

MINE ACTION PROGRAMME OF AFGHANISTAN

NEWSLETTER: DECEMBER 2011



SCHOOLBAGS WITH MINE RISK MESSAGES HANDED OUT IN 75 KANDAHAR SCHOOLS

This month, Mine Action Coordination Centre of Afghanistan (MACCA) distributed schoolbags with messages about mines and other explosive remnants of war (ERW) to 75 schools in Kandahar. The messages, part of MACCA's Mine Risk Education (MRE) initiatives, were printed in both local languages and targeted schoolchildren and, through them, their families in an area that has witnessed many mine and ERW accidents.

Dand district's Kalantar Secondary school is one of the schools where the bags with MRE messages were distributed. "The good thing about having these messages on school bags is that it always reminds students about the treats of mines and other explosives," said Daad Mohammad, Kalantar Secondary School teacher.

Children and young people in contaminated villages in Kandahar city tend to fall victim to mines and explosives while collecting scrap metal for sale or play.

Daad Mohammad said: "I think it is very important for students and children know about the risks of mines and other explosives. They should know that these explosive items can take their lives or any part of their body."

Noor Ahmad, a student at the Kalantar Secondary School, is more aware of the dangers of collecting unknown metals from the contaminated areas of his village since he has seen the MRE messages emblazoned on the schoolbags.

He said: "I will not even go to those areas contaminated with mines and other explosives, since now I know it is very dangerous and I may lose my life or a part of my body."

Kalantar Secondary School Principal, Taaj Mohammad, said: "I would request MACCA to extend the distribution of these bags to other provinces as well, so that we keep students informed of the risk of mines and other explosives."



MAPA is supported by the following donors to the United Nations Voluntary Trust Fund for Assistance in Mine Action:

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

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RESTRUCTURING AT MACCA

In line with overarching policies to further strengthen the collaboration between MACCA and the Government of Afghanistan's Department of Mine Clearance (DMC) and to continue to strengthen institutional arrangements for mine action governance, the MACCA is embarking on a period of restructuring. The restructuring process will allow the MACCA to become leaner, more financially sustainable, and with full Afghan ownership.

Some posts will be lost in the headquarters and in the regional offices but the prime coordination tasks of information management and quality inspection performed by these offices will not alter. The (UN) MACCA HQ office will split into two entities: a UN project support office for the MACCA, and the MACCA itself.

The MACCA will, at the end of this restructuring phase, be staffed only by Afghans. Thus from 1 April 2012, coordination of the Afghan mine action programme will be undertaken only by Afghan nationals in the MACCA and DMC. The UN will continue to support the MACCA/DMC collaboration from a UN Mine Action Project Office. The project office, with MACCA/DMC, will also resource mobilize, monitor and evaluate UN VTF funded mine action projects in Afghanistan.

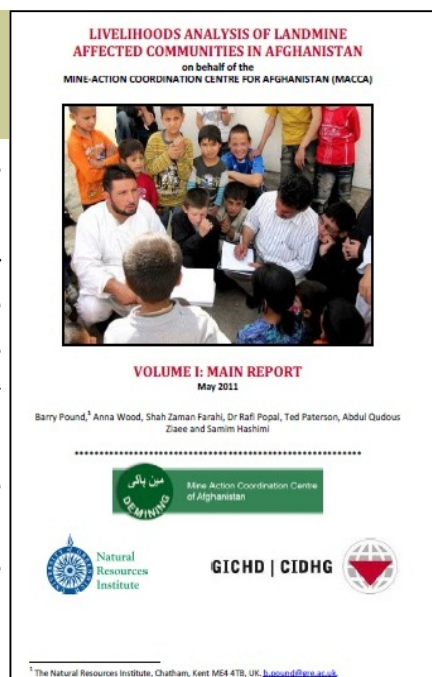
LIVELIHOOD ANALYSIS OF LANDMINE AFFECTED COMMUNITIES IN AFGHANISTAN WAS PUBLISHED

The Livelihood Analysis of Landmine Affected Communities in Afghanistan was released this month.

The report which has been prepared by the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD) on behalf of Mine Action Coordination Centre of Afghanistan (MACCA), represents an important milestone in the efforts made by the international mine action community, and the Mine Action Programme for Afghanistan.

It is the second of the "Landmines and Livelihoods" report which employ the Sustainable Livelihoods Approach to better understand both the problems created by landmines and other ERW, and the benefits stemming from mine action.

