A photograph of a child in a white t-shirt and dark shorts running in a sun-dappled forest, holding a long, light-colored stick. In the foreground, a rusty, weathered metal sign is attached to a tree trunk. The sign features a skull and crossbones symbol and the word 'DANGER' in a distressed, hand-painted font. The background is filled with lush green trees and foliage, creating a bokeh effect.

THESE WEAPONS CLAIM VICTIMS LONG AFTER CONFLICTS END

They can be found on roads, footpaths, farmers' fields, forests, deserts, along borders, surrounding houses, schools and water sources—well-frequented places where people carry out their daily activities.

Life's most basic need: safety

Landmines, cluster bombs and explosive remnants of war (ERW) are indiscriminate weapons that injure and kill civilians in every corner of the globe, every day. They don't recognize ceasefires and claim victims long after conflicts end. The ripple effect on individuals, families, communities and countries is devastating.

In Canada, we're lucky. We've never had to worry about accidentally stepping on one of these hidden killers as we walk to fetch water from the village well. Or to school. Or while working in the fields. Or having our children picking one up, fatally confusing it for a toy.

Imagine how these hidden killers would change your life as you know it. Your children's lives. Your community. And your country.

Everyday, millions of people live with these life-threatening weapons. We'd like to introduce you to a few of them, and follow them on their daily journey. We'll see the extent of harm these weapons can create—the scope is probably much more than what you might have guessed.

But there's good news. This man-made, lethal problem can be fixed. We know the solution. We know it works. And, it's simple. This is a problem we can solve in our lifetime.

Safe land means more than safe passage to school, work and play. To people in 60 countries and seven unrecognized territories, it means freedom. Let's do this together.



Blanca Nubia was only 12 years old

She was playing in a cave near her house when she picked up what she thought was a ball and it exploded. It was not a ball—it was a mine left in the cave by combatants during Nicaragua's civil war—a war that had ended before Blanca Nubia was even born.

Her mother traveled with her as the family carried her by hammock from their rural ranch to the nearest town. From there, she was transported down river by canoe and then by ambulance to Managua.

Her family is illiterate and they had not been to a city many times before. Her mother slept on a piece of cardboard next to her daughter's bed and they shared the hospital food.

Blanca Nubia was sent home from hospital without any follow-up medical care. She had lost an eye, her left arm and most of her right hand. She had shrapnel wounds on her face, torso, and cuts so severe on her legs they required skin grafts. Yet, she was sent home with no rehabilitation and no plans for follow-up care.



Children like Blanca Nubia often make the deadly error of mistaking landmines for toys. Photo: Giovanni Diffidenti

I met Blanca Nubia at the hospital in Leon with a fellow landmine advocate. We followed her progress and visited her in the hospital whenever we could. Then one day she was gone. All we knew was that she had been sent home and we knew she wasn't ready for this yet.

After an exhaustive search, we eventually found her in a small one-room house in the middle of nowhere. It took two days for us to get to her village on bumpy roads, canoe and donkey. Two days—in heat, humidity, dirty, sweaty, smelly, and dehydrated. And to think that young Blanca Nubia made this grueling trip with her arm hanging off, bleeding profusely.

We brought first aid supplies and showed them how to use them to keep her wounds clean.

