



Towards a global compact on refugees: thematic discussions

Written contribution from the UN Mine Action Service

Background

Landmines, improvised explosive devices and explosive remnants of war, pose a deadly threat to refugees in flight, transit and when returning to their homes and communities. In the context of the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework, this is particularly relevant to objective four “*Foster conditions that enable refugees voluntarily to return to their home countries*”. Explosive hazards can also hamper the delivery of life-saving humanitarian assistance without mine action being integrated into the planning and delivery of humanitarian response.

During the partner consultations held on 24 October, UNMAS raised these issues and UNHCR requested the proposal of some concrete proposals to inform the development of the CRRF action plan. Therefore, this paper provides some initial suggestions for key areas to consider. UNMAS remains available for further consultation, inputs and revisions as the document takes shape.

Thematic Discussion Four - Key Inputs to Action Plan

- Landmines, improvised explosive devices and explosive remnants of war pose a deadly risk to returning refugees and other displaced persons posed by landmines. For example, in Mosul, Iraq, improvised explosive devices have been laid in homes and other civilian areas, specifically targeting returning civilians, at unprecedented levels.
- Landmines, improvised explosive devices and explosive remnants of war can hamper the safe delivery of humanitarian assistance and endanger humanitarian aid staff.
- UNMAS recommends that the action plan includes humanitarian mine action response in the earliest stages of planning and programming assistance for voluntary refugee returns in conflict and post-conflict settings.
- Specific actions that humanitarian mine action actors may undertake include: removal of explosive hazards according to humanitarian priorities to enable safe voluntary returns, such clearance also supports durable solutions by enabling, inter alia, reconstruction of vital infrastructure, risk education for returning refugees, victim assistance to people with disabilities.

N.B. UNMAS is the global lead for the Mine Action Area of Responsibility within the Protection Cluster.

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