

Victim Assistance in Algeria: then and now

Algeria	1	2	3	4	5	6
According to original study			•	•		•
According to LM 2002						•
According to LM 2003		•		•	•	•

Key Developments (LM 2002):

Algeria ratified the Mine Ban Treaty on 9 October 2001, and the treaty entered into force for Algeria on 1 April 2002. An interministerial commission responsible for the landmine issue is being established.

Indicator 1: The extent to which information on mine victims' demographics and needs is available.

According to original study:

LM 1999 indicates that IPR Strategic Business Information Database reports 40,000 killed and 80,000 wounded from landmines. LM 2000 reports that Algerian officials confirm mine accidents have occurred in the Mitidja region, around Algier (Blida), in the area of Mascara, Saçda, Relizane, and Kabilie, but no information regarding the number and location of mine incidents is available due to the lack of an adequate data-collection system. There are plans to establish a WHO/ICRC Strategic Framework for Planning Integrated Mine Victim Assistance Programmes in Algeria, which would include the development of a system for the monitoring and surveillance of mine injuries.

According to LM 2002:

During the Army's mine clearance operation in Sid Ali Bounab in April 2002, a mine explosion killed five Islamists and wounded five military personnel. The Salafist group is reported to have laid the mine, as its base is located there.¹⁷

The lack of information on landmine casualties in 2001 and 2002 is due in large part to the absence of an overall database in Algeria. The need to establish such a database is one of the priorities for forthcoming interministerial commission.¹⁸ The Ministry of War Veterans has a database on military mine casualties, but this information was not made available to Landmine Monitor.¹⁹

Indicator 2: The extent to which a national disability coordination mechanism exists and recognizes mine victims.

According to original study:

LM 1999 reports that the care and rehabilitation of soldiers is the responsibility of the Servico de Ajuda Medica-Militar (SAMM) and coordinates care for military mine victims exclusively. The WHO plans to begin working with the government during 2000 to establish a Strategic Framework for Planning Integrated Mine Victim Assistance Programmes in Algeria, which would include the development of a national inter-ministerial coordinating body.

According to LM 2002:

The Ministry of War Veterans and the Ministry of Defense are responsible for providing assistance to military mine survivors, while the Ministry of National Solidarity has responsibility for civilian survivors. Mine survivors have free access to local and national structures of the Ministry of Health.²⁰

Indicator 3: The extent to which programs and services for the medical care and rehabilitation of mine victims are available.

According to original study:

No information available.

According to LM 2002:

Since the end of 2000, Handicap International has established a rehabilitation center in Algiers and conducted a program for persons with disabilities but none of the patients are believed to be mine survivors.²¹

In June 2001, the ICRC signed an agreement with the Algerian Ministry of Health to create a production unit at the Ben Aknoun prosthetic/orthotic center in northern Algiers.²³ The unit has the capacity to produce 150 prostheses per year with the intended beneficiaries being Sahrawi ex-combatants and victims of violence. Two technicians undertook a training course at the ICRC center in Ethiopia.

Indicator 4: The extent to which programs and services for the social and economic reintegration of mine victims are available

According to original study:

According to LM 1999, the Algerian National Assembly adopted legislation in 1974 to provide financial assistance to landmine survivors.

According to LM 2002:

Social and economic measures for persons with disabilities are part of the global framework of governmental social action.²²

Indicator 5: The extent to which mine victims are protected and supported by effective laws and policies.

According to original study:

According to LM 1999, the Algerian National Assembly adopted legislation in 1974 to provide financial assistance to landmine survivors.

According to LM 2002:

No information available.

Indicator 6: The extent to which there is a disability community advocacy network.

According to original study:

No information available.

According to LM 2002:

No information available.

Endnotes:

¹⁷ “Cinq islamistes tués dans une opération militaire en Kabylie” (Five Muslims killed in a military operation in Kabylie), El Watan (Algerian daily newspaper), 16 April 2002.

¹⁸ Statement by Abdelaziz Lahiouel, Director of International Policies Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Regional Seminar on Ottawa Convention in North Africa, Tunis, 15 January 2002.

¹⁹ Interview with Lt. Col. Hacene Gherabi, Ministry of Defense, Geneva, 30 January 2002.

²⁰ Interview with Nassima Baghli, Counselor, Permanent Mission of Algeria to the UN in Geneva, 30 May 2002.

²¹ Phone interview with Nicolas Brun, Program Director, Handicap International, 14 May 2002.

²² Letter to Landmine Monitor from Nassima Baghli, Counselor, Permanent Mission of Algeria to the UN in Geneva, 7 May 2002.

²³ ICRC (Geneva), *Special Report, Mine Action 2001*, July 2002, p. 37.