, Kabul, Kandahar, Kunduz, and Mazar-i-Sherif. Other representatives came from the Parliament, from the Embassies of Canada, Germany, Japan, and the United States, the European Commission, 10 international agencies, around 38 national and international non government organisations, including disabled persons organisations. The workshop also welcomed international guests from Tajikistan’s Ministry of Health and Mine Action Centre. (See Annex B) The opening of the workshop was covered by several representatives of local and international media outlets.

The main language of the workshop was Dari; however, simultaneous translation in English, Dari and Pashtu was provided.

**Workshop Objectives:**

The main aim of the workshop was to review the Kabul Report – the plan of action to address the rights and needs of mine survivors and other persons with disabilities in Afghanistan in the period

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<sup>1</sup> *Review of the operation of the status of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction: 1999-2004*, (Part II of the Final Report of the First Review Conference of the States Parties to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction, Nairobi, 29 November – 3 December 2004, APLC/CONF/2004/5, 9 February 2005), p. 33, paragraph 85. Ethiopia’s ratification of Mine Ban Convention on 17 December 2004 increased the number to 24.

<sup>2</sup> *Ending the suffering caused by anti-personnel landmines: Nairobi Action Plan 2005-2009*, (Part III of the Final Report), p. 99, paragraph 5.

<sup>3</sup> *Review of the operation of the status of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction: 1999-2004*, p. 33, paragraph 86.

2006 to 2009 – which was developed at the First National Victim Assistance Workshop in August 2006.

Other objectives were to assess the progress that has been made in implementing the plan, and to identify the gaps in the existing plan and the challenges that remain to ensure that the issue of disability remains high on the agenda of all the relevant ministries and other key actors in Afghanistan.

The preliminary results of the workshop were presented to the Eighth Meeting of the States Parties (8MSP) to the AP Mine Ban Convention in November 2007.

**Opening of the Second National Victim Assistance-Disability Workshop:**

His Excellency, Mr. Noor Mohammad Qarqin, Minister of Labour, Social Affairs, Martyrs and Disabled, welcomed participants and officially opened the meeting. H.E. Mr. Qarqin reiterated the Government's commitment to the obligations of the AP Mine Ban Convention including those in support of landmine victims. He noted that Afghanistan's international obligations under the AP Mine Ban Convention to assist mine victims, and the clear understanding that assistance should not exclude persons disabled by other causes, falls very well within the mandate of his ministry and its obligations at the national level to take the measures necessary to assist all persons in vulnerable situations, including mine survivors and other persons with disabilities. H.E. Mr. Qarqin noted the progress made in reducing the number of new landmine casualties, but highlighted the fact that Afghanistan still has huge numbers of persons with disabilities, including mine survivors, who are not receiving the assistance that many desperately need. H.E. Mr. Qarqin stressed the importance of collaboration between all relevant ministries to ensure a truly holistic approach to address the rights and needs of persons with disabilities, including landmine survivors. He told participants that the workshop provided a great opportunity for government ministries, international agencies, disabled persons organisations and non governmental organisations to work together to promote substantial movement forward on issues relating to people with disabilities. (See Annex C)

The Deputy Minister of Education, His Excellency Mr. Abdul Ghafoor Ghaznawi, and Mr. Khalid Ahmad Zekriya of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Abdul Baqi-Baryal, Member of Parliament, and Ms. Susan Helseth, Deputy Programme Director of the Mine Action Centre for Afghanistan, also participated in the opening of the workshop.

His Excellency Mr. Abdul Ghafoor Ghaznawi, Deputy Minister of Education, noted the importance of convening this type of workshop to highlight the role and rights of persons with disabilities in Afghan society, and to challenge all governmental and non governmental actors to consider the rights of persons with disabilities as one of their priorities. He also noted that access to education is a right of all Afghans, including Afghans with a disability, but that this was not possible without the collaboration of all actors.

Mr. Khalid Zekriya, Assistant Secretary of the Fifth Political Division of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, noted the progress of Afghanistan's Mine Action Programme since 1989 in reducing the area of land contaminated by mines and unexploded ordnance, in the destruction of all known stockpiles of anti-personnel landmines, in reaching more than 17 million people with mine risk education, and in reducing the number of new casualties. He reminded participants that victim assistance in the context of the AP Mine Ban Convention makes clear that the ultimate responsibility for assisting mine victims in Afghanistan rests with the Government of Afghanistan, and that the work undertaken in the lead-up to and since the first workshop in 2006 showed the government's commitment. Mr. Zekriya also noted that the fact that the MoLSAMD was hosting this second national workshop, and not the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, was evidence that the relevant ministry responsible for disability issues was taking ownership of this important issue. (See Annex D)

Mr. Abdul Baqi-Baryal, Member of Parliament and mine survivor, expressed his support and appreciation, together with fellow mine survivor and Member of Parliament, Mr. Nafesa Sultani, to the MoLSAMD for convening the workshop. He noted the major problems for civilians caused by landmines and unexploded ordnance in Afghanistan, and other countries, and encouraged the government of Afghanistan, the Parliament, UNMACA, and the international community to work together to achieve a mine-free Afghanistan.

Ms. Susan Helseth, Deputy Programme Director of the Mine Action Centre for Afghanistan (MACA) supported by the United Nations informed participants that all of the activities within the mine action programme for Afghanistan seek to make the lives of Afghans better, safer and free from the impact of landmines, and to prevent needless injury and death. The programme's victim assistance efforts work towards inclusive and integrated approaches to disability services and rights advocacy

with the aim of broadening opportunity and ensuring the rights and dignity of landmine survivors, other persons with disability, and all Afghan people. The programme aims to support government and disabled person's organisations in ways that advocate and raise awareness with regards to disability issues and rights. Ms. Helseth noted that the disability movement in Afghanistan is growing in size and strength with a voice that is becoming louder, but also more knowledgeable and authoritative. She urged participants to review the Kabul Report, mark the progresses made, identify the shortcomings and recommend revisions to ensure that the Kabul Report remains relevant and alive with the current needs within the disability sector, but also with the ideas, dreams and goals of persons with disability. (See Annex E)

### **The Framework: Victim Assistance in the Context of the AP Mine Ban Convention**

Ms. Sheree Bailey, the AP Mine Ban Convention Implementation Support Unit's Victim Assistance Specialist from the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining, highlighted some of the key aspects of victim assistance in the context of the AP Mine Ban Convention and shared some of the challenges and lessons learnt over the past 10 years since the Convention was adopted. (See Annex F)

States Parties at the First Review Conference of the AP Mine Ban Convention in 2004 adopted a clear understanding of principles to guide their victim assistance efforts. Four statements are particularly important:

- "...the call to assist landmine victims should not lead to victim assistance efforts being undertaken in such a manner as to exclude any person injured or disabled in another manner;"
- victim assistance "does not require the development of new fields or disciplines but rather calls for ensuring that existing health care and social service systems, rehabilitation programmes and legislative and policy frameworks are adequate to meet the needs of all citizens – including landmine victims;"
- "assistance to landmine victims should be viewed as a part of a country's overall public health and social services systems and human rights frameworks;" and,
- "...providing adequate assistance to landmine survivors must be seen in a broader context of development and underdevelopment..."<sup>4</sup>

The First Review Conference also adopted the ambitious five-year *Nairobi Action Plan* for the period 2005 to 2009. With respect to victim assistance, the *Nairobi Action Plan* aims to "enhance the care, rehabilitation and reintegration efforts" through eleven "actions." The Plan of Action commits affected States Parties, including Afghanistan, to do their utmost to establish and enhance health care services needed to respond to the immediate and ongoing medical needs of mine victims; to increase national physical rehabilitation capacities; to develop capacities to meet the psychological and social support needs of mine victims; to actively support the socio-economic reintegration of mine victims; to ensure that national legal and policy frameworks effectively address the needs and fundamental human rights of mine victims; to develop or enhance national mine victim data collection capacities; and to ensure that in all victim assistance efforts, emphasis is given to age and gender considerations. Other States Parties committed to provide external support to assist affected States in the care, rehabilitation and reintegration of mine victims. All States Parties committed to monitoring and promoting progress in achieving the victim assistance goals and ensuring the effective participation of mine victims in the work of the Convention.<sup>5</sup>

Within the framework of the AP Mine Ban Convention, a comprehensive, integrated approach to victim assistance is promoted. This framework rests on a three-tiered definition of a landmine victim. A "mine victim" includes directly affected individuals, their families, and their communities. Therefore, victim assistance should encompass a wide range of activities that benefit individuals, families and communities.

Through the work of the Convention's Standing Committee on Victim Assistance and Socio-Economic Reintegration (SCVA) important advances have been made in increasing understanding of

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<sup>4</sup> *Review of the operation of the status of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction: 1999-2004*, pp. 27-28, paragraphs 65-67.

