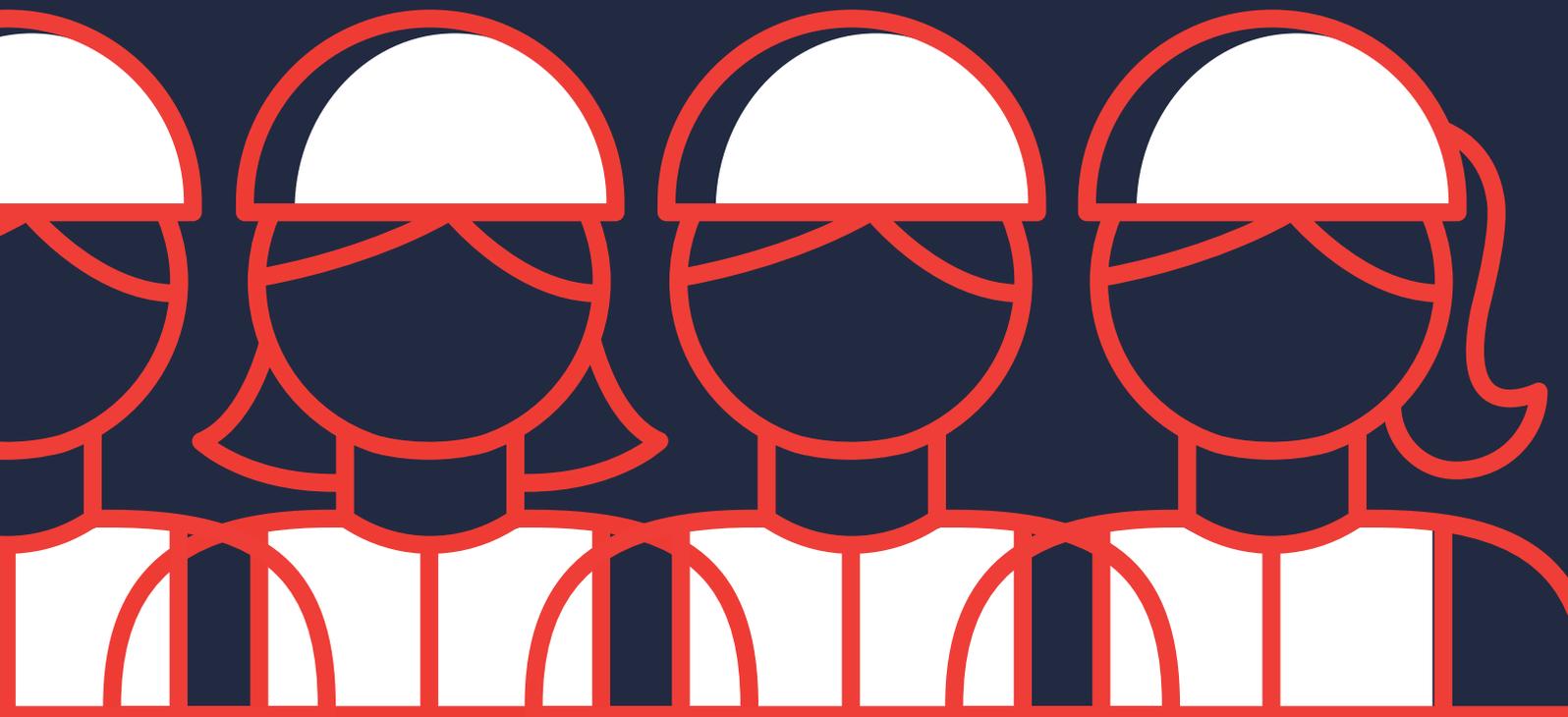


ANALYSIS OF GENDER MAINSTREAMING IN MINE ACTION BY KEY ACTORS IN UKRAINE



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Acronyms and Abbreviations

BAC	Battle Area Clearance
DRC/DDG	Danish Refugee Council/Danish Demining Group
EO	Explosive Ordnance
EORE	Explosive Ordnance Risk Education
ERW	Explosive Remnants of War
c	Swiss Foundation for Mine Action
GCA	Government-Controlled Areas
GICHD	Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining
HMA	Humanitarian Mine Action
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
IM	Information Management
IMAS	International Mine Action Standards
IMSMA	Information Management System for Mine Action
IMWG	Information Management Work Group
KAP	Knowledge, Attitude and Practices
KII	Key Informant Interview
MA	Mine Action
MACF	Mine Action Charity Fund
MoD	Ministry of Defence of Ukraine
MVA	Mine Victim Assistance
NGCA	Non-Government Controlled Areas
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NMAA	National Mine Action Authority
NMAC	National Mine Action Centre
NTSG	National Technical Standards and Guidance
OSCE	Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe
PSS	Psychosocial Support
RMAC	Regional Mine Action Centre
SC	Sub-Cluster
SES	State Emergency Service of Ukraine
SSTS	State Special Transport Service
UDA	Ukrainian Demining Association
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UN RPP	United Nations Recovery and Peacebuilding Programme
VA	Victim Assistance

Introduction

Since the armed conflict outbreak in eastern Ukraine, mine action in Ukraine has been facing several major challenges. Due to a delay with the establishment of the National Mine Action Authority (NMAA), there has been a lack of coordination within all mine action stakeholders. Moreover, mine action legislation¹ was fully adopted only recently. Taking into consideration these preconditions, building gender-responsive mine action was of secondary importance. However, having the legislation and NMAA in place now, mine action stakeholders are more willing to discuss these issues and work on eradicating obstacles that women and girls might face.

