

## PREFACE

At a time when arms control and disarmament are being rolled back in favour of unilateral rearmament, it is reassuring to find that the Mine Ban Treaty (MBT) continues to make headway in achieving its universal goals. This is partly attributable to the fact that the MBT is primarily driven by humanitarian principles, rather than the balance of military power dynamics that have characterized more traditional and less secure regimes such as the Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty and the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START) process.

The durability of the MBT is also attributable to the fact that civil society has played such a central role in the formulation and the evolution of humanitarian mine action. While not party to the treaty, civil society organizations, particularly those that work under the umbrella organization the International Campaign to Ban Landmines (ICBL), have worked tirelessly to further the aims of the treaty, to monitor the treaty's progress around the world, to ensure that States parties comply with their treaty obligations and to place pressure on those States that remain outside the treaty to join. While certain States remain sceptical, even resistant to the role of civil society in arms control regimes, within the humanitarian mine action community the majority of member States welcome and even rely upon the constructive work that ICBL contributes towards achieving the goal of a universal ban on landmines.

One area in which ICBL has been particularly innovative is in the field of citizens' monitoring and verification (CM&V). To date ICBL has evolved the most sophisticated and universal form of CM&V, encapsulated in the annual publication the *Landmine Monitor*. Although not an official mechanism of the Mine Ban Treaty it has come to be regarded as one of the most reliable verification sources on the MBT. The techniques of CM&V are however still in their infancy. There is a sense in which much of ICBL activity in this field is driven by *learning by doing*, a valid form of policy evolution within the development field. By implication learning by doing suggests that the techniques and methodologies utilized in CM&V have yet to achieve maturity.

In this publication, by way of contributing to the debate on appropriate methodologies for CM&V, we have tentatively explored the idea of using participatory monitoring and evaluation techniques in an attempt to expand the notion of CM&V. Established participatory methods of monitoring and evaluation that have evolved within the development field facilitate the input of so-called recipients into the policy implementation process, thereby empowering affected communities through their inclusion. Participatory policies not only attempt to break traditional patterns of dependency but give substance to the idea of democratization and civil society empowerment. The implication of using participatory methods of monitoring in mine-affected communities is that it will bestow even greater strength and credibility to the process of CM&V.

Our study by no means proffers tried and tested solutions. The following pages simply capture the beginning of a process, in which the feasibility of using participatory methods is explored. It is hoped that the contents will stimulate not only further debate on the potential of participatory methods but also encourage practitioners to adopt such techniques, so that those most affected by landmines are included in the monitoring and verification process.

Susan Willett  
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