

MINE ACTION PROGRAMME OF AFGHANISTAN NEWSLETTER: JANUARY 2009



MINE ACTION ROUND UP OF 2008

The Mine Action Programme of Afghanistan has made significant strides forward during the last year. In 2008 alone, more than 84,000 anti-personnel mines, 900 anti-tank mines and 2.5 million Explosive Remnants of War were destroyed by the MAPA. This resulted in the clearance of over 50km² of minefields and almost 113km² of former battle area. Over 500 communities had their land freed from the threat of mines and made available for them to use to grow crops, graze their animals and build on again.

In order to continue the reduction in casualty rates, there have also been significant efforts made in mine risk education, over 1.4 million Afghans received MRE, of which over 40% were female (women and girls) and 70% were children. 15,000 teachers have now been trained to teach MRE. MAPA implementing partners employ over 8,000 Afghan national staff, deployed in over 500 operational teams throughout the country.

In terms of transition to National Authority, in April 2008, the Department of Mine Clearance co-located and began working in close collaboration with the MACCA. MAPA supports three Government ministries (MoLSAMD, MoPH and MoE) to improve the services, policies and attitudes affecting persons with disability in Afghanistan.

In 2003, Afghanistan became a signatory to the Ottawa Treaty, also known as the Mine Ban Treaty, supported nationally by the Afghanistan Compact. The MAPA has achieved over 70% progress towards achieving the goal set by the Afghanistan Compact and is over half way towards the Ottawa/ Mine Ban Treaty of completely clearing all mined areas. However, more than 5,560 known hazards covering an estimated total area of 690 km², impacting over 2,090 communities remain in the country. 574 people were injured and 179 were killed as a result of mines and ERW in 2008, a slight rise from 2007. Almost a quarter of mine related incidents result in death and more than half involve children.

It was recently calculated, incorporating all known factors, the resources needed to reach the goals set by the Ottawa treaty. The total required (bilateral and multilateral) to fund the Mine Action Programme of Afghanistan to reach this target is just over \$500m over the next five years. The programme has the technical expertise and ability to complete the task, but the current resources are inadequate and it urgently needs an increase in funding to be able to meet these targets.



Dr. Muhammad Haider Reza, Director for The Mine Action Programme of Afghanistan talking to journalists on the programme achievements during 2008 through a press conference in Kabul on 12 January 2009.

UNMACA REBRANDS TO MACCA TO REFLECT INCREASING NATIONAL OWNERSHIP AND PURPOSE OF PROGRAMME

As the process of handing over Afghanistan's mine action programme to national ownership progresses, UNMACA will be adapting its name to better reflect its purpose and identity. From this point, the coordination function (previously UNMACA), will be known as the Mine Action Coordination Centre of Afghanistan (MACCA). The national programme, incorporating all implementing partners, will be known as the Mine Action Programme of Afghanistan (MAPA).

In addition, UNOPS Contracts, formerly managed by the MACA Programme Department, will now be managed by a new department known as the Mine Action Contracts Office, Afghanistan (MACOA). The MACOA has a direct reporting link to North America Office of UNOPS and as such is a UNOPS sub-office inside the MACCA.

POWER BOOST TO KABUL: MINES COULD HAVE PREVENTED IT

The announcement of an improved supply of electricity into Kabul from today is a great step forward for Afghanistan. The Mine Action Programme of Afghanistan (MAPA) is particularly happy to see this as it was in large part the fruits of their labour.

Three years ago, the route now used by power lines was heavily mined and prevented the lines being set up. The land cleared stretched from Pul-i-Kumri to Hairatan in Northern Afghanistan.

Dr. Haider Reza, Programme Director, Mine Action Coordination Centre of Afghanistan, said, "This is a classic example of how demining is the crucial first step in development. If this route had not been cleared, we would not now be celebrating our improved power supply which will enable development in our country."



Mine Action Programme of Afghanistan has cleared the power line path which stretched from Puli-Khumri to Hairatan in Northern Afghanistan.



MINE ACTION ACHIEVEMENT SUMMARY – JANUARY 2009

- * 366 AP mines, 53 AT mines, and 38,542 ERW destroyed.
- * 22 communities declared impact free.
- * 22,699 women and girls and 37,134 men and boys received MRE throughout the country.

MINE AND ERW INCIDENTS IN JANUARY 2009

Month	18 Years and Younger		Over 18 Years		Unknown Age/Gender	Total
	Male	Female	Male	Female		
Jan	7		12			19
Grand Total	7		12			19

SUCCESSSES OF MINE CLEARANCE IN AFGHANISTAN AS OF JANUARY 2009

Destruction of all known stockpiles of anti-personnel landmines:

The Government of Afghanistan successfully fulfilled its Article 4 of Ottawa Treaty and Afghanistan Compact benchmark to destroy all known stockpiled anti-personnel landmines in its territory in October 2007.

AFGHANISTAN'S PROGRESS TOWARD MINE ACTION BENCHMARKS

70% reduction of mine/ERW contaminated areas by 2011 & clearance of all known anti-personnel landmines by 2013:

	Adjusted Baseline at 31 December 2007*	Clearance Processed from 31 January to Date	Compact Target of 70% of Hazards by 1389 **	Progress toward Target at end-January/ 2009	Treaty Target of 100% of Hazards at 1391	Progress toward Target from 2006 to end-Jan,09
Number of Hazards to be Cleared	5,973	3,441	4,181	82%	5,973	57%
Estimated Area of Hazard Clearance (km ²)	852 km ²	377 km ²	596 km ²	63%	852 km ²	44%

***NOTE ON ADJUSTED BASELINE:** THE BASELINE FIGURE HAD TO BE ADJUSTED AT THE END OF 2007 AS DATA SETS THAT WOULD HAVE AFFECTED THE ORIGINAL BENCHMARK WERE KEPT IN SEPARATE DATABASES. WHEN THE DATA SETS WERE MERGED A HIGH POINT OF 852 SQ KM OF HAZARDOUS AREA AND 5,973 KNOWN HAZARDS WAS ESTABLISHED.

