



THE NEXT STEP

NEWS FOR FRIENDS AND PARTNERS

CFC# 51472

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U.S. funds jumpstart demining in Senegal

NEWS

In December 2015, Handicap International relaunched demining operations in Casamance, Senegal, the region at the center of a 33-year-long conflict between the Senegalese army and an armed independence group. Thanks to funding from the U.S. Department of State and donors like you, Handicap International deminers aim to clear 55,000 square meters around three villages by August.

Between 2007 and 2012, Handicap International contributed to the clearance of 1,800,000 square meters of land. Authorities estimate that landmines and other explosive remnants of war still pollute 480,000 square meters of land in Casamance.

“During this long conflict, mines were used erratically, and, at times, without any apparent logic,” says Aziz Sy, head of Handicap International’s mine action program in Senegal. “Landmines could be anywhere.”

To start, the Handicap International team, including 14 deminers and support staff, and two demining dogs, is opening up paths and farmland around the village of Diagonon. Many of the village’s 500 inhabitants have not dared to walk on this land for more than a decade. “In order to survive, locals need to farm fields they abandoned when they fled their villages because of the conflict,” says Charles Coly, Handicap International’s head of operations. “Now they have returned, but they are still afraid to venture into these fields.”

These mine-clearing operations will also clear paths between villages and the region’s main road, giving isolated communities better access to the large markets. Farmers will be able to sell their crops and increase their income.

Handicap International’s demining dogs, Katja and Rex, and their handler, Jonathan Matambo, play a key role in clearance efforts. “Dogs are faster and more efficient mine detectors than human deminers with metal detectors,” says Aziz. “They are also highly valuable because they can detect mines that are not made of metal, like the PRBM 35 mine, which we often come across.”

At the end of a day clearing mines, Jonathan walks and grooms his dogs. “I have to be very careful to keep my dogs at ease, and make sure they are not stressed,” says Jonathan. “Katja and Rex are like a second family for me.” No demining dog in Senegal has ever been injured as a result of our stringent safety procedures. The dogs and human deminers expect to clear enough land to allow 60,000 people to live in safety by the end of the summer.



Demining dog handler Jonathan Matambo and his Belgian Shepherd Katja are much more efficient and accurate than human deminers with metal detectors.

Supporting Syrians 5 years into the conflict



According to recent estimates, the five-year Syrian conflict has left 470,000 people dead and 1.9 million injured, totaling nearly 12% of the population.* More than 12.2 million people have been forced to flee their homes.

Handicap International’s emergency mission in the Middle East is redoubling its efforts to bring aid and comfort to thousands of people affected by the

fighting in Syria. Thanks to our donors, we have already reached more than 600,000 refugees and displaced people.