Legislation

Noteworthy that until recently women in Ukraine were not allowed to work as deminers. Demining was in the list of 458 so called “dangerous or arduous” professions prohibited by the Ministry of Health of Ukraine for women to engage in. It is only in 2017, when the Ministry abolished its order No.256 banning women from being employed in professions, which were considered damaging to women’s health, mine action operators were allowed to hire women. Apart from the employment issues, gendered differences in the Ukrainian mine action relate to the following: career opportunities for deminers; delivery of Explosive Ordnance Risk Education (EORE) for targeted population; women’s representation in collected data; access to medical care and psychosocial support (PSS); consequences of casualties for direct/indirect victims; reintegration into society after casualties.

Gendered differences in mine action

It is important to take into account that women, men, girls and boys may be affected differently by mines/explosive remnants of war (ERW). Moreover, EORE and medical care must be adapted and tailored to specific target audiences. According to the latest statistics, provided by HALO Trust and Danish Refugee Council-Demining Group (DRC-DDG), men and boys more often fall victims of mines/ERW in eastern Ukraine.

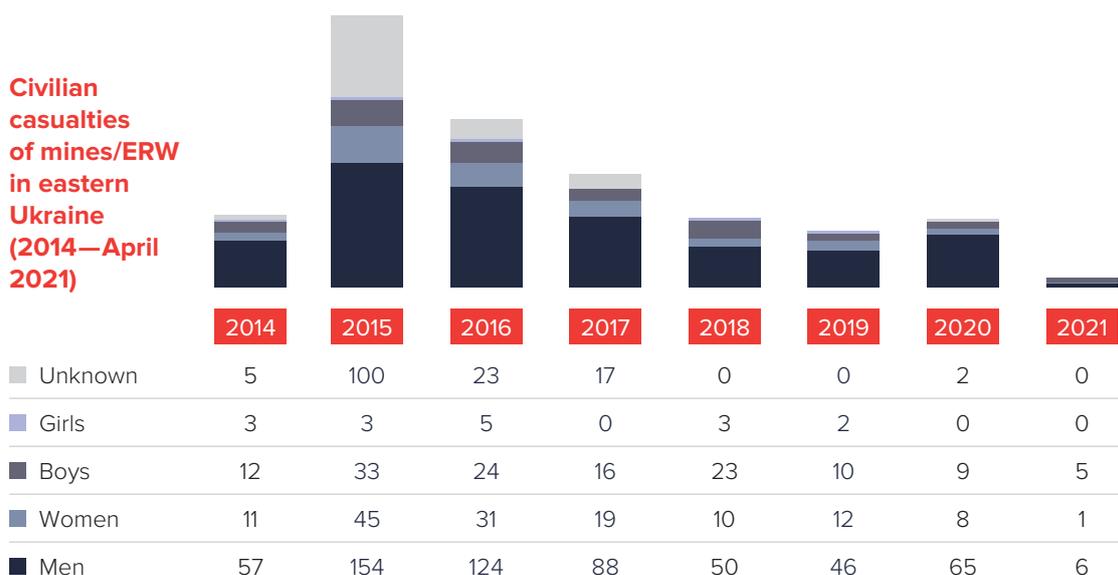


Figure 1. Statistics provided by HALO Trust

¹ Law “On Mine Action in Ukraine”: <https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/2642-VIII#Text>

As for the adult population, this is due to traditional gender roles (farming, collection of firewood etc) usually performed by men and/or economic necessity (collection of scrap material, for example)².