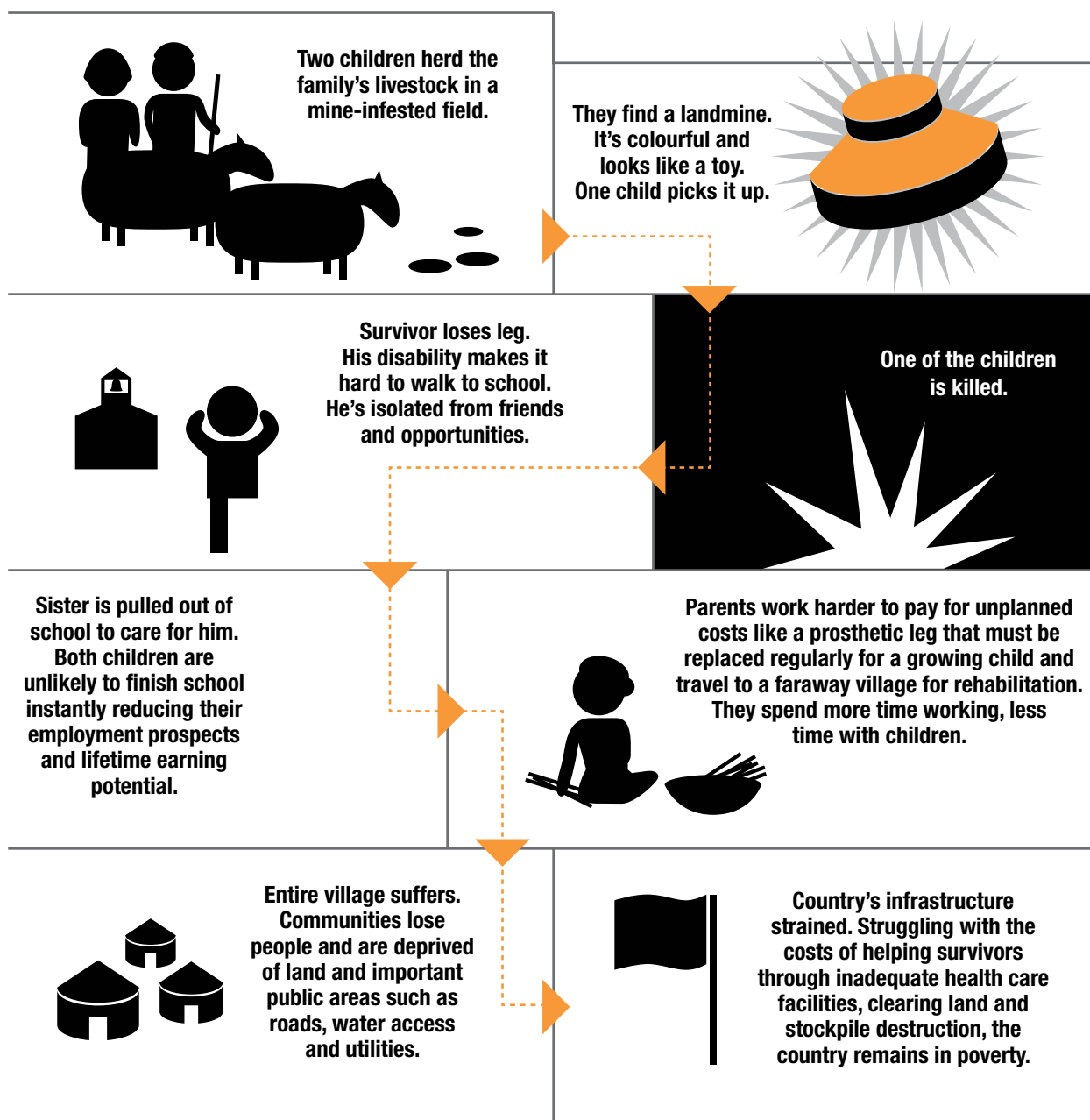
Blanca Nubia's story is one of many around the world. And it's why the movement to ban victim-activated weapons is so important. We work to prevent further innocent civilian casualties and to ensure victims receive the help they need.

As told by Jackie Hansen. Jackie first became involved with Mines Action Canada (MAC) as a Youth Mine Action Ambassador. Today, Jackie is a Program Manager with MAC where she works on the Landmine & Cluster Munition Monitor.

Ripple Effect

Blanca Nubia's story is a far too typical.

This scenario plays out repeatedly in countries affected by landmines, cluster bombs and ERW. Let's take a broader look at how these weapons impact not just the individual—but families, communities and entire countries.



These weapons maim & kill ordinary people

When triggered, landmines, cluster bombs and explosive remnants of war (ERW) maim and kill ordinary people every day. They blow off victims' legs, feet, toes and hands. They fire shrapnel into their faces and bodies.

Antipersonnel landmines are explosive devices designed to injure or kill people. They lie dormant for years and even decades under, on or near the ground until a person or animal triggers their detonating mechanism. Antipersonnel mines cannot be aimed—they indiscriminately kill or injure civilians, soldiers, peacekeepers and aid workers alike.

Cluster bombs act in a similar way as landmines, but contain hundreds of smaller “bomblets” inside. They are dropped from the air or fired from the ground and designed to break open in mid-air, releasing bomblets over an area the size of several football fields. Many fail to explode on impact and remain a threat for decades after a conflict.