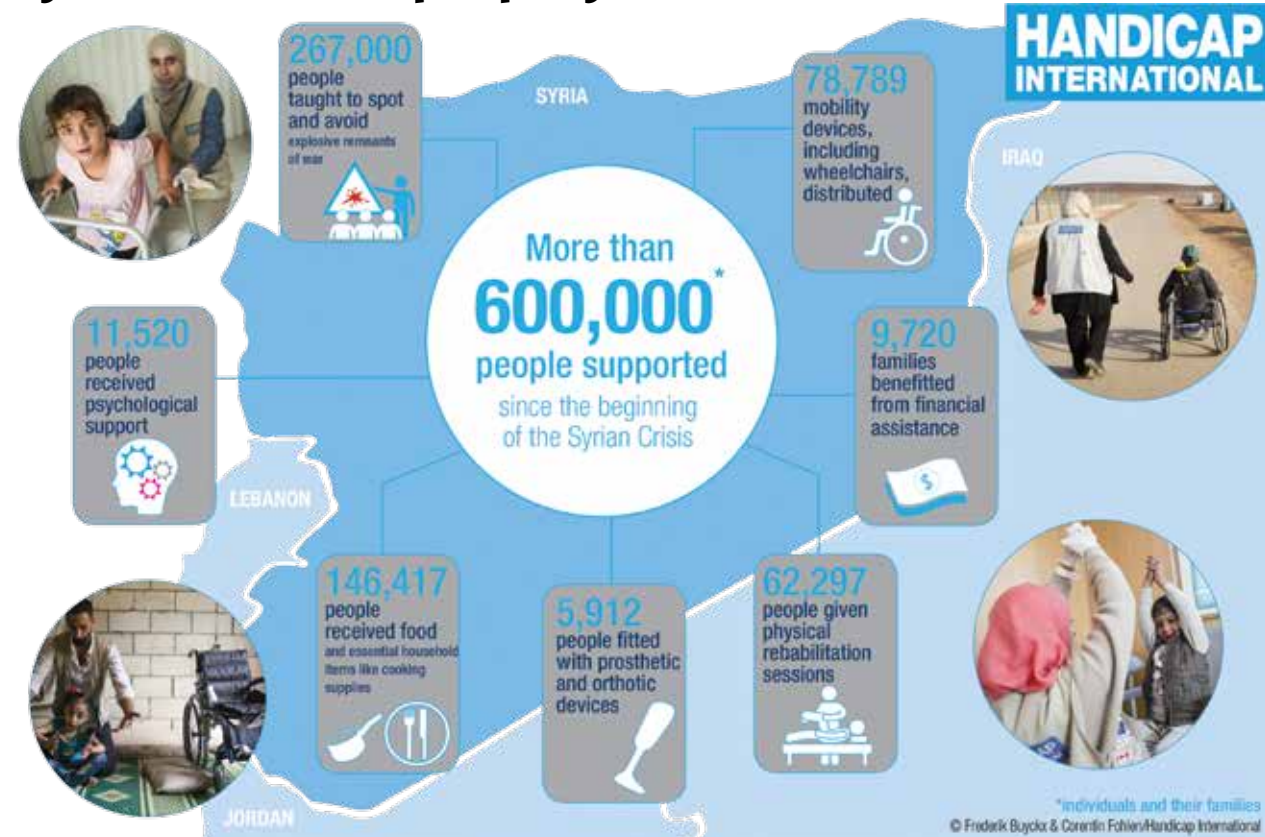
In Syria, Jordan, Lebanon, and Iraq, Handicap International provides an emergency response in support of people with disabilities and injuries, as well as older and isolated people. Dozens of mobile teams, each including a physical therapist and a social

worker, assist people who cannot travel to health care centers.

Handicap International is demining inside Syria and teaching civilians in Syria and Iraq how to stay safe through risk education. Meanwhile, campaigners are urging governments to ban the use of explosive weapons in populated areas.

*Syrian Center for Policy Research

Syrian crisis: The people you’ve reached (2012-2016)





Tapai, who was disabled after an accident with a U.S.-made cluster bomb, received two female goats so he can set up a breeding business.

Note from the Executive Director



It is with great pride that we share the story of our direct role in combatting the Ebola outbreak. You'll learn how our ambulance project helped break the chain of transmission in Sierra Leone, and meet the American who led the team.

With your support, we continue to fight other deadly scourges around the globe. We've launched fresh efforts to clear the landmines that have terrified communities in Casamance, Senegal, for decades. In Laos, we're helping people injured by explosives to regain economic independence.

This month, we mark a dreadful anniversary: five years have passed since the start of the Syrian conflict. While we mourn the tremendous loss of innocent lives and the trauma wrought on millions more, we remain committed to helping the most vulnerable people.

Your generosity has helped us to reach more than 600,000 people affected by this crisis. If you're not already one of our First Responders, please consider joining our monthly donor program, and ensure that we're able to swiftly react to this and other crises around the world.

Jeff Meer, Executive Director
Twitter: @Jeff_HIUS

Laos: Aiding bomb victims

Donor support helps people disabled by explosive weapons to earn a living



PROJECT UPDATE

Tapai, a farmer in Savannakhet, Laos, was putting up fence posts when his shovel struck a bomb dropped by an American plane during the Vietnam War. Shrapnel from the explosion tore off his finger tips and embedded in his stomach and legs. Unable to pay for hospital treatment, Tapai became permanently

disabled.