For minors, curiosity that goes along with recklessness are often stated as the major reasons of casualties³. In general, according to the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), casualties are usually linked to picking up, handling, or playing with explosive ordnance (EO). “Mishandling or attempting to dismantle” EO led to death or injury in 40% of cases with men and nearly 90% of cases with boys. Overall, men are 2.5 times more likely to be injured by mines/ERW.⁴

Even though women and girls are less likely to engage in unsafe behaviours, they are an important target audience to convey EORE messages and promote them in their families and community at large. It is also important to take into consideration that women more often become indirect victims of mines/ERW. For instance, when the main wage earner (a man) is handicapped in result of a casualty. Medical and caring costs usually significantly exceed financial capacities of a household. These socioeconomic consequences, as well as emotional burden that indirect victims have to bear, remain less visible/countable and are rarely paid attention to by mine action actors.

All parties should “ensure that mine clearance and mine awareness programmes take into account the special needs of women and girls”, as stated in the Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security. The 1995 Beijing Platform recommends to governments to “recognise that women and children are particularly affected by the indiscriminate use of antipersonnel landmines” (§ 143e) and “promote assistance in mine clearance, notably by facilitating, in respect of the means of mine-clearing, the exchange of information, the transfer of technology and the promotion of scientific research” (§ 143iii). The Ukrainian mine action legislation, however, does not include any special provisions related to the aforementioned statements. Moreover, there is no mention of gender considerations that should be taken into account by mine action operators.

Victim assistance and data disaggregation

The current version of mine action legislation foresees medical, psychological, professional and social assistance to all victims of explosive ordnance, without considering different needs and experiences of women, men, girls and boys from diverse groups. However, as of now, there are no mechanisms of victim assistance (VA) implementation. Therefore, we can observe a serious gap in service provision for both women and men who have suffered from mines/ERW. Since there are no clearly stated regulations on the national level, local administrations might or might not provide aforementioned services.

Another issue to pay attention to is absence of coordinated collection of data on the EO victims in the east of Ukraine disaggregated by sex, age and other markers of identity. According to Landmine Monitor, victim casualty data from Ukraine “is not considered to be comprehensive”⁵. There is no national database with disaggregated information that could be accessed by all mine action stakeholders. They conduct their own information collection separately and disaggregate obtained data when possible. However, they are often unwilling to share collected data with other operators. Therefore, there is no clarity on victims and their needs depending on sex, age, and other markers of identity. Moreover, no coordinated action takes place to make sure that no one is left behind and needs of women and girls are taken into account.

Since there is no comprehensive victim information system, it is “likewise impossible to accurately quantify the cost of conflict-related disabilities to individuals, the economy, and society at large”, according to the research conducted by DRC-DDG⁶. Thus, it is also challenging to assess gendered differences in aid provision, as compensation and assistance for victims of mines and ERW are questionable for both sexes.

² Monitoring and Research Committee, ICBL-CMC Governance Board (2020).

Landmine Monitor, (22). <http://www.the-monitor.org/media/3168934/LM2020.pdf>

³ Ibid.

⁴ OSCE (2020), Thematic Report: Civilian Casualties in the Conflict-affected Regions of Eastern Ukraine 1 January 2017-15 September 2020, dated November 2020.

⁵ Monitoring and Research Committee, ICBL-CMC Governance Board (2020).

Landmine Monitor, (22). <http://www.the-monitor.org/media/3168934/LM2020.pdf>

According to DRC-DDG, every second victim of EO receives psychosocial support (PSS). It might be a part of generic psychological assistance, therapy at hospitals, sanatoriums during rehabilitation etc. In case of men's injury, women may feel overwhelmed shouldering both paid job and unpaid domestic and care work, while men may feel like "not manly enough" due to forced dependence and inability to be providers for their families. However, men survivors are rarely looking for PSS, as they often perceive acknowledging this need as a weakness. Also, PSS and other forms of VA usually don't address different necessities and experiences of women and men, as well as girls and boys often, labelling children as a homogenous group, paying no attention to different consequences of casualties for them. Thus, more research is required to assess delivery and access to PSS for men and boys as well as women and girls as indirect victims of mines and ERW.