Zjalko Peric, a young Bosnian landmine survivor. Photo: John Rodsted



Leftovers of war, landmines, cluster bombs and ERW maim and kill ordinary people. Photo: ICBL

ERW includes all abandoned and unexploded weapons in an area like unexploded artillery shells, grenades, mortars, rockets, air-dropped bombs, anti-vehicle landmines as well as dud cluster munitions.

All of these weapons pose a serious and ongoing threat to civilians. During and after conflicts, these weapons can be found on roads, footpaths, farmers' fields, forests, deserts, along borders, in or surrounding houses and schools and in other places where people carry out their daily activities. They deny access to food, water and other basic needs. Often, these weapons limit people's ability to participate in education or access medical care.

They slow and can even prevent the repatriation of refugees and displaced people. Contaminated land obstructs the delivery of aid and relief services to people in need by putting the lives of aid workers at risk.

Many affected countries are some of the poorest in the world. They struggle to pay for the costs of clearing mines and destroying stockpiles. Medical treatment for victims—where available—is costly, burdening an already overstretched health-care system. Communities are deprived of their productive land: farm land, orchards, irrigation canals and water points may be no longer accessible. Mines also cut off access to economically important areas, such as roads, electricity pylons and dams.

Until the 90s, antipersonnel landmines had been used by almost all armed forces of the world, in one form or another. Under international humanitarian law, parties to an armed conflict are obligated to protect civilians. Weapons that cannot discriminate between civilian and military targets or that cause excessive humanitarian harm are a grave concern. This is why countries signed a treaty banning landmines in 1997.

Landmine use has dramatically dropped since the treaty. However, the weapon still poses a significant and lasting threat. This is also why countries were compelled by civil society groups, like MAC, to sign a second treaty banning the use of cluster bombs in 2008.

It is equally as important that countries take the same steps against cluster bombs and ERW.

INJURIES ARE OFTEN DISABLING

Kei Khonn, 50, with his granddaughter Linn Srey Neth. After a conflict is over, bomblets from cluster munitions continue to kill and maim civilians for decades. Kei Khonn is one of an estimated tens of thousands of civilians worldwide killed or injured by cluster munitions.

Photo: Werner Anderson

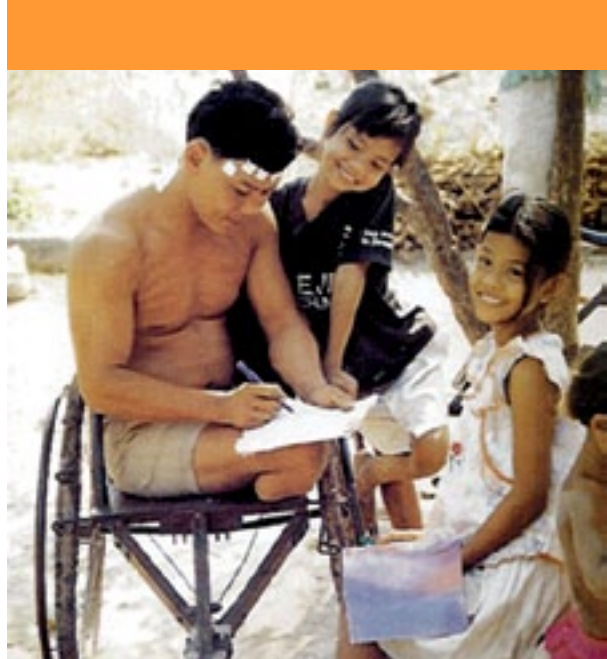


LANDMINE SURVIVOR TO NOBEL PEACE PRIZE WINNER



Tun Channareth with his daughters

Photo: ICBL



Tun Channareth, or Reth as he is known to his friends, is a passionate advocate for a ban on the weapon that cost him his legs. Born in Phnom Penh, Reth and his family were forced to leave by the Khmer Rouge in 1975.

Reth stepped on a landmine as a resistance soldier on a mission near the Thai-Cambodian border in 1982. He later had both of his legs amputated. Reth received vocational training at a Thai refugee camp, where he stayed for 13 years. He later moved back to Cambodia where he started making wheelchairs as a way to help landmine survivors and support himself and his family.

Reth's story is one of transformation—he went from begging his comrade to kill him after his incident to the father of a thriving family of six. He is an entrepreneur making wheelchairs for the disabled in Cambodia adapted to the local terrain, and an international advocate educating decision makers around the world. Reth has taken the ban message to the Pope, former UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan, countless diplomats and governments around the world, and accepted the Nobel Peace Prize on behalf of the International Campaign to Ban Landmines in 1997.