<sup>5</sup> *Ending the suffering caused by anti-personnel landmines: Nairobi Action Plan 2005-2009*, pp. 99-101, paragraph 5.

the issues involved in adequately addressing the rights and needs of mine survivors and other persons with disabilities.

While progress has been made through increased understanding, several challenges remain in addressing the rights and needs of persons with disabilities. These challenges include:

- Lack of capacity to address disability issues at all levels including within the governmental and non governmental sectors;
- Lack of inclusion of persons with disabilities in decision making processes; and,
- Disability still seen as a charity issue not a human rights issue.

In terms of some key lessons learnt in addressing the rights and needs of persons with disabilities in the context of the AP Mine Ban Convention, these include:

- Victim assistance must be seen as a concrete set of actions for which the State holds ultimate responsibility. Afghanistan has made significant progress in this regard with the development of the Kabul Report in 2006.
- Victim assistance must be understood in the broader contexts of development and as a part of existing State responsibilities in the areas of health care, social services, rehabilitation, vocational training and human rights. The Kabul Report was based on this understanding.
- Without collaboration and cooperation there is the potential for inefficient and ineffective use of resources and for duplication in services.
- An inter-ministerial process that includes collaboration with all actors in the disability sector is essential. Afghanistan's efforts to develop the Kabul Report and subsequent activities is providing a good example of this.

#### **Components of Victim Assistance:**

It has generally been agreed by the main stakeholders in the disability sector that the key elements of victim assistance include:

- data collection to understand the extent of the challenge;
- emergency and continuing medical care, including first aid and the management of injuries in the immediate aftermath of a landmine explosion or other traumatic injury, surgery, pain management, acute hospital care, and the ongoing medical care needed for the physical recovery of the injured person;
- physical rehabilitation, including the provision of services that promote rehabilitation such as physiotherapy, and the supply of prosthetics, orthotics and other assistive devices;
- psychological support and social reintegration, including formal and informal counselling, sports, associations of people with disabilities, access to education, and other activities that assist mine survivors and the families of those killed or injured to overcome the psychological trauma of a landmine explosion, adjust to their disability, and promote their social well-being;
- economic reintegration, including education, vocational training, creation of employment and other income generating opportunities, micro-credit schemes, the development of community infrastructures to reflect the local economic reality, and activities that improve the economic status of mine survivors and other people with disabilities and raise awareness so that people with disabilities can enjoy equal opportunities for employment and other services; and
- laws and public policies that promote effective treatment, care and protection of people with disabilities.

However, in the Afghanistan context two other areas have been identified for priority attention: community based rehabilitation and inclusive education.<sup>6</sup>

Before breaking into the smaller working groups, four issues were highlighted through focused presentations: community based rehabilitation, inclusive education, psychological support, and the new convention on the rights of persons with disabilities.

In their discussions to review, and if necessary revise, the plan of action, participants were reminded that mine survivors are part of a larger community of persons with injuries and disabilities from other causes, and that victim assistance' efforts should be beneficial for this larger group of persons with disabilities. Services should be intended to benefit all people with disability in Afghanistan and be embedded in the national health and social services systems. Furthermore, it was

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<sup>6</sup> For more information on Inclusive Education see Annex I.

understood that to ensure sustainability it was essential that the government takes greater ownership of the plan and that the relevant ministries coordinate their activities to avoid duplication and ensure a holistic approach to meet the needs of the population, including people with disabilities.

**Progress in Victim Assistance-Disability in Afghanistan:**

Afghanistan is one of the most mine-affected countries in the world and life can be hard not only for mine survivors and other people with disabilities but also for their families. Addressing its obligation under the AP Mine Ban Convention to take action in relation to the rights and needs of landmine survivors in effect provided Afghanistan with an opportunity to focus attention on the disability sector as a whole and take measures to address the gaps in services and policies.

In 2005, Afghanistan responded to a questionnaire developed by the Co-Chairs of the SCVA, to assist the 24 States Parties reporting significant numbers of landmine survivors in developing a plan of action in relation to mine victim assistance. The questionnaire was viewed by the Government of Afghanistan as an opportunity to articulate specific, measurable and realistic objectives that would be relevant to the disability sector as a whole, to undertake activity planning to achieve these objectives, to estimate the costs and the means to implement these plans, and to identify capacities to monitor, evaluate and reassess the plan as required.

Through consultations with relevant ministries and colleagues from UN and other international and national agencies working in the disability sector, inputs were provided for the first response to the questionnaire that included a situation analysis and objectives. This draft report was presented to the Sixth Meeting of the States Parties to the AP Mine Ban Convention (6MSP) at the end of November 2005. The *Zagreb Progress Report* presented to the States Parties at the 6MSP, contained a lengthy annex which summarized the responses made by Afghanistan and most of the other relevant States Parties.

However, the *Zagreb Progress Report* acknowledged that the questionnaire was “not an end-product but rather an initial step in a long-term planning and implementation process.”<sup>7</sup> At the 6MSP, Afghanistan, together with Switzerland, assumed the important role of Co-Chair of the SCVA. In this capacity, Afghanistan aimed to lead by example and develop a plan of action to meet the needs of landmine victims and other people with disabilities.

Under the leadership of the former Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, Dr. Haider Reza, Afghanistan launched a process to revise the information presented in the *Zagreb Progress Report* and increase the level of inter-ministerial coordination and cooperation within the disability sector to develop a national plan of action that would assist mine survivors and other people with disabilities. Several meetings were convened with representatives from the Ministries of Public Health, Martyrs and Disabled, Labour and Social Affairs, Education, and Foreign Affairs, and other key actors. The UNMACA also played a key role in facilitating the process to review and elaborate on the responses to the questionnaire through consultative work with ministries and implementing agencies. A second draft, which included inputs from key actors, was presented to the States Parties at the SCVA meeting in Geneva in May 2006. This revised document provided the foundation for discussions at the First National Victim Assistance Workshop in August 2006.

The First National Victim Assistance Workshop, which brought together some 90 stakeholders, including representatives from the ministries of Public Health, Martyrs, Disabled and Social Affairs, Economy and Labour, Transport, Energy and Water, Public Works, and Foreign Affairs, the Department of Disaster Preparedness, eight international agencies, and around 20 national and international non government organizations, including several that represent people with disabilities, resulted in the elaboration of the *Kabul Report – Addressing the rights and needs of mine survivors and other persons with disabilities: The Islamic Republic of Afghanistan's objectives and plan of action for the period 2007-2009*.

Some significant achievements have been noted since the August 2006 workshop, including:

- The MoLSAMD has included all relevant objectives of the *Kabul Report* in the Afghanistan National Development Strategy action plan for the achievement of the benchmark on disability.

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<sup>7</sup> *Achieving the Aims of the Nairobi Action Plan: The Zagreb Progress Report*, (Part II of the Final Report of the Sixth Meeting of the States Parties to the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction, unofficial version, 2 December 2005), p. 27, paragraph 72



- A national disability support unit is being established within the MoLSAMD to provide the technical capacity to monitor disability activities and gather and disseminate practical and technical information on disability. The disability unit will also provide leadership for an inter-ministerial task force on disability to ensure cooperation and coordination of the national plan of action for disability.
- The MoLSAMD is supporting a national network of disability resource centres that are being built throughout the country to educate, provide social services and supports to disabled persons organizations.
- The MoLSAMD has assessed the new Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities to seek accession to it through the Government.
- Disability awareness packages and pilot training has been developed to increase the capacity of Ministry of Public Health (MoPH) personnel in terms of disability.
- Guidelines to implement BPHS Disability Services have been developed.
- A training package has been developed and piloted to provide formal training for specialized social workers in Afghanistan.
- Draft legislation to guarantee the rights of persons with disabilities is before the Parliament for approval.
- Activities to raise awareness and to educate relevant stakeholders, including ministries, government personnel, aid agencies and donors, about the issues of disability is an ongoing process to ensure the objectives of the Kabul Report are not only understood, but owned by those responsible for the policy development, implementation and oversight of public and private sector services.

Afghanistan's efforts to develop and implement the Kabul Report's plan of action are based on an understanding of the lessons learnt at the international level in regards to victim assistance in the context of the AP Mine Ban Convention.

### **Working Groups:**

The real work began with participants breaking into seven working groups of 15-20 participants. Each group, facilitated by experts, focused on one of the key elements of victim assistance:

- Emergency and continuing medical care – Dr. Zia Bina
- Physical rehabilitation – Razi Khan Hamdard and Fiona Gall
- Psychological support and social reintegration – Frozan Esmati
- Economic reintegration – Dr. Abdul Baseer and Naeem Aliyar
- Laws and public policies – Firoz Ali Alizada and Omara Khan
- Community based rehabilitation – Amin Ghani and Anne Hertzberg
- Inclusive education – Parwin Azimi and Sandrine Bohan-Jacquot

The Inclusive Education working group was further divided into smaller sub groups due to the great interest generated by this issue: 45 participants were engaged in these discussions.

