

## **GICHD statement**

### **CCW AP II - Meeting of High Contracting Parties - 2019**

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Since 2015, the GICHD, together with SIPRI, has been publishing annual reports on the humanitarian impact of AVM.

While the evidence on the direct humanitarian impact of AVMs has been strengthened since, a new publication, released by the GICHD, SIPRI and King's College London depicts the impact of AVM on development with a focus on two provinces in Angola.

The study, entitled "The socio-economic impact of AVMs in Angola" provides an assessment of the social and economic impact of AVM contamination. The study also highlights how clearance of AVM contributes to local sustainable development and social well-being, and thus, towards the Sustainable Development Goals.

The study focuses on two Angolan provinces, Huambo and Kuando Kubango, where the blockages posed by AVM contamination and the effects that clearance had on agricultural production, trade, and infrastructure, are explored in the period comprised between 2002 and 2018.

The two provinces were selected due to the contrast and relevance of their profiles regarding mine contamination and clearance, which enabled a detailed analysis of the major changes in the lives and livelihoods of beneficiaries. The HALO Trust was selected as a partner for the field research component, since it is the main operator in both provinces.

The research team interviewed government ministries and officials, mine clearance operators, civil society organisations, traditional authorities, known as sobas, and beneficiary communities.

The analysis of cleared tasks using HALO documentation was complemented by satellite imagery analysis to illustrate the changes experienced following AVM clearance.

Nonetheless, assessing the impact of a specific type of mine—AVM—on sustainable development is challenging due to mixed landmine contamination found in minefields and on roads. Hence, the affected communities are rarely aware of what type of device affects them. This may impact their assumptions, behaviour and perceptions of the risks associated with AVM contamination specifically. Based on this consideration, the study also contemplated mixed contamination.

The main findings of the study are the following:

First, strong linkages between AVM contamination and obstacles to development were identified. The use of the SDGs as an analytical framework served to underpin the conclusion that contamination slows down development. Conversely, clearance is a direct accelerator towards the achievement of medium and long-term sustainable development goals in Angola.

Clearance of AVM and mixed contamination appears to be a direct enabler for the expansion of safe agricultural land, positively affecting the quantity and diversification of production, which in turn increases sales and incomes for the local communities, enhancing their food security and livelihoods.

Second, safe and rehabilitated infrastructure resulting from clearance fosters mobility and access to transportation, as well as a greater participation in trade activities, resulting in income growth and improved living conditions.

Third, while the use of cleared land for agricultural activities took place soon after clearance, the impact of clearance on infrastructure relies largely on the availability of additional investment for rehabilitation, construction of new systems or maintenance of existing infrastructure.

The findings of the pilot study, and the lessons learnt from the applied methodology will guide the development of additional studies on the socio-economic impact of mine action.

This pilot study was made possible thanks to the financial support of Ireland.

I will not reveal more at this stage about the study as you will have the chance to hear about it in more details at a side-event, taking place at 1 pm in Room 21.

The digital version of the study is available through our website and hard copies are also found in the room.

Thank you very much for your attention.