

# Mine Action Programme of Afghanistan

## NEWSLETTER

March 2017

### ACAP III Provides an Electric Hand

January 2017—Mr. Abdul Khaliq, 27, lives in a small house with his family in Laghman province. Mr. Khaliq is a double amputee; however, unlike most of the estimated 43,528 amputees in Afghanistan, he is able to grasp objects and perform routine daily tasks through the use of an electric hand provided to him through the Afghan Civilian Assistance Program (ACAP III).

A former construction worker, Mr. Khaliq became an amputee when a Rocket Propelled Grenade (RPG) intended for another target hit his yard killing his niece and severely injuring his hands. He exhausted his savings seeking treatment and fortunately for Abdul, he was referred by a local organization to ACAP III, a project funded by USAID. ACAP III provided Abdul's family with a relief package including food and non-food items, psychosocial counseling and a cow to serve as source of income generation. Uniquely, ACAP III also assisted Abdul with a custom-fit myoelectric-controlled hand, which opens and closes using a battery and signals from voluntary muscles.

Abdul can now grasp items, lift of up to 5kg in weight and perform most daily tasks including eating and drinking and grooming. According to ACAP III sources, Abdul's electric hand is one of the first in Afghanistan. The cost of such a treatment is out of reach for many Afghans; however, ACAP III is seeking to expand this line of assistance in 2017 to reach more amputees.

In Abdul's words, the ACAP III assistance he received was life-changing. "Without my hands I was feeling helpless and different than others...ACAP III provided me assistance when I was in need. The immediate assistance saved us from borrowing money from neighbors. After receiving counseling sessions from ACAP III, I realized that although I lost my hands I am lucky that the remaining organs of my body are functioning. I can give a father's love to my children and can look after my family. The electric hand has given me the confidence to plan activities that previously I thought were impossible".

ACAP III gives hope to an amputee through the provision of one of Afghanistan's first electric hands



"The electric hand has given me the confidence to plan activities that previously I thought were impossible. I am thankful to the project and request to keep its assistance going for other conflict-affected civilians."



Mr. Abdul Khaliq tests the use of the electric hand provided to him by ACAP III. @UNMAS

### A letter of Agreement signed between DMAC and TDH

During January 2017, The Directorate of Mine Action Coordination (DMAC) signed a Letter of Agreement with Terre des hommes regarding the integration of Mine/Explosive Remnants of War Risk Education into an existing project, called Ishtema. The Ishtema project is aimed at targeting IDPs, returnees and conflict affected populations and their children in remote and isolated areas of Nangarhar province through mobile community groups, to develop community based child protection services. These services will now be complemented by landmine and ERW Risk Education.

DMAC has provided a Mine/ERW Risk Education 'Training of Trainers' (ToT) training to the staff of Terre des hommes, who will, in turn, transfer the information, knowledge and skills to the remaining staff of the project. As defined by the Afghanistan Mine Action Standards (AMAS), this is a informal approach of implementing Risk Education activities in Afghanistan.

## About Terre des hommes

Terre des homes was established in 1960 by Edmond Kaiser, and strives to come to the aid of children in need. It endeavours to defend the rights of children at all times, be it in times of war, natural catastrophe, or in less publicized situations of distress.



## MAPA declares “Kohsan” district of Herat Province free of known Mines/ERW

The Mine Action Programme of Afghanistan (MAPA) has passed another landmark towards compliance with the Ottawa Treaty, successfully declaring Kohsan district, of Herat province, free of known landmines and explosive remnants of war. The minefields that have been cleared represent 40,083,733 sq/m, and the area of battlefield surface searched is 2,500 sq/m. Only two districts out of 15 districts remain to be cleared in Herat Province, namely Gulran and Shindand.

Due to the extent of the clashes over the past three decades, this area was highly contaminated, resulting in the blockage of access to many facilities and resources, including agricultural and economic development projects for the population of Kohsan, approximately 11,544 people. Cumulatively, this clearance has seen 19 communities and 427 Battlefield/Minefield have been cleared of explosive hazards. This work was financially supported by the UNMAS Voluntary Trust Fund and DFID.

With the clearance work carried out by ATC, DAFA, DDG, HDI, HALO Trust, MCPA, MDC, OMAR, RONCO, UXB and ARCS, Kohsan district's land was successfully handed over to local authorities during the ceremony held in Kohan district Hall on Tuesday 3rd January, 2017.

During the ceremony, Eng. Aminullah Sarwari, District Governor of Kohsan, welcomed the participants, stating “Today, we are happy to announce the Kohsan district cleared of all known landmines and ERW. It is now a safe place for our students to go to school without any threat of landmines, moreover the farmers can use the lands and water canals for agricultural activities and the community has a safe place for living.”

He further added that the district is now open and accessible to all development projects, enabling the district to continue towards development and stability.

At the end he thanked the MAPA and deminers for their hardwork in the area, carried out over a long period of time, as well as giving appreciation to the local communities' councils for their collaboration to demining in this district.

Now that the hazards have been removed, this area can be used to meet the essential needs of people such as agriculture, health clinics, schools and roads directly benefiting a large number of people living in this region.

The ceremony ended with the distribution of the handover and appreciation certificates to the Governor of the Kohsan district, as well as to key staff of DMAC and HT.



## Seventeen - Day Training on IMSMA scripts & IMSMA Reporting tools, GIS, IMSMA Import



UNMAS, in support of DMAC, conducted a 17 day training spread across January, February and March 2017 on Information Management System for Mine Action (IMSMA), Geographical information system (GIS), Import Scripts & IMSMA Reporting tools in Kabul, Mazar-i-Sharif and Kandahar Provinces.

The workshops were mainly focused on continual improvements to MIS processes, including Information management System for Mine Action (IMSMA), Basic Geographical information system (GIS) for mine action & IMSMA Reporting tools

A total of 47 MAPA colleagues attended the workshops from DMAC, AREA, DAFA, ATC, DDG, OMAR, MDC, ITF Firing Range, HT, ACAP III and UNMAS.

Mr. Mohammad Ashraf, the MIS officer for UNMAS Afghanistan and the main instructor of this training said “The aim of this workshop is to achieve greater productivity through the utilization of latest technologies”.

As a result of this workshop, the participants gained the knowledge of how to implement IMSMA in a more informed, effective and efficient manner, and how to use MIS applications correctly to enable them to apply this knowledge to their everyday lives.



## MAPA Celebrated International Women`s day, 7th March 2017 #Be Bold for Change

The Mine Action Programme of Afghanistan (MAPA) and Afghan Civilian Assistance Program (ACAP III) celebrated the International Women`s Day on 7th March 2017 in the Kabul University auditorium.

The event was organized to honour the women that contribute daily to mine action progress, ensure that MAPA remains committed to the integration of gender into all



its programmes and activities, and to praise the resilience and offer support to the families of deminers who lost their lives and limbs during demining operations in Afghanistan. To this end, the Mine Action Programme of Afghanistan provided 20 food and non-food support packages, for 20 families of victim deminers.



International Women's Day (March 8) is a commemorated internationally, and celebrates the social, economic, cultural and political achievements of women. The day also marks a call to action for all to accelerate gender equality.

The official MAPA slogan for the International Women's Day 2017 is 'Be Bold for Change', which means Call on the masses or call on yourself to help forge a better working world- a more gender inclusive world.



The event was well attended by H.E. Wais Ahmad Barmak, State Minister for Disaster and Humanitarian Affairs, high government officials, civil society, MAPA family and the public.

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