

GENDER GUIDELINES FOR MINE ACTION OPERATORS



This manual gives recommendations on gender mainstreaming in four components of mine action: demining, explosive ordnance risk education, advocacy and victim assistance. It is aimed at helping mine action operators to maintain gender parity in their activity, as well as ensure that it corresponds to needs of all, without exception, people that reside in conflict-affected areas.

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GENDER GUIDELINES

**FOR MINE ACTION
OPERATORS**

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

EO	Explosive ordnance
EORE	Explosive ordnance risk education
ERW	Explosive remnants of war
IDP	Internally displaced person
KAP	Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices
NTS	Non-technical survey
TOR	Terms of reference
TS	Technical survey
UXO	Unexploded ordnance
VA	Victim assistance

GUIDELINES ON GENDER MAINSTREAMING IN DEMINING



Demining consists of collecting data (non-technical survey), mapping, marking of contaminated ground, its clearance, handover and land release.

The local communities residing in conflict-affected areas should be engaged in non-technical survey (NTS). Each category of the population, depending on their daily routine and routes might have different information regarding the presence of mines and explosive remnants of war (ERW). Therefore, the primary task of NTS teams is to ensure that the different inhabitants, including people with different vulnerabilities, have had an opportunity to share their knowledge of potentially contaminated land. It is noteworthy that inclusiveness and wholeness of collected information defines the quality and speed of forthcoming clearance.

In the demining process, gender equality should be mainstreamed throughout every stage, including NTS, team composition, employment policy, career opportunities and prospects for women and men.

Thus, ensuring gender mainstreaming in this mine action pillar includes the following:

● GENDER-RESPONSIVE DATA COLLECTION

Needs assessment

The knowledge of various target groups of existing risks from mines and ERW might differ significantly. This is due to the different behavior patterns and social roles of women, men, boys and girls, including people with different vulnerabilities. As such, it is necessary to make sure that all community members residing in the conflict-affected area can meaningfully participate in identifying the existing risks and threats. Their contributions will serve as a basis for conducting a qualitative technical survey (TS), mapping, marking and completing clearance prioritization.

It is essential to record the views of women, men, boys and girls from diverse groups on how the presence of mines and ERW has deterred from their daily activities. Moreover, one needs to assess what impact clearance of the territory will have on them. NTS teams should conduct in-depth interviews to better understand the requests and needs of the local community living in the potentially mined territory. To be more precise: to better understand and analyze the different requests and needs of women, men, boys and girls, and all people with different types of vulnerabilities. Accordingly, all collected data should be disaggregated at least by sex and age.

The [Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices \(KAP\) survey on mines and explosive ordnance \(EO\)](#), conducted by the UNDP in 2020 provides valuable information. However, for monitoring information on casualties and enhancing connection with the local community, it is highly recommended to collect such data when conducting NTS on a regular basis.

● EMPLOYMENT

Gender-balanced teams

Presence of women in NTS teams assists, to a large extent, in gender-responsive data collection among women and girls residing in the potentially mined territories. It is optimal to create mixed-gender teams that consist of at least one man and one woman. How can we make this possible?

Job postings

First of all, it is important to make vacancy announcements equally accessible to both women and men, including vulnerable groups. If such advertisements contain visual content, then it is vital to ensure that both men and women from diverse groups are equally and fairly depicted. Moreover, it is highly recommended to include such visual content as added text to the advertisement to ensure its accessibility. Measures such as these will serve as an illustration of the fact that women and men can perform demining works equally well. It is important to ensure that job advertisements reach different women and men via relevant and accessible to them communications channels.

Sexual misconduct

If a risk of sexual exploitation and abuse or sexual harassment occurs in the team, its members should be aware of the organization's reporting mechanisms. Sessions on prevention of and protection from sexual misconduct must be delivered during the hiring process and on a regular basis afterwards (for all staff annually). It is important to ensure that women and men know how to report in case of such situations and are not afraid to do so.

● PRODUCTION OF GENDER-RESPONSIVE JOB ADVERTISEMENTS

Better targeting

To encourage different women to join demining teams, it is necessary to use communications channels that are the most accessible and mostly used to them. To do this, it is recommended to conduct a preliminary survey among the target audience, asking about their usual and preferable ways of obtaining information and obstacles that prevent them from applying for demining jobs. Once these barriers to access are identified, texts of the advertisements should be reviewed to make sure that they avoid any discriminatory or discouraging messages for women, and instead motivate them to apply.

Reaching out

It is highly recommended to distribute and promote these vacancies through women's NGOs and women's self-help groups.

In order to give a better understanding of the specifics of the work itself, it is good to conduct in-person meetings with women deminers (for instance, in the women organizations' premises). This serves two goals:

- Encourage women to apply for the demining jobs;
- Provides them with better understanding of the job itself through the eyes of other women.