Who is affected

THEY'RE CIVILIANS.

The vast majority of victims are civilians—not soldiers. Year after year, civilians account for 70 to 85 percent of casualties.

MANY CASUALTIES GO UNREPORTED.

Close to 4,000 new casualties were recorded in 64 countries and other areas in 2009. More than 1,000 people were killed and close to 3,000 injured. Many countries don't have the infrastructure or record keeping to report casualties, and many victims don't make it to medical care, so there are likely many more people who have been injured.

CHILDREN FACE SEVERE CONSEQUENCES.

An injured child will face months of recovery...if they don't die and if they get treated in time. Many are killed on the spot due to blood loss, shock or damage to vital organs.

Because a child's bones grow faster than the surrounding tissue, a wound may require repeated amputation and a new artificial limb as often as every six months—although the prosthesis is not likely to be available.

Some never return to school after their accident. Many face social exclusion and will not get married.

Like adult victims, they will face enormous practical, economic, social and psychological challenges in their rehabilitation and reintegration process.


4,000*

innocent people will be killed by landmines, cluster bombs and ERW this year.

500,000*

the number of survivors who currently need care.

** Approximate numbers*

A young woman with short dark hair, smiling, is seated at a desk in an office. She is wearing a maroon t-shirt with a graphic that reads "PUSH FOR PROGRESS" and "MINE BAN TREATY PHNOM PENH - CAMBODIA 28 NOV - 2 DEC 2011". In the background, two other people are visible: a man in a dark suit standing and another man in a white shirt sitting at a desk with a laptop. The office has wood-paneled walls and a map is visible on the wall behind the woman.

“SOMETIMES I DREAM THAT I HAVE TWO LEGS AGAIN AND I RUN FREELY IN THE RICEFIELDS, FEELING THE GRASS UNDER MY TOES.”

At age six, Song Kosal's life was changed forever when she stepped on a landmine while working in the rice paddies with her mother on the Thai-Cambodian border. Now aged 26, Kosal represents youth campaigners and survivors at events worldwide. Kosal has succeeded in putting a face to the many lesser-known young landmine survivors around the world.

Photo: Mary Wareham

Where are they?

According to the *Landmine & Cluster Munition Monitor*, over 75 countries and territories in all regions of the world are affected by landmines, cluster bombs and/or ERW. Nobody knows how many mines are in the ground. But the actual number is less important than their impact: it can take only two or three mines or the mere suspicion of their presence to render a patch of land unusable.

MINE-AFFECTED COUNTRIES AND OTHER AREAS*[10]				
AFRICA	AMERICAS	ASIA-PACIFIC	EUROPE AND CIS	MIDDLE EAST-NORTH AFRICA
Angola Burundi Chad DRC Congo, Republic of Djibouti Eritrea Ethiopia Guinea-Bissau Mauritania Mali Mozambique Namibia Niger Senegal Somalia Sudan Uganda Zimbabwe Somaliland	Argentina* Chile Colombia Cuba Ecuador Peru Venezuela	Afghanistan Cambodia India Lao PDR Myanmar Nepal Korea, North Korea, South Pakistan Philippines Sri Lanka Thailand Vietnam Taiwan	Armenia Azerbaijan BiH Croatia Cyprus Denmark Georgia Kyrgyzstan Moldova Montenegro Russia Serbia Tajikistan Turkey UK* Abkhazia Nagorno-Karabakh Kosovo	Algeria Egypt Iran Iraq Israel Jordan Lebanon Libya Morocco Oman Syria Yemen Palestine Western Sahara
19 states and 1 area	7 states	13 states and 1 area	16 states and 3 areas	12 states and 2 areas

