

# NEWSLETTER

## MINE ACTION PROGRAMME OF AFGHANISTAN (MAPA)

September - October  
2017



ماین پاکي  
DEMINE

## MAPA CELEBRATES INTERNATIONAL DAY OF PEACE “21 Sep 2017”



The Directorate of Mine Action Coordination (DMAC) and The United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS) celebrated the International Day of Peace in Shamshad TV Studio, Kabul, bringing together civil society, academics institutions, International organizations, embassies, government and individual citizens in a global partnership in support of peace in the country as well as reiterating their commitment to work towards the goal of a mine-free Afghanistan by 2023.

While conflict is still raging, the Mine Action Programme of Afghanistan (MAPA), one of the largest and oldest mine action programs in the world, continues to work to remove the threat posed to the lives and livelihoods of Afghan civilians by landmines and Explosive Remnants of War (ERW), and to assist the Government in meeting its obligations under the Ottawa Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Treaty.



The work of the MAPA would not be possible without the partnerships between government, civil society and non-governmental organizations that are working together to provide lifesaving risk education; clear areas contaminated by fighting; and help support those unfortunate enough to have fallen victims to mines and other Explosive Remnants of War (ERW).

“The Mine Action Programme of Afghanistan is contributing towards peace in its efforts to save lives” said Mohammad Aslam Sayas, Deputy and Acting Director General of the Afghanistan National Disaster Management Authority. “It is clearly mentioned in the Quran that whoever saves one man – it is as if he saved mankind entirely” added Mr. Sayas.

“One of the key aspects of establishing peace is to create a secure environment for people to live”, said Mr. Mohammad Shafiq Yosufi, Director of the DMAC of the Afghanistan National Disaster Management Authority.

Mr. Yosufi added “Since its inception in 1989, the Mine Action Programme of Afghanistan (MAPA) has removed more than 20 million explosive devices and has promoted safety of people and facilitated development and economic activities which are vital to peace-building”.

The theme of this year's commemoration was "Together for Peace: Respect, Safety and Dignity for All" which aimed to highlight the importance of all segments of Afghan society to work together to strive for peace.

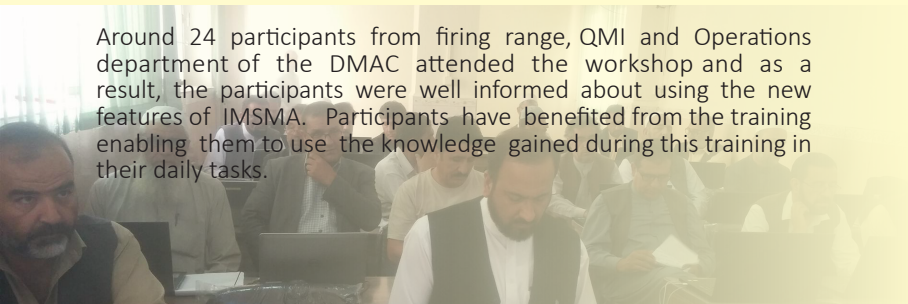
Peace is the right and the desire of all people. Mine action brings peace and hope and it is the foundation for progress and well-being — happy children, thriving communities, and peaceful, prosperous countries.

### **DMAC CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE CONDUCTS IMSMA TRAINING**

On 10 September 2017, the MIS department of the Directorate of Mine Action Coordination (DMAC) conducted a 5-day training on Information Management System for Mine Action (IMSMA) to enable the participants to familiarize themselves with the new tools and applications of IMSMA.

The training aimed to increase the information management skills of the participants using IMSMA reporting tools for analytical purposes, using data for planning and prioritizing, IMSMA for QA/QC for mine action activities, using IMSMA latest data collection technologies, using GIS to design maps, IMSMA data backup and restoration, data collection and data verification tools.

Around 24 participants from firing range, QMI and Operations department of the DMAC attended the workshop and as a result, the participants were well informed about using the new features of IMSMA. Participants have benefited from the training enabling them to use the knowledge gained during this training in their daily tasks.



## STUDIES ON IED CHALLENGES IN AFGHANISTAN



Data suggests that as a result of an increase in the use of pressure-plate improvised explosive devices (PP-IEDs) in Afghanistan, the number of recorded civilian casualties in the country is also on the rise. PP-IEDs are victim-activated devices and thus, are also known as improvised landmines. In 2017, almost 50% of civilian casualties in the country were caused by improvised landmines. According to reports by UNAMA, 547 civilians were killed and injured by this type of device in Afghanistan in 2017 (252 deaths and 295 injured). This represents an overall increase of 22% in the number of casualties compared to 2016.