Moreover, it will allow potential applicants to hear firsthand about the demining process, daily activities and motivation of women who are already involved in mine action and are doing it successfully.

Non-discrimination

It is necessary to ensure that there are no requirements in job advertisements that could negatively affect women's decision to apply or discriminate women based on their gender. To make this check, you should consider two questions:

- What qualifications and skills are definitely "must haves" for a prospective applicant?
- What qualifications and skills could be obtained during the organization's trainings?

The assumption that previous military training/experience is necessary to conduct NTS and TS is incorrect.

Skills needed for these operations can be acquired during special training provided by the mine action operator. This needs to be communicated clearly in advance in the vacancy announcement.

● GENDER-RESPONSIVE TEAM FORMATION

Social benefits

As early as at the application stage, women as well as men should have information on childcare leave, medical leave, annual leave, insurance, etc. It is essential to provide separate lodging for mixed-gender teams and take care of the different needs of women and men (including vulnerable groups). These gender responsive measures needs to be clearly stated in the job advertisements.

Gender parity

During the recruitment process, gender parity should be ensured in the interview panel itself (at least one woman and one man should participate). Applicants should be evaluated based on the same criteria regardless of their gender. It is crucial to ensure that no biases are applied in the selection process linked to the applicant's caregiving or other roles.

Data analysis

It is essential to record the number of men and women who apply to the vacancies and analyze these figures. For instance, if there are only a few applicants are women, it is necessary to review the methods of information dissemination for the vacancies and the content of the advertisements. Similarly, if an employee leaves the team, reasons for their decision needs to be analyzed. It is recommended to conduct an "exit interview" to understand whether gender discrimination or sexual harassment at the workplace are among the preconditions for such decision.

Capacity development

To ensure gender parity in the teams, equal access to training and equal opportunities for career development need to be provided to women and men. During the training, it is crucial to record the number of participating women and men and collect information on their age, (dis)ability and other social identifiers. This data can be used to further the advancement of women's inclusion, as well as engaging women with vulnerabilities. Also, it is necessary to ensure that both women and men receive equal training in gender-responsive communications. It will be beneficial for them when conducting NTS, EORE, community liaison, advocacy work and so on.



CONSIDERATIONS

- Women, men, boys and girls from diverse vulnerable groups may have different information about the potential locality of mines and ERW
- The same announcement about an open call to demining teams may be perceived differently by different men and women; thus, it is recommended to test it in a focus group discussion. It is advisable to conduct separate focus group discussions for different women and men
- Needs of women, men, boys and girls with different vulnerabilities vary, so it is important to take them into account during the planning stage and clearance prioritization to leave no one behind
- The completion ceremony should engage men and women who own the land and other women and men who represent the local community.



QUESTIONS FOR SELF-EXAMINATION

Data collection:

- Did we make sure that different women, men, boys, girls and people with different vulnerabilities shared their opinions during the NTS?
- Do we collect information on knowledge and attitudes towards mines and EO and their impact on the daily activities of women, men, boys, girls from diverse groups, especially the most vulnerable?
- Do we disaggregate collected data by age, sex, and categories of vulnerability?
- Have women and men in our teams completed a training on gender-responsive communications?

Employment:

- Is there gender parity in our teams? If not, what prevents us from employing more women to our teams?
- Are our job advertisements equally accessible to both women and men, including those from vulnerable groups?
- Are our job advertisements free from gender bias? Do they contain information that could affect the decision of women considering applying?
- Do we have mechanisms to prevent sexual exploitation/abuse and sexual harassment in the workplace? Do women and men know how to report in case such risks emerge?

Production of gender-responsive advertisements:

- Do our job advertisements provide comprehensive information on all the advantages of working in our team for both women and men?
- What communications channels are the most popular and the most accessible amongst both women and men? Do we use these channels to disseminate information about our vacancies?
- What might we define as barriers in our job advertisements that prevent women from applying? What can we do to eliminate them?
- What women's organizations can we cooperate with to disseminate information about our work and open calls to join our teams?
- What could be the incentives for women to apply to our open calls?

Gender-responsive team formation:

- Does our selection committee have an equal number of women and men?
- Do we record the number of women and men who apply to our vacancies?
- What about the women who decide to leave our teams? Do we conduct exit interviews with them to analyze if gender discrimination or any type of sexual misconduct are reasons contributing to their decision to leave their job?
- Have we provided separate accommodation for women and men who work in our teams? Have we taken care of the different needs of women and men employed by us (including people with vulnerabilities)?
- Do women and men in our teams have equal opportunities for professional development and career growth?

GUIDELINES ON GENDER MAINSTREAMING IN EXPLOSIVE ORDNANCE RISK EDUCATION (EORE)

Informing the public about risks from mines/EO is an important part of communication with the community. The core intention of this is raising awareness to the civilian population on the risks to one's health and life. Therefore, it is vital to take into consideration the different perceptions, experiences, and needs of women, men, girls and boys from diverse groups and the behavioural patterns of various target groups, including women and men from vulnerable groups residing in areas contaminated (or potentially contaminated) with mines and other explosives.