He is one of more than 50,000 Laotians who have been injured or killed by the 270 million cluster bombs dropped on Laos by the U.S. The people of Laos were not at war with us, but they have been suffering from American bombs for 52 years.

Tapai and his family were barely getting by until they met Handicap International. In addition to clearing

explosive remnants of war in Laos, our teams help people with disabilities generate income for their families.

Tapai asked Handicap International for goats, so he could breed and sell them. Today he has two females, one of which is pregnant.

The family now has more hope for the future, but Tapai still worries about other hidden explosives: "There are still bombs on my farm,"

he says. "I'm afraid for my children."

Since 2006, Handicap International deminers have cleared explosives from more than 26 million square feet of land surrounding 121 villages in Laos. Tapai's village was recently added to Handicap International's list of areas to demine. Staff have already marked dangerous areas around the village to prevent accidents.

Your impact in Nepal: Rishi, Nepal quake survivor, makes strides



April 25, 2015 ↑

When the Nepal earthquake struck, a hotel collapsed on top of 28-year-old Rishi Khanal. After being buried under the rubble for more than 80 hours, he was freed by rescuers who brought him to a hospital. Rishi survived the ordeal, but doctors amputated his crushed left leg.

October 9, 2015 →

ABC News Correspondent Terry Moran, who covered Rishi's rescue from the rubble in April, returned to Nepal to report on his progress.

After months of physical therapy, Rishi was learning to walk with his artificial leg. Handicap International will continue to follow up with Rishi in the months and years ahead, ensuring his prosthesis fits well.



May 28, 2015 ↑

Following his amputation, Rishi was transferred into Handicap International's care. Physical therapists performed muscle strengthening, stretching, and balance exercises with Rishi so that he would be prepared to use a prosthetic leg to walk.

Watch the video here: <http://bit.ly/ABCRishi>



Abdullah Mansaray led a speciality ambulance team that focused on dangerous interventions in Freetown's slums.

Stopping Ebola in Sierra Leone



Handicap International's ambulance service transported thousands of patients to treatment centers

PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT

In November 2015, the World Health Organization declared the end of the Ebola outbreak in Sierra Leone. More than 14,000 people in Sierra Leone contracted Ebola, and 3,956 died.

The outbreak ended thanks in part to Handicap International's Ebola ambulance project, which was funded by the U.K.'s Department for International Development. With their support, staff launched the only centralized ambulance service for transporting suspected Ebola patients and disinfecting their contaminated homes in western Sierra Leone, which includes the capital city of Freetown.

Before Handicap International started the ambulance project in 2014, the country counted only a handful of ambulances to safely transport patients—nowhere near the capacity needed to meet an acute, global health crisis. The international community called on Handicap International, present in

The project was key to breaking the chain of Ebola transmission.

Sierra Leone since 1996, and known for its expertise in logistics, to fill this critical gap. Handicap International's 250 ambulance and decontamination staff have since transported more than 3,700 patients with Ebola symptoms to treatment centers, and disinfected nearly 1,800 homes. At its peak, the program was responding to dozens of calls each day with a fleet of 30 ambulances and 15 decontamination vehicles.

"Every day, staff came to work and waited for the calls," says Mike Denny, an American nurse who worked as Handicap International's Infection Prevention & Control Manager. "For every case, they put on PPEs (Personal Protective Equipment), often in 95F degree temperature with 100% humidity.

"To reach patients, they had to

make their way through hostile crowds, navigate treacherous roads and narrow alleys, and enter unknown dwellings with contaminated fluids and sharp objects that might pierce their protective equipment. After helping the patient to the ambulance, they removed contaminated material and decontaminated the home. They did this four or five times a day. The work was exhausting, but they didn't complain."

The ambulance service played a big part in breaking the Ebola transmission chain, says Pauline Lavirotte, the ambulance fleet project manager. "We can be proud of the quality of our work. We have learned a lot and we reached a high level of expertise. We faced huge challenges, but we managed to find technical solutions that worked."