Among those killed were 66 children and 27 women and among the injured were 114 children and 24 women. This shows a 70 percent increase in the number of child casualties and a 100 percent increase in the number of women casualties compared with the same period in 2016.

Given the fact that both the increasing use of improvised landmines in the current conflict and those that still remain in the ground years after being sown, threaten the lives and livelihoods of Afghans, the MAPA is looking to find new ways and approaches of dealing with the problem in order to minimize the number of lives and limbs being lost.

The DMAC and UNMAS in consultation with demining organizations and through some studies are looking to find practical solutions for this emerging challenge of Pressure Plate IEDs in the country and evaluate the circumstances around likelihood of engaging humanitarian mine action capacity in the clearance of abandoned PPIEDs or improvised landmines. In October 2017, Halo Trust sponsored a study to assess the feasibility of engaging the MAPA in mitigating the threat from abandoned Improvised Explosive Devices. Another study was conducted by UNMAS Ammunition & Weapon Management Technical Advisor, Mark Frankish who visited MAPA during October 2017 and had some consultative meetings with DMAC/UNMAS and the demining organizations.

The studies will help MAPA to plan its future interventions for survey and clearance of areas that are contaminated with abandoned PPIEDs, as well as taking the required measures to keep and maintain the neutrality of the MAPA as a humanitarian demining programme.

### **POST DEMINING IMPACT ASSESMENT RUNS IN 16 PROVINCES OF AFGHANISTAN**

During Jun – Sep 2017, the DMAC carried out a Post Demining Impact Assessment (PDIA) of 76 hazards in over 16 provinces of Afghanistan.

The primary assessment findings show that the mine action operations and services have paved the way for many development and infrastructure projects in all the cleared areas and communities. Approximately 96% of the cleared lands have been used by the communities for agricultural activities, building residential houses, tending animals and thus, making a positive impact on the livelihoods of people.



Moreover, it was also found that many people have received Mine/ERW risk education and are satisfied with the risk education provided by the MAPA.

The assessment was financially supported by the USDOS, Bureau of Political-Military Affairs, Office of Weapons Removal and Abatement (PM/WRA) through ITF- Enhancing Human Security and it was technically supported by the UNMAS. PDIA is impact evaluation of demining/mine action activities carried out in six months to one year after a minefield or battlefield is cleared of mines and ERW.

PDIA objective is to measure the immediate to medium-term humanitarian and socio-economic impact of demining/mine action activities. PDIA assesses whether humanitarian demining operations have achieved their objective of minimizing or eliminating the impact of mines and ERWs on affected communities, and whether the cleared land is in use by the beneficiaries as intended. PDIA also assesses the accuracy of the information upon which demining operations were prioritized, and therefore helps improve future planning processes.

## **REGIONAL WORKSHOP IN TAJIKISTAN / EOD COURSE**

From 25 – 29 September 2017, the MAPA was invited to take part in a regional seminar organized by the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) Programme office in Dushanbe. The regional seminar on Quality and Information Management in Explosive Hazards Reduction and Response brought together representatives from Afghanistan, Tajikistan, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan to exchange their experience and views about mine action activities in order to improve mine action services in the future.

During this training, the participants delivered presentations on Overview of Explosive Hazards Challenges, Quality Management in the process of



Explosive Hazards Reduction and Response, Information Management in the process of Explosive Hazards Reduction and Response and International Cooperation in Explosive Hazards Reduction and Response.

The workshop was mainly split up to three parts, of which the first two days were allocated for presentations, and the third day consisted of field visit organized by FSD to its cluster munition clearance site in Gharm area of Tajikistan. The fourth day was apportioned for de-briefing and certificate distribution to the participants.



## **MINE ACTION NON - TECHNICAL SURVEY TRAINING COURSE CONDUCTS FOR TURMAC**

From 18 Sep – 6 October 2017, a non-technical survey training was conducted in Turkey. Mr. Sayed Agha Atiq, DMAC/UNMAS area manager, participated as the MAPA envoy in this course which aimed to assist and support the UNDP Capacity Development Specialist in delivering of mine action Non-Technical Survey training to Turkish Mine Action Centre (TURMAC) personnel based on the NTS principles, methods, procedures, techniques and reporting system.