The inclusion and meaningful participation of women, men, girls and boys from diverse groups should be ensured throughout all stages of EORE. It is important to provide equal opportunities for employment and career growth for women and men in state agencies and civil society organizations that conduct EORE for the local population.

Ensuring gender mainstreaming in this mine action pillar includes the following:

● **DISAGGREGATION OF DATA BY SEX AND AGE**

Mine action operators do disaggregate data by sex and age during EORE sessions. But it is not only about quantitative indicators (how many women and men, girls and boys participated), but also about the qualitative ones. Data disaggregation should be done for all casualties, considering the circumstances and behaviours that caused them. This will help identify the riskiest behaviours and the most affected groups and will allow for the designing of tailored EORE programmes.

Data on risky behaviours

In Ukraine, data is often divided into the following categories of the general population: women, men, children. It is highly recommended to divide the “children” category into “girls” and “boys”, since communications messages for them might differ. Other factors like (dis)ability, ethnicity, internally displaced person (IDP) status, and others are also important to take into account. This breakdown of data helps to assess potential risks from mines and EO for various groups of women, men, boys and girls, and determine what actions of each target group could potentially lead to a casualty. Based on the conducted analysis of both quantitative and qualitative indicators, mine action operators should form relevant messages targeting a specific risk group.

Data on attitudes

In addition to data on casualties and risky behaviours, it is also necessary to collect data on people’s knowledge about and attitudes towards mines/EO. Namely, how women, men, girls and boys from diverse groups perceive risks and threats associated with them, and whether they know about contaminated areas. Depending on various social identifiers, vulnerability can vary even among members of the same family. Gender roles, different ages, and (dis)ability affect both women’s and men’s livelihoods activities, behaviours, and knowledge about EO. Thus, the messages formulated for one category of the population could be less relevant (or completely ineffective) for another one.

Collecting data on the knowledge and attitudes of the population (disaggregated by sex, age and other social identifiers) helps improve the development of educational programmes and tailored EORE session content. All materials created should accurately describe potentially risky behaviours, taking into account real experiences, and offering realistic solutions to situations in which such risks might occur. These materials should include images and situations relevant to adults and children of both sexes. When depicting women, men, boys and girls, it is also important not to reinforce existing stereotypes about gender roles. Rather, promote diversity, while paying attention to the most vulnerable groups.

● PRODUCTION AND DISSEMINATION OF GENDER-RESPONSIVE MESSAGES

Tailoring messages

Different messages can be more or less convincing for different target groups. A clear understanding of the knowledge, attitudes, behaviours, and risks from mines/EO for women, men, boys and girls helps to formulate well-tailored, gender-responsive messages that are relevant for each population group.

For instance, [according to the State Emergency Service \(SES\)](#), if women witness a casualty, they are more likely to rush to assist the victim. Even after they have received EORE and know what steps to take in such situations. These behavioural nuances must be taken into consideration both when developing messages and when conducting EORE sessions.

Collecting feedback

Before using these developed gender-responsive messages on a regular basis, they need to be tested in focus groups. It is necessary to collect feedback on their relevance, efficiency, aptness to the context from different women, men, girls and boys, including from vulnerable groups. During the testing, one must ensure the relevant representation of women, men, boys and girls from a diverse range of groups and arrange for their equal access to the materials to provide their feedback on them.

● DISTRIBUTION OF GENDER-RESPONSIVE MESSAGES

Targeting audiences

Regardless of how efficient the messages are, who conveys them and how they are conveyed them plays a key role in changing the behaviours of different target groups, including women and men from vulnerable groups. In public awareness sessions, it is necessary to engage women and men from diverse groups: age, (dis)ability, ethnicity, IDP status, etc.), including the most vulnerable, and take into account for which target audience the session is being held.

For instance, [according to the Association of Deminers of Ukraine](#), when working with military personnel, it is important for the speaker to have the appropriate experience and authority/rank among them. In this way, trust as well as peer-to-peer communication are being formed.

For each target audience, it is critical to select and involve women and men who are role models for them. Showing business or sports celebrities, local community members or mine/EO survivors will have a different impact on different target groups. Therefore, it is important to consider who will be the most appropriate speaker respectively for women, men, boys and girls.

Effective tools

Communications channels should also be chosen with consideration of different interests and needs of women, men, boys and girls from diverse groups. Leaflets, billboards, TV/radio messages, printed media, social media posts are not equally relevant to women, men, boys and girls. Each target group has their preferences, most accessible, and most used communications channels. It is worth making those channels a priority.

