

TEXT 2: Landmines in Angola

(FND Module p. 57)

In Angola, millions of mines litter the landscape, some buried, some just lying hidden by leaves, or in long grass. Every year, thousands of civilians, many of them children, lose their lives or are maimed. Do you have any idea what happens when a child steps on one?

A landmine can't tell the difference between a soldier's boot and the naked foot of a child. There's an explosion, a storm of red dust, a scream of agony and a child's small leg has burst open like an overcooked sausage with the foot blown to pieces.

Some victims are left unrecognisable lumps of mangled, bloody flesh. Even a small landmine can quite easily disembowel or disintegrate a child.

At the Mines Advisory Group, we know Angola well. We are de-mining and, because de-mining alone is not enough we, uniquely, teach local people how to live and work as safely as possible on mined land. We especially try to help children.

In Angola, and at our other projects in Laos, Cambodia and Kurdistan, we use puppets, games, toys, songs, plays — every darn thing we can think of to warn children about the dangers of landmines.

We need to raise money to carry on this life- and-death work and to continue campaigning for a blanket ban on the manufacture and sale of landmines.

If we can just raise our meagre UK core costs, international government agencies will underwrite our overseas operations. Including our work in Angola. Each £1 you give us releases £10 that we can then spend on de-mining, and training people. Please help us with a generous donation.

Julian Edge's Analysis:

1 The "Landmines" text belongs to a general type of communicative act, one that we might label appeal.

2 The text does respond to an S-P-R-E analysis. The first two words, 'In Angola', put us into a specific geographical place, and the Simple Present tense in the following clause signals a reference to current time. This clause also focuses our attention on the Problem in the Situation: 'millions of mines litter the landscape.' The semantic content of the first three paragraphs detail the consequent horror, which is specifically signalled by such items as, 'maimed', 'scream of agony', and 'mangled, bloody flesh.'

Paragraphs 4 and 5 introduce the Mines Advisory Group as those people responding to the problems involved. Here, we get a recycling of the semantic pattern when 'de-mining' is named as a Response, and then Evaluated as 'not enough,' after which further types of Response are detailed. The Mines Advisory Group also appears as the voice behind the appeal — 'We are de-mining.'

Paragraph 6 moves the pattern through another cycle as the Mines Advisory Group is in turn identified as having a Problem encoded as a 'need'. Paragraph 7 specifies this need as 'raise our meagre core UK costs' and introduces the Response to the Problem, which is required of the reader: i.e. the gift of money. Before the direct request of the final sentence, there is an implied

positive Evaluation of the logic and strength of the appeal, in that every £1 donated will unlock another £10 from international agencies.

3 As a reversal of the rhetoric of the Barclays advertisement, the appeal attributes problems to the writer of the text and Solutions to the reader. In this case, the Angolans have a problem to which MAG is responding, which means that MAG has a need to which we are asked to respond.