

# MINE ACTION PROGRAMME OF AFGHANISTAN

## AUGUST/SEPTEMBER 2012 NEWSLETTER



### FOR THE FIRST TIME MACCA SUPPORTS MINE/ERW RISK EDUCATION (M/ERW RE) INSTRUCTION COURSE FOR AFGHAN POLICE

Thirty-one Police-e-Mardumi (community police) and six Ministry of Education's Child Protection Officers (CPOs) were trained to deliver Mine/explosive remnants of war risk education (M/ERE) in affected communities in the provinces of Balkh and Kunduz between August and September. This is a pilot project of the Mine Action Coordination Centre of Afghanistan (MACCA), which is supported by the United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS), implemented in coordination with the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) and the European Union Police Mission (EUPOL). The project follows an agreement made between the MACCA, the Ministry of Interior (MOI), UNAMA, and EUPOL to integrate M/ERE into the Police-E-Mardumi units. The project is part of EUPOL's Afghanistan's City Police and Justice Programme.

The project aims to provide training for the community police in Ghor, Badakhshan, Balkh, Kunduz, Bamyan, Herat, Helmand and Kabul provinces. It is also aimed at building police capacity and motivate them to deliver Mine/ERE to local communities as well as to enable them to report M/ERW casualties to the MACCA regional offices and other organizations involved in mine action.



*MACCA and UNAMA representatives along with the M/ERW risk education training participants in Balkh province*

The training was delivered through classroom instruction, exhibitions, role playing and group activities, and practical exercises. The trainees were taught on how to deliver M/ERE and how to train the community elders/members to deliver Mine/ERW risk education. At the end of the workshop, the trainees were provided with certificates and other material.

Mr. Fathullah, working with Security Department of Baghlan and a member of Police-e- Mardumi team said, "I am very pleased for having the opportunity to

attend the this training conducted by MACCA in Baghlan. I have learned a lot on recognition of landmines and ERW, dangerous makings/signs, risky behaviors and how to stay safe working in mine affected communities."

Mr. Fathullah added, "This training will enable me to share the lessons learned and conduct M/ERE sessions for Mine/ERW affected communities in particular to the innocent children. Unfortunately, the existence of landmines and ERW has created a lot of problems for our people with too many casualties. I as a policeman, will try my best to assess the situation in my areas of responsibility, provide awareness to the community members in mosques, schools, public gatherings and any other area based on the task given to me by the EUPOL and the security department of Baghlan. I am proud and committed to this job to save the lives of children, women and men living in contaminated communities and to report the location of mine/ERW and any other suspected items to the MACCA regional offices and security department of Baghlan."

The training of Police-E-Mardumi to deliver M/ERE to affected communities is another example of the transition process of shifting the responsibility for mine action to the Government of Afghanistan.

#### **MAPA is supported by the following donors to the Voluntary Trust Fund for Assistance in Mine Action administrated by UNMAS:**

Australia, Austria, Canada, Denmark, European Commission, Finland, Japan, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Oman and Spain.

#### **MAPA is also supported by the following bilateral donors:**

Belgium, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Government of Afghanistan, Ireland, Japan, Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, UAE, United Kingdom and USA.

## SOUTH SUDAN DELEGATION VISITS MINE ACTION COORDINATION CENTER OF AFGHANISTAN

In September 2012, a delegation from South Sudan Mine Action Authority (SSMAA) visited the Mine Action Coordination Center of Afghanistan (MACCA). The delegation came to study the Mine Action history and experiences of Afghanistan and take advantage of the lessons learnt. The delegation was led by John Sorbo of Norwegian People's Aid's South Sudan Program. MACCA provided the delegation various presentations and briefings which covered the latest information to lessons learnt over the past twenty years. The visitors from SSMAA also met with some of MACCA's implementing partners and they were all deeply impressed with the devotion of MACCA staff and with the entire Mine Action Programme of Afghanistan (MAPA). Mr. Mike Rashid, the Operations Director of SSMAA said "I find Afghanistan Mine Action Programme so interesting, I was very impressed by what you people are doing here. Nobody could put more quality, care and dedication into managing Mine Action Programme than you do.."