● EMPLOYMENT

Recruiting teams

Gender parity should be sought among trainers who conduct EORE sessions. Open calls need to be equally accessible for women and men. Moreover, women should be encouraged to apply for these vacancies. To make this happen, conditions that are suitable for the different women and men, including vulnerable women and men, must be created (for example, by providing separate lodging). These details should be mentioned in job postings. In addition, job announcements should contain additional information that may influence women's decision on whether to apply. For instance, regarding business trips, additional vacation days for childcare, etc.

Equal inclusion

Opportunities for professional growth and career advancement must be equal for women and men. During the training sessions, it is crucial to record the number of women and men from diverse groups who participated, and use this data to further enhance the inclusion of women, including women with different vulnerabilities, into EORE.

● PARTNERSHIPS

Cooperation and involvement of the local community helps to build trust and enhance the distribution of information among women, men, boys and girls from diverse groups using different channels of communications tailored to a variety of audiences. Thus, it is strongly recommended for mine action operators to prepare EORE trainers from local communities, training both women and men as future trainers and ensure they possess the necessary knowledge of gender issues in mine action.

It is also advisable to disseminate information about the recruitment and EORE materials through local women's, religious, youth and educational organizations, initiatives and grassroots women and men activists from different groups. This will help to reach out to more diverse target groups of women, men, boys and girls. Moreover, the experience of these organizations/activists in communicating with women, men, boys and girls will be a valuable asset in formulating convincing, gender-responsive and accessible messages and changing the risky behaviours of target groups.

● MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The views of different women, men, boys and girls, including from vulnerable groups, should be taken into account during all stages: in the planning and development of EORE materials, implementation of EORE activities, as well as in monitoring the progress and evaluation of the impact of EORE. It is essential to provide gender-responsive messages and ensure equal access to materials for women, men, boys and girls from diverse groups, including those with disabilities, thus, changing behaviours of target groups. In addition to quantitative indicators (age, sex, (dis)ability of participants, etc.), qualitative indicators should also be established. For example, an indicator of gender responsiveness of the developed messages for the different target audiences.



CONSIDERATIONS

- Women, men, boys and girls from diverse groups may perceive risks from mines/EO in a different way, as well as behave differently when facing a threat
- EORE messages should be gender-responsive and adapted for women, men, boys and girls. It applies to women, men, boys and girls from different vulnerable groups and with different education needs too. All messages should be illustrated with examples that are relevant to a specific target group
- Even members of the same family may assess mines/EO risks differently. Therefore, involving one family member in EORE session is often insufficient
- When both parents are informed about mines/EO risks, they are more likely to protect their children from them.



QUESTIONS FOR SELF-EXAMINATION

Planning:

- Do we have data on casualties (including circumstances and behaviour that caused them) with, at least, a breakdown by age and gender of victims?
- Do we have data, disaggregated by age, sex and other social identifiers, on attitudes towards mines and other EO?

Message production and dissemination:

- Do our messages take into account the major beliefs and habits of specific target groups, including those of vulnerable women, men, girls and boys?
- Do our messages depict women, men, boys and girls equally and fairly? Do we reinforce any gender stereotypes with our illustrations and examples?
- Who are role models of our target groups? Who are they willing to listen to?
- What communications channels are most often used and are most accessible for different women, men, boys and girls, including from diverse vulnerable groups residing in areas contaminated (or potentially contaminated) with mines and EO?

Employment:

- Do our EORE teams consist of an equal number of women and men?
- What should we do to recruit more women to the teams?
- Do women and men in our teams have equal opportunities for professional development and career growth?

Partnership:

- How do we involve the local women, men, boys and girls, including from vulnerable categories, in different stages of EORE? How can their involvement be enhanced?
- What local organizations/initiatives/activists can we partner with to ensure wider access to our materials for women, men, boys and girls, including those with specific learning needs who reside in the community?

Monitoring and evaluation:

- Do we take into consideration the different views of women, men, boys and girls when monitoring and evaluating our EORE activities?
- How do we use results of monitoring and evaluation to improve our EORE activities and tailor our messages to various groups?
- Does our monitoring contain qualitative indicators? In particular, an indicator of the gender responsiveness of the developed messages for different audiences?

GUIDELINES ON GENDER MAINSTREAMING IN VICTIM ASSISTANCE



Victim assistance (VA) includes both the collection of data on casualties and their consequences, and actions aimed at supporting mine/ERW survivors. Casualties involving mines and unexploded ordnance (UXO) might have different consequences on women's, girls', boys' and men's physical and mental health, their economic welfare, socialization in the community, and the full realization of their rights and opportunities.

While men tend to make up a larger proportion of direct victims, indirect victims are often women. These are oftentimes the wives, mothers, sisters and daughters of mine/ERW survivors, or people killed by mines/ERW. It is the women in these cases who bear the burden of taking care of the victim and providing for the family (if the direct victim was a breadwinner).

