

Convention on Cluster Munitions Victim Assistance Committee Work Plan 2018-2019

Introduction

Ireland and Spain now currently serve as Co-Coordiators of the Victim Assistance (VA) Committee of the Convention on Cluster Munitions (CCM). Italy's two-year tenure (2016-2018) on the VA Committee concluded in September 2018, when Spain took over; while Ireland will remain on as VA lead Co-Coordinator until September 2019 (9MSP).

The overall objective of the VA Committee is to help assess the status of implementation of VA commitments according to the Convention and the Dubrovnik Action Plan (DAP); strengthen joint approaches with CCM Coordinators on Transparency and International Cooperation and Assistance, including with a view to facilitating increased cooperation and communication between potential donors and recipients on VA; increase coordination with Victim Assistance Coordinators of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC) and the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) as well as the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) and; facilitate increased exchange of information on good practices and challenges.

Under Article 5 (paragraph 1) of the CCM, "Each State Party with respect to cluster munition victims in areas under its jurisdiction or control shall, in accordance with applicable international humanitarian and human rights law, adequately provide age-and gender-sensitive assistance, including medical care, rehabilitation and psychological support, as well as provide for their social and economic inclusion. Each State Party shall make every effort to collect reliable relevant data with respect to cluster munition victims." In fulfilling their obligations under paragraph 1, States Parties must assess domestic needs in the above-mentioned areas and *develop and enforce national policies*. States Parties must also *develop a national action plan, designate a focal point* within the government for coordinating all matters relating to the issue, *take steps to mobilize national and international resources*, closely consult with and *actively involve victims* and their representative organizations and *strive to incorporate relevant guidelines and good practices*.

To guide States Parties to effectively implement the Convention during the period 1 January 2016 to 31 December 2020, States agreed to the five-year Dubrovnik Action Plan (DAP). The DAP elaborates the priorities established by the States Parties through the various actions to be undertaken and the expected key results to be derived from these actions. Action 4 of the DAP encourages States Parties with **victim assistance** obligations to: strengthen national capacity (4.1); increase the involvement of victims (4.2); share information (4.3); and provide support, assist and cooperate (4.4).

The following work plan is proposed by Spain and Ireland for the 2018-2019 period. It aims to build on the progress already achieved during the 2017-2018 period and to advance the overall work of the VA Coordinators.

	Overarching Objective is to Enhance the Implementation of Action 4 of Dubrovnik Action Plan (DAP)	Strategies (2018-2019)	Outcome/Result 2018-2019	Draft Work Plan and Actions 2018-2019 (The Coordinators will draw on the support of the ISU, as appropriate. ISU capacity to support Coordinators for the forthcoming period is set out in CCM/MSP/2018/2)
1	Strengthen national capacity; share information.	Reach out to States Parties with current obligations under Article 5 to find out the extent of the <i>challenges and key priorities</i> with regards to victim assistance.	<p>2017-2018 Coordinators wrote to 7 States Parties; received Responses from one SP and held informal meetings with 3 States Parties (Chad, Iraq and Lao PDR) in the margins of the 21st International Meeting of National Mine Action Programme Directors and United Nations Advisers in February 2018. Two States Parties provided detailed feedback, albeit not formally, on challenges and key priorities regarding Article 5 implementation.</p> <p>Expected result(s):</p> <p>At least 5 States Parties with obligations under Art. 5 have provided information with regards to challenges and key priorities in victim assistance.</p>	<p>Action: Coordinators to reach out again to SPs that did not respond to 2017/18 requests;</p> <p>Action: Draft appropriately targeted letters to relevant SPs. The difficulty of securing long-term financial and other resources for VA was noted;</p> <p>Action: Draft guidance note to SPs to ensure recognition of this long term funding challenges; draw linkages with other Conventions and humanitarian demining more generally;</p> <p>Action: Based on the 2018 findings, design actions to meet the other challenges identified.</p>
2	Strengthen national capacity (including the designation of a focal point within the government to coordinate victim assistance by the end of 2016).	Through letters, emails or bilateral meetings, target two States (Guinea-Bissau and Sierra Leone) that have not yet designated a national focal point for VA - which is an objective set by the DAP in Action 4.1 (a) by the end of 2016.	<p>Nine out of 11 States Parties with Article 5 obligations reported through their 2017 annual transparency report on the designation or existence of a national focal point.</p> <p>Expected result(s):</p> <p>Two States Parties that have not provided information on the existence of a national focal point (Sierra Leone and Guinea-Bissau) have demonstrated efforts towards or achieved the designation of a national focal point.</p>	<p>Action: Coordinators to target (again) the two SPs still yet to identify a national focal point.</p>
3	Strengthen national capacity (including the development of a national disability	Through letters, emails or bilateral meetings, target 3 States (Guinea-Bissau, Montenegro, and Sierra Leone) that have not yet developed	Six States Parties reported to have integrated their victim assistance (VA) efforts into the broader disability sector (two of which were identified as target SPs, Afghanistan and Iraq).	<p>Action: Coordinators to target the three SPs (Guinea-Bissau, Montenegro and Sierra Leone) still yet to provide information on national laws or national action plans relating to victims/persons with disabilities.</p>

