

**Victim Assistance in Ethiopia: then and now**

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

**Key Developments (LM 2002):**

A national Landmine Impact Survey was initiated in April 2002. While no demining has started in Ethiopia, two demining companies have been trained, and some survey work has been carried out since February 2002. During 2001, nearly 200,000 people received some form of mine risk education. In April 2002, Ethiopia provided to the UN detailed maps of mines its forces laid in Eritrea during the border conflict. In 2001, there were at least 71 new landmine/UXO casualties, a significant decrease from the previous year.

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

**According to original study:**

LM 2000 reports that landmine casualties are not recorded systematically in Ethiopia. Before the 1998-2000 border war, there were an estimated 4,200-4,600 amputee mine victims. There were 100 deaths were reported from 1998 to 1999 representing an increase as a result of new use of landmines in northern Ethiopia, with reports indicating a casualty rate of between five and seven per week.

**According to LM 2002:**

In 2001, there were at least 71 new landmine/UXO casualties: 16 people were killed and 55 injured. Reported new casualties decreased from 2000, when 202 new landmine/UXO casualties were reported in Tigray, Afar, Somali National Region, and Dabu Kebele.<sup>52</sup>

Casualty data was collected in RaDO's mine awareness project. In the Tigray region, 49 new mine/UXO casualties were reported, of which 11 died and 38 were injured; 27 were below 18 years-of-age. All the casualties were males. RaDO also registered 22 new casualties in the Afar region, of which five were killed and 17 injured; 12 were below 18 years-of-age, four were women and six were men. Most of the casualties are child herders. The areas where the incidents occurred were trenches and grazing lands.<sup>53</sup> There are media reports of landmine incident in other parts of the country, but these are not well documented.

On 4 October 2001, a vehicle carrying seven Ethiopian Armed Forces soldiers hit a landmine, killing one soldier and injuring six, in an incident in Sector West of the TSZ.<sup>54</sup>

According to the U.S. State Department, since 1995 landmines have killed at least 172 civilians and injured 113, while Ethiopian deminers have suffered four deaths and 16 wounded in clearance operations.<sup>55</sup>

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

**According to original study:**

No information available.

**According to LM 2002:**

The Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs and the EFPD coordinate disability issues at the national level.

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

**According to original study:**

LM 2000 reports that all mine-affected regions of Ethiopia are extremely underdeveloped with poor infrastructure and poorly equipped health care facilities. Few hospitals are capable of performing emergency surgery and most local health posts are not competent to provide emergency care to mine victims. The Dept. of Rehabilitation of the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs runs prosthetics/orthotic centers in Ethiopia: the Prosthetics-Orthotics Center in Addis Ababa indigenously established in 1961; the Mekele center in the Tigray

region, which was established by the ICRC in 1992; and the Harar center in the Hararegay region established by ICRC in 1982. The Addis Ababa center also produces prosthetic and orthotic devices, wheel chairs and crutches for use throughout Ethiopia, as well as components that supply other centers across Africa. Since 1997, HI and RaDO have conducted a joint project to implement rehabilitation services in the main hospitals of the country (Axum, Maychew, Bahir Dar, Debre Tabor, Woldia, Nekempte, Mettu, Sodo, Hossana, Dire Dawa). These services, established in coordination with the respective regional and local health bureaus, provide basic physiotherapy treatments and walking aids to in-patients and to disabled persons.

**According to LM 2002:**

In Ethiopia, few hospitals are capable of performing emergency surgery and most health posts in the mine-affected areas do not have the capacity to provide emergency care to mine casualties. Adigrat hospital provides emergency care and physiotherapy services, with support from Medecins Sans Frontieres-Holland in surgery. In 2001, the hospital assisted five landmine casualties; three crutches were also supplied to landmine survivors.<sup>57</sup> Shire Hospital, a government hospital, has also assisted a number of landmine casualties in emergency care and treatment. In 2001, 12 landmine survivors were assisted by the hospital and two crutches were supplied.<sup>58</sup> The ICRC supports the Ethiopian Red Cross Society (ERCS) Tigray branch: ERCS first aid volunteers and ambulance service provides emergency assistance in mine-affected areas.<sup>59</sup>

In Ethiopia there are centers providing physical rehabilitation and orthopedic devices; some are government run and others are operated by NGOs or international agencies. The Rehabilitation Affairs Department, of the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs is responsible for providing rehabilitation services for the disabled. It oversees four orthopedic workshops in different parts of the country: Addis Ababa, Mekelle, Harar, and Dessie.