Men and women might react differently to trauma obtained as a result of a casualty. Therefore, provisions of psychological and psychosocial aid should be gender-responsive and inclusive of their potentially different needs and behavioral patterns. It is a pivotal aspect of gender mainstreaming in VA.

Ensuring gender mainstreaming in this mine action pillar includes the following:

● GENDER-RESPONSIVE DATA COLLECTION

Needs analysis

The different needs of affected women, men, girls, boys from diverse groups, including those from the most vulnerable populations can vary significantly. For example, in some cases, women need other medical procedures and assistance than men affected by mines and UXO do. This applies, for instance, to reproductive health. As such, the disaggregation of data by sex, age and other identifiers helps to adapt VA to the needs of different women, men, girls, boys, including vulnerable groups, affected by mines/ERW.

Data collection

Data on the socio-economic [status of the victim \(direct and indirect\)](#) and the assistance already provided (or to be provided) need to be collected. Such data will enable better planning to facilitate faster rehabilitation of victims and support their immediate circles. Such information should be obtained directly from the victims affected by mines/ERW and their families. Gender-responsive data collection will make VA more substantial and efficient for affected women, men, girls, boys, including those from vulnerable groups.

● GENDER-RESPONSIVE ASSISTANCE

Tailored support

The provision of medical and psychological aid to women, men, girls and boys from diverse groups who have become mine/ERW victims might vary. Moreover, it is important to underline that casualties from mines/UXO bear different consequences for women, men, boys and girls, including those from vulnerable groups. It is crucial to ensure that services are gender-responsive and inclusive and do not discriminate based on gender, age, vulnerability, ethnicity or the social status of the victim.

Psychological support

The loss of working capacity, as a result of a casualty, could affect women and men differently. An additional factor to consider is having the status of the family's breadwinner. Its loss often leads to depression, which requires intensive long-term psychological therapy. When considering the most common masculine gender-roles, it can be established that men are usually less likely than women to ask for such help. Moreover, men and women are willing to share their feelings to varying degrees about their experienced casualty and their life afterwards. This willingness, or reluctance to talk about their feelings and emotions directly affects their capacity to recover. In order to assist in faster trust building between the victims and VA providers, it is recommended to appoint a therapist of the same gender.

A special emphasis could be placed on the formation of separate women's and men's self-help groups on psychosocial support, if necessary. Collective support in a peer-to-peer format to a large extent contributes to psychological and psychosocial rehabilitation, as well as the social inclusion of mine/ERW victims.

● ASSISTING INDIRECT VICTIMS

Vocational training

As noted above, indirect victims of mines/ERW are more often women. They require psychological help no less than the direct victims. Financial and technical help often as well. If a direct victim was a breadwinner, then an indirect victim must find new or additional sources of income. In such cases, indirect victims should have access to vocational training and other types of education for income generation. It is necessary to organize such opportunities for women and men (microloans to start their own business, entrepreneurship schools, etc.) and/or inform indirect victims about them.

Caregiving responsibilities

Also, training on rehabilitation and taking care for the victims may be necessary for family members. It should be ensured that they receive this training, regardless of their gender, so that the burden of taking care for the victim is shared fairly in the family.

Challenges

VA is often overlooked and not prioritized in Ukraine. According to the [gender analysis of humanitarian mine action, conducted by UNDP](#), the most tangible support is provided to indirect victims by NGO Demining Solutions. Employees of the organization raise funds to assist the wives of those killed by mines and ERW.

● ADVOCACY

Leaving no one behind

To raise the issue of the risks from mines/ERW, as well to protect the rights of victims, the voices of different women and men from diverse groups should be raised. Gender-responsive advocacy is required for the following:

- addressing different needs of women, men, girls and boys from diverse groups;
- dismantling gender stereotypes; protecting the rights of victims;
- eliminating discrimination of vulnerable groups, namely women and men with disabilities;
- providing them with opportunities for training and employment;
- ensuring barrier-free access to public spaces.

Engaging audiences

The gender-responsive inclusion of different women and men can be covered via various communications channels (including online platforms and live meetings), making sure that men and women from diverse groups are equally involved in advocacy initiatives. Their engagement may significantly contribute to their psychological rehabilitation and reintegration, as it gives them an opportunity to share their experience and warn others against engaging in risky behaviours.

● EMPLOYMENT

Gender aware teams

This issue was addressed in detail in previous chapters. Here we can emphasize once again the importance of gender parity among physicians, their knowledge of gender-related issues in VA, and the selection of therapists according to the different needs of different women, men, boys, girls, including those from vulnerable groups.

Diversity

Priority should be given to the employment and involvement of mine/ERW survivors (different women and men) in humanitarian mine action projects. Work in this direction will contribute to positive developments in two mine action pillars: VA and EORE. Another important aspect that should be prioritized is training women and men with disabilities who have suffered as a result of mine/UXO casualty, with the possibility of further employment.