	action plan or a national action plan on victim assistance).	a national disability or victim assistance national plan which is an objective set by the DAP Action 4.1 (c) by no later than the end of 2018.	<p>Lebanon reported on efforts made to implement existing law on disabilities.</p> <p>Afghanistan reported that it would finalize and adopt a National Disability Strategy before the end of 2018. No response from the others.</p> <p>Chad noted that it had developed law for disabilities but national approval of the law was still needed.</p> <p>Expected result(s):</p> <p>Two States Parties (Afghanistan and Chad) with VA national plans being developed have adopted them.</p> <p>Three States Parties (Guinea-Bissau, Montenegro and Sierra Leone) that have provided information on national laws or national action plans relating to victims/persons with disabilities have positively engaged in the process.</p>	Coordinators to follow up with two States Parties (Afghanistan and Chad) on progress made in the adoption of their respective National Disability Strategies.
4	Provide support, assist and cooperate.	Consult with Coordinators on International Cooperation and Assistance (The Netherlands and Peru) to identify ways to relay States Parties' requests for assistance under Art. 5 to donor States and/or organizations with relevant expertise.	<p>Eight States Parties requested international assistance and cooperation specifically for victim assistance through their 2017 annual transparency reports.</p> <p>Two informal meetings (led by 2017-2018 International Cooperation & Assistance Coordinators) were held.</p> <p>Expected result(s):</p> <p>Contact has been facilitated between at least 2 States Parties requesting assistance for Art. 5 implementation and potential donors.</p>	<p>There has been some discussion about establishing a database, but no progress to report as yet. Australia is stepping down from the ICA Committee; Peru staying on for a further year joined by The Netherlands.</p> <p>Action: Organise a meeting with The Netherlands and Peru to identify links with the work of the VA Committee and try to agree a plan of action for the forthcoming year.</p>
5	Increase coordination Increase coordination with Victim Assistance Coordinators of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC) and the Convention on	Co-organize or support the organization of a side event or workshop between CCM, APMBC and CCW coordinators as well as CRPD to enhance efforts to provide comprehensive victim assistance to States Parties with victim assistance obligations possibly in the margins of the 22st International Meeting of Mine Action National Programme Directors and United Nations	<p>The 2017-2018 Coordinators participated in a victim assistance retreat organized by the Committee on Victim Assistance of the APMBC, which was also attended by the Victim Assistance Coordinators of Protocol V of the CCW, and the Committees on the Enhancement of Cooperation and Assistance of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention and the Convention on Cluster Munitions;</p> <p>The retreat discussed respective priorities and identified possible opportunities for cooperation, with a view to promoting concerted synergistic approaches (across</p>	<p>Action: Support the APMBC VA Committee in the organization of a retreat in early 2019 to continue efforts to promote synergistic approaches (across Conventions) to VA. Draft action plan in concert with other VA Committees of APMBC and Protocol V.</p> <p>The primary aim is to encourage donor states to view funding in a holistic and cross-cutting way. Funding VA via the CCM, APMBC and Protocol V needs to be understood as part of the same family of Conventions (notwithstanding that some SPs are not party to each Convention). The lack</p>

	Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) as well as the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD)	Advisors held in Geneva from 5-8 February 2019.	Conventions) to VA. Expected result(s): One (1) workshop or side event across Conventions was organized allowing for improved joint approaches to supporting States Parties with VA obligations	of long-term funding - for what is a long term problem - for recipient States has also been identified as a problem and must be encouraged.
6	Share information.	Continue to promote integrated approaches to victim assistance among States Parties and relevant operators.	Promoted guidance on an integrated approach to VA through existing electronic and web-based dissemination tools and well as informal meetings.	Action: Continue to promote guidance on an integrated approach to VA through existing electronic and web-based dissemination tools and well as informal meetings ahead of 9MSP.
7	Share information; provide support, assist and cooperate	Keep promoting the Guidelines on Gender and Diversity-Responsive Victim Assistance in Mine Action, produced by the Gender and Mine Action Programme (GMAP) in collaboration with Humanity and Inclusion	At a side event organized during the Intersessional Meeting of the APMBC in July 2018, Italy, in cooperation with the Gender and Mine Action Programme (GMAP) and Humanity and Inclusion (HI), launched the Guidelines on Gender and Diversity-Responsive Victim Assistance in Mine Action). The publication was produced thanks to the financial support of the government of Italy. Expected result(s): At least two (2) States Parties have reported to have used the Guidelines in their VA work.	Action: Promote guidance on Gender and Diversity-Responsive Victim Assistance in Mine Action through existing electronic and web-based dissemination tools and well as informal meetings ahead of 9MSP.
8	Increase the involvement of victims.	N/A.	Seven States Parties reported through their 2017 annual reports having involved victims and/or people with disabilities in decision making processes Expected result(s): At least 9 States Parties have reported through their 2018 annual transparency report and/or in their 9MSP statements having involved victims and/or people with disabilities in decision making processes.	Action: Inquire with States that haven't reported involving victims why this is the case, and identify what help is needed. If it is a problem of missing lines of communication, we could work as a channel with relevant organizations (e.g. introduce them to HI or CMC would be a good start). If there are other reasons it would be useful to know about them to devise possible other actions.