The Addis Ababa Prosthetic-Orthotic Center (POC) is a referral center for physical rehabilitation and operates an orthopedic workshop and physiotherapy department. In 2001, the center assisted 5,361 persons with disabilities, including 1,546 landmine survivors. The center produced 863 prostheses, 61 wheelchairs, 2,234 crutches, 1,111 orthoses, and 1,055 other assistive devices. It also provided physiotherapy treatments for 1,339 people. Patients who cannot afford to pay receive free services; for those who can pay the cost is from US\$5 to US\$200, depending on the type of service. The annual budget for the program is 2.8 million ETB (US\$329,411) with funding for the program from the sale of orthopedic devices, charges for services, and donations from the ICRC, Christoffel Blinden Mission (CBM) and the Sheraton Addis.<sup>60</sup> The ICRC Special Fund for the Disabled (SFD) manages a training center at the Addis Ababa POC. In 2001, 31 prosthetics from 14 countries benefited from the training.<sup>61</sup>

The Dessie Orthopedic workshop provides physical rehabilitation services to persons with disabilities, free of charge. In 2001, the center assisted 194 persons with disabilities, including 88 landmine survivors. In 2001, the workshop produced 161 prostheses, 449 crutches, and 23 orthoses, and distributed 10 wheelchairs. The annual budget for the program is provided from two sources; the Government allocated 189,600 Birr (US\$22,305) and the ICRC allocated Birr 106,000 (US\$12,470). The workshop plans to continue providing similar services in 2002 in cooperation with VVAF, Pact and the ICRC.<sup>62</sup>

The Harar Orthopedic workshop provides physical rehabilitation services. In 2001, the center assisted 142 persons with disabilities, including 92 mine survivors. The workshop produced 142 prostheses and 100 crutches, of which 88 prostheses and all the crutches, together with three wheelchairs, were distributed to landmine survivors. The sources of funding for the workshop are the regional government and the ICRC.<sup>63</sup>

The Mekelle Orthopedic workshop is operated by the Tigray Disabled Veterans Association. In 2001, the center assisted 728 persons with disabilities, including 206 landmine survivors. The workshop produced and supplied 330 prostheses, 1,322 crutches, and 377 assistive devices, and supplied 21 wheelchairs. Of these 193 prostheses, 386 crutches, and 13 assistive devices were for landmine survivors. The annual budget of the center is 382,500 Birr (US\$45,000).<sup>64</sup>

The ICRC continues to support the orthopedic workshops in Addis Ababa, Dessie, Harar, and Mekelle. The support includes assistance with the provision of transportation, accommodation, orthopedic devices, physiotherapy services, psychological support, and technical assistance.<sup>65</sup> In 2001, the ICRC made 40 technical visits to the centers to provide training and to monitor the quality of patient services. The ICRC also works with the Ethiopian Red Cross Society, the Ministry of Health, the Bureau of Labor and Social Affairs, and the Tigray

Disabled Veterans Association. The ICRC sponsored two national technicians to undertake a 3-year course in prosthetics/orthotics at TATCOT in Tanzania.<sup>66</sup>

The local NGO, Arbaminch Rehabilitation Center, provides assistance in physical and medical rehabilitation, and social, economic and vocational reintegration. The center works in partnership with the Arbaminch Hospital, Action Aid and Integrated Community Development Programme (ICDP). From 1 January to 17 November 2001, the center assisted 83 landmine survivors with physiotherapy treatments and CBR. If the patient has a poverty certificate the cost is Birr five to ten (US\$0.60 to US\$1.20), otherwise services cost from Birr 200-1,000 (US\$24 to US\$118). In 2001, the center produced 83 prostheses, 175 crutches, 11 assistive devices, and supplied three wheelchairs; 63 prostheses, 112 crutches and six assistive devices were for landmine survivors. The center's socio-economic reintegration program assisted 397 persons with disabilities, including 83 landmine survivors.<sup>67</sup>

Addis Development Vision is a local NGO in Addis Ababa, with services including the provision of basic rehabilitation services, referral services, vocational training, and financial support for education, to persons with disabilities. In 2001, the organization assisted 331 people, including 11 mine survivors.<sup>68</sup>

The Landmine Survivors Network's (LSN) program in Ethiopia uses community-based outreach workers, who are also amputees, to work with individual survivors to assess their needs, offer psychological and social support, and educate families about the effects of limb loss. The program also provides material support, and prostheses and physiotherapy through referrals. In 2001, LSN assisted 380 people, including 232 mine survivors; services are free of charge. The annual budget for the program is approximately US\$239,000. LSN receives technical cooperation and duty-free privileges from the Bureau of Labor and Social Affairs and Bureau of Foreign Relation and Development Cooperation.<sup>69</sup>

The Ethiopian Prosthetics-Orthotics National Professional Association was established in 21 June 2001. This association advocates for a high standard of prosthetic-orthotic care for landmine survivors through research, education and practice, working in partnership with the Ministry of Health, ICRC, EPTA, Maltaser, Ethiopia, and Handicap International.<sup>70</sup>

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

**According to original study:**

No information available.