The basis for discussion in the working groups was the Kabul Report; the plan of action developed at the First National Victim Assistance Workshop. The working group facilitators were tasked with achieving five main aims:

1. Review the Status column of the Kabul Report to determine if this represents the current situation in Afghanistan
  - Update as appropriate
2. Review the Objectives to determine what progress, if any, has been made to change or improve in situation by 2009
  - Has the Objective been achieved? If not, what progress has been made towards achieving the Objective?
  - Are the Objectives still achievable in the timeframe? If not, modify as necessary.
  - Should priority be given to other objectives?
3. Identify new Objectives to change or improve the situation by 2009, if appropriate.
  - Are the Objectives achievable in the timeframe?
4. Identify issues of concern that may prevent the achievement of current Objectives.
5. Review plans to achieve the objectives – develop the plan to achieve new objectives, if required.

- Is the relevant government ministry engaged in oversight/achievement of each objective?
- Are plans being implemented as recorded? If not, make adjustments as appropriate.
- Identify other agencies/organisations which could implement activities on behalf of relevant ministry, as appropriate, to achieve each objective
- Identify other activities, as appropriate.

For new objectives

- Identify which government ministry has responsibility for oversight/achievement of objective.
- Identify which agencies/organisations could implement activities on behalf of relevant ministry, as appropriate, to achieve objective.
- Identify what these activities could be.

Participants reported that the working group sessions had been very productive, and although the work was sometimes hard, the outcomes were promising. Before the workshop concluded, the working groups presented the results of their discussions to all the participants.

A lively discussion followed which included the active participation of H.E. Mr. Wasil Noor Mohmand who responded to questions from the participants.

Participants stressed that persons with disabilities do not need charity. The ultimate goal should be to ensure that persons with disabilities are treated with dignity and their right to appropriate medical care, rehabilitation and social services respected.

All the notes and flipcharts produced by the working groups will be used to produce Afghanistan's revised Plan of Action.

#### **Closing remarks:**

Ms. Shukria Kazimi from the Social Policy section of the Afghanistan National Development Strategy (ANDS) informed participants of the status of implementation of the ANDS in relation to the disability sector.

Ms. Jane Brouillette, the Victim Assistance Technical Advisor at MACA thanked the participants for their committed and passionate involvement in the workshop. She reported that success had been achieved, the information provided would enable the Kabul Report to be enhanced, and that the dedication of the colleagues involved had taken this process forward. Ms. Brouillette told participants that the revised Plan of Action would be sent for comment prior to finalization and presentation to the relevant ministries for endorsement. She thanked their Excellencies, Mr. Qarqin and Mr. Wasil Noor, and the staff of the MoLSAMD for their efforts in hosting the workshop, and all the ministries for their high level of participation. Ms. Brouillette reiterated that the outcomes of the workshop would provide concrete benchmarks and actions that will ensure the delivery of services and protection of the rights and dignity of persons with disabilities throughout Afghanistan.

Mr. Khalid Zekriya delivered a statement on behalf of the former Co-Chairs of the SCVA, Afghanistan and Switzerland, voicing their regret at not being able to participate in this workshop but expressing their continued support to the issue of victim assistance in Afghanistan. (See Annex G)

His Excellency, Deputy Minister of Labour, Social Affairs, Martyrs and Disabled, Mr. Wasil Noor Mohmand closed the workshop by highlighting several points, including that the issue of disability must be given greater priority within all government ministries, and that implementing a national plan is a long term process that requires political will and commitment from all actors. In addition, he acknowledged that providing adequate assistance to people with disabilities, and promoting their medical and physical rehabilitation and social and economic inclusion must take a holistic approach and that this could not be done without collaboration and coordination between all relevant ministries and other actors. He reiterated that it was essential that the relevant government ministries take greater ownership of the plan and adopt the objectives within their own work plans for the coming years. To advance this aim, he proposed to convene a meeting of an inter-ministerial task force on disability to bring together all the relevant ministries to review the revised plan of action. He also noted that the workshop represented only the second time in Afghanistan that Government representatives and Disabled Persons Organisations from around the country have participated in a national disability forum and stressed that while the plan of action may currently be called the Kabul Report it was essential that the work done here was known, understood and implemented as widely as

possible. H.E. Mr. Wasil Noor concluded by thanking all those who participated in, supported and facilitated the workshop. (See Annex H)

**Workshop Outcome and Key Recommendations:**

The principal outcome of the Second National Victim Assistance-Disability Workshop will be the elaboration of a revised plan of action to address the rights and needs of mine survivors and other persons with disabilities in Afghanistan. The full revised plan of action will be presented to the AP Mine Ban Convention's Standing Committee on Victim Assistance and Socio-Economic Reintegration at its next meeting in June 2008.

The revised plan will be based on the extensive deliberations at the workshop, and through inter-ministerial and key stakeholder consultations afterwards. The revised plan of action will chart a more realistic and achievable way forward for the enhancement and expansion of current services for all people with disabilities, including landmine survivors, and their integration into social, educational and economic opportunities. Objectives will be reviewed and where appropriate made less ambitious to take into account the particular challenges faced by the disability sector in Afghanistan, including: the lack of trained personnel and time needed to provide adequate training; the lack of financial resources; and the volatile security situation in parts of the country.

Once endorsed by the relevant ministries, it will be necessary to prepare the budget for implementation of the Plan and to harness the support of the donor community to ensure that the Plan becomes a reality.

The consultative nature of this process will solidify the national ownership of recommendations and obligations elaborated, will support the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals, and will ensure its continued integration into the National Development Framework.

Key recommendations from this process include:

- A national workshop should be convened on an annual basis to review progress in the implementation of the Plan of Action.
- Regional workshops should be convened in the period between annual workshops to ensure that the process and plan was known, understand and implemented as widely as possible.

In addition, a national capacity to maintain a victim assistance perspective within the disability sector, to monitor progress of Convention obligations and the objectives set out in the revised plan of action, and for continued advocacy activities on the rights of mine survivors and other persons with disabilities should be a permanent component of the Government's Mine Action Programme for Afghanistan.

Continued implementation of Afghanistan's Plan of Action, and its subsequent revisions, has the potential to make a significant difference to the daily lives of landmine survivors and their families. It will also benefit the disability sector as a whole as it sets forth a positive planning process and has established achievable benchmarks for a national disability programme. By continuing to engage the disability sector in this process and in the implementation of the plan, Afghanistan can ensure that landmine survivors and other persons with disabilities are fully integrated into Afghan society thus meeting their obligations under the AP Mine Ban Convention.

## Second National Victim Assistance Workshop

**Hotel Intercontinental**

**Kabul, Afghanistan**

**23-25 October 2007**

### Day 1

Time	Activity	Speaker/Facilitator
08:30 - 09:00	Registration	
09:00 – 09:05	Holy Koran	Mr. Zabihullah Haider
09:05 – 10:20	Welcome, introductory remarks, aims of the workshop  General remarks	H.E. Noor Mohammad Qarqin Minister of Labour, Social Affairs, Martyrs and Disabled  H.E. Abdul Ghafoor Ghaznawi First Deputy Minister of Education  Mr. Khalid Ahmad Zekriya Assistant Secretary, Fifth Political Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs  Mr. Abdul Baqi-Baryal Parliamentarian  Ms. Susan Helseth, Deputy Programme Director, MACA
10:20 – 10:30	Introduction of Agenda	Mr. Khalid Ahmad Zekriya
10:30 – 11:00	Tea Break	
11:00 – 11:15	Kabul Report: What & Why	Ms. Sheree Bailey, AP Mine Ban Convention Implementation Support Unit, Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining
11:15 – 12:30	Issues for further exploration  Discussion	CBR : Mr. Amin Ghani, Disability Unit Coordinator, MoPH  Inclusive Education : Mr. Parwin Azimi, UNDP  Psychological Support : Ms. Frozan Esmati, GTZ  Convention on Rights of Persons with Disabilities : Mr. Firoz Ali Alizada, Handicap International
12:30 – 12:45	Workshop Process  Discussion	Mr. Zabihullah Haider, VA Project Officer, MACA
12:45 – 14:00	Lunch Break	
14:00 – 16:00	Working Group Activities	