Protecting people with disabilities

NEWS FROM THE FIELD

When Ebola struck Sierra Leone, many people with disabilities did not know that the illness posed any threats, because public awareness campaigns didn't share information in ways they could understand. Handicap International led a nationwide campaign to teach people with disabilities how to prevent Ebola, using disability-specific awareness tools and messaging.

"I never knew about Ebola," says Nacel Johnson, a student at the Milton Maragai School for the Blind. "But then I got some information from Handicap International."

Nacel received a Braille Ebola prevention guide and heard radio messages made by blind people. Handicap International also produced awareness material for the Deaf community, and reached out to isolated communities of amputees—victims of Sierra Leone's civil war.



"I've served in the company of heroes."



Mike Denny was the Infection Prevention & Control Manager in Sierra Leone, June-November 2015.

The 250 men and women of the Handicap International Ebola ambulance project played a vital role in stopping the outbreak and preventing further deaths. I've served in the company of heroes. I arrived in Sierra Leone as an infectious disease specialist, but they taught me how to fight Ebola.

It's the best job I ever had. I want the world and my fellow Americans to know what these people have done. Please don't forget them.

I have long understood that infectious disease does not respect political borders and, in the 21st century, geographic isolation is no guarantee of protecting our friends and families from outbreaks of disease in far-off lands. In Sierra Leone, I personally witnessed the devastating effects that a disease outbreak can have upon society. I am glad I had the skills required to do a job that needed to be done. I would never want to fight Ebola again, but if I had to I would. We know that some battles must be fought and everyone must do what they can.

Background

History

A former British colony, Sierra Leone was founded in 1792, to resettle freed American slaves. The country achieved its independence in 1961. In 1991, the country was drawn into a brutal, ten-year civil war that left more than 50,000 people dead, and an estimated 27,000 people disabled as a result of forced amputations. Still recovering from this traumatic war, Sierra Leone is one of the world's poorest countries, and suffers from extremely high child and maternal mortality rates.

Mandate

Handicap International started working in Sierra Leone in 1996, to help the victims of the civil war. After three troubled years, during which the teams had to be evacuated several times, the situation calmed down. Since 2000, we have worked continuously in the country. Before Ebola, Handicap International's mission focused on improving maternal and child health, promoting inclusive education for children with disabilities, and supporting disabled people's organizations.

With the outbreak of Ebola, Handicap International launched an emergency response that included the Ebola ambulance project and Ebola prevention awareness campaigns targeting people with disabilities, children, and sex workers. When schools closed due to Ebola, we ensured children in our inclusive education program knew how to protect themselves and were able to continue learning through radio education programs. With Ebola at bay, the organization is now transitioning back to its regular activities.

Boccard: Generous staff give back at work

DONOR SPOTLIGHT

Since 2014, Boccard Pipe Fabricators, Inc., of Houston, Texas, has held a workplace giving campaign that has netted nearly \$30,000 in support of Handicap International's inclusive education program in Indonesia. The program helps bring children with disabilities into inclusive schools and ensures they have the resources they need to successfully learn.

"I think the success stories and activity reports Handicap International shares through the website and newsletters set the stage for giving," says Mark Struss, Boccard CEO. "Our employees are incredibly gratified when they can see the difference their contributions have made in the life of a person who has a face and a name."

Many companies in the U.S. run workplace-giving campaigns that



Rahmat, 10, is one of the children with disabilities benefiting from Handicap International's programs in Indonesia.

encourage employees to donate to select charities, but the way it is done at Boccard is special. "We do not ask employees for money," says Struss, "we ask them for time."

"Each employee is given the opportunity once each year to pledge support for Handicap International," says Struss. "We ask each employee to dedicate two hours or more of their work time. Once the employee pledges a specific number of hours, we calculate the value and handle the deduction from the employee's paycheck. For 2015, we are excited that Boccard's headquarters office

matched individual contributions dollar for dollar."

This program is part of the fourth-generation family business's commitment to giving back to those in need. Like Handicap International, Boccard's international headquarters is in Lyon, France. Plus, both Boccard and Handicap International work in dozens of the same countries.

The partnership has quickly become a deep tradition among the employees of Boccard U.S. "In 2015, more than 70 percent of our employees donated an average of three hours each. In fact, one person donated 40 hours of pay!"