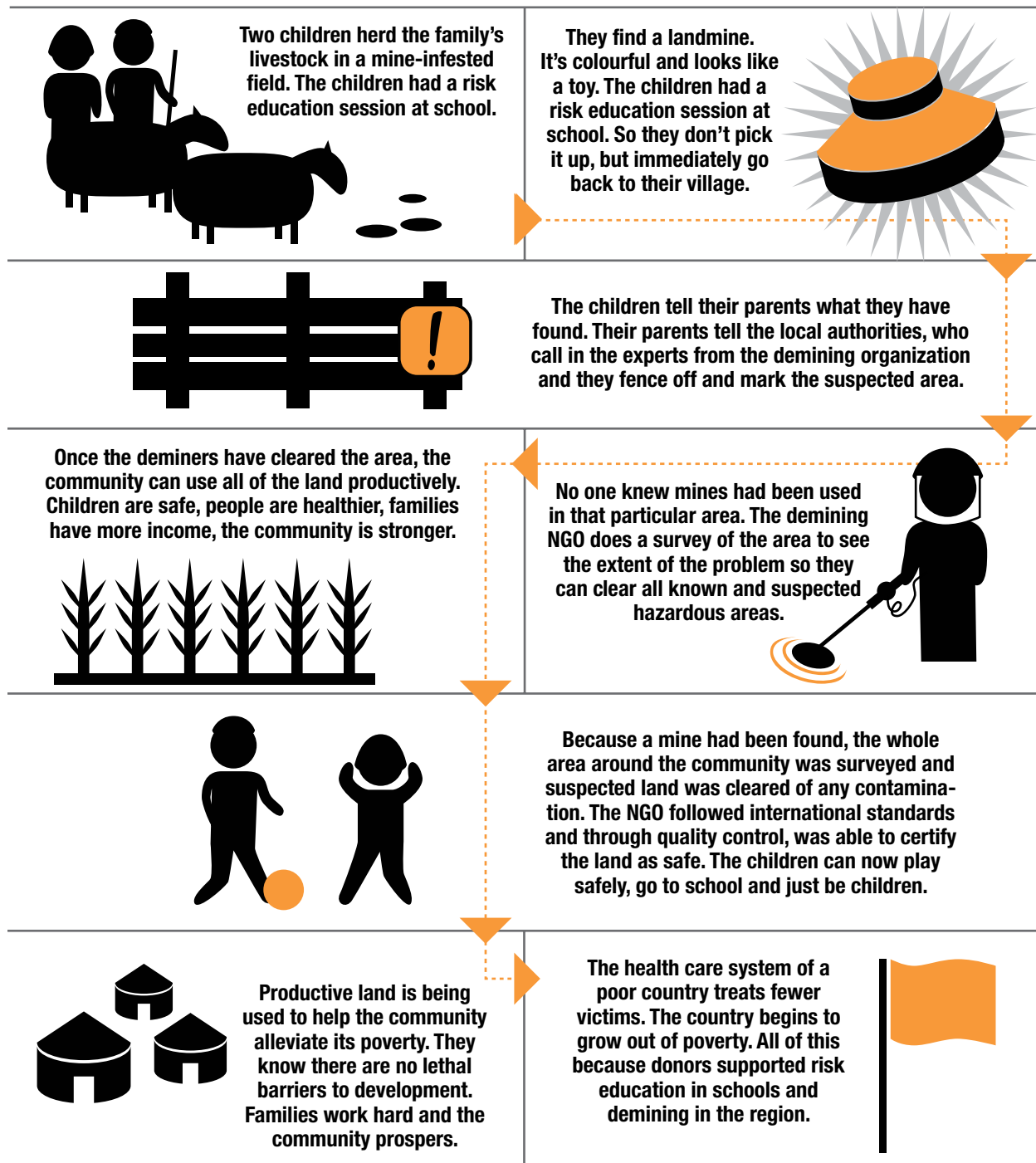
CLUSTER BOMB AND ERW AFFECTED COUNTRIES AND OTHER AREAS*				
AFRICA	AMERICAS	ASIA-PACIFIC	EUROPE-CIS	MIDDLE EAST-NORTH AFRICA
Angola Chad Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) Republic of the Congo Guinea-Bissau Mauritania Sudan	Argentina*	Afghanistan Cambodia Lao PDR Vietnam	Azerbaijan Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) Croatia Georgia (South Ossetia) Montenegro Russia Serbia Tajikistan United Kingdom* Kosovo Nagorno-Karabakh	Iraq Lebanon Syria Western Sahara

*As of September 2010

Anti-Ripple Effect

Now for the good news.

Take a look at what happens when land is made safe for people to walk, work and play.



Yemen: Former Canadian Youth Ambassador Jackie Hansen learns first-hand about clearing landmines with a local demining team.



The solution

It all started with a simple, yet revolutionary idea: that a grassroots movement of ordinary people could rid the world of a deadly menace—specifically minefields—through a ban on antipersonnel landmines. Now, 15 years later, the Ottawa Convention banning landmines and the International Campaign to Ban Landmines have made huge strides in solving this problem.