**Second National Victim Assistance Workshop Report – Annex A – Workshop Agenda – 11**

**Day 2**

<b>Time</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Speaker/Facilitator</b>
09:00 – 10:45	Working Group Activities	
10:45 – 11:00	Tea Break	
11:00 – 12:30	Working Group Activities	
12:30 – 14:00	Lunch Break	
14:00 – 14:15	Emergency + Continuing Medical Care – working group presentation	Dr. Zia Bina
14:15 – 14:30	Physical rehabilitation – working group presentation	Mr. RaziKhan
14:30 – 14:45	Psychological/social support – working group presentation	Ms. Frozan Esmati
14:45 – 15:00	CBR – working group presentation	Mr. Amin Ghani
15:00 – 15:20	Tea Break	
15:20 – 16:00	Discussion	

**Day 3**

<b>Time</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Speaker/Facilitator</b>
09:00 – 09:05	Welcome + review of agenda	
09:05 – 09:20	Inclusive education – working group presentation	Ms. Parwin Azimi
09:20 – 09:35	Economic reintegration – working group presentation	Dr. Baseer/Mr. Naeem Aliyar
09:35 – 09:50	Legislation and policy – working group presentation	Mr. Firoz Ali Alizada/Mr. Omara Khan
09:50 – 10:30	Discussion	
10:30 – 10:50	Tea Break	
10:50 – 11:30	Update – Afghanistan National Development Strategy (ANDS)  Next steps – Update of Kabul Report, submission to the 8 <sup>th</sup> Meeting of States Parties, Kabul Report II  Message on behalf of the 2006 Co-Chairs of the Standing Committee on Victim Assistance and Socio-Economic Reintegration  Closing Remarks	Ms. Shukria Kazimi, ANDS  Ms. Jane Brouillette, Victim Assistance Technical Advisor, MACA  H.E. Wasil Noor Mohmand Deputy Minister of Labour, Social Affairs Martyrs and Disabled
11:30 – 13:00	Lunch	

**Second National Victim Assistance-Disability Workshop**

**Kabul, Afghanistan**

**23-25 October 2007**

**LIST OF PARTICIPANTS**

ORGANISATION	NAME
AAB	Ferashta
	Wafadar Khan
AABRAR	Dr. Abdul Baseer
	Dr. Sharifa
	M. Naseem
	Hafez Abdul Latif
AAR Japan	M Bashir Baasir
	Yama Hakami
ACBAR	Rachel Woloszyn
ACCESS	Kamal
ACHIANA	Abdul Rile Rarh
	Haji M Muslim
	Homa Sabeer
	M Bashir
ACSF	Wagma Noori
Afghan Disabled Union	Ab. Aziz Omari
	Assadullah Kamaury
	Bismillah Khan
	Dr. Humayoun
	Gul Nabi
	Omara Khan
Afghan Disabled Union – Jalalabad	Mahboobu Rahman
Afghan Disabled Union – Logar	Abdul Majeed
Afghan Landmine Survivors Organisation	Amina Azimi
	Sayed Raof Noori
Afghan Paralympics Association	Haji Abdul Rahman
Aftab e Krusan	Abdul Rahman Benish
AIHRC	Mohammad Sadiq Mohibi
	Nazimullah Sarili
Afghan National Association for the Blind	Mohammad Ihsan Fayaz
Afghan National Association for the Deaf	Abdul Ghafoor
	Anosha
	Karimullah Khan
	Saya Mai
	Siadia
Afghanistan National Development Strategy	Ms. Shukria Kazimi
AOAD	Abdul Khaliq Zazai
	Abdullah
	Mr. Iqbal Din
Afghanistan Red Crescent Society	Abdul Rham Firotan
	M. Qasim
ATC	Kafaitullah Eblagh
BARAN	Dr. Masood Ansary
	Nasir Ahmad
BCSAB	Khwaja Zarif

**Second National Victim Assistance Workshop Report – Annex B–Workshop Participants – 13**

Blind School	Abdul Fatah Hamidi
	Abdul Shaheen
	Mir Mohamamd Khan
	Mir Mohammad Shah Rafiey
	Mohammad Ihsan
CAF	Dr. Asef Ghyasi
Canadian Relief Foundation	Nabilla
	Shakila Rozbeh
	Sultani Sahib
Community Centre for Disabled	Haji Ahmad Shah
	Khairia Marial
	Saifuddin Nezami
Disabled Persons Organisations (DPO)	Ab. Kosoon
	Abdul Ghani
	Kazim
	Nazimullah
	Sayed Yosouf Qasimi
	Shafiqqa
	Siddiqqa
	Zamanullah
	Zheda Azime
	DPO - Bamyan
DPO – Herat	Abdul Ali Barakzai
	Farzana Barakzai
DPO – Kunar	Abdul Aziz Omari
	Mohd Nazir
DPO – Nangarhar	Mahboob ur Rahman
DPO – Nooristan	Ghazi
DPO – Pakiya	Abdul Ghafoor Zazi
	S.Gholam Rasoul
Embassy of Canada	Nasir Ebrahim Khail
Embassy of Japan	Hamayoun Nasiri
Embassy of USA	Brandon Hudspeth
European Commission	Clement Bourse
	Samiullah
FWF	Nasrullah Kavir
Gardez TV	Najibullah Shakiri
Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining	Sheree Bailey
German Technical Cooperation (GTZ)	Frozan Esmati
Handicap International	Arnaud Quemin
	Dr. Noor Agha Tahery
	Firoz Ali Alizada
	Naeem Aliyar
International Committee of the Red Cross	A. Jalal Hormat
	A. Jalal Safee
	Najmuddin Helal
International Labour Organisation	Ms. Erlien Wubs
International Rescue Committee	Sandrine Bohan Jacquot
ISAF	Ah. Shirzai
Italian Caritas	Jamila
	Luigi Biondi

**Second National Victim Assistance Workshop Report – Annex B–Workshop Participants – 14**

Kabul Orthopaedic Organization	Gul Makai Siawash
KDG	Asadullah Kamawee
	Dr. Rahmatullah Azimi
Mashrano Jirga	Abdul Baqi Baryal
	Nafesa Sultani
MCPA	Haji Ghulam Hazrat Rahin
	Omar Gul
	Zamaray
Ministry of Defence	Shakela Nazari
Ministry of Defence – Disaster Response Department	Col. Abdullah
	Col. Abdul Qader
	General Moh. Shafi Bahir
Ministry of Education (MoE)	H.E. Deputy Minister Dr. Abdul Ghafoor Ghaznawi
	Anosha
	Belqis
	Benafsheh
	Nasir Ahmad
	Sadia
	Siamoy
Ministry of Education – Gardiz	Mohammad Asif
Ministry of Education – HRT	Mohamamd Salim
Ministry of Education – JLBD	Mirza Khairuddin
Ministry of Education – KDR	Niamatullah Manzoor
Ministry of Education – KDZ	Faqir Mohammad
Ministry of Education – MZR	Sayed Amin Khan
Ministry of Foreign Affairs	A Habib Kayoumy
	Khalid Zekriya
Ministry of Higher Education – TEVT	Mohammad Khan Habibie
Ministry of Information & Culture – JLBD	Noorza Khan Ludin
Ministry of Information & Culture – KDZ	Nimatullah Safi, MOIC KDZ
Ministry of Information & Culture – MZR	Abdul Samad
Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs, Martyrs and Disabled	H.E. Minister Noor Mohammad Qarqin
	H.E Deputy Minister Wasil Noor Mohmand
	Abdul Samad Mosleh
	M. M. Mehdi Tawana
	Naqibullah Hamdard
	S. Asghar Haidary
	Sayed Ali Shah Mustazawi
Ministry of Public Health (MoPH)	Anne Hertzberg
MoPH – National Mental Health Director	Dr. Alia Ibrahimzai
Ministry of Public Health – Balkh	Dr. Ahmad Khetab Osmani
Ministry of Public Health – HRT	Dr. Farid Ahmad Nadem
Ministry of Public Health – IEC	Dr. M Sulaiman
Ministry of Public Health – IMCI	Dr. Sher Mohammad Naqushbandy
Ministry of Public Health – JLBD	Dr. Nooral Ahad Bahranchi
Ministry of Public Health – KDR	Dr. Abdul Hai Razmal
Ministry of Public Health – KDZ	Dr. Mohammad Yousuf
Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation & Development	Ab. Wahid Hamidi
	Akbar Jan Zahid
Ministry of Transport	S. Abdul Ghani



