

Gender and Diversity in Mine Action: CALL FOR PHOTOGRAPHS

Geneva, Switzerland – September 8, 2010 – The Gender and Mine Action Programme (GMAP) of the Swiss Campaign to Ban Landmines is pleased to announce the ‘Gender and Diversity in Mine Action’ call for photos.

With the kind financial support of the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs and the technical support of the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining, GMAP is preparing an exhibition of mine action-related photography for display at the 10th Meeting of the States Parties to the Anti-personnel Mine Ban Convention in late November 2010 in Geneva. The audience for this exhibition will include members of governments from States Parties, those with observer status to the Convention, NGOs involved in mine action and related issues, as well as all those who pass through the UN offices at the Palais des Nations headquarters in Geneva.

This will be an opportunity to show many aspects of mine action around the world through a gender and diversity-sensitive lens.

Background

The importance of taking a gender perspective in mine action is currently recognised by most mine action stakeholders. It has been widely acknowledged that, due to their different responsibilities, tasks and knowledge, women, girls, boys and men are affected differently by landmines/Explosive Remnants of War (ERW) in different countries. Gender influences:

- the risk of becoming a landmine/ERW victim
- the ability to access medical and psychological services
- long term reintegration
- risk reduction education
- the chances of finding a job in mine action.

Women’s and men’s distinct gender responsibilities can also mean that landmines/ERW affect their livelihood activities and strategies in very different and sometimes unequal ways.

In most countries the majority of civilian landmine/ERW direct victims are boys and men, but their accidents also have deep impacts on their families and communities, who become indirect victims. Many indirect victims are women. If the male victim was the breadwinner of the family, the females in the household will often take on responsibility for the family’s income and also care for the victim, in addition to their previous tasks. When females are the direct victims, the gender inequalities prevalent in some societies may limit their access to services, reintegration and compensation. In some countries, female landmine victims may even be abandoned by their spouses and/or families.

The consequences of a landmine/ERW accident are different, according to its socio-economic and cultural context and according to the age and gender of the victim.

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GMAP believes that the media and current literature on mine action do not focus enough on these aspects and wants to convey and reinforce the key message - that taking gender and diversity aspects into account is vital for a more inclusive and effective mine action. This can be partially achieved by using more representative images in mine action materials.

Call for photographs

The call is open to any amateur or professional photographer.

Each person can submit up to three photographs taken by her/himself.

The purpose of the competition is to collect pictures of women, girls, boys and men affected by landmines/ERW and/or campaigning against landmines/ERW, as well as of women and men working to help those affected by landmines/ERW by conducting surveys, carrying out clearance activities, delivering risk reduction education and assisting the victims.

Though the competition is open to photographs from any landmine/ERW affected country in the world, GMAP is particularly keen to receive photos from regions that are traditionally under-represented in mine action materials, such as the Balkans, Central Asia and Latin America.

This competition is not commercial. The photographers selected will not receive cash prizes or similar benefits but will instead enjoy the knowledge that their photographs are used to illustrate and to communicate the importance of gender and diversity issues within mine action. The organisers will show their gratitude for the efforts of each photographer by sending them selected photographs of how their work is displayed as well as letters of appreciation.

A selected group of pictures will be exhibited at the 10th Meeting of the States Parties to the Anti-personnel Mine Ban Convention in Geneva at the Palais des Nations, 29 Nov – 3 Dec, 2010. The judges will also single out the best three photographs that will receive a special mention and place within the exhibition.

The photographs will also be published on GMAP's website: www.scbl-gender.ch and in relevant publications and reports. Additionally, GMAP intends to share the photos with other mine action stakeholders, always making sure that the photographers are given credit.

The organisers will also try to maximise some media opportunities around this exhibition, inviting the international press corps accredited to the United Nations Office in Geneva to visit and to understand the purpose of the exhibition.

GMAP will create a brochure explaining the rationale behind the competition and, more importantly, the key issue which it highlights – the need to represent all victims and effects of landmine/ERW contamination and people working in mine action in a gender and diversity-sensitive manner.

Selection criteria

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The photos will be selected by a jury composed of five photography, mine action and gender specialists who will evaluate the images according to a number of criteria.

No individual photo can combine all aspects of gender and diversity in the mine action context. However, when combined as a group for this exhibition, they should show the following:

- Individuals of different age and sex groups affected directly or indirectly by landmines/ERW or working in mine action from different geographical regions, ethnicity, religion, etc.
- Most mine/ERW-affected regions and populations should be represented. In particular, those regions and populations who are traditionally under-represented in mine action materials (the Balkans, Central Asia and South America)
- Different aspects of direct and indirect landmine/ERW victims' lives – in education, at play, at work and in their homes - illustrating their successful rehabilitation and reintegration.
- The resilience and coping mechanisms of victims and people living and working in landmine/ERW impacted communities and the effect of landmines/ERW on their daily life
- The photos should also challenge existing stereotypes and cultural resistance by showing women and girls successfully performing non-traditional gender roles within mine action. Examples of this include women and girls as deminers, dog handlers, drivers, mine action programme managers.
- Photographs should be of appropriate quality. They must be more than 300dpi in format to allow them to be reproduced well for the exhibition.

Deadline for submission: 17 October 2010

Photos should be submitted electronically to info@scbl-gender.ch. No printed photos will be accepted. Along with the submission, GMAP kindly asks you to include the following information:

- Full name and mailing address, a contact telephone number and email address of the photographer
- A brief biography of the photographer
- A title for the photograph
- A brief description of the image, including where and when it was taken, any information on the person or other details in the image, and any relevant stories
- If the photo(s) are selected for the exhibition a signed photo release form will be required (attached)

Photos must be submitted electronically as a high resolution image, , a minimum file size of 2MB and minimum resolution of 300 dpi. All photos must be in jpg or tiff format. Photos can be in color or black and white, and must be appropriate for printing at least as a 297 x 420mm print.

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