Next, came the movement to ban cluster bombs—the Cluster Munition Coalition and the new treaty banning cluster bombs. MAC has been a leader in both movements with the ultimate goal of ridding the world of two highly used weapons that have deadly consequences for innocent civilians.

Can you really touch the lives of tens of millions of people in just 15 years? The answer is yes. The simple, yet powerful, act of ordinary people banding together to create a world that is free from the threat of these deadly weapons is happening.

Here's how we do it:

1. YOUTH LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT, EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Youth play a particularly important role in persuading governments to sign on and live up to treaties, clear land, educate people in weapon-contaminated countries and fundraise for survivor rehabilitation.

To sustain the progress we've made over the past 15 years, we need to engage, train and support the next generation of socially conscious advocates—the global leaders of tomorrow. We do this by investing in youth both in Canada and around the world.



MAC has been critical in getting the Canadian government to lead the world in negotiations on a treaty banning landmines and challenging the world's position on cluster bombs. Here, MAC staff witness Canada's signature of the Convention on Cluster Munitions in Oslo, December 2, 2008. Photo: Kunder Gyro Oslo

2. MONITORING INTERNATIONAL COMMITMENTS

The *Landmine & Cluster Munition Monitor* is a major activity of the International Campaign to Ban Landmines and an unprecedented civil society initiative. This publication regularly documents progress and problems, and reports annually on the status of every area in the world in relation to the *Ottawa Convention*. It assesses the international community's response to the humanitarian problems caused by these weapons.

MAC is the lead agency in charge of coordinating the overall research and production of the publication—an unprecedented civil society initiative and the defacto government resource for monitoring progress on these treaties.

3. ENGAGING THE PUBLIC AND DECISION MAKERS IN CANADA AND AROUND THE WORLD

Early on, MAC members realized the importance of public opinion in influencing the government's agenda. Armed with limited financial resources, but infinite dedication and creativity, the MAC coalition impressed upon the Canadian public and media the devastating impact of landmines and their futility as a weapon of war, informed them of existing Canadian policy and alternatives to it and urged them to take action on the issue.

These efforts paid off with the Ottawa Treaty banning anti-personnel landmines becoming one of the most rapidly ratified Conventions in history entering into force as international law on March 1, 1999.

Today, we are active in innovative domestic outreach programs such as Canadian Landmine Awareness Week, international symposia, concerts, publications and other awareness events.

Yet, there is still work to be done. We know about the need for consistent stakeholder engagement as an integral part of the continuing the progress of concrete change for good.



WHO WE ARE

Mines Action Canada (MAC) is a non-profit organization that works to eliminate the serious humanitarian, environmental and development consequences of landmines, cluster bombs and ERW on people around the world by raising awareness, partnering in the field and advocating for smart policies to save lives and improve futures. We are the Canadian partner of the International Campaign to Ban Landmines — the 1997 co-recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize.

The big idea that launched MAC has never changed. We remain committed to our original vision of eliminating the serious humanitarian impacts of anti-personnel landmines and ERW from this world.

What has changed is the scope of our efforts. Today, more people in more countries benefit from our work than ever before.

We are a coalition of over 35 Canadian non-governmental organizations working in mine action, peace, development, labour, health and human rights.

MAC alleviates the impact of victim-activated weapons on the rights, dignity and well being of innocent civilians. We raise awareness, mobilize Canadians, partner with local organizations on the ground (both internationally and in Canada), research and monitor the performance and compliance levels of disarmament and humanitarian laws, and by develop and disseminate resources.

WHAT WE DO: CIVIL SOCIETY LEADERSHIP

MAC is relied upon as an international leader in the civil society movement pushing for universalization and implementation of the Ottawa Treaty and the Convention on Cluster Munitions. We are consistently identified as one of the more established, professional and competent national campaigns and are looked to for leadership.

MAC manages and advises the International Campaign to Ban Landmines as a board member and leads universalization of the Ottawa Treaty. MAC is also a founding, active member of the Cluster Munition Coalition. This requires providing expert advice on management, organizational, legal and financial issues to both international coalitions.

IT'S SAFE TO COME HOME NOW

Shakr Ahmad and his daughters are one of ten families to return to an area cleared of mines in Pirijan village in northern Iraq.

"We grow apples, plums, salad, peppers, tomatoes, and wheat on the land. When the other minefields are cleared more people will come back. They want to come but are too afraid. They don't like living in the town. This is their home."