During the fall campaign, Handicap International's Executive Director Jeff Meer visited Houston to share stories and thank employees in person. "I was deeply humbled and delighted to see the interest the employees had in learning about our work and their excitement about supporting it," says Meer. "It's a very special partnership and we are deeply grateful to all the men and women for sharing their hours in support of Handicap International."



Boccard's top employee donors wearing their Handicap International hats.



Handicap International's website has the most up-to-date news, plus photos and videos of the people your donations help.
www.handicap-international.us

Sign up for regular newsletters:
www.handicap-international.us/join

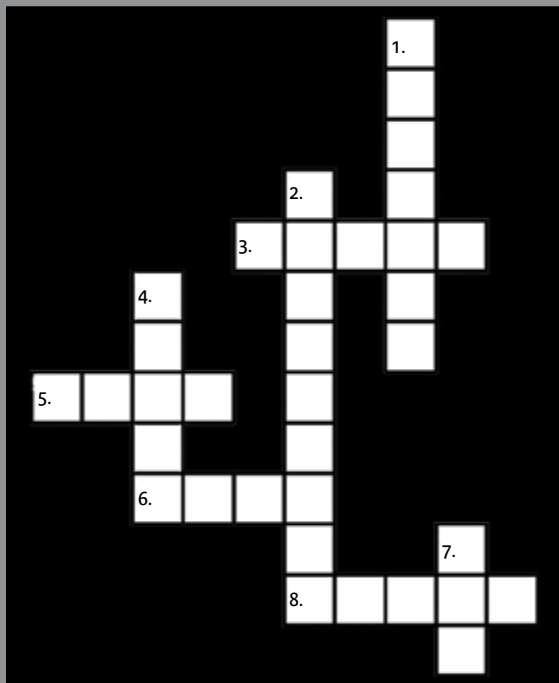
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CROSSWORD PUZZLE

Test your Handicap International knowledge!



- Across**
- 3. Handicap International gave prosthetic limbs to more than one thousand earthquake survivors from this Caribbean nation.
 - 5. This treaty recognizes the rights of people with disabilities. (abbr)
 - 6. The headquarters of Handicap International is found in this French city.
 - 8. Handicap International's largest-ever humanitarian response is the result of the crisis in this Middle Eastern country.
- Down**
- 1. Handicap International is working to clear this type of U.S.-made bomb in Laos.
 - 2. Handicap International was founded in 1982 to help victims of these types of explosive weapons.
 - 4. One of Handicap International's largest rehabilitation programs is in this earthquake-prone Himalayan nation.
 - 7. In addition to Ebola, Handicap International also teaches people with disabilities how to prevent the transmission of this virus.

Answers on page 2.

GIVE MONTHLY, BE A FIRST RESPONDER



A gift of \$5 or more each month will make you a hero to people like Nirmala.

After Nirmala had her leg amputated following the 2015 Nepal earthquake, Handicap International provided her with physical therapy sessions and a prosthetic leg. As a FIRST RESPONDER, your gifts will go to work immediately for survivors of natural disasters and conflict.



Your DOLLARS at work

-  **\$5 A MONTH** provides a family with jackets and blankets to stay warm in winter.
-  **\$10 A MONTH** provides a refugee family with a kit of everyday necessities.
-  **\$50 A MONTH** provides a family with an accessible home.
-  **\$100 A MONTH** provides medical equipment for an emergency rehabilitation center.

YES! I WANT TO BE A FIRST RESPONDER AND SUPPORT HANDICAP INTERNATIONAL.

I want to make a monthly gift of:

- \$5 \$10 \$15 \$25 \$50 \$100 \$_____

Please charge my gift each month to:

CARD NUMBER _____ EXP. DATE _____

NAME ON CARD _____

EMAIL _____ PHONE NUMBER _____

Donate online: www.handicap-international.us/monthly_donations
By mail: 8757 Georgia Ave, Suite 420, Silver Spring, MD 20910
 Monthly gifts are not designated. They will be used where the need is greatest.



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