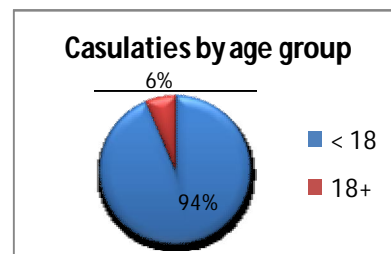
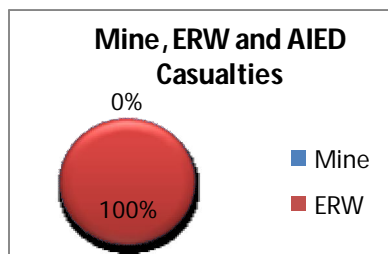
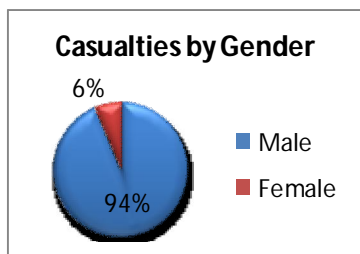
The South Sudan delegation visiting a demining site of DAFA, the MAPA IP in Aybak district of Samangan province, Afghanistan

Mr. Sorbo further said, "I am truly impressed with the dedication, professionalism and the commitment from MACCA staff who are working towards an Afghanistan free from landmines and explosive remnants of war (ERW). I think the programme should act as a role model for other country programmes. Afghanistan has made significant progress in surveying and clearing residential and agricultural areas and roads, as well as clearing battlefields. Despite massive security challenges in this beautiful country, MACCA still delivers mine action across the nation, also in regions like Kandahar and Helmand where security is a major concern," Sorbo added.

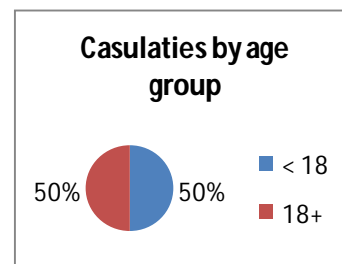
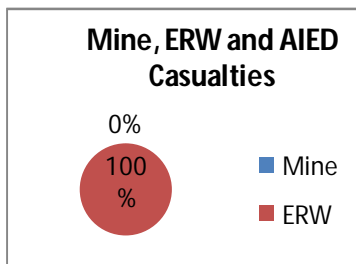
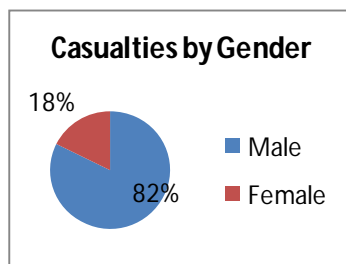
Due to the scale of the problem, the Mine Action Programme of Afghanistan (MAPA) is one of the largest mine action programmes in the world. It has more than twenty years history of successfully delivering mine action

### CASUALTIES IN AUGUST AND SEPTEMBER 2012

In **September 2012**, there were 16 casualties due to ERW recorded in Afghanistan (data as of September 2012).



In **August 2012**, there were 22 casualties due to ERW recorded in Afghanistan (data as of August 2012).



## ISTALEF DISTRICT IS DECLARED FREE OF MINES AND UNEXPLODED ORDNANCE

Istalef district, a former battleground near Kabul city, was declared free of mines and UXO during a ceremony on August 15, 2012. The HALO Trust (HT), after completing the clearance of this district hosted the official handover ceremony. The ceremony was attended by the officials from the District Government, a delegation from the US Embassy in Kabul, and a delegation from MACCA headquarters.

Istalef was heavily contaminated with unexploded ordnance (UXO) during the decades of war in Afghanistan. UXO was cleared by HT, an implementing partner of the Mine Action Programme of Afghanistan (MAPA), with funding from the US State Department.

