



CCM Thematic Working Group
on Victim Assistance

Workplan 2025-2026

Integrated and Inclusive Victim Assistance and the Third Review Conference

Presented by
Japan and Niger

Context and Background

Victim assistance is a fundamental area of implementation of the Convention on Cluster Munitions (CCM) as it addresses the various types of harm and negative consequences that cluster munitions and their remnants have on human beings and communities. Such need is still prominent, as, by 13 MSP, twelve State Parties reported cluster munitions victims,¹ with some of these States reporting new ones in recent years. The needs include urgent medical care, physical rehabilitation such as prosthetics, psychological support, and long-term socioeconomic inclusion. States emphasize sustainable funding, comprehensive victim data collection, and societal inclusion.

Article 5 of the CCM is still considered the golden normative standard in humanitarian disarmament for victim assistance. In the Lausanne Action Plan (LAP), seven actions aimed at implementing Article 5, with a wide range of measures that ensure that all victims² of cluster munitions are supported in their needs and their views are considered.

With hundreds of casualties caused by cluster munitions every year,³ and a likely higher number of direct and indirect victims, that remain largely unreported, victim assistance remains a critical element of the protection of civilians and closely linked to the humanitarian imperative both during and after active hostilities.

¹ These States include Afghanistan, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Chad, Croatia, Iraq, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Mauritania, Montenegro, Somalia, and South Sudan.

² According to Article 2(1) of the Convention, "Cluster munition victims" means "all persons who have been killed or suffered physical or psychological injury, economic loss, social marginalisation or substantial impairment of the realisation of their rights caused by the use of cluster munitions. They include those persons directly impacted by cluster munitions as well as their affected families and communities"

³ See <https://the-monitor.org/online-reader/cluster-munition-monitor-2025#major-findings-178819>

Current Challenges

Currently, victim assistance in relation to cluster munitions faces the following challenges:

- insufficient national systems to provide emergency and medium- to long-term assistance to all victims, including indirect victims;
- difficulties in reaching all victims and survivors;
- limited mechanisms and related processes for victims to express their needs and views;
- insufficient funding.

Relevant Normative and Policy Frameworks

Article 5 of the Convention on Cluster Munitions (CCM) continues to be considered the golden legal and normative standard on victim assistance in humanitarian disarmament, with explicit links to international humanitarian law (IHL) and international human rights law (IHRL), and clear references to various forms of assistance, including “medical care, rehabilitation and psychological support” and “social and economic inclusion”. Furthermore, Article 2 of the CCM outlines the various ways in which cluster munitions impact people’s lives and livelihoods, recognizing that families and communities are also affected by cluster munitions in multiple ways.

In line with sector best practice and normative developments, the 2021-2026 Lausanne Action Plan (LAP) also specifies the needs for disaggregated data (Action 31), adequate national legislative and normative frameworks (Action 32), and national action plans with designated focal points to inform, coordinate, and monitor the implementation of victim assistance at national level (Action 33), as well as specialised trained personnel that can address the needs of victims and other affected people (Action 37).

The LAP also acknowledges the diverse needs of victims, survivors and their families and communities (Action 34), including long-term interventions to reintegrate victims and other affected people (Action 35), and their meaningful participation in the different aspects of implementation of the Convention, including the development of “laws, policies and programme relevant to them” (Action 36).

Victim assistance implementation has also been guided by broader frameworks from both within humanitarian mine action (HMA), such as the [Guidance on an Integrated Approach to Victim Assistance](#), and IMAS 13.10, as well as by broader sectors, including IHRL, and relevant treaties, including the Convention on the Rights of Persons with

Disabilities (CRPD), the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and other relevant human rights instruments.

