



4 April 2014 – Women in regions contaminated by landmines face particular difficulties and are disproportionately affected by landmines and explosive remnants of war. Today the UN, and the International Community, honours the [International Day for Mine Awareness and Assistance in Mine Action](#), and the role held by women worldwide in the drive to clear landmines and protect against their indiscriminate effects.

Anti-personnel mines, which target soldiers but wreak [devastating effects](#) on civilian populations, were banned in 1997. But fifteen years later areas contaminated by explosive ordnance are still being cleared and ten people a day are killed or maimed by landmines. Women and girls have different needs when it comes to education about risks. They may face greater challenges when a family member is killed or injured. Furthermore, they are invaluable in helping to teach people how to live safely in contaminated areas, assisting victims, clearing landmines and disposing of explosive ordnance.

This year seeks to increase the presence of women in mine-eradication action, from safety education to assisting victims and mine clearing. Beyond increasing their presence, today seeks to include women at higher levels in mine action. Women can drive progress towards the central goals of mine action, which aims to increase security, rebuild communities, reclaim land and end the looming fear caused by explosive remnants of war. Women can also amplify the benefits of this work as children return to school, economic activity revives and lives and livelihoods are saved through mine action work.

Since the entry into force of the [Anti-personnel Mine Ban Convention](#) 161 states have signed it helping the world move towards the eradication of landmines. The UN has a proud history of helping millions of people in mine-affected countries doing everything from mine-risk education to clearing contaminated areas. Yet, the quest to eradicate the presence of landmines in our world today persists and the UN is currently undertaking mine actions in 30 countries.

Secretary General Ban Ki-moon in his [statement on this day](#) recognizes the vital role women hold in worldwide mine education and eradication action. He calls upon governments to do more to address gender in their mine action programmes and through their implementation of the Anti-personnel Mine Ban Convention. On 4 April 2014, the Secretary General asks the international community to, “resolve to mobilize the resources, partners and resolve we need to further advance our vision of a planet free from mines.”

UNRIC related links:

UNRIC’s Backgrounder on [landmines](#)

UNRIC’s article on [International Day for Mine Awareness 2012](#)

UNRIC’s article on the [Ottawa Convention](#)

UNRIC’s article on [Minewatch](#)