⁶ Mashchenko, K., Shymanchuk, T., Stoiev, O. and Vovk, N (2020). Assessing Ukraine's Victim Assistance Capacities. *Journal of Conventional Weapons Destruction*, 24(2), 42-48. <https://commons.lib.jmu.edu/cisr-journal/vol24/iss2/13/>

Stakeholder Analysis

01. National Mine Action Authority (NMAA)

The employment process in NMAA has not started yet. The state body is currently undergoing a series of validations. It is expected that the agency will be ready to start the employment process in June 2021 and finalise it by the end of the year. Majority of employees will be recruited from the State Special Transport Service (SSTS). Yet, some vacancies will be open for external candidates as well.

NMAA will serve as a quality assurance body and, thus, will have several monitoring and evaluation teams. According to a NMAA representative, gender equality considerations will be included in the internal documentation; gender equality will be ensured in the hiring process. It is foreseen that more women will be employed by NMAA, since it is not a military, but a civil authority. Gender equality recommendations will be a part of the national mine action standards as well.

As in all state agencies of Ukraine, vacancies at NMAA will not be gender specific. There will be no encouragement for a particular gender to apply. Announcements for NMAA will have descriptions on required qualifications and physical training (if necessary). It is important to note that demining/engineering education and experience in these fields are among the core competencies expected from the future candidates.

Until now data, obtained from key informants and beneficiaries, has been disaggregated by age and sex. Victim data is disaggregated only by age though (adults vs children). The NMAA representative believes that there is no need to make further distinctions as VA is delivered to all in the same way; there is no need to pay attention to different experiences and needs of women, men, girls, and boys.

02. State Special Transport Service (SSTS)

Out of 70 deminers working in this state agency only 3 are women (4%). Employed women have received all necessary training for demining, yet do not participate in Technical Survey (TS) and clearance activities. While based in the military unit, they are in charge of information management, paying infrequent visits to the field to participate in Non-Technical Survey (NTS) and EORE activities. SSTS collects data on beneficiaries and victims of mines/ERW, yet it is not disaggregated by age and sex.

Women have separate facilities and housing in the military unit. There is no code of conduct, internal gender equality policy or mechanism of reporting in case of sexual harassment. Yet it is stated and emphasized by a SSTS representative that due to “high respect to women deminers who provide psychological support to other team members” no cases of sexual harassment have taken place within the team. Yet there is no evidence provided.

In terms of prospects for more women to join the team, there is currently no capacity to employ more people. Moreover, there is a belief, expressed by the SSTS representative, that women won't apply for such vacancies, since they “do not want to work in the field”. Another reason outlined is that there is no financial incentive for women to become deminers.

03. State Emergency Service (SES)

Mine action division of SES has no gender equality policy. However, there is a SES unit that deals particularly with gender equality across the whole agency. There are 50 deminers employed by SES nationwide. Women constitute 10% of the deminers. One of the demining divisions (in Kyiv Oblast) is led by a woman. A second woman to lead the unit was appointed in Donetsk oblast. However, she refused to take the position.

Women employees are members of NTS teams and are, overall, in charge of the following: organising demining operations, informing population about mines/ERW, reporting on casualties etc. Clearance operations are conducted only by men. There were cases when women joined teams for demining training. Yet, according to a SES representative, they withdrew due to “unsuitable for women conditions”

(accommodation etc).

In EORE materials, women, girls, men, and boys are equally represented as characters. All data on beneficiaries is disaggregated during NTS and EORE activities. When data cannot be obtained in the field (for instance, in an area close to the contact line), SES uses the methodology developed and shared by HALO Trust to make assumptions on the number of women, girls, men and boys that reside in that locality.

It is important to take into account a gendered difference in behaviour that has been outlined and stressed out by the SES representative. Regardless of all recommendations on actions in case of witnessing a casualty, women are more likely to disregard them and rush to the victim. Thus, more attention must be paid to tailoring EORE content to women to ensure that they follow the rules and call 101/police instead of risking their own lives.

SES offers PSS to all victims of emergencies on demand. However, there are no cases of mine victims seeking such assistance from SES.