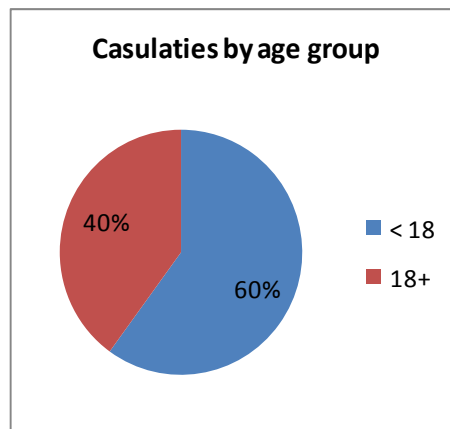
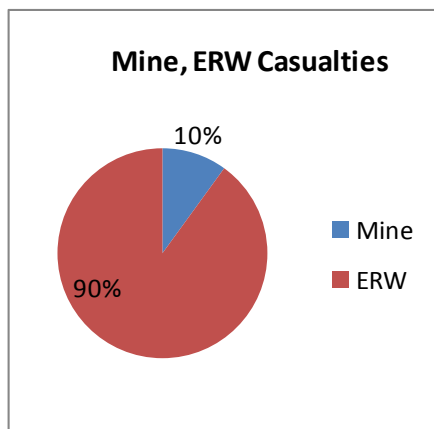
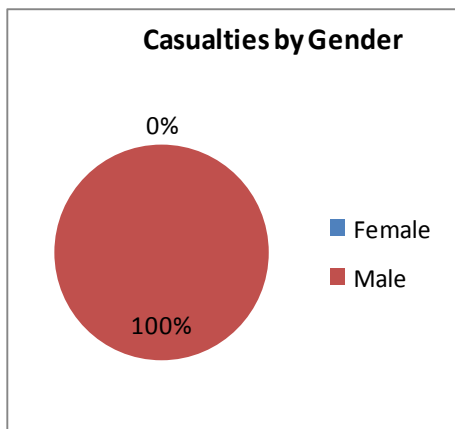
The full report is available on MACCA's website at www.macca.org.af.



CASUALTIES IN DECEMBER 2011

In December 2011, there were 10 casualties due to landmines and ERW recorded in Afghanistan, as of January 11.

NB: Casualty reports take time to come in from the field and so the monthly total may increase some weeks after this newsletter is published. The charts below show a breakdown of these casualties:



MINE ACTION BENCHMARKS IN AFGHANISTAN

Ottawa Convention:

The goal of the Ottawa Convention is to clear all emplaced anti-personnel (AP) mines in Afghanistan 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 ERWs. However it is equally important to ensure that the other hazards are not forgotten whilst the focus is on meeting the Ottawa treaty obligations.

The Afghan State may seek an extension of their deadline of 2013 to complete the clearance of all known AP sites.

Afghan Compact:

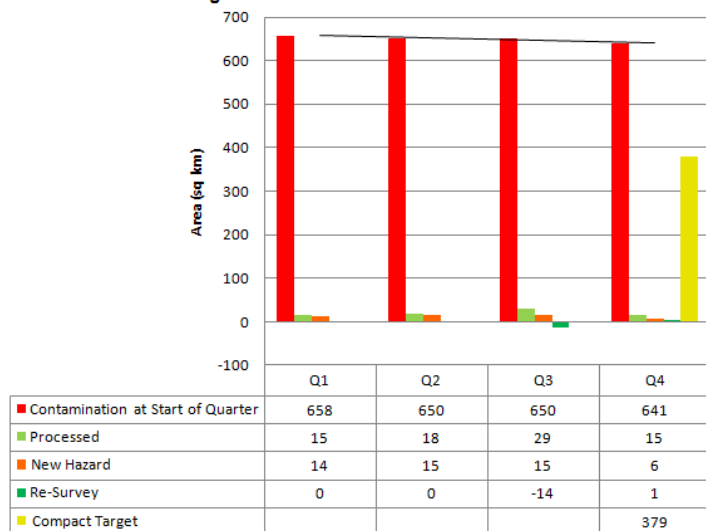
Between 2006 and March 2011, MACCA was reporting on progress towards the Afghan Compact target of a 70% reduction in all mine hazard. Although the Compact was not fully met (though 69% of the 70% target was, equaling to 48% of mine hazards cleared), MACCA has adjusted the table to reflect the achievement towards the Ottawa Convention whilst also recording progress of removal of AT + ERW Hazards.

AFGHANISTAN'S PROGRESS TOWARD MINE ACTION BENCHMARKS (DECEMBER 2011)

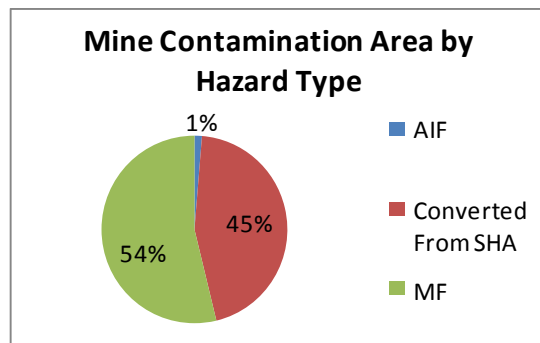
70% reduction of mine/ERW contaminated areas by 2011 and clearance of all known anti-personnel landmines by 2013:

	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)	8,662	692,158,604	119	4,868,804	4,092	374,697,926	47.24	54.13	4,570	317,460,679
AT + ERW	4,808	610,800,880	27	-153,114	3,330	339,555,137	69.26	55.59	1,478	271,245,744
Overall Contamination	13,470	1,302,959,484	146	4,715,690	7,422	714,253,063	116	110	6,048	588,706,423

Changes in the Mine Contamination Area



Mine Contamination Area by Hazard Type



AIF: Abandoned IED Fields
 MF: Mine Field
 SHA: Suspected Hazardous Area

MINE ACTION ACHIEVEMENTS SUMMARY IN 1390 SO FAR (December 2011)

- * 20,502 AP mines, 841 AT mines, and 599,819 ERW destroyed.
- * 186 communities cleared of mines and ERW.
- * 369,759 women and girls and 504,813 men and boys received MRE throughout the country.