The demining operation made safe for productive use 200 sq km of land and in the process, destroyed 202 AP mines, 30 AT mines and 24,291 different types of UXO including rockets, mortars, artillery shells and projectiles.

The Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Bureau of Political-Military Affairs at the US State Department, Mr. Jims K. Heike, addressing a large gathering of Istalef district elders at the ceremony, noted, "I am delighted to be here for such an important event. This handover ceremony represents moments of pride and another



*The Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Bureau of Political-Military Affairs at the US State Department during his speech in Istalef*

example of successful cooperation between the United States and Afghanistan. This plot of land we talk about that has been cleared and is being turned over is evidence to this success, and to the strides being made in clearing mines from Afghan soil."

He added, "The American people are proud of supporting the clearance of landmines in Afghanistan for more than fifteen years. We particularly appreciate the work of Halo Trust, the lead organization for this project, and other demining agencies on behalf of the people of America."

Following Mr. Heike's statement, Abigail Hartley UNMAS/MACCA programme manager also manifested her happiness on the successful completion of the project in Istalef district, "I would like to thank HT for the great work they have done here and we congratulate them for the achievement on declaring Istalef district free of Mines and UXOs. The United Nations has support the mine clearance programme in Afghanistan for more than 20 years. Together with Mine Action implementers, MACCA and the Government of Afghanistan, we have made a plan to finish this job in ten years, and the UN will continue its support until we reach that point. I look forward to having this kind of ceremonies over the coming ten years and have more and more districts free of mines."

Mawlawi Sayed Bashir, Istalef district's Shora leader said, "Supporting needy people is a holy and important task, and I on behalf of this society, thank the countries and organizations who have funded this programme to clear our country from mines, especially our beautiful district."

At the end of the ceremony, community representatives, including the Assistant Deputy Chief of Police, signed the official hand-over document to indicate their agreement to the completed clearance of the area. Now that hazards have been removed, the land will be used for residential houses and other essential buildings such as health clinics and schools for the 48,000 residents of 87 communities of Istalef.