04. Ministry for Reintegration of the Temporarily Occupied Territories (MinTOT)

There is no gender equality policy in the Ministry, yet only women work in the mine action division (3 people). They coordinate work in government-controlled areas (GCA) on the following: EORE, marking and mapping, victim assistance.

MinTOT develops EORE materials, such as: posters, leaflets, colouring books, comics. In these materials both genders are represented as characters. The Ministry conducts its own research and assessment of mine/ERW victims' needs (independently of other mine action operators). EORE materials, methodological books are based on the acquired information and designed to meet needs of various population categories.

05. Mine Action Charity Fund (MACF)

MACF conducts no TS and/or clearance operations. The Ukrainian NGO delivers services in two mine action pillars: EORE and victim assistance (first aid delivery). 70% of all employees engaged in these activities are women. This high number is explained by the fact that more women from affected communities apply to the posted positions. Vacancies are gender-neutral though; no encouragement for women to apply is mentioned in job announcements.

Employed women participate in training for capacity development and get promoted to leadership roles when applicable. For instance, one of the two oblast teams that conducted the Knowledge, Attitude and Practices (KAP) survey in autumn 2020 (initiated by UNDP) was led by a woman. According to MACF's director, women are more capable of trust building and enhancing engagement when delivering EORE or assisting victims, thus, are highly encouraged and supported in enhancing their skills and obtaining proper certification.

There has been no internal gender equality policy for the team or mechanism on reporting gender-based violence (GBV) in place yet. The relevant documentation is being developed and waiting to be finalised and brought to attention of the employees. During the fieldwork men and women do not share housing. Separate facilities are provided for women for their comfort.

In EORE sessions, both girls and boys are actively engaged, images of both genders as the main characters are used in all information materials. Visuals depict two scenarios: an older boy with a younger girl and an older girl with a younger boy.

06. Demining Solutions/ Ukrainian Demining Association

There is one team of deminers operating in Demining Solutions, and no women deminers there. It is explained by the fact that competition for employment is very high, and the most experienced and skilful deminers were employed. All of them were men. There are 70 people in the waiting list to join new potential demining teams, women (x%) in the list as well. The vacancy itself, always posted on

the organisation's website, is gender neutral. Announcement doesn't specify that women are/are not encouraged to apply.

In general, there are 5 people working in the Demining Solutions team. There is one woman (that constitutes 20% of all employees). According to the director, women show high efficiency in victim assistance (first aid). Demining Solutions appears to be the only mine action operator that assists indirect victims – wives of deceased deminers, by providing them with financial support. In this regard, according to the organisation's director, women employees are more actively engaged in fundraising than men.

EORE is conducted for schoolchildren and adult audiences. Selection of the instructor (a woman/man) is made based on the target audience. For instance, if it is an EORE session for military personnel, then experienced men deminers are chosen as key opinion leaders to share information with the group. There is one woman in the team of EORE instructors (20% of the total number).

Gender equality policy and diversity policy were integrated in both Demining Solutions and the Ukrainian Demining Association after the capacity assessment that took place in 2020. The Code of conduct that includes prevention and protection from sexual misconduct was developed in accordance with international standards and with support of international partners.

In EORE materials, usually both girls and boys, women and men are depicted as the main characters. Information on participants of EORE sessions is disaggregated by age and sex. But it is also important to note that so far Demining Solutions has delivered sessions to schoolchildren (both girls and boys) and adult men only. Moreover, protagonists in the latest information product for target audiences are 2 boys. Decision to focus on men and boys is explained by the fact that the number of casualties among them is higher in comparison with girls and women.

07. Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE)

OSCE delivers trainings and conducts round tables for all mine action operators in Ukraine. The organisation tries to engage both women and men equally, or at least to ensure 30/70 or 40/60 ratio at all meetings. During professional trainings on demining, it is not possible to ensure gender balanced participation yet, since there are not many women deminers in the Ukrainian state agencies. Majority of women at such trainings are employees of international organisations: DRC-DDG, HALO Trust and Swiss Foundation for Mine Action (FSD). In the meantime, there is a higher number of women in EORE and Information Management System for Mine Action (IMSMA) trainings.

OSCE has cooperated with Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD), and Gender in Mine Action Programme (GMAP) in particular, to translate two documents into Ukrainian language. The topics covered in these documents are the following:

01. prioritisation in demining with consideration of gender issues;
02. hiring women for demining.

