

Victim Assistance in Iraq: then and now

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

Key Developments (LM 2002):

Iraq has not acceded to the Mine Ban Treaty. It did not attend any international meetings related to the issue of landmines in 2001 or 2002. In failing to pay its dues, Iraq has been ineligible to vote on UN General Assembly resolutions, including the annual resolution promoting the Mine Ban Treaty. Iraq is not a State Party to the Convention on Conventional Weapons.

In 2001, Iraq refused to issue visas to nearly 300 staff hired to work on electrical systems and mine clearance projects in the Kurdish-dominated north.¹

Iraq is a producer of antipersonnel mines, although it is not known if production is on-going or if it commences to meet specific requirements. Iraq remains the only known mine exporter that has neither instituted an export ban or moratorium, nor made a policy declaration of no current export. However, no confirmed evidence has been found of Iraqi exports of landmines in recent years. Iraq is assumed to have a significant stockpile of antipersonnel mines, but no details are available.² There were no reports in 2001 or 2002 about new use or renewal of old minefields in Iraq.

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

According to original study:

LM 2000 reports figures from UNOPS MAP socio-economic survey showing a total of 9,289 victims have been injured or killed by landmines in northern Iraq since 1980. Information on victims needs and demographics is not available for other mine-affected regions of Iraq.

According to LM 2002:

Mines and UXO located inside the country continue to inflict casualties, but information is limited. In 2001, at least 21 people were killed or injured in reported mine/UXO incidents, including 19 children. In February 2001, a boy was killed by a cluster bomblet in Karbala province, six children were injured in an incident in the southern city of Basra, and two boys were injured by a cluster bomblet while tending sheep in western Iraq. On 15 March, a shepherd was injured in a UXO incident near Nassiriyah.⁸ In the period March to September 2001, the UN Iraq-Kuwait Observation Mission (UNIKOM) reported five separate incidents of casualties in the southern sector. Four children aged between 6 and 12 years and one 18-year-old were injured; three died as a result of their injuries.⁹ On 19 September 2001, three boys were killed in a mine explosion in the Al-Deer district of the Basra province when a mine exploded while their father was plowing his land; three of their cousins were injured.¹⁰

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:

No information available

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 1999 reports a variety of local hospitals in Northern Iraq where landmine victims can be treated in the major towns of Zakho, Dohuk, Salahudin, Erbil and Sulaymanya, although facilities and resources are reportedly limited relative to the scale of the problem. Through twelve first aid posts, the UN Mine Action Program supports regional trauma centers that are the first stop for landmine victims following injury. HI has established orthopedic workshops in Sulaymanya and Halabja. The UNOCHI program for Northern Iraq provides support to the Diana Prosthetic Limb Centre in Erbil (which has an orthopedic surgery unit), and the Halabja and Dohuk Prosthetic Limb Centres. ICRC provides support for two prosthetic/orthotic centres in Baghdad, as well as centres in Basra, Najef, Mosul, Arbil, and to the Baghdad Prosthetic/Orthotic School. Additionally, the ICRC supervises a local component production facility.

According to LM 2002:

In the period September 2001 to March 2002, a UNIKOM German medical team carried out ten evacuations of Iraqi civilians injured by mine and UXO explosions. During the period under review, a 12-year-old girl died as a result of her injuries.¹¹

In 2000, UNIKOM treated 87 people injured by mines and UXO.¹²

The government is reported to provide assistance to mine survivors at Ibn al Kuff hospital and through designated medical centers.¹³

In 2001, the ICRC completed rehabilitation work on six hospitals and ten primary health care centers as part of its integrated medical-emergency program.¹⁴ In 2001, the ICRC also provided support to four government-run prosthetic/orthotic centers located in Baghdad, Basra and Najef, as well as to the IRCS-supported center in Mosul and the Norwegian Red Cross-supported center in Arbil. It also supported the Baghdad Prosthetic/Orthotic School.¹⁵ In 2001, the ICRC manufactured 1,168 prostheses for mine survivors.¹⁶ In addition, four training courses for prosthetic/orthotic technicians and physiotherapists were organized for Iraqi staff.¹⁷

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

According to original study:

LM 1999 reports no financial assistance available for mine victims and their families in Iraqi Kurdistan.

According to LM 2002:

No information available

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:

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:

¹ Hassan Hafidh, "U.N. wants Iraq to issue more visas for its staff," Reuters (Baghdad), 29 January 2002.

² In addition to its own production, Iraq has obtained mines from Belgium, Canada, Chile, China, Egypt, France, Italy, Romania, Singapore, the former Soviet Union, and the United States. See Landmine Monitor Report 2000, p. 931.

⁸ See *Landmine Monitor Report 2001*, p. 1008.

⁹ Report of the UN Secretary-General on the UN Iraq-Kuwait Observation Mission for the period from 28 March to 24 September 2001 (S/2001/913), 26 September 2001, p. 2.

¹⁰ “Gulf War mine kills three, injures three – INA,” *Reuters*, 20 September 2001.

¹¹ Report of the UN Secretary-General on the UN Iraq-Kuwait Observation Mission for the period from 25 September 2001 to 20 March 2002 (S/2002/323), 28 March 2002, p.3.

¹² See *Landmine Monitor Report 2001*, p. 1008.

¹³ Report of the UN Secretary-General pursuant to paragraph 5 of resolution 1302 (S/2000/857), 8 September 2000, p. 6.

¹⁴ ICRC (Geneva), *Special Report, Mine Action 2001*, July 2002, p. 37.

¹⁵ “Iraq: Baghdad (MOH), Baghdad (MOD), Basra, Najef, Mosul, Arbil, 1993–2001,” *ICRC Physical Rehabilitation Programmes, Annual Report 2001*. Accessed online at <http://www.icrc.org>.

¹⁶ Information provided to Landmine Monitor by the ICRC, 1 June 2002. The ICRC has said that an estimated 3,000 patients per year receive ICRC prostheses, and of these, over 50 percent are mine survivors. *ICRC Annual Report 2000*, p. 198.

¹⁷ ICRC (Geneva), *Special Report, Mine Action 2001*, July 2002, p. 38.