

Slide 1

Slide 2 Here are some examples of what can happen for months; even years after a war is over:

1 This boy from Sri Lanka had his hand blown off when he picked up an object he didn't recognise

2 This girl from Lebanon was injured during the recent conflict between her country and Israel

3 This boy from Angola lost his leg to an explosive device

These are the lucky ones...

4 This picture is of a minefield in Sri Lanka.

If the accidents happen in remote areas, or if the land is too dangerous for others to go in and save them, the injured bleed to death and are often not found for months.

This is the reason why the organisation MAG exists.

Slide 3 At MAG we are working to make events like these a thing of the past.

MAG stands for Mines Advisory group.

MAG is a conflict recovery organisation....can anyone tell me what that means?

It means that we go into countries that have experienced conflict such as civil war or invasion and help to clear up the damage and rebuild the communities.

Why do you think we should do that?

Slide 4 Here are some of the reasons...

The people who lived in Moxico (pronounced moshico) in Angola used the river to wash their clothes, to have a bath, as a toilet...and then they had to use it for drinking and cooking. This is because there were 17 landmines surrounding their broken water pump after a long conflict and no-one can go to fix it without putting their lives in danger

Slide 5 Here, children just want to go to school, learn and play and break-times. But the school was empty because 500 landmines surrounded the area. A simple thing like walking to school was deadly.

Slide 6 The reason MAG began was to clear landmines from the ground that had been left after the conflict was over. That is what the man in the bottom right picture is doing. We call him a 'deminer'.

The picture in the top right is a 'controlled explosion'. That's what MAG does with all the weapons we find at the end of each day.

Slide 7 So let's talk about one of those weapons we come across in conflict: Landmines. Landmines have different shapes and sizes and can cause many different injuries.

This is the Valmara, it is designed to kill.

It used to be made in Italy, but not any more, but they are still found in the ground.

In Iraq they made their own Valmara copies and MAG has cleared hundreds of them from Iraq.

If the spikes are touched the Valmara will jump up to a metre high (optional: 'has anyone got a metre rule?') and shoot thousands of deadly fragments. Now if you're within 30m of

this going off – so say about two of these classrooms – you will be killed. Even if you're 100m away – you've all done the 100m run, you know what kind of distance that is – you would still be badly injured from this Valmara going off at 100m.

The Valmara contains thousands of deadly fragments and these shoot out and act like thousands of bullets.

Slide 8 The top two pictures are of Type 72s – made in China – They are Waterproof and with very low metal content and so are hard to detect.

As you can see landmines are made from lots of different materials:

The bottom left landmine is nicknamed the Butterfly. It contains a liquid explosive and is what we call a cluster bomb. Cluster bombs are basically large containers that contain lots of smaller bombs and when the case opens they all come out. Hundreds of these Butterflies can be released from a cluster bomb at just one go. Once it lands, if you touch it or step on it the explosive could take off a limb.

This rare glass landmine causes injuries by the glass firing into the victim

In the centre is what we call an Improvised Explosive Device. It is a landmine – it has a pressure activated top. What is this made from?

Look closely, it's a plastic coffee jar! (hits home a little more when you talk about its similarities with a 'bubbles' container)

Slide 9 (This is a potted history of MAG and fairly self explanatory ...)

[at 2nd point] what 'remnants of conflicts' can you name? landmines are one type, name others....[bombs, grenades, guns, bullets, rocket-launchers, shoulder-launched missiles....]

{this pre-empts a common misconception [No, we don't deal with Nuclear Bombs. They are often much too valuable for any country to have them missing. And if they're launched in an attack, they are usually going to go off. (the Film Sum of all Fears shows an Israeli bomb found in the middle of the dessert, but any film showing a 'missing nuclear bomb' is really making this up).]}

It is the third and fourth lines that may need extra explanation...we don't just want to clear mines and other explosive devices but we also want to help the local people to rebuild their lives. Therefore we employ them to help provide the community with a form of income, and we work to develop the areas with the community once they are cleared)

What is the Nobel Peace Prize? Name others... [Mother Teresa, Nelson Mandela, Martin Luther King, UNICEF, UN...]

Slide 10 Here is our vision.

(read it)

But how do we hope to do this?

(If there is time the children can be asked to come up with names of countries that MAG have worked in....there are 35)

Slide 11 Here they are....there are some in the list that are not on the map, and likewise some on the map that aren't in the list. But who remembers how many countries MAG has worked in?35, well done.

Slide 12 So how do we work?

Here's a deminer he lives in the local community; we develop work opportunities for people....

... We put people first. By this we mean we prioritise the areas where we work....for example we would rather clear other land than a desert as there aren't many people in deserts and MAG focuses on areas where people live, work etc.

Slide 13 MAG also work to help people to recognise and avoid contact with landmines and other explosive devices that can be found in and around the areas where they live.

- Community Liaison staff work with all levels of local people to establish the scale, type and whereabouts of their landmine and UXO problem
- Prioritisation and data gathering
- CL staff also explain minefield marking signs and teach people how to live more safely in a dangerous environment. The red sign in the bottom picture is used to mark mine fields...you need to be on the side of the sign where you can see the skull and crossbones. If you are behind it you are in the minefield.
- They also work with other organisations who can supply different resources such as health, education or employment opportunities

Slide 14 So MAG has moved on to be an organisation that does more than just clear landmines.

We work during... Emergencies.

The bottom left picture shows an emergency. It's in Sri Lanka – can anyone guess what caused this emergency [the tsunami of 2004]. MAG was called in after there were reports of disturbed landmines and bombs. What happened was water washed into an army base and dislodged a lot of the stockpiles of munitions. MAG was called to clear them after the water resided. However, because MAG was in the right place and we had vehicles and resources we also used our vehicles to ferry the dead, provide medical support.

We mark minefields if we feel we need to come back to them as there are other priorities. We use the sign shown in the woman's hand in the top picture

Medical training – there always needs to be a medic on our clearance sites in case of accidents – thankfully we have very few accidents in MAG

Research – we try and find new and better ways of doing our work, new technology etc.

Slide 15 (to read)

Slide 16 Do you remember this school? Can you remember the country [Cambodia]? MAG cleared this school of mines – can you remember how many? [500]. There are now 500 students at this school and where there were landmines there are now herb gardens and a playground so they too can play at break times.

Slide 17 And this one? [Moxico in Angola.] These children are happy now that MAG cleared those 17 landmines that were surrounding the broken water pump. They can get clean water and won't be suffering from illnesses from drinking the river water.