The documents are currently at the final stage of preparation and will be disseminated among all mine action stakeholders in Ukraine.

08. Danish Demining Group (DDG)

DDG currently has 73 people employed. Women comprise a quarter of all personnel (24,7%). The Programme is led by a woman, and women are represented in all mine action pillars that are implemented by DDG. The organisation doesn't have additional bonuses for women to encourage them to join the team. DDG follows the national legislation, women employees receive all benefits envisioned by the Ukrainian law. For instance, single mothers are entitled to having an additional leave.

In demining teams, there are 18,5% women (10 out of 54 people). 5 out of 8 EORE specialists are women (62,5%). Mixed-gender teams reside at the same base but have separate blocks and facilities. In information management/management support, a third of all employees are women (3 out of 11 team members).

There is internal gender equality policy, as well as a reporting mechanism in case of sexual misconduct in place. During the induction, each new employee is informed on the steps to take in case of sexual

harassment. DDG also conducts sessions on reporting incidents on the annual basis. Misconduct can be reported at the local/national level or directly to the HQ. If sexual harassment was detected, HQ would engage and follow the case.

09. HALO Trust



11

women assistant team leaders (29% out of total 38 assistant team leaders across clearance (manual and mechanical), TS, NTS and EORE)

6

women team leaders (16% - out of 38 in total);

1

woman clearance supervisor (20% - out of 5 in total);

1

woman EORE coordinator

Job adverts are tailored to attract more women to apply for operational roles, and women have been encouraged to speak at recruitment events. Women from mine-affected communities are encouraged to apply (to operational roles in particular), and as they acquire necessary experience, the proportion of women in senior roles increases.

NTS and EORE teams are mixed gender. They adapt their activities to various audiences and ensure that all voices (of women, girls, men and boys) are heard and taken into consideration. All collected data is disaggregated by age and sex. This analysis allows to tailor messages according to the needs of at-risk groups. The biggest at-risk audience, according to HALO's data, is adult men who are far more affected by mines/ERW (see figure 1 on p. 3). Thus, HALO concentrates its attention on delivering EORE to them, yet not only. The organisation provides EORE in factories, coalmines, utility companies, local administrations, road companies, churches, mosques as well as during house-to-house visits for harder-to-reach beneficiaries.

10. Swiss Foundation for Mine Action (FSD)

There are 38 people employed by FSD in Ukraine, and women constitute 29% of staff. They work in management positions, EORE, NTS and clearance teams. All 3 EORE teams are led by women. Moreover, there are more women in mixed-gender teams (55% women vs 44% men). In NTS teams, women constitute 33% of all staff, yet one of the teams is led by a woman. In clearance, women make 25% of all deminers (6 women). They have been trained as either deminers or deminers/paramedics. Mixed-gender teams reside separately; it is being ensured that both men and women have separate and equal access to facilities.

There is internal gender equality policy applied by FSD globally, including Ukraine. Gender equality and diversity principles are explained to all new employees. In addition, there is an annual workshop that covers these issues. FSD has both a code of conduct and an internal reporting mechanism to address sexual misconduct. There is also so called "red corner" where tips and steps to take in case of sexual harassment are explained in print.

Gender equality awareness training are attended by all employees – both those who work in the field and those who have office positions. The most recent training on gender equality, which has been undertaken by mine action staff, was developed by GICHD. All data (in NTS and EORE) is disaggregated by age and sex.

An important aspect of gender-responsive mine action, which was highlighted only by a FSD representative, is ensuring that personal protective equipment (PPE) fits women deminers. There is no difference in PPE for a woman's/man's body, yet sizes vary depending on one's weight and height. FSD takes into consideration individual needs of their deminers when procuring PPE.

Conclusion

Recruitment & Personnel

Stakeholder analysis shows that each mine action operator follows gender equality guidelines to a certain extent. The international organisations incorporate their global experience and adapt it to the Ukrainian context, while following the Ukrainian legislation. Taking into consideration that women were allowed to enter operational roles in demining in 2017, there has been significant progress made in employing women for demining positions. Although there are rare cases when in vacancy announcements particularly women are encouraged to apply, there is an interest among women candidates to join the sector.