**Second National Victim Assistance Workshop Report – Annex B–Workshop Participants – 15**

Ministry of Women’s Affairs	Shakila Nazart
NADA	Shafiqullah
	Shukria
NADWA	M. Akbar Sahibi
	Shafiqa
National Association of Disabled	Shair Mohammad
National Programme for Action on Disability (NPAD) / MoE	Ghulam Farooq
	Karimullah
OMAR	Dr. Ghulam Dastagir Hazrati
	Gul Mohammad
	Mohammad Rafiq
PAIDC	Abdul Ghafoor
Private company	Yadgar Safi
RTN – Paktia	Najeebullah
SERVE	Gayle Williams
	Latifa Omar
	Mir Bacha Hashimi
	Noor Mohammad Qani
	Ursula Schwank
Zia Ul haq	
Shamshad TV	Mujahed Sangaryar
Social Association for Disabled Children Swedish Committee for Afghanistan	Abdul Ghalap
	Attiqullah
	Dr. Sayed Hamidullah
	Fiona Gall
	Gul Wazir Faisal
	J A Exsen
	Mohammad Amin Qanat
	Samiuddin Sabir
	Samiullah Mahmoody
	Zamarai Saqeb
Tajikistan Mine Action Centre	Bozorali Nosirov
	Zainiddin Rasulov
Tajikistan Ministry of Health	Khurshed Akhmedov
Area Mine Action Centre (AMAC) – JLD	Sayad Farhad Hashimi
AMAC – KDR	Mohammad Qasim Popal
	Toryalai Nangiyalai
AMAC – KDZ	Abdul Azim Muslimi
	Daud Shah Jalalzai
	Dr. Norulahad
	Faqir Khan
	Nematullah Sahi
Norza Khan	
AMAC – MZR	Said Aminullah
AMAC – Paktiya	Najibullah Shakiri
UNDP/NPAD	Haji Nadir
	Parween Azimi
	Razi Khan
	Samiulhaq

Second National Victim Assistance Workshop Report – Annex B–Workshop Participants – 16

UNICEF	Dr. Malalai Naziri
	Mohammad Hussain Haseeb
	Sami Hashemi
Mine Action Centre for Afghanistan	Ahmad Jan Nawzadi
	Aminullah Shariq
	Dr. Zia Bina
	Farzana Mursal
	Ghani Amin
	Hamza Sulaimankhil
	Jane Brouillette
	Laila Andar
	Mohammad Farhad Nadib
	Mohammad Rahim Stanikzai
	Mohammad Sarwar Amanyar
	Mutahar Shah Akhgar
	Naeem Ahmadzai
	Najibullah Nassiri
	Samim Hashimi
	Sediq Rashid
	Shakila Nijrabi
	Shams Ur Rahman
	Susan Helseth
	Zabihullah Haider
	Zareen Khan
Voice of Afghanistan	Salim Wahdat
Voice of ISAF	Sarwar Akbary
World Health Organisation	Dr. Taqdeer
Weapons Removal and Abatement (WRA)	Dennis Hadrick
	Ed Pennington Ridge
	Kristen Leadem
	Nick McDonnal
	Zabiullah Azimi

**Second National Victim Assistance-Disability Workshop**

**Kabul, Afghanistan**

**23-25 October 2007**

**WELCOME  
AND  
OPENING REMARKS**

**H. E. Mr. Noor Mohammad Qarqin  
Minister of Labour, Social Affairs, Martyrs and Disabled**

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen

It is my great pleasure to welcome you to this, the Second National Victim Assistance Workshop in Afghanistan. I particularly welcome my esteemed colleagues from the Ministries of Education and Public Health. Collaboration between our ministries is essential if we are to achieve a truly holistic approach to address this important issue.

The main aim of this workshop is to review the Kabul Report – the plan of action to address the rights and needs of mine survivors and other persons with disabilities in Afghanistan in the period 2006 to 2009 – which was developed at the First National Workshop in August 2006. Our task over the next two and a half days is to assess the progress that has been made in implementing the plan, but more importantly to identify the gaps in the existing plan and the challenges that remain to ensure that the issue of disability remains high on the agenda of all the relevant ministries and other key actors in Afghanistan.

The Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs, Martyrs and Disabled is very grateful to Dr. Haider Reza, Susan Helseth and the victim assistance team at UNMACA for their efforts in the organisation of this workshop, and to WRA for the financial support that has made this workshop possible.

Afghanistan, as a State Party to the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention, has accepted all the obligations that joining this legally-binding international convention entails, including the responsibility to assist the victims.

Progress has been made. According to UNMACA's IMSMA database, the number of new landmine and unexploded ordnance casualties has decreased by more than half from a documented 138 new casualties a month in 2001 to around 60 documented new casualties a month in 2007.

While this progress is encouraging, we must never lose sight of the fact that even though new landmine casualties are dropping, Afghanistan still has huge numbers of persons with disabilities, including mine survivors, who are not receiving the assistance that many desperately need.

As you are all very aware, the mandate of my ministry is much broader than just focusing on the rights and needs of mine survivors. We have the responsibility for all persons with disabilities, regardless of the cause of that disability, for other persons in vulnerable situations, and for issues that will promote the social and economic development of this country. So you might ask; why is my ministry focusing its energies on this national victim assistance workshop?

This question is easy for me to answer. At the First National Victim Assistance Workshop we were informed about the issue of victim assistance in the context of the Mine Ban Convention. Three guiding principles were made very clear to me. Firstly, victim assistance efforts should not exclude any person injured or disabled in another manner. Secondly, assistance to mine survivors and other persons with disabilities should be integrated as a part of Afghanistan's overall public health and social services systems and human rights frameworks. And thirdly, providing adequate assistance to persons with disabilities is directly linked to the economic development of this country.

It is clear from these guiding principles that Afghanistan's international obligations under the Mine Ban Convention to assist mine victims, and the clear understanding that assistance should not exclude persons disabled by other causes, falls very well within the mandate of my ministry and our obligations at the national level to take the measures necessary to assist all persons in vulnerable situations, including mine survivors and other persons with disabilities. But this will not be possible without the support of the international community.

In 2006, Afghanistan, as Co-Chair of the Mine Ban Convention's Standing Committee on Victim Assistance and Socio-Economic Reintegration, wanted to lead by example to show other

affected States what can be achieved with political will and commitment from all actors in the disability sector. I believe we have done this. Under the leadership of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Afghanistan launched an initiative to address the lack of coordination at the ministerial level within the victim assistance/disability sector which subsequently led to the development of the national plan of action at the first workshop last August.

This plan of action is being integrated into long term public health and development strategies; it takes into account elements of already developed plans for health care, rehabilitation, social services and the disability sector; it is intended to benefit all persons with disabilities in Afghanistan; and, it provides the relevant ministries with a clearer picture of the benchmarks, their responsibilities, and the way forward.

We appreciate the efforts of UNMACA to support the implementation of the plan of action. And we especially appreciate the support of some key donors, including Australia, Canada, Japan, and the European Commission. But it is important to note that assisting persons with disabilities is not a short term endeavour – it will take time and commitment. This is particularly true in Afghanistan where the people continue to suffer from the impact of three decades of armed conflict. The government is committed but it takes time to build the capacities of the ministries to develop and implement appropriate policies and strategies; it takes time to develop the capacities of services providers; and it takes time to build the infrastructure necessary to provide the services. I ask the international community not to lose faith in the absence of immediate results but to continue to support the Government of Afghanistan over the time it will take to build sustainable capacities to address the rights and the enormous needs of persons with disabilities in this country.

Addressing these rights and needs will also require the long-term commitment of other key actors in the disability sector – the UN agencies, the ICRC, international and national non governmental organisations, disabled persons organisations, and the private sector. By working in harmony we can achieve much more. Within the plan of action, I would encourage you all to identify specific areas where your agency or organisation can make valuable contributions.

Before concluding, I will take just a few minutes to highlight some significant achievements since the last workshop; mostly relating specifically to my Ministry. Firstly, and more generally, activities to raise awareness and to educate relevant stakeholders, including ministries, government personnel, aid agencies and donors, about the issues of disability is an ongoing process to ensure the objectives of the Kabul Report are not only understood, but owned by those responsible for the policy development, implementation and oversight of public and private sector services.

Secondly, one of the objectives of the plan of action was to see disability-related benchmarks articulated in the Afghanistan National Development Strategy. This objective has been achieved with the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs, Martyrs and Disabled including all relevant objectives of the Kabul Report in the National Development Strategy action plan for the achievement of the benchmark on disability.

Furthermore, a national disability support unit is being established within my ministry to provide the technical capacity to monitor disability activities and gather and disseminate practical and technical information on disability. The ministry is supporting a national network of disability resource centres that are being built throughout the country to educate, provide social services and supports to disabled persons organizations. The disability unit within my Ministry will also provide leadership for an inter-ministerial task force on disability to ensure cooperation and coordination of the national plan of action for disability.

My Ministry has assessed the new Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities to seek accession to it through the Government.

As shown at the First National Workshop, this workshop will provide a great opportunity for government ministries, international agencies, and non governmental organisations to again work together to promote substantial movement forward on issues relating to people with disabilities. It will provide us with a great opportunity to focus our energies on areas where we can have the greatest impact, and on areas of greatest need.

Dear participants!

The potential of your efforts over the next two and a half days to improve the quality of daily life of people with disabilities in Afghanistan cannot be underestimated.