CONSIDERATIONS

- Women, men, girls and boys from diverse groups react differently to casualties that have occurred to those around them or in their family. Therefore, they have various needs and requests for help
- Mine/ERW casualties bear different physical, psychological, economic, and social consequences for women and men, and girls and boys from diverse groups
- Women are more likely to bear the burden of taking care for the victim and/or are forced to look for new sources of income to provide for their family
- At the same time, if a woman becomes a victim of mine/UXO, she is more likely to face indifference or stigmatization from the community
- Men are less likely to seek psychological help, even when they are in a dire need of it as a result of a mine/UXO casualty.



QUESTIONS FOR SELF-EXAMINATION

Gender-responsive data collection:

- Do we disaggregate mine/ERW casualty data by sex, age, and other social identifiers?
- Do we record the socio-economic status of the victim and their particular needs?
- How do we collect this information? Only from direct, or indirect victims as well (inner circle)?

Gender-responsive assistance:

- How do we adapt our help to the special needs of women and men from diverse groups affected by mines/ERW?
- When planning assistance, do we take into consideration that the casualty bears different consequences for the mental and financial condition of women and men survivors and their inner circle?
- Do we ensure that same-gender specialists work with the victims?
- Do we know where to refer different women and men, including those from vulnerable groups, in case of reproductive health or other issues?
- Do we analyze the need for the creation of self-help groups for different women and men who are mine/ERW survivors and facilitate its set-up, if necessary?

Assisting indirect victims:

- What do we do to support indirect victims?
- What options for financial support can we offer/launch for women who have become indirect victims (microloans, vocational training, etc.)?
- What options for psychological support can we offer to them (consultations with a therapist, self-help groups, etc.)?

Advocacy:

- Do we involve women and men from diverse groups affected by mines/ERW equally in our advocacy activities?
- Do we raise issues on the elimination of discrimination, barrier-free access, and the employment of women and men from diverse groups, especially those with disabilities as a result of a mine/UXO casualty?

Employment:

- Do we ensure gender parity among physicians who work with victims?
- Do we provide indirect survivors (mainly women) affected by mines/ERW with opportunities for vocational training?
- Do we set employment of these women as a priority? If not, then what needs to be done to make progress in this direction?
- What prevents us from involving mine/ERW women survivors in our projects and activities? How can we eliminate these obstructions?

GENDER MAINSTREAMING IN ADVOCACY



Advocacy in mine action should include the following: reaching out to diverse groups of women and men to inform them about areas contaminated with mines and ERW; mobilizing resources for clearance; raising awareness about the different needs of women, men, boys and girls, including those from vulnerable groups, those affected by mines/ERW; and promoting their rights. Advocacy efforts to a large extent define the level of engagement of the local and international partners in the development of humanitarian demining.

In Ukraine, women from diverse groups, especially the most vulnerable, affected by mines and UXO, as well as women deminers are often invisible in advocacy activities. They are not sufficiently represented in communications campaigns, discussions, and other humanitarian demining advocacy initiatives as well as activities in support of mine/ERW survivors' rights. This creates an illusion that mine contamination does not meaningfully affect women and does not pose severe risks to the lives and health of women.

More data and stories are required from women, and girls from diverse groups, especially those most vulnerable and women deminers in order to properly demonstrate the entirety of the current mine/ERW problem in eastern Ukraine and specific gender-based risks that women and girls are affected by.

Ensuring gender mainstreaming in this mine action pillar includes the following:

● **DISSEMINATION OF GENDER-RESPONSIVE MESSAGES**

Gender and intersectionality

Achieving gender equality requires the understanding and addressing of the different challenges that women, girls, boys and men from different groups face in accessing equal rights and opportunities. Women and young girls remain disproportionately represented among the poorest and most excluded members of the population. Indeed, women face discrimination in access to work, education, economic assets and participation in private and public decision making. Also, they are at a higher risk of gender-based violence.

Mine action is a male-dominated sector, characterised in many contexts by a strong involvement of security forces and an underlying military mindset. In addition, mine action takes place in environments where women, girls, boys and men have different roles and responsibilities that may impact their mobility, exposure to explosive risks, decision-making power, and access to services and resources. Understanding the interplay between gender and other aspects of diversity ensures that mine action does not unintentionally sustain nor exacerbate existing inequalities. Therefore, gender mainstreaming in mine action is the continuous process of assessing the differentiated implications for women, girls, boys and men and taking into account their specific needs in all activities. It is essential, so that mine action benefit them in the diversity of their circumstances and statuses equally.

Targeted communications

It is important to ensure that messages about risks and consequences of mines/UXO are equally accessible to women, men, boys and girls, including vulnerable groups. To do this, access, preferences, specific needs and habits in information consumption of each target audience need to be studied (through focus groups discussions, key informant interviews, surveys, desk review, etc.). Then, the most accessible and commonly used communications channels should be chosen for conveying advocacy messages to a particular target audience following the principle “leave no one behind”.