Objectives

In line with sector best practice, relevant frameworks, and information reported by States Parties to the CCM, especially affected States, this workplan aims to:

- (1) showcase and promoting positive examples of practical ways to strengthen national ownership and capacity in victim assistance, including enhancing medical infrastructure to ensure access to prosthetics and rehabilitation services, integrating victims into social protection systems, and ensuring sustained long-term national policy commitment.
- (2) ensure that victims and survivors are effectively involved in processes that affect their lives and livelihood, including those related to the Third Review Conference (3RC) and its outcome documents.
- (3) ensure that the drafting of the new action plan is needs-driven and aligned with Article 5 of the CCM.
- (4) promote linkages between victim assistance and other areas of CCM implementation in the new action plan.
- (5) support and promote the full implementation of the integrated approach to victim assistance.
- (6) establish and strengthen links between CCM victim assistance with other relevant international legally binding instruments , including the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (APMBC), the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW), the CRPD, the CEDAW and other relevant international instruments such as the Political Declaration on Explosive Weapons in Populated Areas (EWIPA).

Activities

To achieve the objectives outlined above (section II.), the following activities will be undertaken:

- (a) Engage in international cooperation and provide support-including through a side event at the 3RC-to initiatives that promote advanced technological

solutions that enabling innovative approaches to assistive technologies that can foster local capacity building and sustainable, locally-driven solutions for rehabilitation and mobility assistance.

- (b) Convene (virtual) meetings with representatives of victims' and survivors' organisations, victim assistance organisations, and other relevant stakeholders, to gather views, needs and proposals from people with relevant lived experience or directly involved in the field.
- (c) Reach out to States Parties with obligations under Article 5 to strengthen national ownership and capacity.
- (d) Prepare a working document on a renewed integrated approach to victim assistance in the context of the CCM, drawing on the needs and views of victims, survivors, affected communities, and affected States.
- (e) Support and facilitate the participation of victims and survivors in the process of the Third Review Conference (3RC).
- (f) Provide specific inputs on victim assistance to inform the drafting of 3RC documents, especially the action plan and the political declaration, with particular attention to actions and the related indicators.
- (g) Support and assist the Presidency during the Third Review Conference on matters related to victim assistance.

Expected Outcome

- Increased familiarity with opportunities to access to high-quality assistive technologies for those in need, strengthened local capacity to produce and maintain these solutions, and improved mobility and quality of life for affected individuals. Ultimately, these efforts contribute to greater self-reliance and long-term social and economic inclusion.
- An updated working document on an integrated approach to victim assistance for States Parties.
- The views and needs of victims and survivors are effectively channelled and mainstreamed within the process of the 3RC.

- Meaningful and substantive 3RC outcome documents on victim assistance.
- Strengthened information exchange and communication among relevant States Parties, including affected and donor States.
- States Parties, and organisations representing victims and survivors are better informed of victim assistance obligations under the CCM and the opportunities available under the CCM itself.

Budget and Potential Partners

- Limited costs are expected.
- Under the guidance of the two thematic Co-Coordinator (Japan and Niger), potential implementing partners may include:
 - the Presidency of 3RC,
 - the CCM Implementation Support Unit,
 - other coordinators in the CCM Coordination Committee,
 - Victim Assistance coordinators in other similar conventions,
 - CCM States Parties and Signatories with relevant obligations,
 - ICRC,
 - Survivors and their representative organizations,
 - civil society and international NGOs,⁴
 - relevant industry, especially those in the bio-medical field,
 - relevant UN entities at country level, including relevant UNRCOs, WHO, UNICEF, UNDP and OHCHR.
- Donor and Partner States, including those that actively support victim assistance efforts through international cooperation and assistance.

Timeline

- **March 2026**
 - w/c 9 March 2026 – participation in the VA Retreat.
 - 12 March 2026 – participation in the gender and diversity events for members of the Coordination Committee and CCM State Parties.

⁴ With particular attention to organisations with specific victim assistance expertise.

- w/c 16 March 2026 – online roundtable with representatives of victims’ and survivors’ organisations.
- **April 2026**
 - 6 – 30 April 2026 – preparation of the first draft of the working paper and circulation among relevant stakeholders.
 - 22 – 24 April 2026 – participation in the NDM as VA Co-Coordiators, including reaching out to representatives of States with obligations under Article 5.
- **May – June 2026**
 - Gathering and collating experts’, civil society’s, and victims’ and survivors’ organisations inputs on victim assistance matters for the new action plan.
- **June-July 2026**
 - Finalisation of working paper on the integrated approach to victim assistance to be presented during the 3RC.
- **July-August 2026**
 - Preparation for the organisation of a side event on the integrated approach to victim assistance during the 3RC.