It is noteworthy that all mine action operations ensure separate facilities for their team members in mixed-gender teams and declare equal access to capacity development and career opportunities. However, due to some peculiar requirements (technical education, prior experience in mine action) to candidates (particularly, for TS and clearance), women are highly underrepresented in these activities and limited in professional development. It can be observed in state bodies, in particular where requirements for candidates do not allow women to apply. In international organisations, on the other hand, open calls for trainings make women obtain necessary preparation to engage in demining activities.

It is highly recommended to ensure equal access to job opportunities, career development and capacity building for both men and women. Vacancies have to be made available for all and not restrict women from applying. In case of particular requirements (mentioned above), it is worthwhile to make open calls for trainings or internships to provide women with an opportunity to obtain necessary preparation before applying for a position.

EORE materials

In EORE materials that are developed by mine action operators (International NGOs, NGOs and state agencies) both genders are depicted. However, there are gendered differences in information delivery that should be taken into account. For instance, as illustrated by the SES representative, women often disregard obtained EORE in case of witnessing a casualty. Thus, merely including images of both genders in materials is not sufficient. It is pivotal to display various roles that they could play to break gender stereotypes, challenge expected gender roles and allow women and men, girls and boys to be on equal footing. EORE should lead to tangible behaviour difference. However, as of now, we can't assess its level as there is no sufficient data on changes in behaviour depending on one's gender. Further research is needed in this regard.

Thus, it is highly recommended to ensure that gender stereotypes are not perpetuated in the EORE materials. Moreover, that further studies of behavioural changes (if any) of beneficiaries who received EORE take place.

Data collection

Some mine action operators disaggregate acquired data by age and sex. However, there are examples when the system of data collection is not functioning very well (in SSTS) or gender indicator is omitted in data on victims (NMAA). There are two important notes to consider regarding data collection and the gender component in it:

01. There is a good case study of sharing knowledge on methodology of disaggregation in hard-to-reach localities between the state body (SES) and the INGO (HALO Trust). Such knowledge sharing should be promoted and encouraged among all mine action operators;
02. There is no unified data collection system that can be accessed by all mine action operators. Its absence hinders strategic development of mine action in terms of meeting needs of at-risk-groups and poses further risks of duplication (for instance, in EORE delivery).

As a result, there is a lack of a tailored approach to analysing and addressing different experiences and needs of women, men, boys, and girls from diverse groups. The service delivery is often gender-blind and usually doesn't take into account various diversity dimensions (sex, age, gender norms, disability, ethnic group, language, etc.) that need to be integrated for effective and inclusive mine action programmes that leave no one behind.

Strengthening unified action, knowledge exchange and establishing a centralised platform for information management between all mine action stakeholders are crucial.

Victim assistance

Issue of assisting indirect victims of mines/ERW (who are usually women) must be discussed broader and put into action. Women tend to be underrepresented in statistics of casualties, yet they are affected by the consequences of a casualty if the victim is their relative, husband, child etc. Thus, it is important for mine action actors to assess the impact of EO on one's life, well-being, socioeconomic status and tailor VA accordingly. For now, it appears that there are very rare cases of VA available for indirect victims of mines/ERW. Moreover, PSS is gender-blind and offered by some actors on demand only. Indirect victims must be informed of these services and know where to seek psychological support. Therefore, more communication efforts tailored to diverse audiences are needed to address this issue. Parties are encouraged to expand a notion of MA beneficiaries and study the needs of indirect victims as well as identify the best ways to meet them.

Engagement of women

Based on interviews with key actors in mine action in Ukraine, one can conclude that women are actively involved in EORE delivery, information dissemination and victim assistance in affected communities. Moreover, women tend to gather in associations and generate community-led projects that serve as inspiring examples of peacebuilding and social cohesion. Therefore, more prospects of capacity development to be offered to women to ensure their broader impact.

There is potential for a higher number of women joining the mine action sector when more effort will be put into informing them about job opportunities, providing suitable training and working conditions (in state agencies, in particular) and underlining the women's role in reconciliation and peacekeeping. Whilst international organisations have internal gender equality policy and reporting mechanisms to address sexual misconduct in place, state agencies have some internal documentation, yet no clear procedures to follow in case of abuse/harassment. One should also take into consideration that there have been very few women employed in the national mine action so far. With the establishment of NMAA and growth of local mine action operators' personnel, further gender-responsive capacity building, gender mainstreaming guidelines and knowledge exchange between operators are essential for ensuring gender equality and equity.