Finally, I wish you great success in achieving the aims of this workshop.

**Second National Victim Assistance-Disability Workshop**

**Kabul, Afghanistan**

**23-25 October 2007**

**Mr. Khalid Ahmad Zekryia, Assistant Secretary**

**Fifth Political Division**

**Ministry of Foreign Affairs**

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs is honoured to participate in the Second National Victim Assistance Workshop. Almost 15 months have passed since my Ministry had the privilege of hosting the first ever national workshop in August 2006 to discuss the issue of victim assistance in Afghanistan. That workshop resulted in the Kabul Report and clear evidence of the commitment of the Government of Afghanistan to the issue of assistance to mine survivors and other persons with disabilities.

Five years have past since Afghanistan acceded to the AP Mine Ban Convention in September 2002, and by so-doing accepted all the obligations that joining this legally-binding international convention entailed, including the responsibility to stop the use and production of antipersonnel landmines, to clear mines, to destroy stockpiles, to raise awareness of the dangers of landmines, and to assist the victims.

Great progress has been made. Since the mine action program began in 1989 more than 1,000 square kilometres of land have been cleared and returned to communities, all known stockpiled antipersonnel landmines have been destroyed and more than 307,000 emplaced antipersonnel mines have been destroyed, and mine risk education programs have reached more than 17 million Afghans. And as we heard earlier, the number of new landmine and unexploded ordnance casualties continues to decrease.

Afghanistan's proposed Mine Action Law recognises victim assistance to mean "all aid, relief, comfort and support provided to victims of mines, or victims of unexploded ordnance..., or to the surviving dependents of persons killed or seriously injured by mines, unexploded ordnance..., for the purpose of reducing the immediate and long-term medical and psychological implications of their trauma. Victim assistance includes rehabilitation and reintegration of victims and surviving dependents."

Before the real work starts, I will briefly review the steps that brought us to this point today. At the First Review Conference of the AP Mine Ban Convention in 2004, Afghanistan was one of 24 States Parties that reported responsibility for significant numbers of mine survivors. As a result, Afghanistan has been receiving, and will continue to receive at least until the Second Review Conference in 2009, focused attention from the States Parties on the issue of victim assistance with the principal goal of making progress in meeting the aim of the Convention to provide assistance for the care and rehabilitation, and social and economic reintegration of mine victims.

To facilitate the achievement of this aim, in December 2005, under the leadership of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Afghanistan launched an initiative to address the lack of coordination at the ministerial level within the victim assistance/disability sector with the aim of producing a national plan of action by September 2006. Several meetings were convened with representatives from the ministries of public health, labour, social affairs, martyrs and disabled, education, and foreign affairs, and other key actors. The culmination of this initial process was the First National Victim Assistance Workshop. The process, the results of the workshop, and the plan of action were presented at the Seventh Meeting of the States Parties to the Convention in Geneva, Switzerland, in September 2006.

Long after the last landmine is cleared, our landmine survivors will remain. Although progress has been made, now is not the time for complacency. There is still considerable work to be done to ensure that the promise implied to landmine victims in the AP Mine Ban Convention will be realised in this country.

Victim assistance in the context of the AP Mine Ban Convention makes clear that the ultimate responsibility for assisting mine victims in Afghanistan rests with the Government of Afghanistan. Through the work of States Parties to the Convention, it is also clear that our assistance efforts should benefit all persons with disability. In terms of meeting our responsibilities, we know from past experience, that others have the expertise and capacity to assist in understanding problems, developing

plans to deal with these problems, to monitor the efficacy and implementation of plans, and indeed to actually provide the services needed by persons with disabilities in this country. However, it is clear that real and sustainable progress cannot be made without the Government of Afghanistan itself owning the problem and the solutions to it.

The fact that the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs, Martyrs and Disabled is hosting this second national workshop, and not the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, is evidence that the relevant ministry responsible for disability issues is taking ownership of this important issue. I thank His Excellency, the Minister, for his commitment.

Although resources have been limited from outside of Afghanistan, progress has been made within the key ministries and among the implementing partners for disability services and policy development. The ministries themselves have already outlined some of this progress.

We must continue to build the institutions and infrastructures to ensure the objectives of the Kabul Report are met and the socio-economic reintegration of landmine survivors and all people with disability is a reality in the near future. This vital work takes time and commitment. The Government of Afghanistan is committed. Through the work that many of you have been engaged in since this process started in December 2005, we now have a better road map for the way forward. The work that will be done over the next few days at this workshop and beyond will make that way even clearer.

Continued success in this process will serve to address our obligations to mine victims under the AP Mine Ban Convention, but more importantly, it will also serve to address our much broader responsibility to the people of Afghanistan by taking the necessary steps to ensure that the rights of all persons with disabilities, including landmine survivors, are respected and the appropriate supports are provided to enable them to be fully integrated and take their rightful place in Afghan society.

I look forward to sharing the results of what I am sure will be a very productive workshop with the international community at the Eighth Meeting on the States Parties in Jordan next month.

**Speech on the occasion of the  
Second National Victim Assistance-Disability Workshop**

**Kabul, Afghanistan  
23 October 2007**

**Susan Helseth, Deputy Programme Director  
Mine Action Centre for Afghanistan**

Excellencies, Colleagues, and Friends – Good Morning

I would like to thank H.E. Minister Qarqin, Deputy Minister Ghaznawi, Mr. Khalid Zekriya, and Parliamentarian Mr. Baqi-Baryal for opening this workshop and providing us with inspiration and encouragement to begin our important work. Work that will help guide us in the years to come addresses the challenges persons with disability face each day, but also the long term challenges that the people and the Government of Afghanistan need to plan for and seek solution.

This year Afghanistan celebrates the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Ottawa Convention that prohibits the use, stockpiling, production and transfer of antipersonnel mines for which it has been a member state since 2003. Afghanistan has achieved great things during this period, but also in the previous years. We have seen the number of new mine victims decrease during the past 5 years by 55% from a documented 138 persons per month to around 60 per month. More than 1,000 square kilometres of land has been cleared and millions of people have been provided mine risk education. And I am pleased and proud to announce that Afghanistan has achieved a significant benchmark this past month with the destruction of all known stockpiles of anti personnel landmines in the country.

All of the activities within the mine action programme for Afghanistan seek to make the lives of Afghans better, safer and free from the impact of landmines. We work hard to prevent needless injury and death through our clearance and mine risk education efforts. Through our victim assistance efforts we work towards inclusive and integrated approaches to disability services and rights advocacy hoping to broaden opportunity and ensure the rights and dignity of landmine survivors, persons with disability and all Afghan people.

Victim Assistance is an obligation of the Ottawa Convention and within Afghanistan has grown into a strong programme within the disability sector with goals that are inclusive and integrated aimed at ensuring not only the rights of landmine survivors but the rights of all persons with disability. It is with that in mind that the Victim Assistance activities of the Mine Action Programme for Afghanistan has sought to support government and disabled person's organizations in ways that advocate and raise awareness with regards to disability issues and rights.

As mentioned by Mr. Zekriya, last year as part of the Ottawa Convention obligations for victim assistance the Ministry of Foreign Affairs hosted the first national victim assistance workshop to ensure that a solid and comprehensive plan of action was developed. The process for development of this plan of action brought together more than 90 persons from government, disabled persons, disability sector actors and advocates. This group of experts and concerned colleagues worked side by side to put on paper a comprehensive plan of action that would address the rights and needs of all persons with disability, spanning the areas of medical care, rehabilitation, social integration, education, employment and public policy. The outcome of these deliberations was an inclusive plan of action called the Kabul Report.

Progress against the Kabul Report objectives has been made. Many actions have been taken in particular the establishment of disability focal points within key ministries, disability issues are included in many ministry plans within the Afghanistan National Development Strategy, and inter-ministerial actions are in the works.

Today, with the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs, Martyrs and Disabled taking the leading role, colleagues from across the country including regional ministry and disabled persons organizations join the UN, NGOs, donors and other stakeholders to review the Kabul report. This will be the second time in Afghanistan that Government representatives and Disabled Persons Organizations participate in a national disability forum of such magnitude. I'm not sure of the exact numbers, but I believe we have twice the attendance than last year at around 180 persons here today. I would like to note that we have colleagues from the Tajikistan Mine Action Centre from north of the border. We also have a large number of women who are among the participants this year. The Mine

**Second National Victim Assistance Workshop Report – Annex E – General remarks – MACA – 22**

Action Centre for Afghanistan is once again pleased to support this initiative and is fully committed to the process.

You will be tasked to review the Kabul Report, mark the progresses made, identify the shortcomings and recommend revisions to ensure the Kabul report remains relevant and alive with the current needs within the disability sector, but also with the ideas, dreams and goals for persons with disability.