Representative content

All brochures and other information materials should illustrate diverse groups of women and girls, men and boys, featuring relevant statistics and stories from specific representatives of vulnerable groups. Mine action applies equally to women, men, girls and boys, including the vulnerable groups, and this needs to be reflected in all materials (images, video, texts, etc.).

No victimizing or patronizing

All communications (texts, speeches, visuals, etc.) should avoid victimizing or patronizing women and girls and portraying them as powerless victims that are incapable of improving their lives. Instead, it is important to give women voices by using their quotes and stories when describing traumatic situations, showing their strength and resilience; showcasing their journey of overcoming struggles they face; depicting them as active change makers; acknowledging structural gender inequalities that affect women's lives.

No gender stereotypes

It is important to focus both on equal and fair visibility of women and men, avoiding reinforcing rigid gender stereotypes (e.g., only men work as deminers in Ukraine). We should analyze how gender roles and gender stereotypes affect the perceptions and experiences of women, men, girls, and boys from diverse groups, and portray women and men in a variety of roles, especially those that challenge existing gender stereotypes and expected gender roles. Stories of such women and men should be put in the spotlight.

To dispel the myth that demining is a "men's job", it is pivotal to underline the contribution of women deminers, women paramedics, and women EORE trainers make to humanitarian demining. This should be emphasized in printed/online visual, audio, and video materials and during the meetings and discussions.

It is important to use non-stereotypical colors (avoid pink and blue) to represent women and men in materials and portray diversity of experiences (the impact of intersecting identifiers like gender, age, (dis)ability, ethnicity, IDP status, etc.) and shapes (e.g., diverse icons in infographics).

Gender-responsive language

Using gender-responsive language is a key in delivering messages in a non-discriminatory way. It is advised to use “man” and “woman” instead of “male” and “female”, as the latter terms describe only biological differences and do not acknowledge the socially-constructed roles of women and men.

You can find more on creating and disseminating gender-responsive messages in the chapter on gender mainstreaming in EORE.

● FOCUS ON THE DIFFERENT IMPACT OF EO ON DIVERSE GROUPS

Sex-disaggregated data

In any communications, facts, statistics and real-life cases speak louder than general descriptions of the significance of the problem. The same stands for mine action. Gender-responsive data collection (data disaggregated by sex, age, (dis)ability, ethnicity, IDP status, etc.) helps to better demonstrate the different impact of mines/ERW on women, men, boys and girls, including those from vulnerable groups, and their most pressing needs and experiences as well as the specific gender-based risks they could be prone to.

Gender-specific impact

Advocacy messages should highlight specific problems faced by women and men from diverse target groups, and convey this information to decision makers, legislators and donors. For example, problems with drinking water due to a mined water pipeline. Or the inability of IDPs to return home due to the presence of UXO in their premises.

Diverse contributions

In communications campaigns and advocacy initiatives, it is important to emphasize the stories of women and girls affected by mines/UXO, as well as the personnel who gets involved in humanitarian demining and contribute to its progress (women deminers, leaders of self-help groups, EORE trainers, etc.). Then, advocacy will be gender-responsive and more efficient.

● ENSURING GENDER PARITY DURING EVENTS AND CAMPAIGNS

Equal participation

The majority of organizations, involved in humanitarian demining collect data on the number of women and men who attend thematic events (panel discussions, training, etc.) and strive to maintain gender balance. A good practice is to set specific targets for gender parity, with a minimum expectation of at least 30% of participants to be women, ideally striving to make it a 50/50 division of women and men at each given event. The same practice should be integrated when choosing event speakers. It is especially recommended to involve women, including from vulnerable groups, affected by mines/ERW.

Fair visibility

It is important to pay attention not only to the equal representation of women and men, but also to ensure that their fair visibility does not reinforce gender stereotypes. More women should be showcased as experts and leaders to be more visible in the mine action sector, which is currently dominated by men.

Engaging locals

Local women and men from diverse groups (in particular, women's organizations, women and men from self-help groups) should be engaged as active contributors to local events with the participation of partners and donors. For example, it is appropriate to invite women who are directly or indirectly affected by mines/ERW to the discussions on VA. This will help to hear firsthand about the different needs and challenges faced by women and girls who live in the highly contaminated by mines/ERW locations along the "contact line".

Women ambassadors

Another important issue is the involvement of women in the role of humanitarian demining ambassadors at the national level. Organizations that develop information campaigns should consider who could be such an ambassador among women.

Advocacy could be strengthened by a well-known influential woman that would speak out about the problems of women, men, girls and boys, including those from the vulnerable groups, affected by mines/ERW. Such advocacy will have a greater impact on lawmakers and the media. Nevertheless, when choosing such an ambassador, first, it is necessary to study the preferences of the target audiences and their willingness to listen to this particular influencer.