**According to LM 2002:**

The local NGO, Rehabilitation and Development Organization (RaDO) works in the Somali refugee camps providing social and physical rehabilitation services. The program is implemented in collaboration with UNHCR, Stichting Vluchteling (SV) and the Administration for Refugees and Returnees Affairs (ARRA). In 2001, 530 people were assisted, including 24 landmine survivors. The program provides psychological support, physiotherapy service and prostheses.<sup>71</sup> RaDO also provides physical and social rehabilitation services to Sudanese refugees, in four camps, in partnership with UNHCR and Stichting Vluchteling (SV). In 2001, 895 people received physical rehabilitation services. The number of landmine survivors assisted is not known.<sup>72</sup> Since September 2001, RaDo has provided counseling service to landmine survivors in Tigray. RaDO's assessment identified 41 mine survivors in need of the counseling service; 32 received counseling service and as a result, most of the children under counseling started attending school.<sup>73</sup>

Other organizations assisting persons with disabilities, including landmine survivors, in physical rehabilitation, orthopedic devices, and social and economic reintegration include: Cheshire Service Ethiopia, Handicap National-Action for Children with Disabilities (HN-ACD), Ethiopian Physiotherapists Association, Ethiopian National Association of the Blind, Ethiopian National Association of the Deaf, and the Ethiopian National Association of the Physically Handicapped.<sup>74</sup>

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

**According to original study:**

No information available.

**According to LM 2002:**

The principal disability law that relates to landmine survivors is Proclamation No. 101/1994, the Right of Persons with Disabilities to Employment. Disabled civil servants receive a pension, however, there is no special attention given to persons with disabilities.<sup>75</sup>

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

**According to original study:**

No information available.

**According to LM 2002:**

The Ethiopian Federation of Persons with Disabilities (EFPD) is an umbrella organization of the five national disability associations.

A component of the Emergency Demobilization and Reintegration Project (EDRP) is the strengthening of five regional POCs and the establishment of a National Rehabilitation Center.<sup>76</sup> The EDRP, using a loan from the World Bank, has allocated US\$9 million for construction and US\$10.3 million for equipment for the project.<sup>77</sup>

**Endnotes:**

<sup>52</sup> *Landmine Monitor Report 2001*, pp. 216-217.

<sup>53</sup> Interviews with Ato Abdu Ali and Ato Temesgen of Afar and Tigray mine awareness projects, respectively, January 2002.

<sup>54</sup> UN Security Council, "Progress report of the Secretary-General on Ethiopia and Eritrea," New York, 13 December 2001.

<sup>55</sup> US Department of State, "To Walk the Earth in Safety," November 2001, p. 6.

<sup>57</sup> Interview with Dr. Amanuel Gessesew, Medical Director, Adigrat Hospital, Adigrat, 30 January 2002.

<sup>58</sup> Interview with Dr. Yibrah, Medical Director, Shire Hospital, 24 December 2001.

<sup>59</sup> Interview with Thomas Russell, ICRC delegate, 4 January 2002.

<sup>60</sup> Interview with Ato Yohannes Berhanu, POC General Manager, 8 January 2002.

<sup>61</sup> ICRC Special Fund for the Disabled, Annual Report 2001.

<sup>62</sup> Interview with Ato Daniel Kassa, Manager, Dessie Orthopedic Workshop, December 2001.

<sup>63</sup> Interview with Ato Tsegaye Weldemedhin, Manager, Harar Orthopedic Workshop, December 2001.

<sup>64</sup> Interview with Girmay Gebremeskel, General Manager, Mekelle Orthopedic Workshop, 11 April 2002.

<sup>65</sup> Interview with Thomas Russell, ICRC delegate, 4 January 2002.

<sup>66</sup> ICRC Physical Rehabilitation Programmes Annual Report 2001.

<sup>67</sup> Interview with Ato Tafesse Chirbo, General Manager, Arbaminch Rehabilitation Center, 15 December 2001.

<sup>68</sup> Interview with Ato Adane Alemu, Executive Director, Addis Development Mission, 25 December 2001.

<sup>69</sup> Interview with Ato Yiberta Taddesse, Social Worker, LSN-Ethiopia, 29 December 2001; response to Landmine Survivors Network Monitor Survivor Assistance Questionnaire, 13 March 2002.

<sup>70</sup> Interview with Ato Mulugeta Gedu, President, EPONPA, 20 December 2001.

<sup>71</sup> Interview with Ato Negussie Seifu, Program Coordinator, RaDO, 11 January 2002.

<sup>72</sup> Interview with Ato Alemayohu Mitiku, Technical Coordinator, Addis Ababa, 15 January 2002.

<sup>73</sup> Interview with Ato Temesgen Abrha, Tigray Mine Risk Education Project Manager, 1 January 2002.

<sup>74</sup> Interview with Ato Alemayohu Teferi, Ethiopian Federation of Persons with Disabilities.

<sup>75</sup> Interview with Ato Kassaye Tikuye, Acting Team Leader, Rehabilitation Affairs Department, 24 December 2001.

<sup>76</sup> "Emergency Demobilization and Reintegration Project," Progress Report No. 4, prepared for the UN Security Council Mission to Ethiopia, 21 February 2002, p. 6.

<sup>77</sup> Ato Negussie Kibret, Head of Accounting Department, EDRP, 22 February 2002.