The disability movement in Afghanistan is growing in size and strength with a voice that is becoming louder, but also more knowledgeable and authoritative. As a member of this community over the past 5 years I have seen changes throughout the country and in particular within government who are ensuring disability issues are engaged within the ministries and these issues will remain on the forefront of government priorities. I am personally proud of the work of the Mine Action Programme but also the work of the national and international NGOs and the disabled person's organizations that are making a difference in the lives of persons with disability throughout this country.

I wish to thank the MACA team, Sheree Bailey for her tireless enthusiasm and the many others who have worked so very hard to put this workshop together.

I thank you, in advance for the hard work I know you will all provide throughout this workshop and I look forward to seeing the results of the 2<sup>nd</sup> national victim assistance workshop in Afghanistan. All the best and good luck. Thank you very much.



## Second National Victim Assistance-Disability Workshop

**Kabul, Afghanistan**

**23-25 October 2007**

### **THE KABUL REPORT: WHAT AND WHY?**

**Sheree Bailey**

**Victim Assistance Specialist**

**AP Mine Ban Convention Implementation Support Unit**

**Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining**

Excellencies, distinguished participants, ladies and gentlemen

It is a pleasure to be back in Kabul to participate in the Second National Victim Assistance. Significant progress has been made since I first started working with the Government of Afghanistan at the end of 2005 through my work with the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention's Implementation Support Unit. All of you can take pride in this progress as it has been the result of a collaborative effort between government ministries, international agencies, non governmental organisations, and importantly, persons with disabilities themselves. The focus of my presentation is the Kabul Report but first I would like to highlight some of the key aspects of victim assistance in the context of the AP Mine Ban Convention and conclude by sharing some of the challenges and lessons learnt over the past 10 years since the Convention was adopted.

The AP Mine Ban Convention is unique. Not only is it one of the fastest global multilateral arms control treaties to enter into force, it is also the first in history to make provision for the victims of a particular weapon system. Article 6.3 of the Convention obliges that "each State Party in a position to do so shall provide assistance for the care and rehabilitation, and social and economic reintegration, of mine victims...."

At the First Review Conference of the Convention in 2004, States Parties adopted a clear understanding of principles to guide their victim assistance efforts. Four principles are particularly important:

- Firstly, "...the call to assist landmine victims should not lead to victim assistance efforts being undertaken in such a manner as to exclude any person injured or disabled in another manner."
- Secondly, victim assistance "does not require the development of new fields or disciplines but rather calls for ensuring that existing health care and social service systems, rehabilitation programmes and legislative and policy frameworks are adequate to meet the needs of all citizens – including landmine victims."
- Thirdly, "assistance to landmine victims should be viewed as a part of a country's overall public health and social services systems and human rights frameworks;" and,
- Fourth, "...providing adequate assistance to landmine survivors must be seen in a broader context of development and underdevelopment...."

The First Review Conference also adopted the ambitious five-year *Nairobi Action Plan* for the period 2005 to 2009. With respect to victim assistance, the *Nairobi Action Plan* aims to "enhance the care, rehabilitation and reintegration efforts" through eleven "actions."

Through the work of the Convention's Standing Committee on Victim Assistance and Socio-Economic Reintegration important advances have been made in increasing understanding of the issues involved in adequately addressing the rights and needs of mine survivors and other persons with disabilities. As we have already heard, Afghanistan is one of 24 States Parties that has reported responsibility for significant numbers of mine survivors. The National Disability Survey in Afghanistan reported that 2.7 percent of the population has a disability, or around 800,000 people; including around 60,000 landmine survivors.

In March 2005, the Co-Chairs of the Standing Committee sent a detailed questionnaire to the 24 States Parties, including Afghanistan, with the aim that these States Parties produce objectives to improve services for persons with disabilities that were specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound, or SMART, before the Sixth Meeting of the States Parties in Zagreb, Croatia, in November 2005.

In Afghanistan, through the work of dedicated ministry and disability sector colleagues, inputs were provided for the first draft report that included a situation analysis, objectives and some activities. In November 2005, this draft report was submitted to the Sixth Meeting of the States Parties. The *Zagreb Progress Report* adopted by States Parties at the meeting, contains a lengthy annex which summarizes the responses made by Afghanistan and most of the other relevant States Parties. However, the *Zagreb Progress Report* acknowledged that the questionnaire was “not an end-product but rather an initial step in a long-term planning and implementation process.”

As we have already heard from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in December 2005, under the leadership of the former Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, Dr. Haider Reza, Afghanistan launched a process to revise the Zagreb report and increase the level of inter-ministerial coordination and cooperation within the disability sector. In 2006, Afghanistan continued to make progress towards developing SMART objectives and a plan of action, with the involvement of relevant ministries, international agencies, national organisations, and mine survivors and other persons with disabilities.

These efforts culminated in the First National Victim Assistance Workshop in August 2006 and the development of the Kabul Report and Afghanistan’s plan entitled “Addressing the rights and needs of mine survivors and other persons with disabilities: The Islamic Republic of Afghanistan’s objectives and plan of action for the period 2006-2009.”

The implementation of this plan of action will address Afghanistan’s international obligations to assist the victims under the AP Mine Ban Convention but more importantly it will be a significant step towards addressing the government’s responsibilities for all persons with disabilities in the country. Addressing the obligation under the AP Mine Ban Convention to take action in relation to the rights and needs of landmine survivors has in effect provided Afghanistan with an opportunity to focus attention on the disability sector as a whole and take measures to address the gaps in services and policies.

The Kabul Report should be considered a living document and adjusted according to changing situations while keeping in mind what the desired situation is and what is achievable in the timeframe of the plan. This workshop provides an opportunity to review the report and based on the experience of the past 12 months recommend amendments as appropriate

Afghanistan faces many of the challenges, to varying degrees, experienced by other States in providing adequate and appropriate services for persons with disabilities, including:

- Existing services not meeting the needs in terms of both quantity and quality;
- Lack of accessibility to or awareness of available services;
- The issue of long-term sustainability of services;
- The absence of a holistic approach to providing assistance;
- Disability often not seen as a priority by policy makers;
- Lack of political will to affect change;
- Lack of capacity to address disability issues at all levels including within the governmental and non governmental sectors;
- Poverty and lack of development in affected communities hindering the economic inclusion of persons with disabilities;
- Lack of inclusion of persons with disabilities in decision making processes; and,
- Disability still seen as a charity issue not a human rights issue.

Overcoming these challenges will require the committed and coordinated efforts of everyone working in the disability sector.

In terms of some key lessons learnt in addressing the rights and needs of persons with disabilities in the context of the AP Mine Ban Convention, these can be summarized as follows:

- Firstly, if a meaningful difference is going to be made in enhancing the well-being and guaranteeing the rights of persons with disabilities, victim assistance must no longer be seen as an abstraction but rather as a concrete set of actions for which the State holds ultimate responsibility. Afghanistan has made significant progress in this regard with the Kabul Report.
- Secondly, success in victim assistance also means understanding victim assistance in the broader contexts of development and seeing its place as a part of existing State responsibilities in the areas of health care, social services, rehabilitation, vocational training and human rights. The Kabul Report is based on this understanding.
- And thirdly, without collaboration and cooperation there is the potential for inefficient and ineffective use of resources and for duplication in services. An inter-ministerial process

that includes collaboration with all actors in the disability sector is essential. Afghanistan's efforts to develop the Kabul Report and the subsequent activities to implement it are providing a good example of this.

The framework developed by the AP Mine Ban Convention and lessons learnt are equally applicable to addressing the rights and needs of victims of explosive remnants of war, cluster munitions, and small arms and light weapons; in other words, is applicable to all persons with disabilities. The place of victim assistance within the broader context of disability, health care, social services, rehabilitation, reintegration, development, and human rights efforts, promotes the development of services, infrastructure, and policies to address the rights and needs of all persons with disabilities, regardless of the cause of the disability.

I will conclude by sharing one of the key lessons that I have learnt over the past seven years as I have had the privilege to talk with mine survivors and other persons with disabilities in many countries. A person with a disability is not a problem to be solved. They are individuals with hopes and dreams like all of us. They are assets with the capacity to be productive contributors to the social and economic development of their communities. The challenge is to provide the environment and opportunities that will enable people with a disability to reach their full potential to contribute to their communities and realize their dreams.

**Second National Victim Assistance-Disability Workshop**

**Kabul, Afghanistan**

**23-25 October 2007**

**Message on behalf of the 2006 Co-Chairs of the  
Standing Committee on Victim Assistance and Socio-Economic Reintegration  
(Afghanistan and Switzerland)**

Last August, at the first Workshop on Victim Assistance at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Kabul, the 2006 Co-chairs of the Standing Committee on Victim Assistance and Socio-Economic Reintegration, Afghanistan and Switzerland, were present and delighted to witness a broad participation and commitment of delegates from the field, civil society and government. It was such a motivated although heterogeneous group, all having a common target - the improvement of the victim assistance - and all being committed to finding ways to translate a common shared vision into change of reality.

