

Mine Free Yemen Campaign to Support Landmines Victims and Their Families in Yemen During COVID-19 Pandemic



Almost all countries have declared a national emergency to combat the COVID-19 pandemic. In this emergency, certain measures were implemented such as physical distancing, restrictions on mobility, and home confinement, among others. These measures exacerbate the difficulties of individuals who require personal assistance, as well as persons with disabilities who require frequent healthcare. In general, people with disabilities, including landmines survivors, are often forgotten and excluded from various spheres of state activity and support.

In a public statement released on March 17, the UN Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Catalina Devandas stated clearly "Little has been done to provide the necessary guidance and supports to people with disabilities to protect them during the current COVID-19 pandemic, even though many of them belong to the high-risk group." Her statement also noted that the measures of protection could be detrimental, "Containment measures, such as social distancing and personal isolation, may be impossible for those who require support to eat, dress, or shower."



With the current conflict in Yemen, the COVID-19 pandemic situation is getting worse to the point where the British Minister of Middle East Affairs, James Cleverley, has expressed deep concern about the rapid rise in the number of coronavirus infections in Yemen. The infection may have already reached one million, according to UK-funded research by the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, which predicted the worst-case scenario for about 85,000 deaths (<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/uk-calls-for-drastic-action-in-yemen-as-coronavirus-infections-reach-one-million>).

This critical situation will put thousands of landmines victims and their families in great risk and thus they need help to provide them with the protection they deserve.

Landmines impact

Landmines contamination has a significant impact on infrastructure development (roads, schools, housing etc.) negatively affecting the populations livelihood and safety. Contamination also blocks access to critical resources including water and grazing land. It has the effect of further reducing the already limited, arable land (only 2.6 percent of the country) and frequently results in the death or disabling of farmers, herders (often children) and livestock essential for agricultural production and the resumption of basic economic activities. The government is currently unable to implement social development projects within these affected communities due to the presence of landmines. Pressures are forcing farmers and herders into areas that are unsafe resulting in casualties to humans and to animals. Therefore, **landmines victims and their families need all the support they can get to help them through the Covid-19 Pandemic.**



landmines victims