The training aimed to train 16 TURMAC officers on NTS requirements, methodology, products and benefits in humanitarian mine action as well as increasing staff knowledge on NTS process, desk assessment, using of NTS equipments and tools, identification of key informants and communications, over-irrigation of mined areas, identifying Confirmed Hazardous Areas (CHA) and Suspected Hazardous Areas (SHA)



and producing an electronic mined area map QGIS.

As a result of this training, the participants were informed about the effective and efficient implementation of the NTS requirements enabling them to apply the knowledge gained from the training into their day-to-day work.

Non-Technical Survey is used to investigate a new or a recorded mine and ERW contaminated area without physical entrance into the hazard areas. Non-Technical survey is conducted through a community liaison and interviewing informants about the contaminated areas as well as visiting the hazard areas from a safe viewing point.

## **TURMAC NEWLY APPOINTED DIRECTOR VISITS DMAC/UNMAS**

On 30th October 2017, DMAC/UNMAS received BG. Ayhan SAYGIN- the newly appointed Director for the Turkish Mine Action Centre (TURMAC), Col. Sinan UYAR- the Military Attaché of the Turkish Embassy in Kabul and their team. BG. Ayhan SAYGIN has officially assumed his post in November 2017 as TURMAC Director. The TURMAC team, visited DMAC to have a brief on the key areas of the Afghanistan Mine Action Programme.

During the meeting the Turkish delegation was provided with a short presentation on the history of MAPA, its key achievements, challenges and information on the different processes implemented by the programme. BG. Ayhan SAYGIN and his team appreciated the work and the achievements of the MAPA and expressed their willingness to further strengthen cooperation and collaboration among the two programmes.



## FOOD SECURITY IN THE AFTERMATH OF AN INCIDENT

In the direct aftermath of a conflict-related incident, the Afghan Civilian Assistance Program (ACAP III), a project of UNMAS, funded by USAID- US Agency for International Development, assists civilian victims of conflict.

In October, ACAP III celebrated the World Food Day, highlighting the programme's success in providing assistance to victims of conflict to ensure families' immediate and long-term food security in the aftermath of a conflict-related incident.

Since the start of the programme, ACAP III has distributed relief packages to 13,717 eligible families, supporting a total 117,966 civilians with food and non-food items. Following the immediate assistance, ACAP III has also provided 870 tailored income generation packages to families to generate their own income again, serving a total of 6,599 beneficiaries.

One of those beneficiaries is Mr. Ana son of Baba Qul: In 2016, as a result of fighting between the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) and Anti-Government Elements, a market in Kunduz city burned down, destroying several civilians' businesses.



Immediate Assistance in Badghis

Photo Credit: Nematullah Atayar



Income Generation Assistance in Kunduz

Photo Credit: Fareed Ahmad

Amongst those victims was Mr. Ana son of Baba Qul, a 48-year-old street vendor and main breadwinner of a family of 9, who lost his entire capital to the fighting. After providing immediate food and non-food assistance to Mr. Ana and his family, ACAP III helped to rebuild his small business by providing him with a new handcraft and goods, preventing the family from falling into severe poverty without any source of income.

## **WORKSHOP ON MINE ACTION ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT HELD AT DMAC**

On 29 August 2017, a half day workshop was conducted on developing Environmental Management System (EMS) in mine action policy in DMAC compound.

In addition to presentation - working groups were also formed to discuss the AMAS requirements about the EMS policy and to draft sample policies which will further be developed by DMAC/UNMAS and sent back to mine action organizations in order to develop their own policy; approved by their top management and DMAC. Each organization will have their own EMS policy which will guide the organizations in terms of the protection of the environment. After the formal releasing of revised AMAS 07.06 on Environmental Management in Mine Action, in July 2017, all mine action organizations recommended to convene a half day workshop on developing EMS in mine action policy for each organization.

**If you have any comment or question, Please contact us:**

Directorate of Mine Action Coordination  
Sadarat Square, Next to Bank Alfalah  
Kabul - Afghanistan  
P.B. 520

info@dmac.gov.af | +93 708 606060 | [www.dmac.gov.af](http://www.dmac.gov.af) | [FB/DMAC.Afghansitan](https://www.facebook.com/DMAC.Afghansitan)