****NOTE ON ADJUSTED COMPACT TARGETS:** TARGET IS TO REDUCE BY 70% THUS TOTAL ADJUSTED HAZARDS ARE 4,181 & ADJUSTED AREA 596 SQKM.

TRANSITION OF MINE ACTION RESPONSIBILITY TO NATIONAL OWNERSHIP

The Mine Action Coordination Centre of Afghanistan (MACCA) supported by the United Nations and the Government of Afghanistan through its Afghanistan National Disaster Management Authority (ANDMA)/ Department of Mine Clearance (DMC) have formed a partnership within the MACA offices to plan, coordinate and ensure the quality of all mine action activities in Afghanistan.

TRANSITION ACTIVITIES COMPLETED

- * Mine Risk Education integrated into Ministry of Education in June 2007.
- * Victim Assistance activities integrated into Ministries of Public Health & Labor, Social Affairs, Martyrs and Disabled in June 2007.
- * Inter-Ministerial Body for Mine Action established December 2007.
- * DMC designated lead Government Focal Point for Mine Action during first Inter-ministerial Body meeting in January 2008.
- * MACA / DMC partnership agreed February 2008.
- * DMC relocation to the MACA completed in April 2008.
- * MACA / DMC merger completed May 2008.
- * Second Inter-ministerial Body for Mine Action meeting hosted at ANDMA-July 2008.
- * Third Inter-ministerial Body for Mine Action meeting August 2008.
- * Introduction of MRE monitoring mechanisms to MoE – regional activities August 2008.
- * First Inter-ministerial task force for Disability meeting hosted by the MoLSAMD – October 2008.
- * Afghanistan national disability action plan approved by MoLSAMD – October 2008.

KEYS TO MEETING THE BENCHMARKS FOR MINE ACTION IN AFGHANISTAN

- * Sustaining existing capacities.
- * Expansion of Community-Based Demining.
- * Programming through focused projects.
- * Introduction of competitive tendering.
- * Enhanced fund raising to ensure resources to meet benchmarks.

CHALLENGES TOWARDS BENCHMARKS: The Mine Action Programme of Afghanistan must increase multilateral and bilateral funding to mine action to achieve the targets set by the Ottawa Treaty and the Afghanistan Compact. The MACCA has calculated that this requires just over \$500m over the next five years. Essentially, funding needs to be coherent to enable effective delivery; this means funds must be received before the beginning of the year. If the funds are provided, the MAPA has the technical capability to achieve the targets.

MINE ACTION BENCHMARKS IN AFGHANISTAN

Ottawa Treaty:

Clear all emplaced anti-personnel mines by 2013;
Destroy all known anti-personnel mine stockpiles by 2007; and
Provide mine risk education to Afghans and assist mine survivors.

Afghanistan Compact:

Land area contaminated by mines and ERW will be reduced by 70% by March 2011;
All stockpiled anti-personnel mines will be located and destroyed by March 2007.

ABOUT THE MINE ACTION PROGRAMME OF AFGHANISTAN

The Mine Action Programme of Afghanistan (MAPA) is the first mine action programme in the world, and encompasses all pillars of mine action: advocacy, demining (survey, marking and clearance), stockpile destruction, mine risk education (MRE), and victim assistance (VA). Funded both bilaterally and through the UN Voluntary Trust Fund (VTF)^[1], over 20 mine action implementing agencies are working in Afghanistan, employing over 8,000 personnel. In 2008, the humanitarian sector of the MAPA (non-commercial) deployed more than 500 mobile demining teams, incorporating manual, dog and mechanical assets.



The MAPA has a twenty year history of successfully delivering mine action in Afghanistan and has cleared over 12,000 hazard areas throughout the country. The MAPA is coordinated by the Mine Action Coordination Centre of Afghanistan (MACCA), which is funded through a UN modality. The MACCA has sub-offices, known as Area Mine Action Centres (AMACs) in Herat, Jalalabad, Mazar, Kunduz, Gardez, and Kandahar.

There remains more than 5,560 known hazards covering an estimated total area of 690 km², impacting over 2,090 communities.

THE MINE ACTION STRATEGY IN AFGHANISTAN

The strategy for mine action is based on the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan's vision of a country free from landmines and ERW, where people and communities live in a safe environment conducive to national development, and where landmine and ERW survivors are fully integrated in the society and thus have their rights and needs recognized and fulfilled⁽⁴⁾.

¹The number of hazards is higher than the original benchmark figure noted on this report, because hazards become more defined through survey. A suspected hazardous area is likely to be recorded as one or more smaller minefield hazards after the survey process is completed.

²Data is as appears in the nationwide contamination database on 15 January 2009 and encompasses field activities and assessments that occurred through the end of January 2009. Figures including victim data will fluctuate in the future as additional data is received from the field offices and implementing partners

³ Mine Action in Afghanistan, the Way Ahead, Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, Saur 1385 (May 2006).

MAPA is supported by :