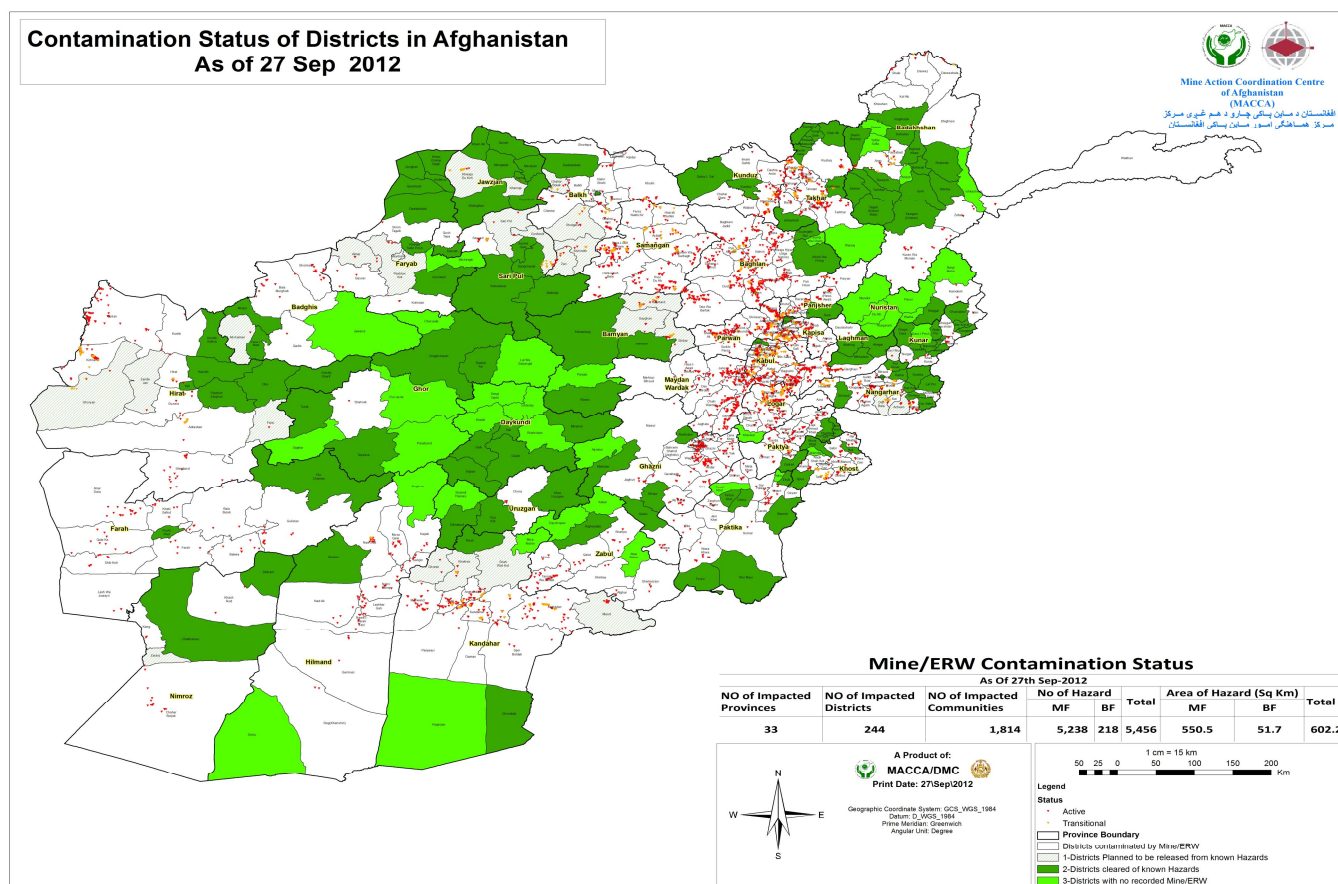
# MINE ACTION BENCHMARKS IN AFGHANISTAN

## Ottawa Convention:

As part of its obligations under the Ottawa Convention, Afghanistan aimed to clear all emplaced anti-personnel (AP) mines by 2013; destroy all known AP mine stockpiles by 2007; provide mine risk education and assist mine survivors. To note, the Ottawa Convention is about the removal of AP mines, and not of anti-tank (AT) mines or ERW. However it is equally important to ensure that the other hazards are not forgotten whilst the focus is on meeting the Ottawa Convention obligations. In March 2012, the Government of Afghanistan applied for 10-year extension of its deadline to clear all AP mines. All AP mine stockpiles have already been destroyed.

**BENCHMARK TABLE-SEPTEMBER 2012**

	Baseline		New Hazard		Hazard Processed		Progress		Remaining Hazard	
	Hazards	Area	Hazards	Area	Hazards	Area	% of Hazards	% of Area	Hazards	Area
AP (+ AP,AT,ERW mixed)	9,049	718,821,612	19	644,589	5,274	431,176,611	58.28	59.98	3,775	287,645,001
AT + ERW	4,984	627,367,203	8	4,604,593	3,637	364,891,282	72.97	58.16	1,347	262,475,921
<b>Total</b>	<b>14,033</b>	<b>1,346,188,815</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>5,249,182</b>	<b>8,911</b>	<b>796,067,893</b>	<b>63.50</b>	<b>59.13</b>	<b>5,122</b>	<b>550,120,922</b>



## MINE ACTION ACHIEVEMENTS IN YEAR 1391 SO FAR (September 2012)

- \* 15,787 AP mines, 1,430 AT mines, and 451,271 ERW destroyed.
- \* 170 communities cleared of mines and ERW.
- \* 109,648 women and girls and 119,323 men and boys received MRE throughout the country.

## MINE ACTION ACHIEVEMENTS IN YEAR 1391 SO FAR (August 2012)

- \* 13,169 AP mines, 1,291 AT mines, and 292,681 ERW destroyed.
- \* 144 communities cleared of mines and ERW.
- \* 80,445 women and girls and 85,872 men and boys received MRE throughout the country.