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LANDMINE and EXPLOSIVE REMNANTS of WAR

SAFETY HANDBOOK



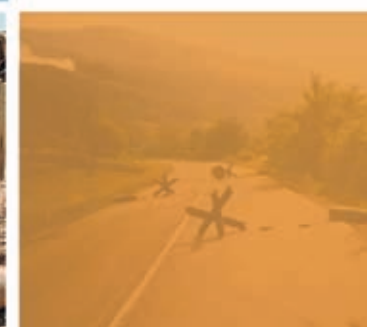
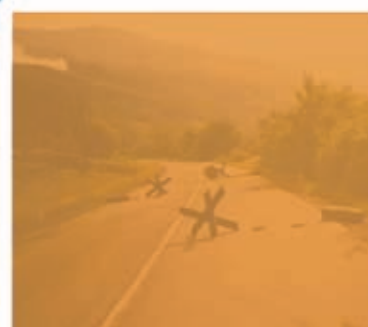
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A manual
for people working
in environments



contaminated by
landmines and other
explosive remnants
of war



Country-Specific
Information

LANDMINE and EXPLOSIVE REMNANTS of WAR

SAFETY HANDBOOK

Landmine and Explosive Remnants of War Safety Handbook

A manual for people working in environments
contaminated by landmines and other explosive
remnants of war

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Acknowledgements

This handbook is the 2nd edition of the *Landmine and Unexploded Ordnance Safety Handbook* produced by the United Nations in 2000, which was originally based on the *Land Mine Safety Handbook* developed and published by CARE in 1997. The handbook has been substantially revised including its title to reflect latest terminology. The *Landmine and Explosive Remnants of War Safety Handbook* draws upon information found in *International Guidelines for Landmine and Unexploded Ordnance Awareness Education* developed by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) in 1999 and *International Mine Action Standards* published by the United Nations (www.mineactionstandards.org). The *Landmine and Explosive Remnants of War Safety Handbook* is part of the *Landmine Safety Project* of the United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS).

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Landmine survivors are an obvious indicator for the presence of mines. These Afghan men are now working as bicycle couriers in Kabul; Afghanistan

Introduction

Landmines, abandoned munitions and military equipment, unexploded ordnance and other explosive remnants of war (ERW) pose a hazard to people in more than 82 countries around the world.

This handbook is not an instruction manual for working with landmines or ERW, or for working with landmine-affected communities. Rather, its aim is to raise awareness and provide basic safety information concerning the threat of landmines and other ERW to organizations and individuals working in war-torn areas, and to help them:

- Establish appropriate safety procedures;
- Avoid contact with mines and ERW;
- Take appropriate action in emergency situations.

Proximity to mines and ERW is always dangerous and should be avoided. Only trained specialists should seek out or handle landmines or ERW.

The information contained in this handbook is general in nature and some of it may not be applicable in all situations. Accordingly, it should be complemented by country-specific information and an analysis of the nature and extent of the local threat. In addition, this handbook is not designed as a stand-alone document, but should be used in support of a landmine and ERW safety briefing by qualified instructors. Whenever possible, readers should seek the guidance and advice of specialists working in their area of operations.

DID YOU KNOW?

As of September 2005, 147 states parties have signed the anti-personnel Mine-Ban Treaty (known as the Ottawa Convention). In doing so, they have accepted to stop using, stockpiling, producing and transferring anti-personnel mines and also agree to their destruction. The convention also has provisions for landmine victims to receive assistance.

Since the Convention came into force in 1999, the use of anti-personnel (AP) mines has decreased. However, a few states (non-signatories to the treaty) continue to use and stockpile AP landmines, and more than 82 countries have some form of widespread landmine contamination from past and ongoing conflicts. AP mines represent some of the most serious threats to people working in post-conflict areas, even decades after a conflict.

The handbook is divided into five main sections and annexes.

- **Section 1** provides information on the nature of the threat from mines and ERW;
- **Section 2** provides advice on recognizing the threat;
- **Section 3** provides general safety advice and information on avoiding the threat;
- **Section 4** explains what to do if you find yourself in a mined area;
- **Section 5** provides basic information on what to do in case of an accident.

The annexes provide examples of travel procedures and information on other threats such as chemical and biological weapons.

Throughout the handbook, coloured text boxes are used to provide additional information: *orange* for case studies; *yellow* for interesting but non-essential information; *blue* for definitions of key terms.