● EMPLOYMENT

Gender parity

In all positions, including those which are advocacy-related, gender parity must be sought after. In previous chapters, it has been repeatedly stated that all job advertisements should be available to both women and men from diverse groups, and that gender-based discrimination is unacceptable. Moreover, all necessary measures should be taken to encourage women to apply for the advertised vacancies. It is important to ensure that women receive their needed gender-responsive support and an inclusive working environment.

Gender awareness in the teams

Trainings on gender concepts should be provided to all employees holding different positions at all levels. They need to have, at least, a basic understanding of gender issues in mine action and possess the necessary skills for gender mainstreaming in their field of work. This should be done through including relevant competencies and responsibilities in the Terms of reference (ToR) for postings and asking role-appropriate questions to assess gender competencies of applicants during job interviews. In addition, strategic actions to increase gender awareness among personnel should be ensured (induction for new employees, role-specific training, etc.).

More details on the development of gender-responsive vacancy announcements and candidate selection could be found in the previous chapters.

● PARTNERSHIP BUILDING

Effective gender-responsive advocacy involves active cooperation with local organizations, national authorities, international institutions, and donors. When working with national authorities, it is important to support them in integrating gender equality considerations into their policy making (strategies, action plans, reports, data collection, evaluations, advocacy, etc.). Particular attention should be paid to women's organizations, women's self-help groups, and women-led initiatives. Working together on gender mainstreaming will help to achieve more tangible results as the voice of several organizations will always be louder than the voice of one, and allows different women and men to speak up on their needs. Together with partner organizations, it is necessary to identify best practices, success stories in advocacy/development of gender-responsive messaging, and disseminate them through diverse communications channels.



CONSIDERATIONS

- All advocacy messages should be gender-responsive and inclusive of the interests of different women, men, boys and girls, including those from the vulnerable groups
- Every target group has their preferable and most used communications channels. It is necessary to focus your advocacy efforts on them
- Women, men, boys and girls, including those from the vulnerable groups, might perceive the same message differently
- The lack of mentions of women and girls, including those from the vulnerable groups in the information materials creates an illusion that the problem does not affect them. This myth is harmful and needs to be dispelled by including texts and visual materials about different women and girls in all communications products
- Specific stories of specific women and men, especially from the vulnerable groups, have a stronger advocacy effect than general descriptions of the challenges that different women and men face
- The joint efforts of several organizations in distributing advocacy messages may significantly increase their effectiveness and lead to the desired results on the basis of “leaving no one behind”.



QUESTIONS FOR SELF-EXAMINATION

Dissemination of gender-responsive messages:

- Are our messages equally accessible by and available for different women, men, boys and girls, including from the vulnerable groups?
- Do we have sufficient knowledge about diverse experiences and needs of women, men, boys and girls that we work for? What can we do to know their needs and preferences better?
- Do we avoid victimizing and patronizing women, men and women from the vulnerable groups?
- Do our materials contain gender-responsive data, the portrayal of women, girls and their stories?
- Do we use gender-responsive language?
- Do we overcome the existing stereotypes about gender roles in our advocacy messages? Do we use non-stereotypical colors and visuals?
- Do we avoid discriminating against women and girls in our messages, uses of communication channels, and advocacy interventions?

Focus on the different impact of EO on diverse groups:

- Do we illustrate the specific problems faced by specific target groups with sex-disaggregated data in our advocacy messages?
- Do we collect and distribute stories of women and girls affected by mines/UXO showing their strength and resilience?
- Do we raise public awareness about the work of women in our demining teams?

Ensuring gender parity during events and campaigns:

- Do we continue to seek gender balance among participants and speakers at our events?
- Do we create a gender-responsive and inclusive environment at our events?
- Do we ensure fair visibility of women and men that does not reinforce gender stereotypes?
- Do we ensure the participation of women's organizations and women's self-help groups in our events and give them the floor?
- Which well-known Ukrainian women can we involve in our advocacy activities to strengthen messaging about the importance of mine action?
- Which popular Ukrainian women are our target audiences willing to listen to? If there is no such information, how can we collect it?

Employment:

- Do we maintain gender parity in our teams, particularly among those who work directly with advocacy?
- Are our job advertisements equally accessible to women and men?
- What are we doing to encourage women to apply to our vacancies?
- Do we ensure employees have an understanding of, and skills for gender mainstreaming?

Partnership building:

- What organizations and women's initiatives are we already cooperating with to strengthen gender mainstreaming?
- How do we help national/regional/local authorities to integrate gender equality considerations into their policy making?
- What organizations (women's organizations and self-help groups in particular) should we join forces with?
- What are we doing to strengthen our gender-responsive advocacy messages and disseminate them through more communications channels?