Photo: Sean Sutton/Mines Advisory Group



MAC youth programs: investment in the future

How do we make change happen? MAC's youth programs are designed to transform communities from the inside out. We engage and empower youth from both Canada and around the world in the campaign against landmines and cluster bombs.

And guess what—it's working. From humble beginnings as youth ambassadors spreading the word in schools and communities across Canada, you'll find these young leaders in remarkable positions of influence around the globe. Since we began working with youth, MAC has trained hundreds of aspiring young leaders who, in turn, spread the word to tens of thousands of other people. Many of these young leaders are now successfully employed in mine action, at UN agencies, with governments or nonprofit agencies in the field.



**Youth representatives
from Angola, Egypt and
Chile at the Youth Leaders
Forum** Photo: Tracy Anderson



Nyambura Gichuki, from Kenya speaks at the Youth Leaders Forum in Laos, November 2010 alongside the First Meeting of States Parties on the Cluster Munition Convention. Photo: Tracy Anderson



Canadian interns prepare for their work with international NGOs on landmines & cluster bombs.

WHERE YOUR INVESTMENT GOES

Internships

We provide highly-skilled Canadian interns to our international partners who are in need of human resource support through our international capacity building program. Students chosen for our internship program understand this once in a lifetime opportunity. Their commitment to bringing lasting change to the world is astonishing.

Local NGO training

We work with international NGO partners training them on how to work with and incorporate youth into their advocacy work.

Small grants

A small grants program provides financial assistance to help partners incorporate youth leaders into their work.

Production of a resource manual

This manual, available in five languages, contains information on best practices and lessons learned in working with youth in mine action from around the world.

International youth training and apprenticeships

We conduct youth seminars where youth leaders identified by our regional partners are provided with comprehensive training to assist them with their work.

Youth Leadership Forum

We coordinate an international youth symposium held in conjunction with official Ottawa Convention and Convention on Cluster Munition meetings annually.

Youth to Youth Network

We coordinate a global virtual youth to youth network which includes mentoring, support and monthly training initiatives.

When you support MAC, you are supporting projects that make positive change and sustainable solutions for hundreds of thousands of children, women and men around the world.

Meet Eugene: triumphing over tragedy

Eugene Mussolini from Rwanda had no money, no connections and few prospects. He was 15 years old when he stepped on a landmine in Rwanda. Doctors performed successive operations on his left leg, amputating more each time. After going through grueling rehabilitation, Eugene was in a horrific car accident. Once again, he had to battle his way back to health.

But he put himself through school and he has worked since a young age. He's the only sibling to be educated. Eugene is the epitome of a self-made man.

Eugene has turned this potential tragedy on its head. Besides working full time, he runs the Association of Landmine Survivors and Amputees of Rwanda (ALSAR) as a volunteer—even when he, himself, needs care he is not always able to get it. He also serves as the victim assistance point person for the International Campaign to Ban Landmines in Rwanda.

"I have a lot of time for Eugene," says Jackie Hansen, Landmine & Cluster Munition Monitor Program Manager. "He is typical of many campaigners—in some ways has so little yet has so much to give."

MAC supports emerging young leaders like Eugene around the world. Eugene has gained skills and developed his intrinsic leadership abilities through our youth training programs.

Eugene is a Youth LEAP graduate and beneficiary of MAC's small grants program for youth. He now has a computer to help him do his campaign work from home and to use with the other volunteers who work with him.

Today, he is a well-recognized champion in the landmines movement and is helping bring attention to the obstacles that fellow survivors face in Rwanda.



Eugene Mussolini, taken at the Youth Leaders Forum in Laos, November 2010 at the First Meeting of States Parties on the Cluster Munition Convention Photo: Jordan Nott

A LAPTOP CHANGED HIS LIFE

MAC also helps our partners like Eugene and ALSAR through a small grants program. Last year, we supported a public outreach event designed to draw attention to the unmet needs of landmine survivors in Rwanda. Many of the country's top political decision makers took part and learned not only about the devastating consequences of these weapons on their citizens, but also potential solutions for survivors.

We've also equipped Eugene and ALSAR to increase their reach and support to survivors around the country—and report on the progress of the landmines campaign in Rwanda—through a basic laptop.

This example of involving the community at the grassroots typifies the behind-the-scenes work MAC tirelessly takes on because we know the huge impact that it will create now and into the future.