This year, we could not make it to come to Kabul and we sincerely regret it. We dare to say that we have been present in spirit with you during these 2 days and that we are ready to continue to support you in the way that you might have indicated during this 2nd edition of the Workshop.

We welcome the appointment of Dr. Reza as Programme Director of UNMACA, as well as the appointment of Ms. Susan Helseth as Deputy Programme Director, both of whom we had the pleasure to work with last year. We also acknowledge the remarkable work done by Ms. Sheree Bailey. We wish all of them success for the continuation of their work. We hope that the authorities of the different ministries will be committed to the further improvement of victim assistance. We will try to take the next opportunity to come to Kabul and witness first-hand all the efforts made.

We very much look forward to and we are eager to hear about your deliberations and recommendations.

On behalf of the Afghan and Swiss Co-Chairs of the Standing Committee on Victim Assistance and Socio-Economic Reintegration for 2006 – Mr. Khalil Nasri, Mr. Flavio Del Ponte, Ms. Patrizia Palmiero, and Mr. Nicolas Lanza.

## Second National Victim Assistance-Disability Workshop

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### **CLOSING REMARKS**

**H. E. Mr. Wasil Noor Mohmand**  
**Deputy Minister of Labour, Social Affairs, Martyrs and Disabled**

Excellencies, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen,

Unfortunately, my other responsibilities prevented me from participating in all the activities of the Second National Victim Assistance-Disability Workshop, but nevertheless I have been kept updated on the progress of the workshop and I am grateful for your enthusiasm and commitment to this process.

Participation in the workshop has been strong with representation from my ministry and the ministries of Defence, Education, Foreign Affairs, Information and Culture, Public Health, Rural Rehabilitation and Development, Transport and Women's Affairs; including colleagues from Balkh, Gardiz, Herat, Jelalabad, Kandahar, Kunduz, and Mazar-i-Sherif. Other representatives came from the Parliament, from the Embassies of Canada, Germany, Japan, and the United States, the European Commission, 10 international agencies, around 38 national and international non government organisations, including disabled persons organisations, and the media. Over 200 participants registered for the opening session on the first day, and 159 people participated in the working groups. We were also pleased to welcome international guests from Tajikistan's Ministry of Health and Mine Action Centre and from the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention Implementation Support Unit of the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining.

It is important to mention again that this workshop represents the second time in Afghanistan that Government representatives and Disabled Persons Organizations from around the country have participated in a national disability forum. While the plan of action may be called the Kabul Report it is essential that the work we do here is known, understood and implemented as widely as possible.

Several points have been made very clear to me. Firstly, the issue of disability must remain a priority within all government ministries. It is also clear that providing adequate assistance to promote the full medical and physical rehabilitation, and social and economic inclusion, of people with disabilities requires a holistic approach. This cannot be assured without collaboration and coordination between all relevant ministries and other actors. And, implementing a national plan is a long term process that requires political will and commitment from all actors.

The workshop introduced four issues for further exploration and action. These are community based rehabilitation, inclusive education, psychological support, and the new Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. I was told that 45 people participated in the inclusive education working group. This is a good indication of the interest in and importance of this issue. Through the presentations and the discussions in the working group we now have a much clearer picture of the priorities and where to focus our energies.

On the first day of the workshop I stated that Afghanistan, as the 2006 Co-Chair of the Standing Committee on Victim Assistance and Socio-Economic Reintegration, wanted to lead by example to show other affected States what can be achieved in addressing the rights and needs of mine survivors and other people with disabilities. I am confident that the outcomes of this workshop will again enable Afghanistan to do just that, lead by example, when we share our experience with other mine affected countries at the Eighth Meeting of the States Parties in Jordan next month.

I believe this workshop can be considered a success, although I understand that the task is not yet complete. It is essential that the relevant government ministries take ownership of the plan of action and adopt the objectives within their own work plans for the coming years.

To advance this aim, I propose to convene a meeting of an inter-ministerial task force on disability to bring to together all the relevant ministries to review the revised Kabul Report that will be produced as a result of your discussions. This revised document will provide the relevant ministries with a clearer picture of the benchmarks and their responsibilities.

There is still much work to be done to fully implement the plan of action and achieve the objectives, but my Ministry is committed to supporting this process and to working with other key

ministries and actors in the disability sector to ensure that actions are implemented and monitored. Success in this process will serve to address our obligations to mine victims under the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention, but more importantly, it will also serve to address our much broader responsibility to all persons with disabilities in Afghanistan.

In conclusion, I would like to again thank Susan Helseth and her team at MACA for their support in organising this workshop, and WRA for the financial support that has made the workshop possible. Thanks also to AAR-Japan for their creative addition to the workshop with the sign and the folders which leave us with a permanent reminder of our activities over the past few days and the tasks ahead.

And thanks to all of you for your participation over the past two and half days and for taking seriously the opportunity presented by this workshop to review the Kabul Report to ensure that by working in collaboration and cooperation – government ministries, international agencies, non governmental organisations, disabled persons organisations, and the donor community – we are doing our very best to improve the quality of daily life of persons with disabilities in Afghanistan.

## WHAT IS INCLUSIVE EDUCATION?

Inclusive education is a relatively new concept in Afghanistan and there is a need to increase understanding of what it means. All efforts should be based on international principles and understandings for inclusive education for persons with disabilities, as detailed below.

### ► The Right to Education as an umbrella to promote Education for All (EFA) children

#### International framework

Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948)
Convention against Discrimination in Education (1960)
Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989)
World Declaration on Education for All-Jomtien (1990)
World Conference on Special Needs Education-Salamanca (1994)
Dakar Framework for Action-EFA Goals (2000)
Millennium Declaration-MDGs (2000)

*“Schools should accommodate all children regardless of their physical, intellectual, social, emotional, linguistic or other conditions”.*

*(World Conference on Special Needs Education-Salamanca-1994)*

The Dakar Framework for Action (2000) also reminded the international community of its duty to ensure access to quality basic education for all children, particularly girls, children in difficult circumstances, children belonging to ethnic minorities, and children with disabilities.

Education for All means ensuring that all children have access to basic education of good quality. This implies creating an environment in schools and in basic education programs in which children are both able and enabled to learn. Such an environment must be inclusive of children, effective with children, friendly and welcoming to children, healthy and protective for children and gender sensitive. The development of such child friendly learning environments is an essential part of the overall efforts by countries around the world to increase access to, and improve the quality of, their schools.

The principle of inclusive educations was adopted at the World Conference on Special Needs Education: Access and Quality (Salamanca, Spain 1994) and was restated at the World Education Forum (Dakar, Senegal, 2000). The idea of inclusion is further supported by the UN Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities proclaiming participation and equality for all.

### ► What is inclusive education?

Inclusive education as an approach seeks to address the learning needs of all children, youth and adults with a specific focus on those who are vulnerable to marginalisation and exclusion. Inclusive education has grown from the belief that education is a basic human right and that it provides the foundation for a more just society. All learners have a right to education, regardless of their individual characteristics or difficulties. Inclusive education initiatives often have a particular focus on those groups, which, in the past, have been excluded from educational opportunities. These groups include children living in poverty, those from ethnic and linguistic minorities, girls, children from remote areas, and those with disabilities or other special educational needs.

The Salamanca Statement states that schools

*‘should include disabled and gifted children, street and working children, children from remote or nomadic populations, children from linguistic, ethnic, or cultural minorities and children from other disadvantaged or marginalized areas or groups’.*

► Why inclusive education?

There is an educational justification: the requirement for inclusive schools to educate all children together means that they have to develop ways of teaching which respond to individual differences and therefore benefit all children. There is a social justification: inclusive schools are able to change attitudes to difference by educating all children together, thereby forming the basis for a just and non-discriminatory society which encourages people to live together in peace. There is an economic justification: it is likely to be less costly to establish and maintain schools which educate all children together than to set up a complex system of different types of schools specialising in the education of specific groups of children. Inclusive schools offering an effective education to all of their students are a more cost-effective means of delivering Education for All.

Inclusive education encourages policy-makers and managers to look at the barriers within the education system, how they arise and how they can be removed. These barriers usually include inappropriately-designed curricula; teachers who are not trained to work with children who have a wide range of needs; inappropriate media for teaching and inaccessible buildings. Segregated educational provision separates children from their peers and families and may not be cost-effective. Establishing or extending separate provision does nothing to identify and remove the barriers preventing these children from learning in mainstream schools. Inclusive education is about helping mainstream schools to overcome the barriers so that they can meet the learning needs of all children.